

## *The Transformations of Our Lady: From the Taishan Precious Scroll to Daoist Paintings*

In 1890, the abbot of the Daoist monastery Baiyunguan in Beijing, Gao Rentong, commissioned a painter who remained anonymous to do a set of twenty-one paintings, *The Transformations of Our Lady*. These paintings show how Bixia yuanjun, an ordinary woman, transformed during her asceticism into a multitude of divided bodies before becoming the Primordial Sovereign of the Azure Clouds. Indeed, having become an adept of Daoist inner alchemy, she attained divine status. A specialist in Daoism, Liu Xun put forward the idea that this series owed its origin to the links between Baiyunguan and the imperial court at the end of the Qing (1644–1911), and above all to the Manchu noblewomen. In the article, the author demonstrates that the themes of the Baiyunguan paintings were probably based on the murals of a temple from the early Qing period in Hebei. In addition, she shows that their content, like that of the wall paintings, was taken directly from the *Precious Scroll of the Taishan on the origins of the Celestial Immortal and the Holy Mother*, a sacred writing (*baojuan*) that circulated widely in the capital region.

*Keywords:* Bixia yuanjun; *The Transformations of Our Lady*; *baojuan*; Peking area; Taishan xinggong Temple; Baiyunguan; Daoist paintings.