

Historical Periodization of Daoism (Seven Periods & Four Divisions)

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(1) Classical Daoism

- Warring States (480-222 BCE) to Early Hàn (206 BCE-9 CE)
- Inner cultivation lineages
- “Nèiyè” 內業 (Inward Training), *Dàodé jīng* 道德經 (*Tào-té chīng*; Scripture on the Dao and Inner Power), and *Zhuāngzi* 莊子 (*Chuāng-tzu*; Book of Master Zhuang), among others
- Kirkland’s “classical Daoism,” Roth’s “early Daoism,” and Miller’s “proto-Daoism”
- Referred to as so-called ~~philosophical Daoism~~ in outdated and inaccurate accounts
- **Models:** Quietistic, meditative, cosmological, existential, mystical

→ Classical Daoism

(2) Early Daoism

- Later Hàn (23-220 CE)
- Tiānshī 天師 (T’iēn-shīh; Celestial Masters)
- Miller’s (problematic) “classical Daoism”
- Referred to as the beginning of so-called ~~religious Daoism~~ in outdated and inaccurate accounts
- **Models:** Communal, ethical, ritualistic, meditative

(3) Early Medieval Daoism

- Period of Disunion (220-589)
- Tàiqīng 太清 (T’ài-ch’īng; Great Clarity), Shàngqīng 上清 (Shàng-ch’īng; Highest Clarity), and Língbǎo 靈寶 (Líng-pǎo; Numinous Treasure)
- **Models:** Alchemical, dietetical, ecstatic, mediumistic, cosmological, ritualistic

→ Early organized Daoism

(4) Late Medieval Daoism

- Táng (618-907) to Yuán (1279-1368)
- Táng monastic system, with Shàngqīng as highest ordination rank
- Internal alchemy lineages, including Nánzōng 南宗 (Nán-tsūng; Southern School) and Quánzhēn 全真 (Ch’uán-chēn; Complete Perfection; a.k.a. Běizōng 北宗 [Northern School])
- New ritual lineages and deity cults
- **Models:** Alchemical, ascetic, ethical, monastic, communal, cosmological, ritualistic

(5) Late Imperial Daoism

- Míng (1368-1644) and Qīng (1644-1911)
- Zhèngyī 正一 (Chèng-ī; Orthodox Unity) and Quánzhēn 全真, especially Lóngmén 龍門 (Lóng-mén; Dragon Gate) lineage
- **Models:** Alchemical, dietetical, ethical, monastic, communal, cosmological, ritualistic, syncretistic

→ Later organized Daoism

(6) Early Modern Daoism

- Republican (1912-1949; 1949-) and early Communist (1949-1978)
- Zhèngyī and Quánzhēn, especially Lóngmén lineage
- **Models:** Alchemical, dietetical, ethical, monastic, communal, cosmological, ritualistic, syncretistic

(7) Late Modern Daoism

- Later Communist (1978-present)
- Zhèngyī and Quánzhēn, especially Lóngmén lineage
- Global Daoism, characterized by cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity
- **Models:** Alchemical, dietetical, ethical, monastic, communal, cosmological, ritualistic, syncretistic

→ Modern Daoism