

## The Space of Nature and the Nature of Space in the Esoteric Biography of Perfected Purple Yang *Ziyang zhenren neizhuan* 紫陽真人內傳

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江乘令晉陵華僑世奉俗神。忽夢見群鬼神與之遊行飲食。群鬼所與僑共飲酒僑亦至醉。還家輒吐所飲噉之物。

數年諸鬼遂課限僑舉才。僑不得已。先後所舉十餘人皆至死亡。鬼以僑所舉得才有知人之識。限課轉多。若小稽違便彈治之。僑自懼必為諸鬼所困，於是背俗入道。

《周遊名山，看望八海，徊遊五嶽。休息洞室。樂林草之垂條，忻鳥獸之相噉，川瀆吐精，丘陵蓊鬱，百物之秀，寒暑之節。弋釣長流，遨遊玄瀨。靜心山岫，念真養氣。呼召六丁玉女，見衛展轉六合，無所不逮。守形思仙，二千七百餘歲。實樂中仙，不營當世。今卒被召，請從此別。》

乃登太華山，遇南嶽赤松子，受上元真君書。

### 1. The problem with the common gods

The magistrate of Jiangcheng, Hua Qiao of Jinling, had venerated the common gods all his life. All of a sudden he saw in a dream a horde of demonic spirits. He was wandering around with them, drinking and eating. Qiao got completely drunk on the wine which the demons were drinking with him. When he returned home he threw up everything that he had drunk and eaten.

For a number of years all the demons insisted that Qiao present talented people to them. Qiao had no choice but comply. One by one, those whom he had presented—more than ten people—all met their deaths. The demons obtained the talents of those whom Qiao had presented and came to possess the intelligence of wise people. Their demands multiplied. If there was any small delay or disobedience, they caught him out and disciplined him. Qiao feared there was no way out of the demons' trap, and thereupon turned his back upon the common [world] and entered the Way.

### 2. Juanzi takes his leave of the world

“I have wandered throughout the famous mountains, I have gazed upon the eight seas, and wandered through the five sacred mountains. I have rested in grotto halls. I have delighted in the drooping fronds of vegetation, and have enjoyed the call of animals, the streams gushing forth their essence, the hills lush with forests, the elegance of the hundred creatures, and the rhythm of winter and summer. I have fished the long waters, and roamed the dark rapids. I have stilled my mind on mountain peaks, meditated on perfection and cultivated energy. I have called on the six *ding* jade maidens, and watched over the six harmonies unfolding and revolving: there is no place I have not reached. I have preserved my form and meditated on immortality, I am over 2,700 years old. I have realized the happiness of a middle-ranking immortal, and I have nothing to do with the present world. Now I have been urgently summoned away. Please let me take my leave from this place.”

### 3. Visiting the Sacred Mountains

Next he climbed Mt. Taihua. He met Chi Songzi of the Southern Sacred Mountain and received the *Book of the Highest Prime Perfected Lord*.

乃登太冥山，遇九老仙都君，受黃水月華四真法。

Next he climbed Mt. Taiming. He met the Lord of Nine Elder Immortals City and received the *Four Methods of Perfection of Yellow Water and Moon Blossom*.

乃至合黎山，遇皇人，受八素真經，太上隱書。

Next he went to Mt. Heli. He met the Sovereign Person and received the *Perfect Scripture of the Eight Pure Ones* and the *Supreme High Hidden Book*.

乃登景山，遇黃臺，萬畢先生，受九真中經。

Next he climbed Mt. Jing, met Huang Tai and Mr. Wan Bi, and received the *Central Scripture of the Nine Perfected*.

#### 4. Description of a Grotto

神虎俠洞門。靈狩衛太室。左侍者清真小童，右侍者太和玉女，各百餘人。捧神醴之琬。詠大洞真經三十九章，誦大有妙經二十四章，修太上素靈二十一曲。其中庭有青腰玉女，執玄玉南震之燈，散花燒香，衛黃老君。

Spirit tigers flanked the grotto entrance. Numinous predators guarded the Supreme Chamber. The servants on the left were Young Lads of Clear Perfection; the servants on the right were Jade Maidens of Supreme Harmony; there were over a hundred of each. They offered cups of spirit wine, chanted the thirty-nine chapters of the *Perfect Scripture of the Great Grotto*, recited the twenty-four chapters of the *Marvelous Scripture of Great Existence*, and performed the twenty-one tunes of the Supreme Purity Numinous Power. In the central court were Azure Waisted Jade Maidens holding Dark Jade Southern Lightning lamps, scattering blossoms and lighting incense; they were attending to the Yellow Venerable Lord.

#### 5. Internal Visualization

君既詣之。乃再拜頓首，乞丐上真要訣。黃老君曰：可還視子洞房中。君乃瞑目內視良久。

Lord Zhou went to them [the three Prime Lords]. He made a double bow knocking his head to the ground and begged the essentials of the highest perfection. The Yellow Venerable Lord said: “Go back and look inside your own grotto chamber.” The Lord then closed his eyes and looked inside himself for a good while long.

果見洞房之中有二大神：無英，白元君也。被服狀如在空山中者。黃老君笑而言曰：微乎深哉，子用意思之精也。此白日昇天之道。子還登常山，授子上真之道。

To the east he saw that inside a grotto chamber there were two great spirits: they were Lords Wuying and Baiyuan. Their dress and appearance was like when they were inside the Empty Mountain. The Yellow Venerable Lord laughed and said: “so subtle, so profound is the mental concentration you employed. This is the way to ascend to the heavens in broad daylight. Return to Everlasting Mountain where you will be handed the Way of the Upper Perfected.”

《藥有數種，仙有數品。有乘雲馳龍白日升天，與太極真人為友，拜為仙宮之主。其位可司真公，定元公，太生公及中黃大夫，九氣丈人，仙都公。此位皆上仙也。或造太清，役使鬼神，中仙也。或受封一山，總領鬼神。或遊翔小有，群集清虛之宮。中仙之次也。若食穀不死。日中無影。下仙也。或白日尸解，過死太陰，然後乃下仙之次也。》

《子名上金書於方諸之宮。命登青錄。為字所謂金閣玉名已定於天曹矣。必能乘雲馳龍，上造以紫陽太清。佩金真玉光，龍衣虎帶。拜為真人。我之道術可教陸仙尸解之人耳，非子真人所可學也。但我是中仙耳，不足以為子師。》

## 6. The Hierarchy of Nature

“There are numerous varieties of herbs, and there are numerous grades of immortals. There are those who ride the clouds in dragon-pulled chariots and ascend to the heavens in broad daylight. They become friends with the Perfected One of the Supreme Ultimate and their status is that of masters of immortal palaces. Their rank gives them charge over the Perfected Dukes: the Duke of Establishing the Primordial, the Duke of Supreme Genesis and the Great Official of the Center and the Yellow, the Master of the Nine Energies, and the Duke of the Immortal City. These are all ranked as High Immortals. Some are established in Great Clarity and employ spirits and demons as their servants: these are Middle Rank Immortals. Others receive the fiefdom of a mountain and are commanders-in-chief of demons and spirits. Some roam and soar through the Realm of Lesser Existence and assemble in crowds at the Palace of Clear Vacuity. These attain the rank of Middle Rank Immortals, Second Class. One who eats grains but does not die and casts no shadow during the day is a Lower Immortal. Some are also delivered from the corpse in broad daylight and pass through the Supreme Yin of death: afterwards they attain the rank of become Lower Immortals, Second Class.”

## 7. Hierarchies of Immortals

“Your name, [however], is in the golden book in the palace of Fangzhu. Your destiny is published in the Dark Register. Your “gold pavilion jade name” is already fixed by the celestial officials. You will certainly be able to ride the clouds in dragon-pulled chariots and be established as Purple Yang in the Heaven of Great Clarity. You will wear a Golden Perfection and Jade Radiance sash, dragon robes and a tiger belt, and you will be venerated as a perfected person. My Daoist arts can only teach you [to become] an Earth Immortal who is liberated from his corpse, but they are not what a [future] perfected person such as yourself should study. I, however, am only a middle-rank immortal, and unworthy to be your teacher.”

真人曰：

《天無謂之空。山無謂之洞。人無謂之房也。山腹中空虛是謂洞庭。人頭中空虛是謂洞房。是以真人處天，處山，處人。入無間以黍米容蓬萊山，包括六合，天地不能載焉。》

夫道生於無，潛眾靈而莫測。神凝於虛，妙萬變而無方。杳冥有精，而泰定發光。太玄無際，而致虛守靜。是之謂大洞者歟。

## Glossary

Baiyuan jun 白元君

Baopuzi neipian 抱朴子內篇

Dadong zhenjing 大洞真經

Di xianren 地仙人

Dong 洞

Dongfang 洞房

Feixian 飛仙

Gu Huan 顧歡

Guan 觀

Heming shan 鶴鳴山

Hua Qiao 華僑

Huang Tai 黃泰

Jijiu 祭酒

Kongshan 空山

Lu Xiujing 陸修靜

Maoshan 茅山

Nanyue Wei furen zhuan 南嶽魏夫人傳

San chong 三蟲

Shenxian zhuan 神仙傳

Songshan 嵩山

Su Lin 蘇林

Taiwei gong 太微宮

Taixuan 太玄

Tan 壇

Tao Hongjing 陶弘景

Tianshi dao 天師道

Tong 通

Zhenji jing 真迹經

Wang Lingqi 王靈其

Wei Huacun 魏華存

Wu 無

Wuying jun 無英君

Xu Hui 許翽

Xu Mi 許翽

Xu 虛

Xuan 玄

Yang Quan 羊權

Yang Xi 楊羲

Zhen 'gao 真告

Zhenren 真人

Zhong xianren 中仙人

Zhongyang huanglao jun 中央黃老君

Zhongyue xianren 中嶽仙人

Zhou Yishan 周義山

## 8. The Sermon of Zhou Ziyang

The perfected one said:

“The nonbeing of heaven is called emptiness. The nonbeing of mountains is called a grotto. The nonbeing of humans is called a chamber.

The empty spaces in the mountains and viscera are called grotto courts. The empty spaces in human heads are called grotto chambers.

In this way the perfected take up residence in the heavens, the mountains and human beings.

When the Perfected enter the state of nothingness, a grain of rice could contain Mt. Penglai, and embrace the six harmonies, yet heaven and earth would not be able to contain them.”

## 9. From the Preface to the *Dadong zhenjing*

Now, the Way is born from nonbeing, secretly harboring a multitude of numinous powers, which no-one can fathom. Spirits condense in the void, marvelously transforming in myriad ways without bounds. In the darkest depths, there is an essence, serene and stable, which shines out light. This great mystery is infinite, reaching across the void, preserving stillness. This is called the “Great Grotto.”