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## **Autoreferát (teze) disertační práce**

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*Time and Bureaucracy in the Cosmologies of Early  
Tianshidao (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century)*

*Čas a byrokracie v kosmologiích rané Tianshidao (2.-5.  
století)*

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# Outline of the dissertation

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The object of this study is the cosmologies of a tradition called Tianshidao 天師道 or the “Way of the Celestial Masters” in the second to the fifth century AD. The tradition is also called the Covenantal Authority of the Correct Unity (*Zhengyi mengwei zhi dao* 正一盟威之道), or simply the Correct Unity (*Zhengyi* 正一) which is also a term that is used for a religious tradition claiming succession from this early medieval tradition, that is still extant.

According to the traditional narrative, Tianshidao was established in 142 when a certain Zhang Ling 張陵 (also called Daoling 道陵) was appointed as the first Celestial Master by the Most High Lord Lao (*Taishang Laojun* 太上老君), a deity identified both with Laozi, the author of *Daodejing* 道德經, and also with the Dao as the ultimate reality itself.

This dissertation focuses on the cosmologies – instead of reconstructing a general doctrine of Tianshidao, the texts are interpreted as representing different cosmologies. The way of interpretation stems from a personal fascination with two of their features that also sparked the interest of the previous researchers: The transformative potential and the bureaucratic imagery of the Tianshidao.

By the *transformative potential* one refers to the possibilities of change created by a given worldview. The change can take various forms – it can be projected onto the physical and/or spiritual levels, it may involve a broad social transformation or can be limited to spaces or situations separated from the mainstream culture. Creating alternative lifestyles opens a way for the reflection of the mainstream culture and a possible way for its transformation. According to some of the previous researchers, the Tianshidao spawned an alternative culture contrasting to the common religious practice (Strickman 1979) and contributed to the process of empowerment and the creation of the self-consciousness of the class of scholars-officials (Stein 1963, Tanigawa 1985, Holcombe 1994). Some studies focused on the visions of transformation that are commonly labeled *millennialism*. One of the goals of this dissertation is to show the variety of attitudes in Tianshidao towards the vision of the end world transformation and the nuances between different types of millennialism in general.

The nature of transformation is partly characterized by the relationship to the institutions. Religious movements create their own institutions while supporting or opposing the preexisting structures. In the case of Chinese religions, this relationship can be partly illustrated by the use of bureaucratic imagery. By *bureaucratic imagery* one means the use of terms borrowed from the world of the imperial administration for the classification of both the spirits and the ritual specialists, adopting forms of the official communication for the communications between the two, as well as official garment and other elements. The co-opting of the bureaucratic elements by various Daoist movements was previously noted by Henri Maspero (1950) and studied in greater detail by Anna Seidel (1983) and many followers. Throughout the Tianshidao texts, the bureaucratic imagery takes on different functions that can be related to the transformative potential. This generates the following

questions: In what way do bureaucratic elements work as symbols? What meanings do they carry? Are they predominantly positive? How is the bureaucracy of early medieval China different from the Western notion of bureaucracy?

An important focus of the interpretation is on the ways of conceiving of time because these are closely related to different sorts of institutions and various visions of transformation. The author uses the term *representations of time* associating the Durkheimian *collective representations*.<sup>1</sup> The representations of time used in the analyzed texts will be related to their attitudes towards the institutions of Tianshidao and the state.

## 2 DIALECTICS OF BUREAUCRATIC IMAGERY

The first chapter explains the ways bureaucratic imagery was interpreted by various authors. The interpretations are organized according to the dialectic triad: *Thesis* represents the interpretations seeing the religions in China as supporting the dominant political organization, an idea that is traceable back to Hegel. The *Antithesis* is represented by the interpretations that explore the ways of escape from or opposition to the social structure and dominant culture. Some studies see the development of the new movements and institutions as a *synthesis* of the earlier elements and describe their integration in the political structure and dominant culture.

## 3 COSMOLOGIES OF TIANSHIDAO

The third chapter presents the way of treating the Tianshidao texts in this dissertation in contrast to the important recent studies, mainly Terry Kleeman's *Celestial Masters: History and Ritual in Early Daoist Communities* (2016, below abbreviated to *Masters*) which portrays the movement as a "church" based on the hierarchy of "registers" as tokens of initiation, which forms the essential part of the tradition. Kleeman pictures the later traditions of Shangqing (around 364) and Lingbao (around 400) as the branches of the Tianshidao. An alternative to Kleeman's arborescent narrative may be found in an earlier work of Gil Raz, *The Emergence of Daoism* (2012) that offered a polythetic definition of Daoism and described its social structure as loosely connected "communities of practice" instead of a church-like organization.

The goal of this dissertation is neither to disprove nor to prove that the system of registers or anything else was a stable element of Tianshidao. It takes the texts as representing cosmologies and focuses on the differences between them. The cosmologies reconstructed from the texts of the Tianshidao are not philosophical systems of Hegelian type, they rather resemble the "configurations" that are given to us in an incomplete form. Comparing the texts can show the dialectic relations between them, to identify the oppositions, to track the changes of attitude towards the institutions, and to describe the synthetic effort made to overcome the cognitive dissonance.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Durkheim (1912), these refer to "ideas, beliefs, and values elaborated by a collectivity. [...] Collective representations help to order and make sense of the world" and work in relationship to the institutional order" (Scott 1998).

A method used to demonstrate these differences is the theory of “cultural bias” also known as the “grid/group theory” developed by Mary Douglas and her followers. *Group* is “defined in terms of the claims it makes over its constituent members, the boundary it draws around them, the rights it confers on them to use its name and other protections, and the levies and constraints it applies” (Douglas 1978: 191). The vertical dimension represents the *grid* which strengthens from down to up. “The term grid suggests the cross-hatch of rules to which individuals are subject in the course of their interaction. As a dimension, it shows a progressive change in the mode of control. At the strong end there are visible rules about space and time related to social roles; at the other end, near zero, the formal classifications fade, and finally vanish” (*ibid.*: 192).

#### 4 GREAT PEACE AND THE TIME REPRESENTATIONS

The author quotes the definition of millennialism from *The Oxford Handbook of Millennialism* (Wessinger 2011) and finds the following variables in it: 1) The level of importance of the outer agency, inversely proportional to the level of the agency of the believers. 2) The “collective salvation” can oscillate between a small number of the elect and a universal salvation. 3) The nature of the transformation of the world can be abrupt or gradual, catastrophic or positive, political, material or spiritual. For the sake of simplicity, two ideal types of millennialism are outlined. The belief in a catastrophic change executed by an outer agent that brings salvation only to the *electi* is labeled *hard millennialism* and the belief in a gradual positive change which takes the form of rather continual processes in which the believers have active roles is called *soft millennialism*.

How is millennialism related to the cultural bias? In *Natural symbols* (1970), Mary Douglas related it primarily to the high grid and weak group. In her later work, she ascribed the millennialist tendencies mainly to the opposite type of low grid and strong group – a *small group* or *enclave* (Douglas 1978). One of the tasks of this dissertation is to observe the millennial thinking in the specific arrangements defined by cultural bias. The millennialist variables are then related to all of the four types of cultural bias.

This leads to the general problem of various representations of time. Chapter 4.3 summarizes the basic repertoire of the time representations of the second century and notes the differences between their interpretation of the Great Peace – the time of harmony and welfare. The writer finds inspiration for the comparison of the various representations of time in the *regimes of historicity* developed by François Hartog (2003): *pastism*, *presentism*, *eschatologism*, and *futurism*.

**Clockwork cosmos** is based on abiding by the rhythm of the heavenly and earthly processes, and harmonizing the movements of stars, seasons, agriculture, politics and ritual. The Great Peace is to be understood as a sustainable state that can be achieved by the continuous effort of the ruler and his ministers.

**Autocratic presentism.** The autocrat is portrayed as a sage who realizes the Great Peace. Such worldview entails a possibility of transcending the world of commoners.

**Genealogic time.** The ruler is a son to Heaven and a father to his subjects. The correct way to establish the Great Peace is the cultivation of oneself and one's family relationships initially and then progressing towards the broader spheres of the world. It is often related to the *pastist* interpretation of the Great Peace.

**The futurists** believe in human ability to achieve a Great Peace in the future.

Cosmologies related to the cult of **transcendence** (*xian* 仙) offer the possibility to escape and keep a distance from the normative time representation and to defend the meaning of the individual existence. The ultimate symbol of escape from the dominant time representations is escaping death.

## 5 FIVE PECKS OF RICE

The fifth chapter presents the cosmology related to the institutions of the early Tianshidao – then called Wudoumidao (Five Pecks of Rice) – according to the oldest preserved Tianshidao text from the Zhang Pu stele and the records about Zhang Lu's rule over Hanzhong (lasted for several decades until 215 CE) written by the early medieval historians.

The institutions of Wudoumidao associate the level of administration with those of health and morality. On one hand, the collective time is structured by rhythm and the individual fate relies on the bureaucratic hierarchy that interlinks the community and the netherworld. On the other hand, one's lifespan depends on moral conduct for the diseases are seen as punishment for transgressions and the repentance takes the form of community service and charity. This system is based on incorporation of the demonic/chaotic forces into the military/bureaucratic order. The justice of this world is intertwined with that of the netherworld by the unified body of bureaucracy. The system is seeking sustainability and expansion. The *grid* and *group* seem to be in balance – the hierarchy is justified by administering the welfare to which everyone contributes to through the levy of rice, and the individual, regardless to his or her ethnicity, is strongly integrated into the community by means of ritual and public confession. The preserved records do not convey any direct manifestation of hard millennialist claims or behavior.

## 6 THE XIANG'ER COMMENTARY TO LAOZI

The sixth chapter interprets the fragment of the *Xiang'er Commentary to Laozi* preserved in Dunhuang. The cosmology of the *Xiang'er* reveals a certain level of skepticism towards the dominant culture but it advocates neither its total annihilation nor escapism from it, rather a gradual change that begins with the individual. On one hand, the individual adopts the system of ethics that is independent of the social rewards and punishments and is motivated by longevity and transcendence. On the other hand, the social structure is seen as necessary for the reproduction of mankind and spreading the teaching from top to bottom. A social/cosmic crisis is seen as purely a moral problem and its solution is based on purification. The text holds an optimistic vision of the future, it integrates the positive human agency within the cosmic processes and does not predict any catastrophes. In contrast to the Hanzhong institutions that aimed towards the unification of human and

divine justice, in *Xiang'er* one sees them split – people have to choose between the social or celestial rewards.

## **7 THE YANGPING PARISH AND THE COMMANDS AND PRECEPTS FOR THE FAMILIES OF THE GREAT DAO**

The *Yangping Parish* and the *Commands and Precepts for the Families of the Great Dao* (put together with the later text *The Texts of Law of the Correct Unity: The Scripture of Precepts and Codes Taught by the Celestial Master*) reflect the situation in the third century after the annexation of Hanzhong. They give account on the breakdown of the early institutions and introduce an exclusivist concept of the *seed people* and the millennialist vision of the Great Peace preceded by catastrophes that is to ascend within the next two generations. The *Commands and Precepts* proposes two quite contradictory visions of the future. On one hand there is the Tianshidao community in the state of deterioration which is heading towards a catastrophe that will be followed by the ascent of the Great Peace that will be “seen” by the seed people. On the other hand there is the ascending Wei dynasty promising administration based on the Way and a peaceful future. The several time representations can be distributed according to their relation to the institutions. The religious side reflects the deterioration of the community. The political side explains the role of the Dao in the general dynastic history, its relation to Buddhism and the relation between the community and the state. These two institutions are interconnected by the title of the Teacher of the State that reveals the ambitions of the author to cooperate with the state.

## **8 SCRIPTURE OF THE YELLOW COURT**

The *Scripture of the Yellow Court* advocates a unity of the physical, spiritual and communal spheres which matches with the experience of the strong group guarding its borders in terms of moral/corporal purity.

## **9 RITUALIZATION OF INTIMACY**

This chapter does not deal with a cosmology of a specific text but with cosmological implications of erotic rituals known as “merging pneumas” and by other names. The texts referring to it share two key elements: The initiation involving intercourse with other people’s wives, and the regulation of the sexual life of couples based on the rhythm of 3–5 and 3–5–7–9. The implicit meaning of the first type of practice is breaking the ties of the traditional family and creating a strong border between the initiated and the commoners. The shameful and secret nature of the ritual creates the experience of *communitas* and reinforces the ties within the religious community. The practice of the 3–5 and 3–5–7–9 not imprints the cosmology in the bodies of the community members and reintroduces the experience of the initiation into the rhythm of the social world and thus contributes to the construction of the *normative communitas* that is typical for liminal communities (Turner 1969).

## **10 DEMON STATUTES OF LADY AZURE**

Chapter 5 of the *Demon Statutes* is one of the clearest examples of “the hard millennialism” within the Tianshidao tradition. History is interpreted clearly as a process of decline, heading to a catastrophe. The Great Peace is not at all utopian in a political sense but a time

of radical transcendence – the seed people are not expected to populate the world, they shall ascend to Heaven. There is no hope in the human institutions for the initiation through the sexual rites. Chapter 2 seems to offer a solution to the problem of the radical exclusivism: The celestial justice becomes more moderate in terms of extermination of the unworthy believers – if they cannot reach the ranks of the perfected, they become the earthly transcendents. The demonology of chapters 1, 2, and 4 corresponds to the hard millennialist bias. Together with the focus on sexuality, the preoccupation with the demons implies the perception of the world as a chaotic and capricious place. The moral purity remains important but the Hanzhong belief in the mechanism of automatic punishment in the form of illness is weakened. This goes hand in hand with the mistrust towards the institutions. Chapter 6 is tending towards a softer version of millennialism and attributes humanity with not only the responsibility for the state of this world but also with the potential to contribute to the future Great Peace. This chapter also brings back some indications of the belief in the mechanism of crime and punishment operated by the demons.

## 11 UPDATED PROPHECY OF ZHAO SHENG

*The Celestial Master of the Correct One gives Secret Instructions to Zhao Sheng* is translated in full length for the sake of demonstrating its complicated structure related to the conception of time and the problem of “failed prophecy.” The story is composed of two prophecies about the Great Peace during which the Sage Lord Li saves the 240 000 seed people while the rest of the population perish in the world catastrophe. The two prophecies are related to the two main characters: Zhang Daoling received the original prophecy and his disciple Zhao Sheng received the updated version. They represent two ways of attaining salvation – one that failed and another one which brings a new hope. Zhang was appointed to build bureaucratic structures to convert people and help them gain power over the demons. His method of selection is based on the Red Register of Huang-Lao, probably associated with the ritual of merging pneumas. Both the merging of pneumas and the bureaucratic utensils are deemed ineffective in terms of setting apart the seed people at the time of world catastrophe. That is caused by a sacrilegious practice of revealing and amending the esoteric texts. The original prophecy predicts the end of the selection of the seed people for the year *jiazi* and relates it to the decline of the Jin dynasty. After this date has arrived, there is no motivation for proselytizing or entering the ranks of Tianshidao, only the calamities are to be expected. Therefore the prophecy needed an adjustment which is associated with his disciple Zhao Sheng. The roles of Zhang and Zhao resemble the juxtaposition of Buddhist *arhats* and *bodhisattvas* – the former represent the individualist or even selfish salvation of the “lesser vehicle”, the latter embody the altruistic effort typical for the “great vehicle.” The updated soteriology is based on the possession of a talisman which creates a more egalitarian community for the initiated. This cosmology is the purest example of a strong group / small grid culture bias among the texts explored in this dissertation. An effort to change the world is seen as futile and all the hope is pinned on the messianic figures. The problem of representation of time is involves not only the conception of time on the level of cosmology but also the way of narration. The background for the plot is formed by the clockwork time according to which everything is operated. However, this mechanical rhythm of time is repeatedly exposed as malfunctioning, the gods and their human agents need to adjust it.

## 12 BARRIER OF PRECEPTS

*The Texts of Law of the Correct Unity: The Scripture of Precepts and Codes Taught by the Celestial Master* (below abbreviated to *Precepts and Codes*) and the *Canonical Statutes of The Most High Lord Lao* (below abbreviated to *Canonical Statutes*) focus on the importance of precepts for the Tianshidao community. In both texts, there are two tendencies important for defining the cultural bias. The first is delineating the boundary between the insiders and the outsiders, the second is the emphasis laid on a passive attitude that limits the employment of power related to status in the human relationships. In the *Precepts and Codes*, the only hierarchy is the invisible one and all the adepts are regarded equally in the striving for salvation. The goal of the *Canonical Precepts* is to correct the behavior of the libationers instead of abolishing the hierarchy. The model for such reform is found in the Buddhist monasticism. The employment of the term Great Peace marks the endeavor to create a sustainable way of life. The overall goal of these texts can be described as *normative communitas*. They advocate restrictions for the sake of consolidation of a social arrangement devoid of the pressures of the high grid and they are also free of power struggles typical for the strong groups with weak grid.

## 13 NEW ORTHODOXIES

The beginning of the fifth century brought several attempts to strengthen the hierarchy within the structures of Tianshidao. Religious authorities such as Kou Qianzhi (365–448) and Lu Xiujing (406–77) were also preoccupied with their relationship to the state. Another common feature is the search for the correct attitude towards Buddhism.

The *Inner Explanation of the Three Heavens* consists partly of a historical narrative. The idea of decline and relates it mainly to the end of the period of Six Heavens. The Han rulers who failed to administer the land according to the new orthodoxy brought by Zhang Daoling, are now given a new opportunity to do it. The Great Peace is happening here and now. The text thus presents a kind of presentism that renounces all of the religious practice of the past and exhorts building a new orthodoxy that would unite the state with the religious communities. This cosmology of “the best of times” seems to go hand in hand with the anthropology – the power goes into the hands of the most talented, human nature corresponds with the fate, man cannot help but represent the Way. The grid is raised by legitimating the *status quo* through celestial justice. The group is strengthens the group by building a massive wall between “them” and “us” based on basically a racist discourse of *yin* and *yang*.

The *Scripture of the Intoned Precepts of Lord Lao* is related to the religious reforms of Kou Qianzhi at the court of Northern Wei. This reform aimed at limiting the autonomy of the Tianshidao communities (weakening the group) and at creating a centralized system harmonized with the state (raising the grid). The political level corresponds with the cosmological ideas: The transcendence turns into a gradual process of promotion that needs to be authorized by the seniors. Both the community organization and the otherworldly bureaucracy appear as a copy of the state (or *yang*) administration. The transcendentals and the officials of Earth mirror the common view of the high officials and the minor clerks. On the top of this hierarchy stands the Thearch, corresponding to the majestic character of Lord Lao. The Thearch and the high officials represent the world detached from responsibility for

the moral decline of the common folk. Lord Lao operates according to the rhythm of macrocosmic time, not according to the time of the common folk characterized by the decline which occurred from the time of the sage rulers. The revelation of the arrival of Lord Lao is formulated like a prophecy but actually it only amplifies the present situation – Lord Lao descends to Kou, destroys the heterodox practice, supplants it with the new orthopraxy, his cohort presents the believers with the transcendent potion. The ruler Taiwudi was entitled of the Perfect Lord of the Great Peace which demonstrates that he has nothing to be afraid of when Lord Lao comes to inspect his empire.

In the *Abridgement of the Daoist Code by Master Lu* (Xiujing), the Great Peace is something that can be built within the family and the state. The world is not condemned, it only needs rectification. The representation of time emphasizes sustainable order that used to be there before the decline during the Lower Antiquity and that is being re-established since the revelation to Zhang Daoling. The overlap of the ancient order and the new one is the reason for chaos in the present time. The demonic influence is represented by the local religion. The demons occupying the positions not assigned to them represent a corruption of the system. The universal goes against the local, the grid reduces the millennial tendencies of a small group. On the other hand, Lu is criticizing the practices related to the worldview based on a vision of cosmos as a complex system: Geomancy, hemerology and the medical practice of moxa and acupuncture. They represent the technocratic vision of space, time and body that is detached from morality and approaches certain mode of fatalism. Lu's project is based on overcoming the alienation by the empowerment of the individual. The adept is given a place in the cosmic hierarchy which allows mobility based on meritocracy. Bureaucracy seems to be a middle way between the extreme forms of group/grid orientation. Also it meets Lu's need of strengthening the ties with the state.

## 14 CONCLUSION

The transformation takes a catastrophic form in the cosmologies that represent ambivalent or hostile attitude towards the institutions – be them institutions of the state or those of Tianshidao. The world catastrophe is portrayed in two ways. In the cosmologies characterized by the lowering of group and the competitive exclusivism (encyclicals) it is the heavenly purge as a necessary response to the chaotic behavior of the believers. The catastrophe is accepted as justice. In the texts representing the collective exclusivism and enforcement of the group (*Demon Statutes, Secret Instructions*) it is presented as an automatic restart of the cosmos that can be survived only by the initiated. The catastrophe represents the inhumane and demonic aspect of the world. Both prophecies were heading towards a failure but that is not to say that the transformative potential comes in total vain – the focus is shifted from building institutions to self-cultivation or to strengthening the *communitas*.

The softer versions of millennialism are aligned with the trust in the positive potential of the institutions. The Hanzhong community was creating its own social world. The *Xiang'er* represents a more individualist approach that is distanced from the institutions. In the *Three Heavens*, the transformation is already taking place. In the *Daoist Code*, the active attitude towards the institutions is restricted towards the Tianshidao and one's family. The positive

transformation of the state institutions is presented as going parallel to the private salvation. Kou Qianzhi combines the vision of the positive change with the catastrophic rhetoric.

In all of the texts representing different types of cultural bias, the bureaucratic imagery fulfills a role of a very versatile metaphor in terms of covering various types of worldviews and social experiences. It becomes a metaphor for the high grid and weak group type of arrangement – the individual is subjected to the bureaucratic machinery that he or she does not identify with. While the bureaucracy serves as a metaphor of the high grid arrangements in the modern West, in early medieval China it can also express liberation from such arrangements. While the imperial officials represent the central power, the transcendents represent the vertical link to the universal order of the Dao. Moreover, the bureaucratic imagery can represent the arrangements characterized by strong groups. Some cosmologies integrate the individual into a group defined by access to transcendence in terms of leaving the corrupt world and entering the Heavenly ranks which guarantees their future salvation. These are the cosmologies of strong group and low grid. There are also cosmologies of strong group and high grid that integrate the individual into the established bureaucratic structures that connect the levels of Heaven, Earth and humanity.

What follows is an outline of the relationship between the bureaucratic imagery in the Tianshidao texts and the history of the official administration. At the end of the Later Han the great families monopolized the high offices and fought for power with the eunuchs. The *Xiang'er*, whether it was written during the Later Han or after its fall, reflects this crisis and the rise of the eremitic ideal. Towards the end of the Late Han, the regions fell into anarchy. This opportunity was grasped by Zhang Lu in Hanzhong. Hanzhong cosmology represents the change from chaos to order. They recruited the “demon troopers” and turned them into officials in a contractual relationship with the bureaus of the Correct Unity, whose power exceeds that of the imperial court. The regime of the Cao Wei attempted to consolidate power and regulate the influence of the powerful families. In 220 a new system of Nine Ranks was established and lasted until 583. It was supposed to sort the individuals into nine categories according to their talent. This culture left an imprint also on the Tianshidao texts of that time. In the encyclicals, the salvation is not based on entering the ranks of an egalitarian army-like structure, the real elite has to emerge from it through the selection of the seed people. During the Cao Wei and the Jin dynasty which adopted it, the system of Nine Ranks became monopolized again by the officials of the great families. The elite created a closed community defined by aristocratic behavior ostentatiously different from the common mores. The bureaucratic imagery of Tianshidao texts of this period reflects the alienation between the masses and the officials. On one hand, the bureaucratic hierarchy is presented as corrupt in both the *Demon Statutes* and the *Secret Instructions*. The *Demon Statutes* presents a vision of the offices seized by the demons and offers an experience of *liminality* and *communitas* in the form of merging pneumas. The *Secret Instructions* refuses the efficacy of Tianshidao offices, the written documents are replaced with oral instructions and the hierarchical registers are replaced with a talisman that is egalitarian but given only to a limited number of people, just like the privilege of the high offices. The age of the accumulation of power in the hands of the great families came to an end with the establishment of the Northern Wei and Liu Song dynasties. South and North, the

bureaucracy again became an instrument of consolidation of the central power. The new orthodoxies of Tianshidao offer solutions to the crisis of social roles within the communities, solutions based on maintaining or reconstructing the hierarchical order. The Tianshidao institutions lead the way to salvation, while the government seeks the Great Peace.

In the last volume of the monumental publishing project covering the history of religion in China, John Lagerwey summarized that the rationalization, interiorization and secularization are the features of religious history that “characterize every age of radical change” (Goosaert, Kiely, Lagerwey 2015: 1). Lagerwey defines religion as a “system of values in practice”, the rationalization is defined as “ever wider scope of the abstract ideas used to organize social and political ideology and practice,” the interiorization is the “individual integration through practice of these ideas,” and secularization is the “diffusion of comparable values into various autonomous realms” (*ibid.* footnote 2). If one adopts this view, millennialism goes against the values of rationalization, secularization and interiorization. It envisions concrete, total and radical transformation instead of abstraction, compartmentalization, and the use of metaphor. This should not lead one to reduce the role such discontinuous cosmologies to the stepping stones on the way to the system as the ultimate goal of the process. The cosmologies advocating stabilization and systematization present themselves as final solutions but they often collapse or appear as oppressive and show that the “whole is false.” The façade of stability is concealing the continual change taking place behind it. Although the prophecies of the unstable cosmologies may end up in failure, they contribute to creation of concrete social arrangements that may persist or be periodically re-produced. These arrangements and cosmologies offer alternatives to the dominant order in terms of experiencing time, space, and relations to humans and other beings. The new possibilities of social organization are only one of their possible outcomes.

Robert Campany suggests that one should regard the religious identities as “imagined communities” and religious tradition as “repertoires and resources” (Campany 2003: 317–8). The image of repertoire is a very useful one but it should not lead to the conception of Daoism as a mere container of disparate elements. The attempts of systematization of the structure of authority, ritual, and the texts are important parts of it, integrating the disparate parts into various structures. These projects of systematization may create institutions or ideas that have a long-lasting effect within the tradition. However, the persistence of these institutions within the tradition should not lead one to an automatic conclusion that they form an essence of the tradition. Their importance differs among different communities and individual members, and also with the course of time. It is possible that the core institutions of Wudoumidao were abolished by the millennial communities but it is also possible that the hierarchical and egalitarian cosmologies co-existed within the same communities, each contributing to particular types of social arrangement and ritual practice. The cosmologies representing various types of cultural bias became parts of the repertoire and were either preserved, recycled or forgotten.

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## Publications

Chapters "Komentář *Xiang'er*" (*Xiang'er* Commentary), "Ge Hong: O nesmrtelných" (Ge Hong: On the Immortals), and "Vnitřní objasnění Tří nebes" (Inner Explanation of the Three Heavens). In *Čínský, japonský a korejský taoismus* (Chinese, Japanese, and Korean Daoism), edited by Oldřich Král and Jan Beran. Prague: Nakladatelství Argo, 2019 (in print).

"Kou Qianzhi a reforma Cesty nebeských mistrů" (Kou Qianzhi and the Reform of the Way of Celestial Masters), in *ACTA UNIVERSITATIS CAROLINAE PHILOLOGICA 1 ORIENTALIA PRAGENSIA XIX*, 2013.

Chapters "Ge Hong: O nesmrtelných" (Ge Hong: About the Immortals) and "Vnitřní objasnění Tří nebes" (The Inner Explanation of three Heavens) in Dušan Vávra (editor), *Antologie textů k náboženství Číny* (The Anthology of texts Concerning Chinese Religions), internal electronic text of the Center for Studies of Chinese and Japanese Religion at the Masaryk University in Brno, 2011.

## Scholarships

June – July 2017: Stay at the Czech Center of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic at Academia Sinica, Taipei.

September 2014 – February 2015: Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, USA; researching stay funded by the Fulbright-Masaryk grant. Supervisor: Prof. Stephen Bokenkamp.

February – July 2013: National Cheng-chi University, Taipei; researching stay funded by the Taiwan Fellowship. Supervisor: Prof. Hsieh Shu-wei.

October 2012 – January 2013: National Cheng-chi University, Taipei; researching stay funded by the Mobility Fund of the Charles University in Prague. Supervisor: Prof. Hsieh Shu-wei.

## Conferences

November 2018: The Twelfth Annual Czecho-Slovakian Sinological Conference at Charles University in Prague. “Velký mír v textech školy Nebeských mistrů.”

May 2018: Early Medieval China Workshop, University of Leipzig. “The Modes of Taiping in the Early Tianshidao.”

November 2017: Early Medieval China Workshop, Orientální ústav AVČR. “The Celestial Master of the Orthodox Unity Gives Oral Instructions to Zhao Sheng”: Early Medieval Daoism and the Problem of the Failed Prophecy.”

November 2016: The Tenth Annual Czecho-Slovakian Sinological Conference at Masaryk University in Brno. „Nebeský mistr dává poučení Zhao Shengovi: Otázka „mileniálního zklamání“ v tradici Nebeských mistrů.“

May 2015: Conference on the History and Culture of Early Medieval China at Palacký University in Olomouc. “The Dialectics of Cosmologies: The Development of the Worldview of the *Tianshi Dao* from the 2<sup>nd</sup> until the 5<sup>th</sup> century.”

November 2011: The Fifth Annual Czecho-Slovakian Sinological Conference at Masaryk University in Brno. “Kou Qianzhi a reforma Cesty nebeských mistrů.”

## Teaching

Winter term 2016/2017, Institute of Far East, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, Charles University in Prague: “Základy čínské civilizace” (Introduction to Chinese Civilization).

Summer term 2013/4, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, Charles University in Prague: “Středověký taosimus (2. – 10. st.)” (Daoism in Medieval China: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> century).

Since October 2009 until now, University of Economics, Prague: Courses of Chinese for beginners and intermediate Chinese in Czech and English, seminars on Chinese history and culture.