The Making of Imperial Religion

State and the Three Teachings in Song China (960–1279)

by

Jiangnan Li

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved April 2023 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, Co-Chair
Stephen R. Bokenkamp, Co-Chair
Xiaoqiao Ling
Charles Hartman
Huaiyu Chen

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2023

ABSTRACT

This dissertation challenges the conventional understanding that Song dynasty China (960–1279) was a period when Confucianism was placed at the center of governance. Bringing heretofore inadequately studied Buddhist and Daoist texts into discussion, it offers three case studies on interrelationships between Song emperors and the Three Teachings of Daoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. As shown in all three cases, although a religious campaign directed by the emperor and his institutional apparatus could set out under the influence of a certain teaching/religion, the campaign's outcome at the state level would often be a fusion of various religious and cultural components. My research suggests that Song emperors employed an eclectic strategy in selecting and utilizing elements from the Three Teachings and attempted to build an imperial religion centered around themselves. As such, Song imperial power emerged as a centripetal force that compelled the Three Teachings to tailor themselves to the imperial religion. Therefore, I term the Song imperial court as a "regulated syncretic field" where segments from different religious traditions became amalgamated into religious/ritualistic entities that served imperial visions of the time. Although proponents of the Three Teachings by and large continued their efforts to gain imperial acceptance of their teachings, they often turned to local society to ensure their authority when their efforts at the court failed. Further, I argue that such phenomena were rooted in the mechanism of patriarchal governance in which the emperor considered themselves and was considered by leaders of the Three Teachings to be the patriarch of his household/empire, who was responsible for balancing the power structure among the Three Teachings.

Dedicated to My Grandmother Hou Ziyu 侯紫玉 (192?–2022),
A High School History Teacher

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the summer of 2015, I stepped outside of the Phoenix Sky Harbor airport. The hot air hit me hard—as if I was walking into an oven. Giant cacti, wide roads, and leafless trees, everything was new to me. My goal was simple back then—studying Song-dynasty intellectual history with Professor Hoyt Tillman. Professor Tillman took me to a coffee shop the next day. It was a Starbucks inside a Safeway in South Tempe, where he explained to me what the East Asian Languages and Civilizations program at Arizona State University looked like, from the professors to the courses. In the summer of 2017, Professor Stephen Bokenkamp and I had a meeting inside a cafe in South Tempe. My English was not fluent, and I could not fully understand what he was saying. But I remember he persuaded me to learn more about Daoism because I did a poor translation of a Daoist text in his course the previous semester. I then decided to study more about Chinese religions with him. Retrospectively, I have always felt fortunate to be able to study with these two great scholars. They helped me with every step that I made during my years at ASU, from the times when I could not understand secondary readings to when I could not organize my ideas clearly to when I made basic English mistakes. I am beyond grateful for their mentorship and forever indebted to them.

My gratitude also goes to Professor Charles Hartman, who enthusiastically comments on my research and shares his research with me. His recent two books greatly inspired my dissertation's methodology. I am thankful for the advice and encouragement that Professors Anna Shields and Robert Hymes gave me at different stages of my research. I thank Professors Ling Xiaoqiao and Chen Huaiyu for being careful and critical

readers of my dissertation. I have always been fond of the Buddhist reading group with Professor Jan Nattier, to whom I owe my knowledge about early Chinese Buddhism. I enjoyed and benefited from taking courses with Professors Stephen West, Robert Tuck, Lucas Klein, Tonya Eick, James Rush, and Oh Young Kyun. I have also met many friends and colleagues as a graduate student. I want to thank Wong Pui See, Tyler Feezell, Bai Haihan, Francesco Papani, Li Wanmeng, Zheng Yiwen, Lucas Wolf, David Mozina, Joshua Capitanio, Yao Lili, Chen Yuqing, and Liang Shuo for their camaraderie. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Chiang Ching-kuo foundation, who generously offered me a dissertation completion fellowship.

Finally, I must thank my family. My wife Luying has always been my first reader and critic. We learned from and supported each other during my years at ASU. Our two cats, Udon and Monkey, brought me much joy and calmness by being cute, energetic, and aloof. My dissertation could not have become possible without their contributions. My parents have been very tolerant of my life choices. Although I have been a rebellious son for most of my life, they have always respected my decisions and supported me in ways they could. I am very grateful for the space they have given me. My grandmother Hou Ziyu was the most important person in my childhood. She cooked for me, read me bedtime stories, and taught me to read and write. More importantly, she taught me to care for others through the example that she set for me. She was a survivor of the 1937–1945 Sino-Japanese War and the 1959–1961 Great Famine. She passed her memories, joyful and painful, to me through stories, which made me interested in history and then humanities. Therefore, I dedicate this dissertation to her and her memory.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

INTRODUCTION

A Confucian-ruled Era?

Serenade of Peaceful Joy (*Qingping le* 清平樂) was a controversially received drama series in the eventful year 2020. Produced and released in the PRC, the show is committed to depicting the reign of Song Emperor Renzong (r. 1022–1063). Viewers from Chinese academia tended to praise the series for being faithful to the Song dynasty's (960–1279) history. Zhao Dongmei 趙冬梅, a scholar of Song dynasty history at Peking University, spoke highly of the drama's overall presentation of the Song clothing, historical setting, and the benevolent character of the emperor, even though she admits that Renzong in history was not as perfect.[1] However, many in the mass audience deemed its plot to be boring as "daily records of events" or "laundry list" (*liushui zhang* 流水賬)[2] in which Renzong is deprived of the complexity of human emotions and turned into an instrument whose existence simply serves for his historical image as a benevolent ruler. In other words, the incorporation of the received representation of the emperor ironically failed to meet the mass audience's critical expectations for a fictional reality where the audience can experience the "real" lives of the protagonists.

[1] Zhao Dongmei, "Jiemi yige bi Qingping le geng zhenshi de Song Renzong" 揭秘一個比清平樂更真實的宋仁宗, *WeChat*, June 4, 2020, https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/fabU3MLyR-FmznE_z2XWfg; Zhao Dongmei, "Qingping le li cangzhe naxie lishi de caidan" 清平樂裡藏著哪些歷史的彩蛋, *WeChat*, June 12, 2020, https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/jbuHcFuyU-yKho0x8Ox1CQ.

[2] For comments from the Chinese movie review website Douban, see *"Qingping le"* 清平樂, *Douban*, accessed on March 16, 2023, https://movie.douban.com/subject/26759908/.

The mismatch between the views of Chinese academia and the mass audience is worth further discussion. Not only does this example reflect the problems that come into being when playwrights superimpose historical narratives of the Song dynasty on a drama series intended for mass consumption, but also the entrenched narratives themselves. In other words, why does the benevolence (*ren* 仁) of Renzong become so important as soon as we attempt to achieve a narrative, no matter whether it is fictional or historical, of this period? Besides the fact that "benevolence" is the posthumous title of this emperor, our modern historiography offers another possible reason behind this spontaneous reaction.

In the most recent effort to write a Song history in English, Dieter Kuhn depicts the Song dynasty as a time when policymakers placed Confucian ideology at the center of statecraft. Following the Confucian focus on culture and education, the first three Song emperors emphasized civil principles (*wen* 文) over military principles (*wu* 武). These emperors made peace with alien states instead of going to war with them and strengthened the Civil Service Examination system and the agrarian economy.[3] In Sinitic scholarship, a statement by historian Chen Yinke 陳寅恪 (1890–1969) has also become increasingly influential—"after evolving for thousands of years, the culture of the Chinese nation reached its pinnacle in the Song dynasty" 華夏民族之文化歷數千載之演進造極於趙宋之世.[4] This claim appears in a preface that Chen wrote in 1943 for a

[3] Dieter Kuhn, *The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2.

[4] In the 1990s, mainland Chinese scholars began to quote Chen Yinke's statement to evaluate the status of the Song dynasty in Chinese history. For example, Liu Qiugen cited Chen's statement in his report on the

scholarly work by Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘 (1907–1998), a giant of studies of the Song dynasty history in the twentieth century. According to the context of Chen's preface, the culmination of Chinese culture refers to the revival of classical learning (*xueshu* 學術), namely Confucianism in the Song.[5] This narrative of the Song being a golden era of Chinese culture and Confucianism profoundly influences the political and cultural dynamics in twenty-first-century China. This projection of the Song as a golden age is a shift away from the dominant twentieth-century evaluation of the Song dynasty. During much of that century, many of China's intellectuals led people to generally regard the Song as a weak and unsuccessful dynasty since it suffered numerous military defeats and by no means could compare favorably with the vast territories of the Han and Tang dynasties.[6] However, in light of governmental, social, and scholarly efforts in China since the late twentieth century to revive Confucianism,[7] Chinese scholars have increasingly

1991 international conference on Song dynasty history held by Hebei University and highlighted the remarkable achievements of this dynasty. See Liu Qiugen 劉秋根, "Yijiujiuyi nian guoji songshi yantaohui shuyao" 一九九一年国际宋史研讨会述要, *Hebei daxue xuebao*, no. 4 (1991): 85–87; Chen Zhi'e 陳植鍔, *Bei Song wenghuashi shulun* 北宋文化史述論 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1992), 5.

[5] Chen Yinke, "Deng Guangming Songshi zhiguanzhi kaozheng xu" 鄧廣銘宋史職官志考證序, in *Jinming guan conggao erbian* 金明館叢稿二編 (Taipei: Liren shuju, 1981), 245.

[6] Conventionally, the historian Qian Mu 錢穆 (1895–1990) has been regarded as the first one who claimed that the Song dynasty was a period of "accumulative Impoverishment and accumulative weakness" (*jipin jiruo* 積貧積弱), especially after the publication of his famous *Outline of Our Nation's History* (*Guoshi dagang* 國史大綱) in 1940. Qian's statement was continued by later scholars and adapted into history textbooks in both mainland China and Taiwan. But as Zhu Yongqing 朱永清 has recently shown, many scholars in the Republic of China (1912–1919) share similar observations. See Li Huarui 李華瑞, "Songchao jiruoshuo zairenshi" 宋朝積弱說再認識, *Wenshizhe*, no. 6 (2013): 33–42; Zhu Yongqing, "Jipin jiruo yihuo zaoji zhi shi: minguo yijiang liang Song pingjia de shanbian yu jiujie" 積貧積弱抑或造極之世民國以降兩宋評價的嬗變與糾結, *Huizhou xueyuan xuebao* 39, no. 2 (2019): 106–15.

[7] For a recent investigation on this issue, see Hoyt Cleveland Tillman and Margaret Mih Tillman, *Making China Confucian Again: The Zhu Family's Mission for Family, Society, Business, and Nation* (Manuscript).

embraced Chen Yinke's view that the Song was the pinnacle of Chinese culture.[8] Indeed, the sense of cultural superiority of the Song partly derives from the notion of the Song being overwhelmingly Confucian and, as a result, Chinese. In an Andersonian sense, the immemorial past of a modern China nation would very likely find its anchor in such a statement.[9]

The Problems

To what extent is this Confucian label for the Song dynasty accurate or true? To answer this question, we must investigate how these historical narratives were formed. First, we see a Confucian triumph in histories about the Song written during the Song period and in late imperial China. Charles Hartman's recent investigation of Song historiography has demonstrated that the compilations of both official and private histories about the dynasty can be understood as a process of ongoing negotiations between the monarchy and Confucian literati in which two systems were at play. The first one was inherited from the Five Dynasties (907–959), where the ruler established people's loyalty through ad hoc appointments of technical specialists to address pressing issues in terms of military administration, finance, accounting, and technology. This system, as a result, mainly produced historical records that praised the imperial family. The other one grew out of the Qingli 慶曆 reform (1043–1045), where technocrats were replaced by "a Confucian institutionalism," namely a co-governance between literati

[8] Zhu Yongqing, "Jipin jiruo yihuo zaoji zhi shi," 106–15.

[9] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2006), 11-12.

scholar-officials and the emperor. Confucian literati consequently transformed historical records into narratives, or what Hartman terms "the grand allegory," in defense of this institutionalism and often presented rosy images of Song emperors championing Confucianism for the purpose of educating future emperors. Renzong's benevolence and Song emperors' unprecedented attention to civil principles are only two of the products of the grand allegory. The conflicts and entanglements between the two systems often complicated the voices we hear in the collected works and historical records, since Confucian literati, in practice, composed not only didactic narratives but also congratulatory fiction following the examples set by technical specialists. After efforts by generations of historians, Confucian historians successfully applied this grand allegory to their histories of the Song dynasty, which resulted in the surviving primary sources for Song history, such as the *Song History* (*Songshi* 宋史), the *Long Draft Continuation of the Comprehensive Mirror That Aids Administration* (*Xu Zhizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編, hereafter, the *Long Draft*), and the *Recovered Draft of the Song State Compendium* (*Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿, hereafter, the *State Compendium*).[10] In other words, the bias in favor of Confucianism is rooted in the primary sources that historians have often utilized.

Second, we see a continuation of this Confucian triumph in modern scholarship. Edward Davis in his *Society and the Supernatural in Song China* laments that some scholars tend to view the Song elite and society through the victor's lens, namely Neo-

[10] Charles Hartman, *The Making of Song Dynasty History: Sources and Narratives, 960-1279 CE* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

Confucianism, and that this perspective has confined scholars' imagination.[11] Charles Hartman in his new book *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China, 960–1279 CE* shares the same observation that scholarships on "Neo-Confucianism," such as those by Wing-tsit Chan and Wm. Theodore de Bary, contributed to the widely accepted notion that the Song was an age of Confucian governance. But as Hartman has pointed out, if Confucian literati had really dominated governance, why would we have historical records in which they constantly reminded Song emperors of how imperial ancestors avoided bad governance by conforming to Confucian principles?[12] Similarly, we can ask why we have extant records in which Confucian literati repeatedly opposed Buddhist and Daoist ideas and practices at the imperial court if Confucianism were the predominant teaching for Song governance. In other words, the very existence of such records questions the extent to which we know about the power dynamics behind the ideologies of Song governance.

Third, we see an inadequacy in studying Song dynasty Buddhism and Daoism. Edward Davis also argues that the preoccupation with Confucianism in the Song has undermined the study of Buddhism and Daoism. This inclination would, at its worst, lead to the description that Buddhism and Daoism during the Song were in decline because of the rise of the examination system, clerics' moral decline, Neo-Confucians' attack on Buddhism and Daoism, and the trend of religious syncretism. In Davis's words,

[11] Edward L. Davis, *Society and the Supernatural in Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 4–7.

[12] Charles Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 1–5.

Buddhism and Daoism are degraded as "intellectually moribund, socially ineffectual, and politically irrelevant religions." Thus, Davis opposes the conviction that Chinese civilization is equivalent to Confucianism and urges scholars to bring Daoist and Buddhist texts into the discussion of Song dynasty history.[13]

Case Studies: A Solution

Scholarship has made much progress since Davis's lament. For example, scholars of Song dynasty literature, such as Jason Protass and Li Wanmeng, have recently explored interactions between literature and Buddhism and Daoism at that time.[14] Scholarship of this kind complicates the conventional notion of the Song dynasty being a Confucian-ruled era because they question constituents of Song literature and literati culture by bringing non-Confucian players into the discussion. Likewise, taking Buddhism and Daoism into consideration when investigating Song governance would shed light on our understanding of ideologies that shaped state policies, ritual practices, and power structures of different religious groups at the imperial court. Therefore, this dissertation is but a preliminary attempt to take seriously Buddhist and Daoist texts, images, and objects produced at that time in hopes of giving nuances to the picture of religious/ideological forces in the Song state. I seek to explore mechanisms behind the interrelationships between the state and the three major religious forces at the imperial

[13] Davis, *Society and the Supernatural in Song China*, 4–7.

[14] Jason Protass, *The Poetry Demon: Song-Dynasty Monks on Verse and the Way* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2021); Wanmeng Li, "From Peach Blossom Spring to Grotto-Heavens: Literati Writing on Daoist Sacred Geography in Song (960–1279) China" (Dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2022).

court—the Three Teachings (*sanjiao* 三教) of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism.[15] More specifically, my focus in this dissertation is more on the imperial court of the Song state and its relations with the Three Teachings than the local governments.

This project is confronted with two difficulties in terms of historical data. First, extant government documents contain little information about Buddhism and Daoism as the result of the Confucian triumph in official historiography. As Charles Hartman has shown, the unique dated entries about Daoism and Buddhism in the *State Compendium* only constitute one percent of the entire extant corpus.[16] Comparably, the *Song History* has merely two *juan* or fascicles dedicated to Buddhist and Daoist clerics out of its 496 fascicles, while Confucians occupy at least nineteen dedicated fascicles. More tellingly, the compilers of the *Song History* categorized those clerics into the section "Thaumaturges" (*fangji* 方技, more literally, people with methods and techniques). The word *fangji* or *fangshi* 方士, in most cases, highlights the technocratic functions of religious practitioners—providing ritual, prophetic, apotropaic, medical, and physiognomic services at the imperial court. In other words, the *Song History* not only presents Buddhist and Daoist clerics in a much shorter length but also downgrades them into a servile and trivial category, especially when we compare them with the splendid names given to groups related to Confucian literati, such as "Learning of the Way"

[15] Kobayashi Masayoshi has pointed out that using the term "teaching" (*jiao* 教) to refer to Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism had become popular in the fifth-century South China. Kobayashi Masayoshi 小林正美, "Sankyō kōshō niokeru kyō no kannen" 三教交渉における教の観念, in *Rikuchō Dōkyō shi kenkyū* 六朝道教史研究 (Sōbun sha, 1990), 520–21.

[16] Hartman, *The Making of Song Dynasty History*, 27.

(*daoxue* 道學), "Forrest of Confucians" (*rulin* 儒林), and "Garden of Literati" (*wenyuan* 文苑).[17]

Second, the biographical data in Buddhist and Daoist canons often focus on how a certain cleric became connected to emperors, officials, literati, and deities and lack details of the cleric's religious services and their association with significant political events at the imperial court. Here, I will take the Daoist priest Zhang Shaoying's 張紹英 (fl. 1020s) biography from the *Monograph of Mount Mao* (*Maoshan zhi* 茅山志) as an example to demonstrate this problem:

> Zhang Shaoying was from Danyang (modern Danyang in Jiangsu province). He made himself a Daoist priest rather than entering officialdom. [At that time,] Emperor Renzong considered engaging with the views outside of the secular world. Master [Zhang] and his friend Zhu Ziying (976–1029), Master of Observing the Marvelous, both received the imperial edicts [that summoned them to the court]. While [Master] Zhu prepared for the travel, Master [Zhang] used his illness as a pretext to reject [the invitation]. The following year, Councilors Ding Wei (966–1037) and Wang Qinruo (962–1025) together reported to the emperor [on this situation]. Renzong summoned [Master Zhang] again. In the next two years, envoys visited the master over and again, but he always claimed to be sick and refused the summons. Renzong [then] sent the eunuch Ren Gui to bring an imperial proclamation to [Mao] mountain. [Thereby,] Renzong conferred [Zhang Shaoying] the title "Master of Illuminating Perfection" and commanded that the temple where Zhang resided be renamed "Abbey of the Heavenly Sages." When [Zhang] was seventy-five years old, he took a bath and changed his clothes one day morning, ascended to a ritual altar, paid respects to the four directions and "above and below," bolted the door, and sat down. His disciples felt strange about it. When they opened the door, [the master] had transformed into [a transcendent being].
> 張紹英，丹陽人。自為道士，不入城府。仁宗思接方外之論，先生與友朱自英（觀妙宗師也），偕應詔。朱既治行，先生辭以疾。明年，丞相丁謂、王欽若，同奏於上，再召。後二年使車再至，俱稱疾不起。遣中貴人任珪賚誥

[17] Tuotuo 脫脫 et al., *Songshi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977).

於山，賜號明真先生，仍勅所居庵為天聖觀。年七十五，一日清旦沐浴更衣，升壇拜於四方上下，扃戶而坐，弟子異之，啟戶已蛻化矣。[18]

According to the text, we know that Emperor Renzong summoned Zhang Shaoying and his Daoist fellow Zhu Ziying for his religious demand, but we lack detailed knowledge of the emperor's demand. And we know that Renzong summoning Zhang to the court was due to the insistence of high-ranking officials Ding Wei and Wang Qinruo. Still, we are not told whether or not their insistence and contemporary politics were in any way connected. Thus, the problem of studying the Three Teachings at the imperial court lies in contextualizing religious practitioners in tandem with significant historical events.

To overcome this problem, we can try to bring relevant evidence from the extant corpus of Song dynasty texts and archeological discoveries into the discussion. Taking the case of Zhang Shaoying's biography as an example again, we first can use the two famous names, Ding Wei and Wang Qinruo, in this text to date the imperial invitations. Checking against the chronicle *Long Draft*, the only period when Ding and Wang served as Councilors under Renzong was 1022–1025. Ding was demoted from Chief Councilor about three months into Renzong's reign in 1022. Wang was promoted to Chief Councilor in the fall of 1023 and then passed away in 1025. Another important background is that Renzong had not reached ten years old when he ascended the throne in early 1022, and his foster mother, Empress Dowager Liu (r. 1022–1033), at the time

[18] Liu Dabin 劉大彬, comp., *Maoshan zhi* 茅山志, ZHDZ 48:15, 16.441a–b.

centralized much power in her hand and operated the imperial court on Renzong's behalf.[19]

The second step would be searching in the Daoist canon. Fortunately, we find the record composed by Zhu Ziying about one liturgical service that he helped provide in 1024. To briefly summarize this record, Zhu Ziying and Zhang Shaoying facilitated the ordination of Empress Dowager Liu and placed her in the Shangqing 上清 (Upper Clarity) Daoist lineage. The language in this record would have contributed to the divinity and legitimacy of the empress dowager.[20] Now, we can speculate that it was not Renzong, who was only twelve years old, summoned Zhu Ziying and Zhang Shaoying. Instead, the regent empress dowager, who sought to consolidate her power, connected herself to these two Daoist practitioners. Indeed, even the new name for Zhang Shaoying's temple had political implications. "Heavenly sages" (*tiansheng* 天聖) was also Renzong's reign title at that time. Its characters can be divided and regrouped into "two sages" (*erren sheng* 二人聖), which refers to the co-governance of Empress Dowager Liu and Emperor Renzong.[21]

---

[19] Li Tao 李燾, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 98.2285–87, 101.2332–33.

[20] Zhu Ziying 朱自英, "Zhangxian mingsu huanghou shou shangqing bi falu ji" 章獻明肅皇后受上清畢法籙記, ZHDZ 48:21, 308a–09b.

[21] For a discussion on Renzong's reign title and contemporaneous politics, see Li Huarui 李華瑞, *"Songdai jianyuan yu zhengzhi"* 宋代建元與政治, *Zhongguoshi yanjiu*, no. 4 (1996): 65–73. Noteworthily, Tang Emperor Gaozong (r.649–683) and Empress Wu (624–705) were called by people of the time the "Two Sages" (*ersheng* 二聖). See N. Harry Rothschild, *Wu Zhao: China's Only Woman Emperor* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2008), 49–64.

Further analyzing Zhang Shaoying's biography, we can question two loose ends. First, it would have been impossible for Ding Wei and Wang Qinruo to submit a report to Renzong together because, as aforementioned, their terms as Chief Councilors did not overlap. Second, we cannot find any information about the eunuch Ren Gui, who delivered the imperial edict to Zhang Shaoying. But sometimes, we cannot solve every puzzle in a text. After all, the *Monograph of Mount Mao* was compiled by Daoist priest Liu Dabin 劉大彬 and his disciples in the first half of the fourteenth century after the Mongol conquest.[22] Since the compilers probably did not have access to Song government documents with more accurate details, they might have had to make speculations to form narratives about the Daoist master.

This short investigation of Zhang Shaoying's biography is to demonstrate one solution for insufficient information in government documents and hagiographies—case studies involving a wide range of sources, such as memorials to emperors, texts of the Three Teachings written under imperial commands, and ideological or religious texts and images created by emperors, Confucian literati, as well as Daoist and Buddhist clerics. In-depth reconstruction drawing on textual and material evidence from government documents and the Three Teachings has several advantages. It forces us to consider textual history and genre, reestablish a chronological order of events, and survey pertinent people, ideas, and traditions. But, of course, it can be frustrating at times, especially when one finds data are still very much inadequate even after thoroughly investigating extant evidence. One can further argue that data will never be decisive and

[22] Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, eds., *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 909.

sufficient enough to define a certain research object. However, this doubt will linger in historians' minds until a time machine is invented.

As I read texts regarding state-religious interactions, three cases of Song imperial religious campaigns stood out as the most interesting because they would provide revealing narratives about how leaders of the Three Teachings interacted with emperors in terms of religious, cultural, and political visions and practices. The negotiating processes[23] and synthesized results presented in these cases reveal the mechanism behind the interactions. My exploration and analysis of these three cases are premised on reconstructing the chronological sequences of my primary sources. I then attempt to understand the development of events and contextualize them in a larger political and cultural context. But sometimes, my sources provide insufficient information for me to date them and explore the formative process of the sources. Those places will be where I acknowledge the limitations of my research and, where possible, offer readers reasons for my tentative hypothesis.

Imperial Religion

As I will show, my three case studies concertedly indicate one phenomenon—imperial religious campaigns in the Song were often synthesized entities of ritual practices, monumental architecture, and ideas from different cultural and religious

[23] For example, as Shin-yi Chao has noted in her study on the Daoist deity Zhenwu 真武 and its relationship with the late imperial Chinese state, the narratives and worships surrounding the god resulted from on-going negotiations of various social groups. See Shin-yi Chao, *Daoist Ritual, State Religion, and Popular Practice: Zhenwu Worship from Song to Ming (960–1644)* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 1–12.

traditions. Therefore, I find much resonance in the concept of "Imperial Religion" devised by Geoffery Goble in his research on Esoteric Buddhism in the Tang dynasty (618–907). According to Goble, Imperial Religion in mid-eighth-century China was "a composite of ritual observances drawn from ancient tradition and adjudicated by court literati and ritual specialists as well as rites incorporated on an ad hoc basis according to the inclinations and needs of sitting emperors." The deities of Imperial Religion included: 1) the deities and ancestors of Chinese imperial tradition; 2) astral deities; 3) the gods of the natural elements; 4) local spirits that populated the territory of the imperium; 5) the exalted powers of the Daoist pantheon; and 6) the foreign gods of the Buddhists through the ritual performances of the emperor. Goble further argues that these ritual observances were disparate in terms of performative aspects, theoretical foundations, and cosmological justifications. What united them was the overarching force, namely the imperial Chinese state. All the ritual observances contributed to securing the stability, prosperity, and longevity of the state, its ruling dynasty, and the imperial family.[24]

Before rushing to adopt the concept of "Imperial Religion" for my research, I must, as many scholars have done, point out the obvious mismatch between the Western notion of "religion" and my research target, namely interactions between the state and the Three Teachings at the emperor's court and their synthesized products. However, we need not completely avoid using "religion" just because of this mismatch. Taking early medieval China as an example, Robert Campany has argued that scholars should define

[24] Geoffrey C. Goble, *Chinese Esoteric Buddhism: Amoghavajra, the Ruling Elite, and the Emergence of a Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 60–61.

the "religions" in their target cultures and juxtapose them with the Western notion of "religion":

> That early medieval Chinese discourses lacked one-for-one "versions" of the Western category "religions" does not mean that they lacked some usages that are analogous-ones that do something like the same work, ones invoked in the sorts of contexts in which "religions" would be invoked in modern Western discourses. Hence we must pay close attention to two cultural and temporal sets of linguistic usages and their metaphorical implications, and juxtapose these results. Such an inquiry has the purpose not of ruling out Western usages simply because they are Western but of clarifying certain aspects of both members of the comparison and the nature of the differences between them, as a way of better understanding both the contours and limitations of the category "religions" and the contours and limitations of the early medieval Chinese discourses on analogous topics as well as the nature of the fit, or lack of fit, between the two.[25]

Therefore, following Goble's elaboration of "Tang Imperial Religion," I tend to view Song Imperial Religion as the ritual, material, doctrinal, and ideological entities that Song emperors and the direct beneficiaries of imperial authority, such as imperial consorts and palace eunuchs, created out of sources from different religious and cultural traditions to meet its persistent and ad hoc ritualistic and ideological demands. Results of Song Imperial Religion often contributed to the ruling imperial family's legitimacy and the rulers' divinity or sagacity. I will use my three case studies to further explain the mechanisms of Song Imperial religion.

Certainly, there was apparent continuity between the notion of "Tang Imperial Religion" and that of "Song Imperial Religion." But one might inquire about discontinuities between Song Imperial Religion and situations in the previous dynasties.

[25] Robert Ford Campany, "On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)," *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 287–319.

After all, emperors, such as Emperor Wu of Northern Zhou (r. 561–578) and Sui Emperor Wen (r. 581–604), also utilized religions for their own political agendas. As N. Harry Rothschild has demonstrated, Empress Wu Zhao (r. 690–705) utilized sources both within and beyond what we usually deem to be Confucian tradition to construct her pantheon and legitimize and sacralize her rule.[26] Then, what was new in Song China? I would connect this question to a conundrum that scholars have long been searching for solutions to: Why did the state inflict no significant persecution on Buddhism and Daoism in the Song dynasty?

Scholars have noted that Buddhism and Daoism in Medieval China competed and negotiated with one another in terms of doctrines, scriptures, lexicons, and practices. Imperial favor and disfavor were significant for the ascendency of the two religions. Emperors oversaw court debates between Buddhist and Daoist advocates and often provided the victors with official protection. Failure to win imperial patronage usually resulted in persecution against a certain religion.[27] However, the last large-scale state persecution of Buddhism took place in 955, about four years before the establishment of the Song dynasty. Despite recurring challenges posed by Confucian literati and the rise of

[26] John Lagerwey, *Wu-Shang Pi-Yao: Somme Taoiste Du Vle Siècle* (Paris: Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1981); Jinhua Chen, *Monks and Monarchs, Kinship and Kingship: Tanqian in Sui Buddhism and Politics* (Tokyo: Scuola italiana di studi sull'Asia orientale, 2002); April Hughes, *Worldly Saviors and Imperial Authority in Medieval Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2021); N. Harry Rothschild, *Emperor Wu Zhao and Her Pantheon of Devis, Divinities, and Dynastic Mothers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

[27] Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion* (Enskede: TPB, 2006), 188–190; Livia Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao: Debates among Buddhists and Taoists in Medieval China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 3–46.

Daoism at the imperial court,[28] both Buddhism and Daoism in the Song did not suffer from any state-wide persecutions as they did in previous dynasties since the Han dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE). Albert Welter has suggested that the absence of severe persecution against Buddhism was because of the domestication of Buddhism. In other words, the Song state successfully tamed Buddhism by incorporating it into the state's bureaucratic system.[29] I would argue that the mechanism behind Song Imperial Religion would provide further reasons for Welter's observation. And I will explain them in greater detail in the Conclusion.

How do we place Song Imperial Religion in a larger religious landscape of the Song period? Robert Hymes has argued that we better understand Song religion as a "religious market" where clients can pick and choose from available beliefs, rituals, texts, and artifacts. Competitors in this market primarily targeted the laity to pitch and sell their products. As for the market's relationship with the state, Hymes has pointed out that the state power in the Southern Song (1127–1279) had declined, and the state could no longer afford expensive state-wide religious campaigns compared to the ones in the Northern Song (960–1127), especially those under Emperors Zhenzong (r. 997–1022) and Huizong (r. 1100–1126). Furthermore, the Northern Song state played more of a

[28] For an account of the hostility Song Buddhism confronted at the imperial court, especially under Song Emperor Huizong (r. 1100–1126), see Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen: The Dispute over Enlightenment and the Formation of Chan Buddhism in Song-Dynasty China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 49–54.

[29] Albert Welter, *The Administration of Buddhism in China: A Study and Translation of Zanning and the Topical Compendium of the Buddhist Clergy* (Amherst, New York: Cambria Press, 2011), 4.

regulatory role than its Southern Song counterpart.[30] Following Hymes's discussion, I want to point out that emperors and their power's direct beneficiaries were among the most powerful clientele and that creating Imperial Religions was often the religious service that this group of patrons demanded. The Three Teachings can then be understood as three major service providers at the imperial court. Through the perspective of competing to win patrons at the imperial court, we then can explain why the committed Confucian Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) tolerated and participated in rituals with Daoist elements to pray for rain when he served as a local official while he vehemently opposed Buddhism and Daoism in front of Emperor Xiaozong (r. 1162–1189).[31]

Defining Players and Scope

1. Techno-Confucian Continuum and the Inner Court

Charles Hartman has recently developed the concept of "Confucian-technocratic continuum" in his analyses of Song historiography and the structures of Song governance. According to Hartman, technocrats refer to aristocrats, clerks, military staff, palace servants, and imperial consorts. They often served as the emperor's technical experts and formed close ties with the emperor. Confucian institutionalists refer to non-

[30] Robert P. Hymes, *Way and Byway: Taoism, Local Religion, and Models of Divinity in Sung and Modern China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 197–205; Robert P. Hymes, "Sung Society and Social Change," in *The Cambridge History of China: Part Two: Sung China, 960–1279*, ed. John W. Chaffee and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 526–664.

[31] My Chapter 3 will discuss Zhu Xi's attitude toward Buddhism and Daoism. For Zhu Xi and rain praying, see Xi Chen and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, "Ghosts, Gods, and the Ritual Practice of Local Officials during the Song: With a Focus on Zhu Xi in Nankang Prefecture," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 44 (2014): 287–323.

aristocratic, civil officials at the imperial court who were always male and often upheld established Confucian institutions. Technocratic and Confucian institutional ideas and practices are often at odds. But as Hartman emphasizes, these two approaches to governance are not mutually exclusive; rather, we can find participants of governance along the continuum or spectrum formed by technocracy and Confucian institutionalism. To illustrate players along the continuum, Hartman proposes five dyadic parameters (see Table 1) based on Yan Buke's 閻步克 research on traditional Chinese bureaucracy.[32]

Imperial Technocrats	Confucian Institutionalists
Aristocratic (*gui* 貴)	Non-aristocratic (*jian* 賤)
Clerical (*li* 吏)	Official (*guan* 官)
Military (*wu* 武)	Civil (*wen* 文)
Palace (*gong* 宮)	Court (*chao* 朝)
Female (*nü* 女)	Male (*nan* 男)

Table 1 A Structural Alignment of Song Officialdom

Since the focus of my discussions is on the imperial court of the Song state, the first relevant dyad is "palace" versus "court." In the case of the Song dynasty, "palace" refers to what historians often call the "inner court" (*neichao* 內朝), which consisted of institutions and personnel under less mediated control of the emperor and thus more on

[32] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 17, 115–40.

the side of technocracy. On the contrary, the outer court or *waichao* 外朝 was often mediated by civil and military officials and their institutions. Therefore, what I mean by "Song emperors and direct beneficiaries of imperial authority" entail male emperors and the inner court personnel who acted directly and responded immediately under commands of the sitting emperor or had the potential to redirect his power. As Charles Hartman has pointed out, monarchy in the Song dynasty had three major components—male emperors, female members, and palace eunuchs. The female members included empresses, empress dowagers, imperial consorts, female palace bureaucrats, and female servants. The powerful among some of these women would elevate their male relatives to the status of "affinal kinsmen" (*waiqi* 外戚), who lived outside of the imperial palace and fed on their ties to kinswomen to build careers in government.[33] The inner court personnel and male emperors together constituted the clientele that the Three Teachings competed for at the imperial court.

Additionally, there would always be power struggles among components of monarchy, and decisions made during a certain period often resulted from negotiations among different forces. However, there usually would be a dominant force that could balance voices within the monarchy and make the ultimate decision regarding religious policies. When an emperor was strong enough to confront the forces in the inner court, he would be the one who made final decisions. But there were times in the Song period when other forces obtained dominance. For example, it was Empress Dowager Liu's

[33] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 9–10.

reign that continued the Daoism-inspired religious policies of the deceased Emperor Zhenzong but, at the same time, reduced the intensity for those policies.[34]

2. Officials, Literati, and Confucian Literati

The second dyad that I want to invoke is "military" versus "civil." While military officials were often on the technocratic side of the continuum and civil officials on the Confucian institutionalist side, civil officials could hold very diversified views. Only very few Song civil officials and, to a larger extent, literati claimed that they exclusively subscribed to Confucian learning. In his study on Song literati's connections to Buddhism, Mark Halperin proposes the idea of "worldly devotion" to conceptualize literati's relationships to Buddhism and Daoism. Since "worldly" here refers to "sophisticated or cosmopolitan," worldly devotion indicates a blurry boundary between religious and secular spheres and conveys "the richly textured, now devotional, now savvy view of Buddhism" seen among Song literati.[35] I would further suggest that the same characterization can be applied to Song literati's associations with Daoism. Since Song literati could write a wide range of content to define and redefine their devotions, criticisms, appreciations, and enrichments of any of the Three Teachings, it is unsuitable to simply deem literati as Confucians.

---

[34] Wang Shengduo 汪聖鐸, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu* 宋代政教關係研究 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2010), 79–87.

[35] Mark Halperin, *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960–1279* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), 3–5.

Defining Confucianism and Confucians in the Song government and the Song intellectual sphere has been a debated topic. Hoyt Tillman's research has shown that scholars following Wm. Theodore de Bary have been using the word "Neo-Confucianism" for anything related to Confucianism during and after the Song. In contrast, other scholars following Wing-tsit Chan use it specifically to refer to the Cheng-Zhu 程朱 philosophical school.[36] Such divergence can cause difficulties in surveying Confucians' attitudes toward other religions. For example, both Beata Grant and Ronald Egan have demonstrated that, despite the famous Confucian literatus Su Shi's 蘇軾 (1137–1101) reservations about Buddhism, Su and his family maintained strong interests in the religion, and Su even wrote prayers for the salvation of his parents.[37] Ironically, both Su Shi and the influential anti-Buddhist Zhu Xi can be characterized as Neo-Confucian under de Bary's conception because Su Shi also wrote extensively on the topics usually considered to be Confucian.

The question then is: How do we better define the terms related to Confucianism, such as "Confucian literati" (*rusheng* 儒士) and "literati" (*shi* 士), in tandem with their positions in the Song government? Charles Hartman proposes one useful way for scholars to visualize Confucian activists' position in Song officialdom, as shown in the following figure cited from his book.

---

[36] Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, "A New Direction in Confucian Scholarship: Approaches to Examining the Difference between Neo-Confucianism and Tao-Hsueh," *Philosophy East and West* 42, no. 3 (1992): 455–74.

[37] Beata Grant, *Mount Lu Revisited: Buddhism in the Life and Writings of Su Shih* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), 8-11; Ronald Egan, *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1994), 134–168.

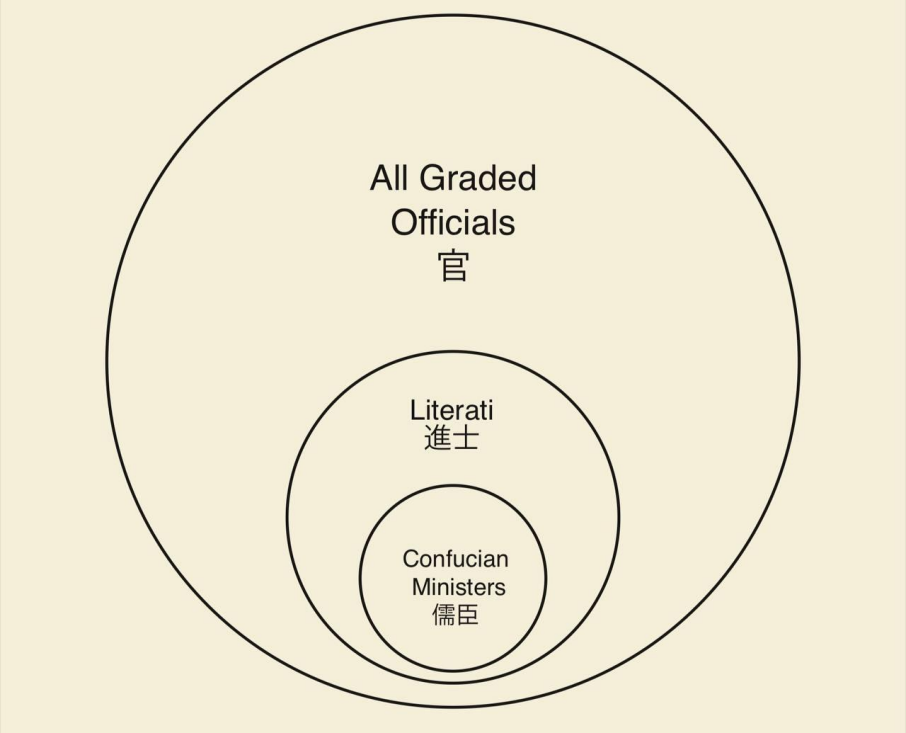

Figure 1 The Position of Confucian Activists in Relation to Song Officialdom (drawn by Charles Hartman)

According to Hartman, “all graded officials” entails not only civil and military officials but also members of the inner court; “literati” refers to “all civil grade officials with *jinshi* examination (highest level of the Civil Service Examination) credentials, without consideration of their personal commitment to any ideology, Confucian or otherwise;” and “Confucian ministers” denotes those who regarded implementing Confucian values and principles at the imperial court as the main objective of government. Additionally, Hartman suggests that “committed Confucian literati” is a term that we can use to

categorize the most idealistic Song Confucian officials, who held an intensified commitment to Confucian principles.[38]

Following these scholars, I use "officials" as a general term to refer to *guan* 官, who held governmental posts with administrative duties, as opposed to *li* 吏 (clerks), who enforced the policies devised by *guan* and dealt with the nitty-gritty of governance, such as the production and circulation of documents and tax collection. I use "literati" to refer to those who received the education of Confucian classics. I use "scholar-official" (*shidafu* 士大夫) to refer to those who received Confucian education and held governmental posts. I use "Confucian literati" to refer to those who showed strong inclinations toward Confucianism but did not necessarily oppose Buddhism and Daoism. I use "committed Confucians" to refer to those who consistently and exclusively advocated for Confucianism and thus rejected other religions. Generally, I employ two parameters—political stance and intellectual/religious penchant—as my working rubrics. I do not mean to classify Song officialdom in an overly clear-cut fashion but rather to find their approximate locations in a plane of coordinates where one axis ranges from being bureaucratic to idealistic and the other ranges from being eclectic to exclusively Confucian.

3. Buddhist and Daoist Clerics and Institutions at the Imperial Court

[38] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 12–13, 18–19.

What I try to clarify in this section is not a clear-cut boundary between Buddhism and Daoism. As Robert Sharf has pointed out, the distinctions between the Three Teachings of Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism were not as self-retrained as we would see in some modern textbooks. Instead of a "normative" Buddhism originated from India, what we often see in Chinese Buddhist history is Buddhism interacting with local traditions of China and becoming Buddhism's localized others. Therefore, quoting Sharf, "The power of the term is sustained in part by its very indeterminacy, its function as a placeholder. The authority of the word 'Buddhism' lies not in its normative signification(s) so much as in its rhetorical deployments. This indeterminacy forced local Buddhist ecclesiastics to circumscribe orthodoxy and orthopraxis by juxtaposing Buddhism with the heterodox teachings of their immediate rivals."[39]

Similarly, Stephen Bokenkamp has also pointed out the problem in the narrative that Indian Buddhism influenced or even conquered Chinese culture. According to Bokenkamp, the assertion that Daoism misunderstood Buddhist doctrines, texts, and practices not only presumes a pure origin of Buddhism but also regards those elements from Buddhism as pure and Daoist inclusion of "Buddhist elements" as hybrid. This mode of thinking will lead us to assume that borrowing was not something that Daoists did but that happened to them. In this regard, he opposes a "billiard ball" image of Buddho-Daoist relationships in which Buddhist ideas are the influencer, like the cue ball, and Daoist ideas are like the billiard balls that are forced to change their trajectory by the influencer. Therefore, he invites scholars to see Daoist texts in medieval China as

[39] Robert H. Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 1–27.

responses to Buddhism rather than evidence of the impact of Buddhism.[40] Although Buddhism and Daoism had further evolved in accord with specific circumstances from early medieval China to the Song dynasty, these two scholars' observations remind us of the importance of exploring Buddhism and Daoism in relation to their immediate rivals and contemporaneous social milieu rather than generalizing their different reifications under the same category, or assuming a one-way impact of one reification on another.

Therefore, what I mean by Buddhist and Daoist clerics should also be understood in the context of this study, that is, their relationships to emperors and officials in the Song. I suggest that the various Buddhist and Daoist schools therein should be understood in relation to two loci in which they were rooted: 1) the imperial court and 2) their religious bases in local society. These Buddhist and Daoist communities straddled the border between imperial religion and local sects, since religious masters often actively sought to, or were summoned to, communicate with members of monarchy. Moreover, my study will primarily portray Buddho-Daoist relationships, as well as their interactions with Confucian literati and imperial power, as a fluid network in which all the four players freely made use of, or even reinvented, religious and cultural elements of the others in ways that fit into their own contexts and pressing demands. I also want to

[40] Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "The Silkworm and the Bodhi Tree: The Lingbao Attempt to Replace Buddhism in China and Our Attempt to Place Lingbao Daoism," in *Religion and Chinese Society: Volume I: Ancient and Medieval China*, ed. John Lagerwey (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2004), 320–22; *Ancestors and Anxiety: Daoism and the Birth of Rebirth in China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 11.

clarify that this framework does not intend to deny the significance of popular religions and their roles at the court.[41]

Among the two aforementioned loci, my discussions will be centered on the interrelations between male emperors, their immediate beneficiaries, and the Three Teachings at the emperor's court. Leaders of the Three Teachings came to the court through different channels. Channels for Confucian literati are among the most obvious due to the enormous extant records. Civil officials at the court would have regular audiences with the emperor and could submit memorials on matters of their concern. Renowned Confucians would serve as Court Lecturer (Shijiang 侍講), who discussed Confucian classics and issues on governance, or be summoned to the court to give ad hoc lectures.

Dealing with Daoism and its relationship with the Song state, Robert Hymes draws on biographical data from the Daoist canon to map out the geographical distribution of Song Daoist clerics and the circumstances of their capital visits. His research shows that about fifty-two percent of the Daoist clerics were invited by an emperor to the capital in the Northern Song, while the rest very likely came to the capital on their own. In the Southern Song, the percentage of the Daoist clerics invited by an emperor increased to about seventy-eight.[42] Buddhist clerics also could be summoned by the emperor to the capital. For example, as Wang Shengduo has noted, the monk Zhiyuan

[41] For study on the Song state's relationship with popular religions, see Valerie Hansen, *Changing Gods in Medieval China, 1127–1276* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

[42] Hymes, *Way and Byway*, 175–81.

智緣 (fl. 1160s) was summoned to the court by Emperor Renzong in the early 1160s.[43] Noteworthily, as Morten Schlütter has shown, the Song state regulated Buddhist monasteries through plaque-granting policies, which resulted in certain monasteries being associated with certain Buddhist schools, such as Chan and Vinaya (*lü* 律).[44] This system enabled the emperor to invite local Buddhist clerics from a certain Buddhist school to the court. As my case studies will show, both Vinaya and Chan masters had paid visits to the capital via this channel.

Buddhist clerics often connected themselves to the emperor through people who had the potential to sway him. For example, Albert Welter has shown that imperial relatives and court literati contributed to the rise of Linji Chan Buddhism in the Northern Song.[45] I hope my research can give further nuances to the network by which Buddhist and Daoist clerics came to the court because, as we will encounter in this dissertation, technocrats, such as palace eunuchs and military officials, often played crucial roles in bringing Buddhist and Daoist clerics to the capital.

In addition to ad hoc visitors, the emperor's court also had its institutions for Buddhist and Daoist clergies who would be responsible for regular rituals and answering the immediate needs of the imperial state. Scholars have demonstrated the significance of Buddhism and Daoism at the Song court in that the two religions were successfully

[43] Wang Shengduo, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu*, 115–22.

[44] Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 31–49.

[45] Albert Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati: The Political Ascendancy of Chan Buddhism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

institutionalized into the bureaucratic system of the state.[46] Based on the historical reconstruction of Wang Shengduo and Tang Daijian, as well as Gong Yanming's *Dictionary of Song Official Titles*, I have made the table below to illustrate the ranks of Buddhist and Daoist officials at the Song imperial court. These ranks were exclusive for Buddhist and Daoist officials and thus separate from the ranks for military and civil officials.

	Buddhist Officials	Daoist Officials
Rank 1	Director of the Left Precinct of Buddhist Monks (Zuojie senglu 左街僧錄)	Director of the Left Precinct of Daoist Clerics (Zuojie senglu 左街道錄)
Rank 2	Director of the Right Precinct of Buddhist Monks (Youjie senglu 右街僧錄)	Director of the Right Precinct of Daoist Clerics (Youjie senglu 右街道錄)
Rank 3	Vice Director of the Left Precinct of Buddhist Monks (Zuojie fu senglu 左街副僧錄)	Vice Director of the Left Precinct of Daoist Clerics (Zuojie fu senglu 左街副道錄)
Rank 4	Vice Director of the Right Precinct of Buddhist Monks (Youjie fu senglu 右街副僧錄)	Vice Director of the Right Precinct of Daoist Clerics (Youjie fu senglu 右街副道錄)
Rank 5	Supervisor of the Left Precinct (Zuojie dujian 左街都監)	Supervisor of the Left Precinct
Rank 6	Supervisor of the Right Precinct (Youjie dujian 右街都監)	Supervisor of the Right Precinct

[46] Mihwa Choi, *Death Rituals and Politics in Northern Song China* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 15–51; Albert Welter, *The Administration of Buddhism in China*, 4; Shin-Yi Chao, "Daoist Examinations and Daoist Schools during the Northern Song," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 31 (2003):1–37; Morten Schlütter, "Vinaya Monasteries, Public Abbacies, and State Control of Buddhism under the Song," in *Going Forth: Visions of Buddhist Vinaya*, ed. William Bodiford (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 136–60.

Rank 7	Senior Cleric of the Left Precinct (Zuojie shouzuo 左街首座)	Senior Cleric of the Left Precinct
Rank 8	Senior Cleric of the Right Precinct (Youjie shouzuo 右街首座)	Senior Cleric of the Right Precinct
Rank 9	Lecturer of the Left Precinct (Zuojie jianyi 左街鑒義)	Lecturer of the Left Precinct
Rank 10	Lecturer of the Right Precinct (Youjie jianyi 右街鑒義)	Lecturer of the Right Precinct
Rank 11	Alternative Lecturer of the Left Precinct (Zuojie shouque jianyi 左街守闕鑒義)	Alternative Lecturer of the Left Precinct
Rank 12	Alternative Lecturer of the Right Precinct (Youjie shouque jianyi 左街守闕鑒義)	Alternative Lecturer of the Right Precinct

Table 2 Ranks of Buddhist and Daoist Officials at the Song Imperial Court

These twelve ranks only provide an idealized image of how Buddhist and Daoist posts were arranged in the central government and by no means can completely reflect political practices in history. One important feature of these ranks is that they only mark the status and salary of a certain official. At times, the emperor would grant one salary-indicative title together with an honorific title. If the emperor assigned a cleric to a post with actual responsibilities, an additional duty-indicative title, such as Supervisor of the Affairs of Left and Right Religious Bureaus (Guangou zuoyou jiaomen gongshi 管勾左右教門公事), would be added on top of the rank-indicative title. Clerics with actual duties would supervise their corresponding religious orders at the court or certain state-sponsored religious facilities in the capital. Additionally, the affiliation of Buddhist and Daoist

officials had an important change from the late seventh century to the eleventh century. By the late Tang, there were also Left and Right Precincts to manage Daoist and Buddhist clerics. Although these two bureaus were attached to the outer court's governmental branches, such as the Court of State Ceremonies (Honglu si 鴻臚寺) and the Bureau of Sacrifices (Cibu 祠部), Daoist institutions in the Tang were relatively independent of the outer court's civil and military bureaucracy because of the existence of the overarching Daoist institution: the Office of Daoist Worship (Chongxuan shu 崇玄署) or, in its later name, the Commission of Merit and Virtue (Gongde shi 功德使). In the Song period, however, Buddhist and Daoist institutions became attached only to the Bureau of Sacrifices after the administrative reform in the early 1180s.[47]

Outline

Chapter 1 presents the case of the Song Divine Ancestor (Shengzu 聖祖) which provides us with a window into Daoism at the Song court. Song Emperor Zhenzong drew upon precedents from preceding dynasties and Daoist literature to create a cult centered on the Divine Ancestor of the imperial family. The cult had distinctive Daoist characteristics at the beginning and later was incorporated into state rituals for the worship of Heaven and ancestors. When Daoism was losing ground at the emperor's court during the Southern Song, Daoist priests began to envision local Daoist rituals free

[47] Wang Shengduo, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu*, 462–96; Tang Daijian 唐代劍, *Songdai daojiao guanli zhidu yanjiu* 宋代道教管理制度研究 (Beijing: Xianzhuang shuju, 2003), 150–93; Gong Yanming 龔延明, *Songdai guanzhi cidian* 宋代官制辭典, 2nd ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2017), 352–57.

from the influence of the cult of the Divine Ancestor. This case study shows that the cult had never been Daoist or Confucian at the state level—despite the tremendous influence of Daoists and Confucians on the cult's formation. Instead, categorizing the cult as part of imperial or state ceremonies would be more accurate.

Chapter 2 discusses how the concept of "uniting the Three Teachings into one" (*sanjiao heyi* 三教合一) was in part a product of compromise between Buddhism and imperial authority. From the early Song, Buddhist clergy had promoted the idea that emperors supervised the Three Teachings. Most Buddhist apologists in the Northern Song upheld an idea developed in the ninth century: although Confucianism and Daoism were beneficial to the human realm, Buddhism was the superior teaching that understood the origins of the phenomenal and the spiritual world. A significant change occurred during Song Emperor Xiaozong's reign (1162–1189). Seeking imperial patronage, leaders of the Linji Chan Buddhism partially abandoned the claim of Buddhist superiority and, instead, argued that the Three Teachings had one origin. They then endorsed Xiaozong's claim that only a person as sagely as the emperor himself could unify the Three Teachings.

Chapter 3 compares the Northern Song reformer Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–1086) with the Southern Song Daoxue 道學 (Learning of the Way) Confucian Zhu Xi in terms of their attitudes toward the Three Teachings. Drawing on the case of the construction of the Temple of the Central Great One (Zhong Taiyi gong 中太一宮) under Emperor Shenzong's reign (1048–1085) and Zhu Xi's response to Emperor Xiaozong's essay on the Three Teachings, my research suggests that Wang had eclectic perspectives

on religious and cultural entities to the extent that he was willing to make compromises between his and Emperor Shenzong's views. In contrast, Zhu displayed intense antagonism to any idea that did not conform to his own version of Confucianism. This disparity resulted in their different career trajectories. Wang reached the pinnacle of scholar-official power, whereas Zhu's proposals were ignored or glossed over by Emperor Xiaozong.

CHAPTER 1

BETWEEN DAOISM AND CONFUCIANISM:

THE MAKING OF THE SONG DIVINE ANCESTOR

One day in the 1160s, the Southern Song historian Li Tao 李燾 (1115–1184) was compiling a chronicle for the Northern Song dynasty (960–1127)—later known as the *Long Draft Continuation of the Comprehensive Mirror That Aids Administration* (*Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編). Confronted by conflicting records on the titles of two deities—the Divine Ancestor (Shengzu 聖祖) of the Song dynasty and the Daoist Director of Destinies (Siming 司命) Mao Ying 茅盈, Li was beset by confusion.[48] Unable to reach a conclusion, he chose the following record for the main text of his chronicle and preserved all the contradictory records in a lengthy note:

> On the *wuwu* day (November 10, 1012), the Celestial Worthy Preserving the Living, the High Lord Director of Destinies of the Nine Heavens (Jiutian siming shangqing baosheng tianzun, henceforth, Siming baosheng) descended to the Palace of Extending Largess.
> 戊午，九天司命上卿保生天尊降於延恩殿。[49]

[48] As Stephen Bokenkamp shows, the Director of Destinies is a title given to various deities in early Shangqing scriptures. For example, the medium Yang Xi 楊羲 (330–ca. 386), who passed Shangqing revelation to his patrons and whose work later resulted in the *Zhengao* 真誥 (Declarations of the Perfect), was promised the celestial rank "Director of Destinies of Wu and Yue" 吳越司命. From the perspective of the emperor and his court officials, the Director of Destinies involved in the eleventh-century politics, however, is highly likely Mao Ying as in the three Mao lords. I will introduce how Mao Ying came to be connected to the Song imperial family later in this paper. See Stephen R. Bokenkamp, *Ancestors and Anxiety: Daoism and the Birth of Rebirth in China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2007), 123–24; *A Fourth-Century Daoist Family: The Zhen'gao, or Declarations of the Perfected, Volume 1* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021), 9–11.

[49] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 79.1797. Using notes to preserve conflicting records is a method that Li Tao applied to the compilation of the *Long Draft*. Charles Hartman has illustrated that the main text

Later in the text, Siming baosheng reveals his identity as the Song Divine Ancestor Zhao Xuanlang 趙玄朗. Scholars touching on the cult of the Divine Ancestor have followed Li Tao's main text and ignored the quandary expressed in the note.[50] Some go on to conflate all the recorded identities of the Divine Ancestor—as if the knowledge that the Divine Ancestor was also the Daoist Director of Destinies was not controversial at all in the Song dynasty.[51] Therefore, this chapter attempts to reconstruct the history of the Song Divine Ancestor by addressing the sources of Li Tao's confusion and situating this case in the broader religious and political context of the eighth to the thirteenth centuries. My research suggests that the textual conflicts that Li Tao discovered come from two different phases of Emperor Zhenzong's (r. 997–1022) political campaign between 1008 and 1022. The campaign sought to establish the divinity of the emperor and the imperial Zhao household in order to reinforce the legitimacy of the ruling clan. In the first phase, the Song court primarily imitated the Tang dynasty by elevating the Daoist Director of Destinies Mao Ying from the Shangqing (Upper Clarity) tradition to the Song Divine

in the chronicle presents a reformulated version of history that Li Tao deemed credible. See Hartman, *The Making of Song Dynasty History*, 79–94.

[50] Choi, *Death Rituals and Politics in Northern Song China*, 15–51; Wang Shengduo, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu*, 52–64; Zhang Weiling 張維玲, *Cong tianshu shidai dao guwen yundong: Bei Song qianqi de zhengzhi guocheng* 從天書時代到古文運動北宋前期的政治過程 (Taida chuban zhongxin, 2021), 131–37; Tang Daijian, *Songdai daojiao guanli zhidu yanjiu*, 15–18.

[51] For example, Zhu Yongqing acknowledges that the Divine Ancestor had several possible origins in Daoism, and that they might not have been seamlessly connected to the Divine Ancestor. However, he argues that Zhenzong's utilization of those origins was all well-planned, and the cult of the Divine Ancestor was a harmonious combination of all the origins. Zhu Yongqing 朱永清, "Shenge yu zhengzhi: Zhao Song shengzu chongbai xinlun" 神格與政治趙宋聖祖崇拜新論, *Ningxia shifan xueyuan xuebao* 40, no. 8 (2019): 69–76.

Ancestor just like Laozi was held to be the Divine Ancestor during the Tang. During the second phase, Zhenzong distanced the imperial Zhao clan from the Shangqing Director of Destinies by giving the deity a different title and by creating myths that gave the Divine Ancestor a second identity as the Yellow Emperor. The cult of the Song Divine Ancestor experienced two additional phases of development after Zhenzong. In phase three, Emperor Renzong (r. 1022–1063) further utilized the Divine Ancestor's identity as the Yellow Emperor to ground the cult of the Divine Ancestor in Confucian court rituals. The result was the incorporation of the Divine Ancestor into state ceremonies for worshiping Heaven. A new development in the Southern Song period (1127–1279) is the fourth phase. Dissatisfied with the state's infiltration into Daoist scriptures with the Divine Ancestor, Daoist priests in the late twelfth century began to remove the Divine Ancestor from Daoist ritual manuals.

Li Tao's Conflicting Sources

Li Tao made a safe decision because the record for the main text came from the *Veritable Records* or *Shilu* 實錄, official documents about the Song court. But the note coming after the record contains details perplexing even to Li Tao, not to mention its confusion to modern readers. To better explain the conundrum, I have made the following table to show the different claims from the sources preserved in Li Tao's note and included a translation of the note below.[52]

[52] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 79.1797.

Source	Claim
The Divine Ancestor's official biography compiled by the Song court	Siming baosheng is the Divine Ancestor of the Song dynasty.
The *Veritable Records* from Emperor Zhenzong's reign	1. Siming baosheng, who was the Divine Ancestor, descended to the imperial palace in 1012. 2. A different Siming baosheng, who was the Daoist Director of Destinies Mao Ying, was honored with the title of the Perfected Lord of Aiding the Sage, the High Lord Director of Destinies of the Eastern Sacred Peak (Dongyue siming shangqing yousheng zhenjun 東嶽司命上卿佑聖真君, henceforth, Dongyue Siming yousheng) in 1013.
The Record of Feng and Shan (*Fengshan ji* 封禪記)	The Perfected High Lord Director of Destinies of the Nine Heavens (Shangqing Jiutian Siming Zhenjun 上卿九天司命真君, henceforth, Jiutian siming), namely the Daoist Director of Destinies, was honored with the title of Siming baosheng in 1008.
The *Record of the Descended Sage* (*Jiangsheng ji* 降聖記)	The Perfected High Lord Director of Destinies of the Eastern Sacred Peak (Dongyue Siming Shangqing Zhenjun 東嶽司命上卿真君, henceforth, Dongyue siming), namely the Daoist Director of Destinies, was honored with the title of Dongyue Siming yousheng in 1013.

Table 3 Sources and Claims of Li Tao's Note of the Song Divine Ancestor's Descent

According to his biography, Siming baosheng is precisely the Divine Ancestor. Furthermore, the *Veritable Records* writes: "In the seventh month of the sixth year [of the Dazhong xiangfu reign] (1013), Siming baosheng was further honored with the title of Siming yousheng. Originally when the *feng* and *shan* rituals were completed, Emperor [Zhenzong] ordered [the Daoist Director of Destiny] to be honored with the title of Siming baosheng. Now, because the Divine Ancestor descended and his title was similar to [the Daoist Director of Destiny], the honorific title [of the Daoist Director of Destiny] was changed [to Siming yousheng]. As such, the Divine Ancestor should be a separate Siming. In

> the *Record of the Descended Sage*, the imperial edict conferring the title of Siming yousheng only says: "Dongyue siming shall be honored with the title of Siming yousheng." There are no *jiutian* and *baosheng tianzun* (i.e., characters alluding to Siming baosheng) [in the Dongyue siming title]. However, the *Record of Feng and Shan* writes: "On the *renzi* day, the tenth month, the first year [of the Dazhong xiangfu reign] (November 25, 1008), the emperor ordered further honor to Jiutian siming with the title of Siming baosheng." [The new title] actually has the six characters *jiutian* and *baosheng tianzun*. The two books were both compiled by Ding Wei (966-1037). How come they are so different? This issue should be further examined.
> 按本志，九天司命上卿保生天尊，即聖祖也。實錄于六年七月又書加上九天司命上卿保生天尊曰東嶽司命上卿佑聖真君。初，封禪禮畢，詔上司命天尊之號。至是，以聖祖臨降，名稱相類，故改上焉。如此，則當別一司命矣。又據降聖記加上東嶽司命上卿真君聖號敕但云東嶽司命上卿真君，可加上東嶽司命上卿佑聖真君，無「九天」及「保生天尊」字。然封禪記書元年十月壬子詔上卿九天司命真君增號九天司命保生天尊，實有此六字。二書皆丁謂所編，乃如此不同，當考。

Li Tao had in front of him the above four different sources. The former two are regular governmental documents inherited by the Southern Song court. The *Record of Feng and Shan* and the *Record of the Descended Sage* are commemorative compilations respectively completed in 1010 and 1017. Unfortunately, all four compilations are now lost to us except for scattered excerpts; yet the conflicts over the Divine Ancestor and the Daoist deity between the four sources are not entirely inaccessible to us. In order to explain the conflicts, we need another piece of information from the *Veritable Records*—Siming baosheng in 1012 was conferred with the title of Divine Ancestor, the Director of Destinies of the Nine Heavens with High Numina and Lofty Way, and the Celestial Worthy of Preserving the Living (Shengzu shangling gaodao jiutian siming baosheng tianzun 聖祖上靈高道九天司命保生天尊, henceforth, Shengzu siming).[53] With that, the

[53] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 79.1800.

biography of the Divine Ancestor and the *Veritable Records* suggests a strange fact. On the one hand, both records confirm that the Divine Ancestor was Siming baosheng when he descended to the imperial palace in 1012, which was followed by his title being elevated to Shengzu siming in the same year. On the other hand, Siming baosheng, who in this case was the Daoist Director of Destinies Mao Ying, was granted the title of Dongyue Siming yousheng in 1013.[54] Following this narrative, the only possible explanation is that Mao Ying and the Divine Ancestor had the same title, Siming baosheng, before the Divine Ancestor's descent in 1012 because, as far as Li Tao could see, no record indicates that the imperial court conferred the title Siming baosheng on Mao Ying after the descent. The question then becomes, how could the court let this confusing overlap of titles happen? The two commemorative compilations do not make the case easier, since their records contradict each other. The *Record of the Descended Sage* claims that the Daoist Director of Destinies had the title Dongyue siming, not Siming baosheng, before being further honored in 1013, while the *Record of Feng and Shan* shows that the Daoist Director of Destinies indeed was honored with the title Siming baosheng in 1008. In other words, the 1017 text denies that there was a period when the titles of Mao Ying and the Divine Ancestor overlapped; but the 1010 text shows that there was such a period.[55] Since Li Tao could not decide whether or not the Divine Ancestor derived from the Daoist Director of Destinies, he preserved all the sources in

[54] Since *yousheng* means "aid the sage" or "bless the sage," the emphasis here is not on Mao Ying but on Emperor Zhenzong and his divinity. I want to thank Professor Stephen Bokenkamp for pointing this connectin out.

[55] Since the record from the 1010 *Record of Feng and Shan* is in line with the *Veritable Records* and was produced before the descent of the Divine Ancestor, I take the 1010 record as the more credible one about the title change in 1008 and incorporate it into my later discussions.

his lengthy note. To provide a possible solution for the problem these sources created, we need first to direct our attention to the Tang dynasty.

The Tang Model

Scholars have noted that the Song Divine Ancestor was, to a large extent, a continuation and imitation of the Tang Divine Ancestor Laozi.[56] Therefore, defining the Tang model of divine ancestor is vital for us to explore what legacies the Song court inherited from its preceding empire during the making of its own divine ancestor. By "Tang model," I do not mean a monolithic and static set of principles during the Tang dynasty. Rather, the Tang model should always be understood as organic combinations molded by political and cultural demands of the times.

In fact, the cosmology that sustained the Tang Divine Ancestor cult at the beginning of the Tang dynasty was very different from that of the high Tang period. Scholars such as Anna Seidel and Stephen Bokenkamp have shown that the founding of the Tang dynasty had a close bond with Daoist eschatology circulating at that time. In the early seventh century, prophecies foretold that a man surnamed Li would inaugurate a new era and become the new ruler after a devastating apocalypse. Li Yuan 李淵 (566–635), later the Tang founding emperor, actively capitalized on his blessed surname with prophetic verses composed to legitimize his political ascent. The verses furthermore

[56] Wang Shengduo, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu*, 56; Zhang Weiling, "Songchu nanbei wenshi de hudong yu nanfang wenshi de jueqi: jujiao yu Xu Xuan jiqi houxue de kaocha" 宋初南北文士的互動與南方文士的崛起聚焦於徐鉉及其後學的考察, *Taida wenshizhe xuebao*, no. 85 (2016): 197–98; Zhang Weiling, *Cong tianshu shidai dao guwen yundong*, 105–16.

allude to the blood connection between Li Yuan and Laozi whose surname was Li, too.[57] Although all these traces hint that Li Yuan was Laozi's descendent, this Daoist genealogy of the Tang imperial family remained ambiguous on the level of state ceremonies in the early Tang, on the one hand. On the other hand, the relationship between Li Yuan and Laozi did not transcend the eschatological concerns of that time. In other words, the surname Li and the potential Daoist deity Laozi as the progenitor were intended to prove that Li Yuan and his Li family were the destined savior of the chaotic world and would initiate a new and good dynasty.

The period from the early Tang to the high Tang marked the institutionalization of the divine ancestor cult. As Lei Wen has demonstrated, the grandiose *feng* and *shan* sacrifices conducted by the Tang Emperor Gaozong in 666 found their legitimacy in Laozi's role as the divine progenitor of the imperial family and vice versa.[58] Hence, Laozi was further honored with the title Emperor of the Mystical Prime (Xuanyuan huangdi 玄元皇帝) in the same year. This divine progenitor cult reached its apogee under the Tang Emperor Xuanzong's reign. In 743, Xuanzong commemorated Laozi with the title Grand Divine Ancestor (Da shengzu 大聖祖). As I will show later, it is the worship of Laozi as the Divine Ancestor since Gaozong's reign that provided the Song court with the model of making a divine ancestor.

---

[57] Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Time after Time: Taoist Apocalyptic History and the Founding of the T'ang Dynasty," *Asia Major* 7, no. 1 (1994): 59–88; Anna Seidel, "The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-Tzu and Li Hung," *History of Religions*, no. 9 (1969–1970): 216–47; Russell Kirkland, "Dimensions of Tang Taoism: The State of the Field at the End of the Millennium," *T'ang Studies*, no. 15/16 (1997–1998): 79–123.

[58] Lei Wen 雷聞, *Jiaomiao zhiwai: Sui Tang guojia jisi yu zongjiao* 郊廟之外隋唐國家祭祀與宗教 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2009), 138–53.

Based on current scholarship on the Tang Divine Ancestor, two motifs from the building of this cult since Gaozong's reign stand out as distinguishing characteristics that I will use to discuss the Tang model inherited by the Song court. I summarize them below to further illustrate what this Tang model entails.

1. Emperor's dreams functioned as a medium by which the emperor established personal relationship with the Divine Ancestor Laozi. The dream motif is very much salient in Xuanzong's efforts to advance the Divine Ancestor cult. It is said that Laozi appeared in Xuanzong's dreams beginning in 741, wherein the emperor received instructions from Laozi to find auspicious omens and propagating icons of Laozi.[59] Following the paradigms of dreams in medieval China proposed by Robert Campany, we can see that Xuanzong's dreams fit well into the visitation paradigm where "dreams are face-to-face encounters with other beings across some ontological, spatial, or taxonomic gap." Campany suggests that dreams under this category often are meant to be taken as actual past events rather than parables or hypothetical cases and are means by which vital information can be conveyed.[60] In Xuanzong's case, his dreams represent his actual encounters with Laozi and his attempts to make people accept these encounters as historical facts. At the same time, the dreams also convey crucial instructions from the Divine Ancestor that serve to further the emperor's Daoist project.

[59] T. H. Barrett, *Taoism under the T'ang: Religion & Empire during the Golden Age of Chinese History* (London: Wellsweep, 1996), 62; Charles Benn, "Religious Aspects of Emperor Hsüan-Tsung's Taoist Ideology," in *Buddhist and Taoist Practice in Medieval Chinese Society: Buddhist and Taoist Studies II*, ed. David W. Chappell (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 127–45.

[60] Robert Ford Campany, *The Chinese Dreamscape: 300 BCE–800 CE* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2020), 6.

2. During the process of institutionalization of the Divine Ancestor cult, Daoist establishments and practices are inextricably intertwined with and assimilated into state ceremonies. This is a rich motif that contains—but is not limited to—the following elements. First, both Daoist clerics and scholar-officials actively participated in the creation and propagation of the cult. Second, Temples for the Divine Ancestor were both Daoist and ancestral temples. Under Xuanzong's reign, the Tang court established Daoist temples specifically dedicated to Laozi, namely the Temples of Emperor of the Mystical Prime (Xuanyuan huangdi miao 玄元皇帝廟). Not only did this temple system become state-wide with its expansion to the prefecture level, the most elevated one located in the western capital Chang'an was renamed the Palace of the Grand Purity (Taiqing gong 太清宮) in 743. On the one hand, this renaming resonates with Laozi's rank in the Daoist pantheon, namely the Celestial Worthy of the Way and Its Virtue, who is the highest deity of the Heaven of the Grand Purity. On the other hand, Xuanzong in 749 used the palace to perform imperial ancestral rituals. Third, statues of Laozi and other Daoist deities in the Palace of the Grand Purity were co-worshipped with Confucian figures, as well as with selective Tang emperors and ministers. It is noteworthy that Xuanzong ordered his own statue and the statues of his Chief Councilors to be erected by the side of Laozi. Fourth, certain state festivals were established to celebrate the Divine Ancestor. The most evident case is the Tang Emperor Wuzong, who declared Laozi's birthday to be the Festival of the Descent of the Divine Sage (*jiang shensheng jie* 降神聖節) in 841.[61]

[61] Barrett, *Taoism under the T'ang*, 60–73, 85; Benn, "Religious Aspects of Emperor Hsüan-Tsung's Taoist Ideology," 127–45; Victor Xiong, "Ritual Innovations and Taoism under Tang Xuanzong," *T'oung Pao* 82, no. 4/5 (1996): 263–73; Lei Wen, *Jiaomiao zhiwai*, 108–15.

With these characteristics, the Tang Divine Ancestor set a precedent for later imitations. Scholars have noticed that Wang Yan 王衍 (r. 918–925), the last ruler of the Former Shu, worshipped the Daoist transcendent Wangzi Jin 王子晉 as his divine ancestor and built his own Palace of the Grand Purity.[62] Regardless of this record's credibility, the cultural and institutional memory of the Tang model certainly extended to the ninth to the eleventh century and influenced rulers and scholar-officials of the time.[63]

Phase one: The Inception of the Cult of the Song Divine Ancestor

The Cult of the Song Divine Ancestor was a continuation of the Heavenly Text (*tianshu* 天書) affair in 1008. Zhenzong dreamed about a prophecy in early 1008 that foretold the Heavenly Text's descent. A month after the dream, the Imperial Security Office (Huangcheng si 皇城司) reported that a yellow silk scroll bound by green threads appeared on the rooftop of a gate tower within the imperial palace. Since the text on the silk scroll declared the ruling Zhao clan's legitimacy, the emperor conducted numerous ceremonies to worship the text. With the help of scholar-officials and Daoist priests, the Song court performed the *feng* and *shan* rituals, the most magnificent and rare among

---

[62] Jinhua Jia, *Gender, Power, and Talent: The Journey of Daoist Priestesses in Tang China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 197.

[63] The reliability of the record is questionable because it first appears in Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩's (1007–1072) *Xin Wudai shi* 新五代史 (New History of the Five Dynasties), a later work reflecting Ouyang's political views. Wang Yan's usage of Wangzi Jin can thus be taken as Ouyang's implicit criticism of the cult of the Song Divine Ancestor. See Ouyang Xiu, *Xin Wudai shi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 63.792.

imperial ceremonies in traditional China, at Mount Tai in the autumn of 1008 to display Zhenzong's sincerity and legitimacy.

Scholars such as Suzane Cahill, Du Yue, and Mihwa Choi have concretely demonstrated the important role that Daoism played in the Heavenly Text affair.[64] For the purpose of my discussion I focus on one thread from Daoism that Zhenzong utilized, namely the Daoist Director of Destinies Mao Ying. In the middle of the tediously long course of ceremonies held for the *feng* and *shan* rituals, on November 24, 1008, Zhenzong issued an edict to elevate Jiutian siming to Siming baosheng. The edict preserved in the *Collection of Major Song Edicts* (*Song da zhaoling ji* 宋大詔令集) reads:

> Jiutian siming elucidates the profound in the high arches of [the Heavens], and his plan gives rise to primordial transformations. He oversees the destiny calendar of the masses and sets the foundation for the numinous field at Mount Tai. I entrust the *feng* rite to report my piety and place reliance on the Purple Void's descent to inspect [our rituals]. With precious vessels placed and filled, I offer vibrant sincerity. With banners raised, I employ them to extend the luminous response. I honor him with this excellent title of Siming baosheng and erect his statue in the side hall of the Palace of Encountering the Perfected. I assign Daoist Register Bureau to prepare and submit a ritual manual [for Siming baosheng]. I command that Supervising Secretary Feng Qi (fl. 1000) once again visits the Temple of Numinous Transcendents in Shuzhou to make offerings and reports.
> 上卿九天司命幽贊高穹，財成元化。掌群生之命厤，奠喬岳之靈區。屬封祀之告虔，賴紫虛之降鑒。載瞻珍館，聿薦明誠。爰舉徽章，用伸昭報。尊謚號曰「九天司命上卿保生天尊」，設像於會真宮別殿。委道籙院具科儀以聞，仍令給事中馮起詣舒州靈仙館祭告。[65]

[64] Suzanne E. Cahill, "Taoism at the Sung Court: The Heavenly Text Affair of 1008," *Bulletin of Sung and Yüan Studies*, no. 16 (1980): 23–44; Du Yue 杜樂, "Song Zhenzong chao zhonghouqi de shensheng yundong" 宋真宗朝中後期的神聖運動 (M.A. Thesis, Peaking University, 2011), 45–79; Choi, *Death Rituals and Politics in Northern Song China*, 15–51.

[65] Si Yizu 司義祖, ed., *Song da zhaoling ji* 宋大詔令集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962), 135.473.

This edict provides us with three valuable pieces of information. First, Jiutian siming had his temple named Numinous Transcendence (Lingxian 靈仙) in Shuzhou 舒州 (modern Qianshan in Anhui). This fact suggests that Zhenzong continued his father Taizong's worship of this deity because it was Taizong who initiated the construction of the Numinous Transcendence Temple in 982.[66] Furthermore, the contemporary *Comprehensive Geography of the Taiping Era* (*Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記) compiled for Taizong included the story of Tang Emperor Xuanzong dreaming of Jiutian siming of Mount Qian 潛 in Shuzhou.[67] Therefore, evidence suggests that the two emperors and their court ritualists attempted to follow the Tang precedent and find legitimacy in Jiutian siming. Second, the change of title from Jiutian siming to Siming baosheng in the edict accords with the *Record of Feng and Shan*. This Siming baosheng would later be elevated to Shengzu siming and Dongyue siming yousheng respectively in 1012 and 1013. Given the edict is very likely culled from official documents, this account of the title elevation might be the most credible one as far as we know. Third, there is no clear indication in the edict that Jiutian siming is the Divine Ancestor of the imperial Zhao family.

[66] It is worth noting that Taizong ordered the temple's construction because a stone inscription was found at Mount Qian. The inscription instructed the emperor to worship Jiutian siming in exchange for the dynasty's stability and longevity. See Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 23.522.

[67] Yue Shi 樂史, *Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記, punctuated and collated by Wang Wenchu et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007), 125.2427.

No source can definitively demonstrate the identity of Jiutian siming in the edict. However, it is certain that Jiutian siming and Mount Qian is intertwined with the *feng* and *shan* rituals and the Shangqing tradition. As James Robson points out, Han Emperor Wudi (r. 156–87 BCE) relocated the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue 南嶽) to Mount Qian/Huo 霍 because Mount Heng 衡 was too distant for him to conduct rituals such as the *feng* and *shan*. The relocation resulted in lingering confusion among the three mountains of Qian, Huo, and Heng. Mounts Qian and Huo were taken as the same place in certain cases and as different mountains in other cases.[68] Despite Sui Emperor Wendi's (r. 581–604) effort to restore Mount Heng as the Southern Sacred Peak, one official proposed in 1009 that Zhenzong should follow Wudi's recognition and offer sacrifices to Mount Huo. Court ritualists then reexamined the matter and once again established Mount Heng as the Southern Sacred Peak.[69] Robson further notes that Mount Huo was associated with two significant deities for the Shangqing tradition—Mao Ying and Lady Wei Huacun 魏華存—from the early medieval period to the late tenth century. As a mountain closely connected to, and sometimes interchangeable with, Mount Huo, Mount Qian had a remarkable impact during the Southern Tang (937–976) and then the early Song.[70] As aforementioned, the Song court elevated Siming baosheng to Dongyue siming yousheng in 1013. Given that Mao Ying's title High Officer of Eastern Sacred Peak,

[68] James Robson, *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak in Medieval China* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), 57–64.

[69] Robson, *Power of Place*, 75–84; Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 72.1628.

[70] Nathan Ben Woolley, "Religion and Politics in the Writings of Xu Xuan (917–92)" (Ph.D. dissertation, The Australian National University, 2010), 88–97.

Perfected Lord of Director of Destinies (Dongyue shangqing siming zhenjun 東嶽上卿司命真君) is very close to that of Dongyue siming yousheng and that one of the possible mountains governed by Mao Ying is Mount Qian in Shuzhou, it is highly possible that Zhenzong and his court indeed took Jiutian siming/Siming baosheng as Mao Ying despite the deity's ambiguous identity.[71] Since Mao Ying oversees the Eastern Sacred Peak, namely Mount Tai, it is not surprising that the Song court selected him for the *feng*, a ritual supposed to be performed at this very sacred mountain.

Fast-forwarding to the year 1012, on November 2, Emperor Zhenzong had another dream where the Jade Emperor sent an envoy to announce that the emperor's ancestor would descend to the imperial palace a week later and the emperor should worship his ancestor as Tang Emperor Xuanzong did in the case of Laozi. Hence, Zhenzong set up adequate Daoist rituals and waited for the descent. It is said that the descent occurred on November 10, where Zhenzong cordially received his divine ancestor. The ancestor introduced himself as the progenitor of the imperial Zhao clan and as a deity who once incarnated into one of the nine Human Sovereigns (Renhuang 人皇) and the Yellow Emperor. Although the Divine Ancestor's account did not mention much about his Daoist origin, he did mention that it was the Jade Emperor who sent him to the human realm.[72] His Daoist identity was soon celebrated by the state and assimilated into state ceremonies and institutions. On November 21, the descended deity Siming

[71] Hong Ge, *Shenxian Zhuan Jiaoshi* 神仙傳校釋, collated and interpreted by Shouwei Hu (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2010), 5.184.

[72] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 79.1797–98.

baosheng was officially conferred with the title of Shengzu siming. On the same day, the Song court dedicated a hall in the Temple of Responding to Jade Purity (Yuqing zhaoying gong 玉清昭應宮) to the Divine Ancestor.[73] Zhenzong ordered the building of the Daoist temple complex right after the Heavenly Text affair in 1008, but the temple was still under construction in 1013. On November 24, an imperial edict ordered the two characters of the Divine Ancestor's first name *xuan* 玄 and *lang* 朗 to be included in the taboo characters,[74] and make the day that the Divine Ancestor descended the Festival of Sagely Descent (Jiangsheng jie 降聖節), a state holiday for which Daoist rituals should begin to be performed seven days before the holiday. On the next day, Zhenzong issued an edict to build the Hall of the Divine Ancestor in every Abbey of Heavenly Felicity (Tianqing guan 天慶觀), a state-wide Daoist temple system constructed after the Heavenly Text affair. In the same month, Zhenzong decided to erect statues of the Divine Ancestor, the two Song emperors prior to him, and his own statue in the Temple of Responding to Jade Purity. Moreover, Zhenzong ordered large Daoist temples named Spectacular Numina (Jingling gong 景靈宮, see figure 2) to be constructed for worshipping the Divine Ancestor and the deceased Song emperors both in the capital city

[73] For a recount of the construction of the Temple of Responding to Jade Purity, see Kubota Kazuo 久保田和男, "Gyokusei shōō kyū no kenzō to sono enjō: Sō shinsō kara jinsō (ryūtaikō) jidai no seiji bunka no henka ni yosete" 玉清昭応宮の建造とその炎上宋真宗から仁宗劉太后時代の政治文化の変化によせて, *Toshi bunka kenkyū* 12, no. 3 (2010): 139–52.

[74] Including *xuan* 玄 in taboo characters profoundly impacted Chinese religious history. One revealing example is that the martial deity Xuanwu 玄武 was changed to Zhenwu 真武 because of the new regulation. See Chao, *Daoist Ritual, State Religion, and Popular Practice*, 3. But it seems that the regulation's implementation centered on the court level. We can find a multitude of usages of xuan in contemporary literati writings, for instance.

Kaifeng and in Shouqiu (modern Qufu, Shandong) where the Yellow Emperor, the second incarnation of the Divine Ancestor, was born.[75] With his prophetic dreams and the above measures to institutionalize the cult of the Divine Ancestor, Zhenzong's campaign had almost matched everything in the Tang model, and the Daoist characteristics were very much pronounced during this course. However, Zhenzong did not conclude his project by simply matching the Tang model, and his further attempts did not continue to unequivocally favor the Daoist characteristics of the Divine Ancestor.

Figure 2 Stone Stele (about 16 meters in height) for the Tempe of Spectacular Numina in Qufu, Shandong[76]

Phase Two: Further Institutionalization under Zhenzong

[75] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 79–80.1800–02, 1807, 1809, 1821, 1825–26, 1830; Xu Song 徐松, *Song huiyao jigao bubian* 宋會要輯稿補編, ed. Chen Zhichao (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian weisuo fuzhi zhongxin, 1988), 244.25. For modern scholarship on the statues that Zhenzong erected, see Patricia Ebrey, "Portrait Sculptures in Imperial Ancestral Rites in Song China," *T'oung Pao* 83, no. 1/3 (1997): 42–92.

[76] "Jingling gong bei" 景靈宮碑, *Wikipedia*, accessed on April 24, 2022, https://zh.wikipedia.org/zh-tw/%E6%99%AF%E7%81%B5%E5%AE%AB%E7%A2%91.

The problem left to be solved was the fundamental contradiction between the deity Siming baosheng, who contributed to the *feng* ritual in 1008, and the Divine Ancestor, who descended in 1012. In other words, the court associated Siming baosheng with the Director of Destinies Mao Ying, or at least an ambiguous Daoist Director of Destinies, whose surname had nothing to do with the imperial Zhao lineage. Paradoxically, Siming baosheng suddenly revealed his identity as the Divine Ancestor of the Zhao clan in 1012. To solve this "identity crisis," Zhenzong made attempts on two fronts that resulted in a gradual departure from the original Daoist characteristics of the cult of the Divine Ancestor. On the one hand, his encounter with the Divine Ancestor provided a backstory in which the Divine Ancestor had three different incarnations—one of the Human Sovereigns, the Yellow Emperor, and the deity who at the time of Zhenzong's encounter governed the Zhao clan. Zhenzong chose to emphasize the Yellow Emperor as the key identity of the Divine Ancestor and erected the Temple of Spectacular Numina in Shouqiu, the birthplace of the Yellow Emperor. On the other hand, Zhenzong separated the Divine Ancestor from Mao Ying by giving Mao a different title. On August 13, 1013, Zhenzong issued an edict elevating Siming baosheng to Dongyue siming yousheng. The edict reads:

> The lush and green peak indeed has mastery over genesis; the hazy and blurry numina principally dictates governing. For a long time, you present good responses; constantly, you bless this great empire. Formerly, I put my trust in the ritual of worshipping Heaven; at that time, I declared my edict praising your virtue. Recently, I listened to the treasured instructions [from my divine ancestor] where the grand origin was shown afar. Respectfully, I think about the auspices that he brought about and the prosperity that I have already received; eternally, I hope to venerate my ancestor and thus have offered him for the sublime title. Looking up to your mountain, it is recorded in the transcendent documents. I ought to worship you separately with a beautiful title, in hope that it better suits

you with its pure jubilation. Solemnly, I promote your title Siming baosheng to Dongyue siming yousheng.
鬱蒼之岳，實主於發生；惚恍之靈，蓋司於統治。夙昭善應，常佑丕圖。頃屬升中之儀，時申旌德之命。近者欽聞寶誨，逖示鴻源。恭念發祥，早承於茂緒；永惟尊祖，增薦於徽稱。瞻彼介邱，紀茲仙籍。宜別崇於嘉號，庶益洽於純禧。謹加上九天司命上卿保生天尊曰東嶽司命上卿佑聖真君。[77]

Even though Mao Ying is not mentioned by name, this 1013 edict identifies the Daoist deity to whom Zhenzong made offerings during the 1008 *feng* ritual as a Daoist god who has Dongyue siming in his title and oversees Mount Tai, which is a privilege only Mao Ying enjoyed. Moreover, the edict proves that Mao Ying and the Divine Ancestor indeed shared the same title Siming baosheng before Zhenzong issued the 1013 edict and separated one from another. Although we do not have a clear picture behind the change from 1008 to 1013, my speculation is that Zhenzong did not inaugurate his campaign to sanctify the imperial Zhao clan with a clear plan for creating the Divine Ancestor.[78] Therefore, Zhenzong needed more justification that could connect this sudden turn in 1013 to the Heavenly Text affair earlier.

[77] Si Yizu, ed., *Song da zhaoling ji*, 135.475.

[78] Another piece of evidence that indicates the lack of a clear plan can be found in Mao Ying's biography preserved in the *Seven Lots from the Bookbag of the Clouds* (*Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤, completed in the 1020s). The text starts with an account of Mao Ying's family history. This is an unusual account because it is not included in Mao Ying's biography in the *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 (Imperial Readings Compiled in the Taiping Era), an encyclopedia compiled under Taizong. In other words, the *Yunji qiqian* account was likely added during Zhenzong's reign. Moreover, the account states that Mao Ying originated from Ji 姬 clan, the very same clan to which the Yellow Emperor belongs. Even though the text does not elucidate the relationship between Mao Ying and the Divine Ancestor, an implicit connection has been established between Mao Ying and the Yellow Emperor (i.e., the Divine Ancestor). It is tempting to view the text as a result of the fact that Mao Ying was utilized as the Divine Ancestor by the Song court between 1012–1013. See Zhang Junfang, *Yunji qiqian*, punctuated and collated by Li Yongcheng (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003), 104.2254. I owe this finding to my fellow graduate student Bai Haihan 白海涵 who pointed out this connection during his presentation in Professor Stephen Bokenkamp's seminar on Daoist literature.

A major justification can be found in an entombed epitaph (*muzhiming* 墓誌銘) for the Daoist priest Wang Jie 王捷 (962–1016), who served as the major liturgical facilitator for the Heavenly Text affair and the descent of the Divine Ancestor. Wang's career in the Daoist officialdom at the Song court was exceptional in terms of the unusual promotions that he received.[79] After Wang Jie's death in the autumn of 1016, Zhenzong ordered Xia Song 夏竦 (985–1051), a high-rank scholar-official who actively assisted Zhenzong in the Heavenly Text affair and the cult of the Divine Ancestor, to write the epitaph. The epitaph for Wang was not only a commemoration of his contributions to Zhenzong's projects but also a public record that proposed a narrative that connected the Heavenly Text affair to the cult of the Divine Ancestor.

Since the original text is very lengthy, I will only briefly recount it here. Wang Jie came from Tingzhou (modern Changting, Fujian) and lost his parents at a young age. Growing up, he became a trader but did not find joy in that line of work. He traveled to Xingzi county in the early Xianping reign era. There, he met a Daoist transcendent whose surname was Zhao and whom he reencountered in the winter of the same year. After getting to know each other, Wang learned thaumaturgical techniques from the transcendent. When bestowing secret instructions on Wang, the transcendent warned him and said, "Unless you meet the emperor, do not recklessly tell others" 非遇人君慎勿輕述. Wang traveled to the capital in order to see Emperor Zhenzong, but had no luck there. On the way back, he feigned madness by claiming that he was an extraordinary being.

[79] Shin-yi Chao, "Daoist Examinations and Daoist Schools during the Northern Song Dynasty," 6.

Although his goal might have been to draw some attention and become known to Zhenzong, he was instead arrested and exiled to the southern frontier. Fortunately, Xie Dequan 謝德權 (953–1010), Military Inspector (Xunjian shi 巡檢使) at that time, was on duty to pacify rebels in the South. He heard about Wang's unusual behavior and requested that Wang be released from exile. Xie hosted Wang in his own mansion, where Wang demonstrated his thaumaturgical skills by making alchemical silver. After Xie presented the silver to Zhenzong, a powerful eunuch Liu Chenggui 劉承珪 (949–1012), the Commissioner of Imperial Security Office (Goudang Huangcheng si 勾當皇城司), arranged for Wang Jie to meet Zhenzong. There, Wang revealed the secret instructions to the emperor; hence, Zhenzong kept Wang in the capital. During his stay, Wang Jie often talked to a Daoist practitioner in the marketplace. When Liu Chenggui asked whom Wang was meeting, Wang responded that the Daoist practitioner was the master who taught him the thaumaturgical methods and was now willing to grant Zhenzong an audience. In 1007, the deity descended to the Imperial Security Office, where Liu Chenggui eavesdropped on the deity and learned that he was a Director of Destinies. Thereafter, Wang Jie served as the medium between the Director of Destinies and the Song court and passed the deity's instructions to Zhenzong. Zhenzong then received auspicious omens and performed *feng* ritual in 1008 with help from Wang Jie and the Director of Destinies. In 1010, Zhenzong honored the deity with the title of the Celestial Worthy of the Director of Destinies of the Nine Heavens (Jiutian siming tianzun 九天司命天尊). Wang Jie retired in the same year, and Zhenzong promoted him to a prestigious rank 6 honorific position to celebrate his retirement. The next year, Wang was further

promoted to a rank 4 honorific civil position. In the winter of 1012, the deity once again descended to the imperial palace, where Zhenzong learned that the deity was his ancestor. Then, Zhenzong presented his divine ancestor with the title Shengzu siming. In 1015, Zhenzong granted Wang Jie another rank 3b honorific military position, an extremely rare honor for a Daoist priest. Wang Jie died in the autumn of 1016. About to pass away, Wang dreamed about the Divine Ancestor (i.e., the Director of Destinies from whom Wang had learned), and the deity said: "Confidantes as careful as you are very few. I shall have your statue erected in the Temple of Spectacular Numina. You will be my aide, don't worry" 慎密類汝者少, 塑形于景靈宮, 為吾輔, 勿憂. After Wang's death, Zhenzong indeed erected a statue of him in the Temple of Spectacular Numina.[80]

This story from Wang Jie's epitaph first and foremost should be understood as Xia Song's retrospective account of Wang Jie's role in the Heavenly Text affair and the cult of the Divine Ancestor. Since the epitaph was written under Zhenzong's command in 1016, Xia Song had to incorporate the views of both Wang Jie's family and the emperor. Because of this background, the epitaph more or less shows what Zhenzong wanted his audience to know about the cult of the Divine Ancestor. Overall, the epitaph displays a strong proclivity to move away from Daoism despite the fact that this was an epitaph putatively created for a Daoist priest. First, the Daoist traditions that Wang Jie learned and utilized are not explicitly attributed to Daoism in the epitaph. For example, we know

[80] Xia Song, "Gu Jinziguangludafu Jianjiaolibushangshu Youshenwuweidajiangjunzhishi Shichijiekangzhouzhujunshi Kangzhoucishi Chongbenzhoutuanlianshi Shangzhuguo Kaiguobo Shiyiqibaihu Zengzhennanjunjiedushi Taiyuan Wanggong muzhiming" 故金紫光禄大夫檢校禮部尚書右神武衛大將軍致仕使持節康州諸軍事康州刺史充本州團練使上柱國開國伯食邑七百户贈鎮南軍節度使太原王公墓誌銘, in *Quan Song wen* 全宋文, ed. Zeng Zaozhuang et al., (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2006), 16:226–29.

that Wang Jie learned his thaumaturgical techniques from a Daoist transcendent. However, there is no concrete reference to any explicit Daoist school. We even do not know if the Director of Destinies in this story is the Director of Destinies in the Shangqing tradition. Second, Wang Jie is an exception in the Daoist officialdom. He is not in charge of any Daoist institutions in the epitaph; instead, he is given honorific titles that are meant for civil and military officials. In other words, Wang Jie appears to be more of an official than a Daoist priest. Third, the Divine Ancestor's title given in 1010 is Jiutian siming tianzun, a title similar to, but different from, Mao Ying's Siming baosheng. Mao Ying is then distinguished from the Divine Ancestor. Last, the story boils down to the notions of ancestral blessing and worship. It is the Divine Ancestor who utilizes Wang Jie and manages to bring forth auspicious omens for the imperial Zhao family. The emperor in turn repays his Divine Ancestor's magnanimity with state ceremonies to venerate the Divine Ancestor. In short, Daoism in the story is degraded to be secondary.

Now we shall return to Li Tao's conundrum that I discussed in the beginning. A possible explanation for the conflicted records Li faced is that the *Record of Feng and Shan* (1010) and the *Record of the Descended Sage* (1017) reflect different phases of Zhenzong's political campaign, while official records reflect what we see in the imperial edicts. The *Record of Feng and Shan* was compiled not long after the *feng* and *shan* rituals were performed in 1008 when Zhenzong did not have a clear plan for the Divine Ancestor. Consequently, Jiutian siming, whom Zhenzong's court considered to be Mao Ying, was honored with the title of Siming baosheng. The *Record of the Descended Sage*

was compiled after the entire Divine Ancestor episode unfolded. Mao Ying in this account kept his title Dongyue siming until he was further honored in 1013. However, the official document in the *Veritable Records* retains the nitty-gritty that reveals how Zhenzong did not have a mature plan for the Divine Ancestor until 1012 and how Zhenzong relied heavily on Siming baosheng in the early phase of his campaign. Therefore, the second phase of the cult of the Divine Ancestor marked Zhenzong's attempt to obscure the significance of Daoism at the court, so he projected a cult centered around the imperial Zhao family and the emperor himself.

Phase Three: Integrating the Divine Ancestor into the Worship of Heaven

Institutionalizing the Divine Ancestor did not cease after Zhenzong's reign. One facet that scholars have discussed in detail is the evolvement of the Temple of Spectacular Numina dedicated to the Divine Ancestor. The temple originally displayed more Daoist characteristics, but under Emperor Shenzong (r. 1067–1085) eventually evolved into a site of ancestral worship for deceased Song emperors and empresses.[81] This section will discuss a similar issue, namely imperial rituals for worshipping Heaven and their relationship with the Divine Ancestor.

As James T. C. Liu has pointed out, worshipping Heaven in the Song dynasty also served the purpose of ancestral worship because ceremonies for Heaven attached

[81] Patricia Ebrey, "Portrait Sculptures in Imperial Ancestral Rites in Song China," 65–69; Azuma Jūji 吾妻重二, *Sōdai shisō no kenkyū: Jukyō dōkyō bukkyō o meguru kōsatasu* 宋代思想の研究儒教道教仏教をめぐる考察 (Suitai: Kansai daigaku tōzai gakujutsu kenkyūjo, 2009), 259–309; Hiu Yu Cheung, *Empowered by Ancestors: Controversy over the Imperial Temple in Song China (960–1279)* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2021), 45.

significance to worshipping the ancestors of the imperial family; furthermore, after the 1050s, emperors regarded ancestors to be as important as Heaven.[82] Speaking of the worship of Heaven, there generally are two different types of ceremonies in the Song—the Hall of Brightness (*mingtang* 明堂) ritual and the Southern Suburb (*nanjiao* 南郊) ritual. As we will see in this section, Song Emperor Renzong successfully assimilated the cult of the Divine Ancestor into the rituals for both the Bright Hall and the Southern Suburb.

The Hall of Brightness ritual in the Song was devised to worship Heaven in an indoor setting. Renzong decided to revitalize the ancient, but lost, Hall of Brightness. On March 13, 1050, Renzong requested his court officials to scrutinize ritualistic classics and plan for the Hall of Brightness rites in the coming autumn. After a two-day discussion, Chief Councilor Wen Yanbo 文彥博 (1006–1097) concurred with the plan to revitalize the Hall of Brightness and presented it as the continuation of Zhenzong's *feng* and *shan* rituals. Wen also suggested that the main hall of imperial palace, the Hall of Grand Felicity (Daqing dian 大慶殿), should serve as the Hall of Brightness according to Confucian classics.

On April 10, Renzong ordered ceremonies to worship the Lord on High of Bright Heaven (Haotian shangdi 昊天上帝) and the Five Heavenly Thearchs (Wu tiandi 五天帝) in the Hall of Brightness. The Five Thearchs included the Azure Emperor, the Red Emperor, the White Emperor, the Yellow Emperor, and the Black Emperor. Since the

[82] Liu Zijian, "Fengshan Wenhua Yu Songdai Mingtiang Jitian 封禪文化與宋代明堂祭天," in *Liang Song Shi Yanjiu Huibian* 兩宋史研究彙編 (Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi, 1987), 3–9.

Divine Ancestor had the dual identity of the Director of Destinies and the Yellow Emperor, Renzong's new project to worship Heaven naturally became congruous with ancestral worship and the cult of the Divine Ancestor. On the next day, ritual experts proposed a floor layout to arrange the Lord on High and the Five Thearchs in the Hall of Grand Felicity (see Figure 3), in which the Yellow Emperor (i.e., the Divine Ancestor) was given special significance. On September 18, Renzong furthermore ordered a noble official Ding Du 丁度 (990–1053) to make a side offering to the Yellow Emperor after the major offerings to all recipients were completed. This special command was due to the fact that the Yellow Emperor was the Divine Ancestor and thus deserved an extra offering.[83]

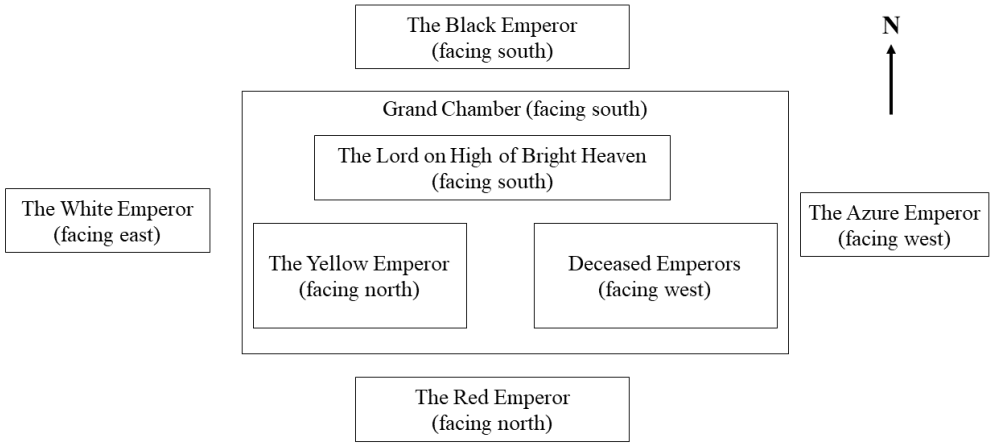

Figure 3 The Floor Layout of the Hall of Brightness in 1050 (drawn by the author)

[83] Xu Song, *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿, collated and punctuated by Liu Lin, Shu Dagang, Yin Bo, et al., (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2014), 1139–51.

The floor layout of the Hall of Brightness deserves more attention. Five chambers should be set up in the Hall of Grand Felicity to perform the Hall of Brightness rituals. The four chambers on the periphery respectively host the tablets of the Black, White, Red, and Azure Emperors. In the middle, there is the Grand Chamber (*taishi* 太室) that contains three components—the liturgical spaces respectively for the Lord on High of Bright Heaven, the Yellow Emperor, and deceased Song emperors. The Lord on High, as the primary deity, faces south, and the Yellow Emperor faces the Lord on High. Interestingly, the deceased emperors do not face the Lord on High; rather, they face the Yellow Emperor. This arrangement is a reflection on the scene from 1012 when the Divine Ancestor descended to the imperial palace. On the day of the descent, the seat for the Divine Ancestor was set up on the west side, and Zhenzong paid respect to him from the east side. Moreover, the descent was possible because the Divine Ancestor was dispatched by the Jade Emperor to assist the Song dynasty.[84] Since scholars have long noticed the confluence of the Jade Emperor and the Lord on High in the Song dynasty,[85] the set-up in the Grand Chamber indicates a three-echeloned authority transmission—from the Lord on High to the Yellow Emperor to Song emperors in the Hall of Brightness ritual, or, in Daoist imagery, from the Jade Emperor to the Divine Ancestor (i.e., the Director of Destinies) to Song emperors.

[84] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 79.1797–89.

[85] Xie Conghui 謝聰輝, *Xin tiandi zhi ming: Yuhuang zitong yu feilian* 新天帝之命玉皇梓潼與飛鸞 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 2013), 1–29; Du Yue, "Song Zhenzong chao zhonghouqi de shensheng yundong," 40.

The Southern Suburb ritual was similar to the Hall of Brightness ritual in many ways, except that the Southern Suburb ritual was supposed to be performed every three years and in an open space. Since the Southern Suburb ritual was conducted in the southern suburb of the eastern capital Kaifeng, the most distant area from the imperial palace inside the capital city, the final ritual was preceded by a set of rituals during which the emperor visited several ritual sites and eventually the Southern Suburb in a well-planned sequence (see figure 4). The Divine Ancestor was given special significance in the ritualistic route. Three days before the winter solstice, the emperor would stay over in the Hall of Grand Felicity. The next day, the imperial entourage would visit the Temple of Spectacular Numina and the Imperial Ancestral Temple. The emperor would then stay overnight in the Imperial Ancestral Temple. The following day, the imperial entourage would go outside of the outer city of the capital and arrive at the Green Enceinte (*qingcheng* 青城). After another night, the emperor would proceed to the terrace for the Southern Suburb ritual and make offerings to Heaven, where the Lord on High and the Five Thearchs were worshipped. Two steps during the long ritual procedure are pertinent to the Divine Ancestor. First, the emperor visited the Temple of Spectacular Numina and paid homage to the Divine Ancestor there; and second, the Yellow Emperor was presented with offerings on the terrace for the Southern Suburb ritual.[86]

[86] Meng Yuanlao, *Dongjing menghua lu jianzhu* 東京夢華錄箋注, annotated by Yi Yongwen (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006), 882–931.

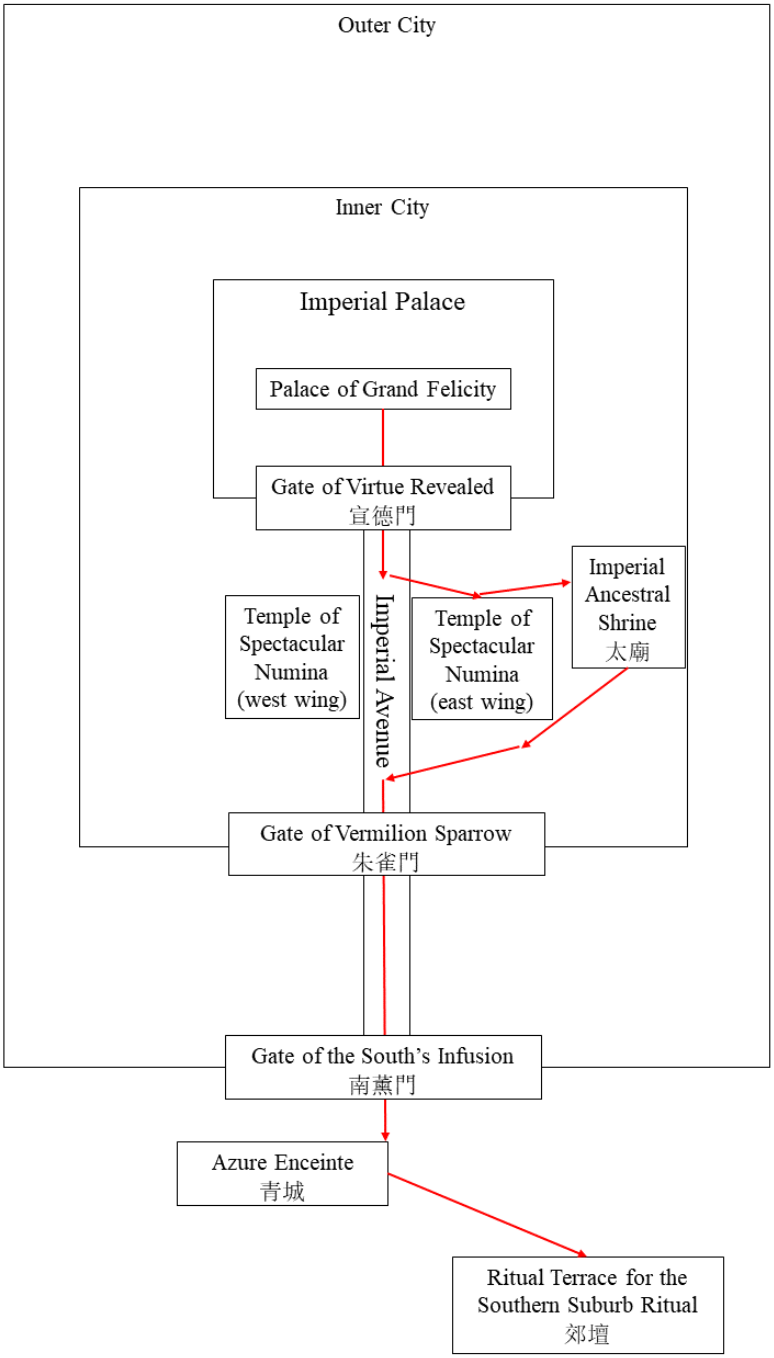

Figure 4 Route to the Southern Suburb Ritual (drawn by the author)

Even though the Tang dynasty already had the tradition of worshiping the Five Thearchs in the Southern Suburb ritual, it was only after Zhenzong's reign that this ritualistic route emphasizing the Divine Ancestor became stabilized. The greatest challenge to the route was posed in 1038 when Jia Changchao 賈昌朝 (997–1065), a Confucian scholar and Court Lecturer, opposed Renzong's visit to the Temple of Spectacular on the way to the southern suburb. Jia reasoned that Renzong's visit was modeled on Tang Emperor Xuanzong's to the Palace of the Grand Purity and thus "violated the instructions from the Confucian classics" 有違經訓. Renzong thereupon left the matter to the hands of ritual experts who later rejected Jia's request. The ritual experts argued that it was Zhenzong who established the precedent of the Southern Suburb ritual to venerate the Divine Ancestor; hence, removing the visit to the Temple of Spectacular Numina from the ritualistic route would not suit the Divine Ancestor's significance.[87] This practice for the Southern Suburb ritual continued throughout the Northern Song period, and the imperial entourage parading on the route became a sensational event for the city residents, as Stephen West has shown.[88]

Many may assume that the worship of Heaven, one of the most solemn state ceremonies, must be grounded in Confucianism. Nonetheless, as James T.C. Liu, has observed, this was not the case in the Northern Song court. When Renzong laid out his plan to revitalize the Hall of Brightness ritual, Chief Councilor Wen Yanbo's instant

[87] Xu Song, *Song huiyao jigao*, 539.

[88] Stephen H. West, "The Pains of Pleasure: The Lanterns of Kaifeng," in *Senses of the City: Perceptions of Hangzhou and Southern Song China, 1127–1279*, ed. Joseph S. C. Lam et al. (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2017), 109–47.

reaction was: “This ritual has long been lost, and the previous dynasties did not practice it.” 此禮久墜, 歷代未行.[89] As a Confucian scholar, Wen did not expect the emperor to resurrect the Hall of Brightness ritual and thus did not have a stock answer for it; rather, he and other officials researched Confucian classics and proposed a plan that accorded with Renzong’s vision.

Moreover, Confucianism should not be the only factor when discussing the worship of Heaven because Daoism also played an important role. It is worth noting that imperial rituals for the Five Thearchs and Daoist deities had long intertwined with each other since the Han dynasty. Gil Raz has demonstrated that the Five Thearchs in the Han dynasty’s imperial sacrifices were integrated into weft texts and later into early Daoist scriptures such as the *Array of the Five Talismans of the Numinous Treasure* (*Lingbao wufu xu* 靈寶五符序).[90] Thus, the legacy that Renzong received from previous dynasties was already an amalgamation of different cultural elements.

In summary, what mattered most in Renzong’s attempt to integrate the Divine Ancestor into the worship of Heaven was not what Confucian classics or Daoist scriptures said about the rituals for worshipping Heaven, but rather the consideration that the divinity of the Song imperial family was connected to Heaven through the Divine Ancestor and his incarnation as the Yellow Emperor. As before, the mandate of Heaven once again favored the imperial house.

---

[89] Liu Zijian, “Fengshan Wenhua Yu Songdai Mingtiang Jitian,” 5–8; Xu Song, *Song huiyao jigao*, 539.

[90] Gil Raz, “Imperial Efficacy: Debates on Imperial Ritual in Early Medieval China and the Emergence of Daoist Ritual Schemata,” in *Purposes, Means and Convictions in Daoism: A Berlin Symposium*, ed. Florian C. Reiter (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007), 83–109.

Phase Four: Reactions from the Daoist Clergy

I have not discussed much how the Daoist community responded to the institutionalization of the Divine Ancestor under Zhenzong and Renzong's reigns. The difficulty primarily lies in the lack of pertinent records. However, we do have data on how the institutionalization infiltrated Daoist scriptures during and after Song Emperor Huizong, and how the Daoist community responded during the Southern Song period.

In early 1111, Chief Councilor Zhang Shangying 張商英 (1043–1122) presented Huizong with the *Illustrated Pantheons of the Three Spheres* (*Sancai dingwei tu* 三才定位圖). Scholars have pointed out that the Three Spheres refer to the Heavens of Jade Capital (Yujing tian 玉京天) on the bottom, the Heavens of the Three Clarities (Sanqing tian 三清天) in the middle, and the Heavens of the Void Emperor (Xuhuang tian 虛皇天) on the top, and that we can find parallels between the cosmology presented in the *Illustrated Pantheons* and that in the Lingbao tradition.[91] In the *Illustrated Pantheons*, the Divine Ancestor is placed in the Heavens of the Three Clarities, more specifically in the Heaven of the Upper Clarity (Shangqing tian 上清天, see figure 5). Wan Chui-ki has noted that the Divine Ancestor is surrounded by the Red, White, Black, and Azure Emperors in the illustrations, but Wan does not provide the reason for this arrangement.[92] One possible explanation is that the layout of the Divine Ancestor and the other four

[91] Yin Cuiqi 尹翠琪, "Zhengtong daozang ben *sancai dingwei tu* yanjiu: Bei Song Huizong chao de daojiao yuzhou shenpu" 正統道藏本三才定位圖研究北宋徽宗朝的道教宇宙神譜, *Guoli Taiwan daxue meishishi yanjiu jikan*, no. 33 (2012): 113–62; Schipper and Verellen, eds., *The Taoist Canon*, 875–77.

[92] Yin Cuiqi, "Zhengtong daozang ben *sancai dingwei tu* yanjiu," 127.

emperors is modeled on their positions in the Hall of Brightness ritual that I have discussed above. The Divine Ancestor is placed in the center because of his identity as the Yellow Emperor. Also, the Heaven of the Upper Clarity is where the Director of Destinies resides. Since the Divine Ancestor's other identity is the Director of Destinies, who is generally considered to be a deity living in the Heaven of Upper Clarity in Daoism, the Heaven of Upper Clarity seems to be a fitting placement for the Divine Ancestor. What we see in Huizong's period is that imperial power still had a strong hold on how a Daoist scripture portrayed the Divine Ancestor.

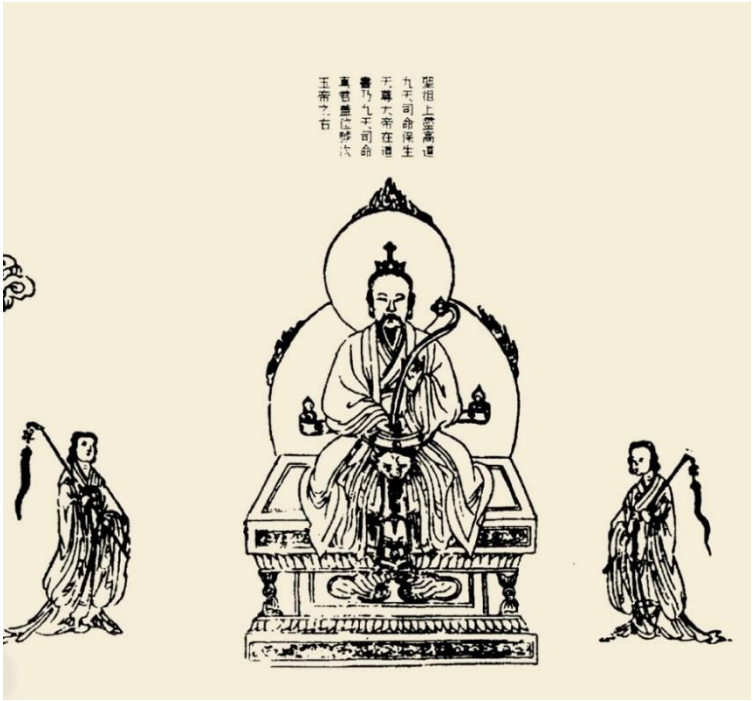

Figure 5 The Divine Ancestor in the *Illustrated Pantheons of the Three Spheres*[93]

[93] Zhang Shangying, *Sancai Dingwei Tu* 三才定位圖, ZHDZ 48:5, 112c.

The situation changed in the Southern Song period.[94] Jiang Shuyu 蔣叔與 (1162–1223), a Daoist priest who compiled the ritual manual *Standardized Rituals of the Supreme Yellow Register Retreat* (*Wushang huangluzhai lichen yi* 無上黃籙齋立成儀), had a lengthy discussion in the manual on ranking the Divine Ancestor in the Daoist pantheon. That section begins with an anecdote from Zhao Yanwei's 趙彥衛 (fl. 1195) *Unrestrained Jottings from the Foot of the Cloudy Mountain* (*Yunlu manchao* 雲麓漫鈔). In the early summer of 1038, Renzong consulted his advisors about recent ill omens and why he did not please the mind of Heaven. His advisors responded that the Divine Ancestor was ranked above the Great Emperor of the Northern Culmen (Beiji dadi 北極大帝). Since the Great Emperor of the Northern Culmen "governed the myriad things and dictated the Northern Culmen 總領萬物主宰中極," the advisors suggested that the emperor should rank the Divine Ancestor below the Great Emperor of the Northern Culmen. Renzong took the advice and separated the rituals for the Divine Ancestor from the rituals for other Daoist deities. It is said in the anecdote that this practice continued well into the Southern Song period.

Zhao Yanwei's account indeed gives Jiang more credibility in discussing the Divine Ancestor because Zhao was a member of the Song imperial clan. However, it is

[94] One possible reason behind the change is that Emeperor Huizong attempted to utilize Daoism, especially the Divine Empyrean (Shenxiao 神霄) sect, to deify himself. But this Daoism-inspired campaign met a disastrous end when Jurchens conquered North China and forced the Song court to relocate to the South. Because of the notoriety of Huizong, as Robert Hymes has suggested, Southern Song Daoist practitioners also critized Huizong for being a misguided and overreaching ruler. See Judith M. Boltz, *A Survey of Taoist Literature: Tenth to Seventeenth Centuries* (Berkeley: Institute for East Asian Studies, 1987), 26–30; Hymes, *Way and Byway*, 171–75; Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Emperor Huizong* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2014), 131–158, 343–371, 395–504.

doubtful that the anecdote is factual. For example, the *Ritual for the Display of Offerings, of the Area of the Way for Cultivating the Perfection of the Tianxin zhengfa* (*Tianxin zhengfa xiuzhen daochang shejiao yi* 天心正法脩真道場設醮儀), compiled under or after Huizong's reign, still ranked the Divine Ancestor above the Great Emperor of the Northern Culmen.[95] In other words, it seems that the rank of the Divine Ancestor was not altered in Daoist rituals for a long time after Renzong's reign.

Jiang Shuyu then goes on to express his own opinions on ranking the Divine Ancestor. The text reads:

> I, Shuyu, humbly think that worshipping the divine ancestors in our dynasty and the Tang dynasty are like offering sacrifices to the Thearch of Responsive Birth. The Thearch derives from Confucians; divine ancestors come from thaumaturges. Having been combined, the Thearch and divine ancestors become the same. The Thearch of Responsive Birth is one of the Five Heavenly Thearchs. Those who have all-under-heaven become sovereigns because they receive this dispensation from the Five Powers. Their certain ancestors correlate with a certain Thearch [from the five] and thus are born. Hence, in addition to the four seasonal sacrifices to greet the *qi*, a separate [ritual] platform is set up for sacrifices peculiar to [the Thearch]. Divine ancestors should be one of Heavenly Thearchs and perfected beings. Since the surname Li originates from Laozi, the Tang regarded Laozi as its progenitor. Since the surname Zhao stems from the Yellow Emperor, our dynasty considered the Yellow Emperor its ancestor, and then gave him the honorific title and constructed the Temple of Spectacular Numina to worship him. In all the prefectural Abbeys of Heavenly Felicity, the Halls of the Divine Ancestor were constructed. Rituals for the Divine Ancestor are among the most solemn. The ritual bureau in the Jingyou reign era (1034–1038) stipulated that Daoist abbeys in the realm, when setting up the rituals [for the Divine Ancestor], should solely make offerings in the Hall of the Divine Ancestor and not arrange him together with other perfected beings. Officials in prefectures and counties, for the sake of the state and the people, send prayers and requests to avert disaster and disease. When rituals are held, it might be possible for the officials to invite and greet the Divine Ancestor. But this is already a mistake of overstepping propriety.

[95] See *Tianxin zhengfa xiuzhen daochang shejiao yi*, ZHDZ 30:31, 309c; Schipper and Verellen, eds., *The Taoist Canon*, 1063.

> It is improper for the households of subjects and commoners to overreach [by performing the rituals for the Divine Ancestor].
> 叔與竊謂，本朝及唐之祀聖祖，猶其祀感生帝也。感生帝，出於諸儒。聖祖，出於方士。其為附會則一爾。感生帝，即五天帝之一也。有天下者，以其膺五德之運而王天下，其某祖感某帝之德而生，故於四時迎氣時祭之外，別為壇位而特祀之。聖祖，即諸天帝真之一也。唐以李姓出於老子，故祖老子。本朝以趙姓出於黃帝，故祖黃帝，遂加尊號，築景靈宮而事之。州郡天慶觀，率立聖祖殿。其禮至嚴。景祐禮院，詳定天下道館，每遇醮設，獨於聖祖殿供獻，不與眾真參列。州縣官僚，為國為民，祈請禳禬，遇有醮設，或可邀迎，已失於僭。臣庶之家，不宜僭及。[96]

Jiang here makes four arguments about ranking the Divine Ancestor. First, Jiang distinguishes the cult of the Divine Ancestor from Daoism by claiming that the cult derives from Confucians and thaumaturges (*fangshi* 方士). In other words, the Divine Ancestor does not have its origin in "orthodox" Daoism. Second, Jiang draws upon the liturgical instructions created during Renzong's Jingyou period (1034–1038) to justify the claim that the ritual for the Divine Ancestor has already been detached from the rituals for Daoist deities. Yet the validity of this assertion is questionable because there are no such records in the extant official documents, and, as I have mentioned above, the confluence of the rituals for the Divine Ancestor and Daoist deities continued under and after Huizong's reign. Third, Jiang categorizes the ritual for the Divine Ancestor under state rites and excludes it from rituals not performed by governmental officials. Of course, Jiang does this in a strategically polite fashion. It is not that the Divine Ancestor is unworthy of worship but that he is too exalted a deity for ordinary people to invoke. As a result, there is no mention of the Divine Ancestor anywhere else in the *Standardized*

[96] Jiang Shuyu, *Wushang huanglu dazhai licheng yi* 無上黃籙大齋立成儀, ZHDZ 43:28, 15.405c–406a.

Rituals except for the section I have dealt with. Jiang completely removed the Divine Ancestor from his Daoist ritualistic manual.

In sum, Jiang's discussion on the Divine Ancestor was an attempt to distance Daoist clergy from the cult of the Divine Ancestor, and thus a sharp contrast, however polite, from the Daoist clergy to the institutionalization process since Zhenzong's reign. The *Standardized Rituals* divided the cult of the Divine Ancestor and the rituals for Daoist deities into two different spheres. The former should be exclusively dedicated to the imperial house and the state; the latter are the practices for commoners. By this new arrangement, Jiang excluded the ritual for the Divine Ancestor from local society and thus reserved it exclusively for the rituals held by officials and the ruling clan. Jiang's influence persisted in the Southern Song. A later Daoist priest Jin Yunzhong 金允中 (fl. 1220) confirmed in his writing that Daoist rituals no longer had a position for the Divine Ancestor, and filled the position with Jiutian siming instead.[97]

Conclusion

The history of the Song Divine Ancestor is an informative case that displays the interrelationships between imperial authority, Daoism, and Confucianism. The cult began with Zhenzong's effort to emulate the Tang dynasty and make a divine ancestor for the Song ruling clan, in which Daoism was heavily utilized but had never become the only religious source for the emperor. Zhenzong and his court soon deviated from the Tang model marked by its Daoist characteristics. Indeed, the court attempted to separate the

[97] Jin Xunzhong, *Shangqing lingbao dafa* 上清靈寶大法, ZHDZ 34:1, 5.27b.

Divine Ancestor as a new Director of Destinies from the Daoist Director of Destinies that played a great role in Zhenzong's *feng* and *shan* rituals. Therefore, the Divine Ancestor was given the twofold identity of the Director of Destinies and the Yellow Emperor, and the cult surrounding him appeared not only in Daoist scriptures but also in state ceremonies that worshipped Heaven and imperial ancestors. Renzong further integrated the cult of the Divine Ancestor into the rituals for ancestral and heavenly worship, especially the Hall of Brightness ritual, where Confucian scholars were involved in offering ritualistic advice. However, Renzong rejected any suggestions that opposed the integration; moreover, he employed Confucian scholars to find a Confucian basis for merging the Divine Ancestor into the rituals of the worship of Heaven. In this process, Confucianism became an instrument rather than an ideology that the imperial power wholeheartedly accepted. As a reaction to the institutionalization of the Divine Ancestor and its infiltration into Daoist rituals, the Southern Song Daoist priests who disagreed with the inclusion of the Divine Ancestor into "orthodox" Daoism removed the Divine Ancestor from Daoist rituals.

The cult of the Song Divine Ancestor had never been Daoist or Confucian at the state level—despite their tremendous impact on the cult's formation. Categorizing the cult as part of imperial or state ceremonies might be a more accurate description because the cult ultimately served Song emperors' agendas that had one common goal—associating the ruling clan and its legitimacy with divineness. It is worth noting that the cult, nevertheless, did not find an efficient way to enter local society because of the efforts by the Daoist clergy to confine it within officialdom.

When Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) discussed the origin of the Song Divine Ancestor with his students, he did not even mention the title Director of Destinies and simply treated the Divine Ancestor as the Yellow Emperor. Moreover, he blatantly expressed his doubts about the myths woven around the Yellow Emperor's birth: "People used to think that the Divine Ancestor was one of the Human Sovereigns and that the Yellow Emperor was born due to his descent from Heaven and thus was not the son of Shaohao. This story is absurd and hard to be true" 舊以聖祖為人皇中之一，黃帝自是天降而生，非少昊之子。其說虛誕，蓋難憑信也.[98] Zhu Xi's testimony reveals that the legend of the Divine Ancestor, along with its Daoist origin, might have slipped into oblivion in the Southern Song period. This also offers a possible explanation for the difficulty that confronted our Southern Song historian Li Tao in deciding among conflicting documents.

[98] Li Jingde, *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類, punctuated and collated by Wang Xingxian (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), 78.1996.

CHAPTER 2

BITTER COMPROMISE: BUDDHIST DISCOURSE ON THE THREE TEACHINGS

> Under [Song] Emperor Lizong's reign (1224–1264), there was a Painter-in-Attendance Ma Yuan (1160–1225), who painted the *scroll of the Three Teachings*. [In the painting], an elder with a yellow face (i.e., the Buddha) sits cross-legged in the middle, a dragon-like old man (i.e., Laozi)[99] solemnly stands by the side, and our Confucius [kneels on the ground] to pay his respect before them. This was because a palace eunuch deliberately commanded Ma Yuan to create this scroll to belittle the sage (i.e., Confucius). One day the emperor ordered Jiang Ziyuan (Jiang Wanli 江萬里, 1198–1275), whose literary name was Guxin, to compose an encomium [for the scroll], and used the composition to have fun with Jiang. Gentleman Jiang then eulogized the scroll: "Śākyamuni sits cross-legged, and Lao Dan looks askance at him. Only our Confucius [laughs so hard or venerates the other two sages so much] that he falls on the ground." The emperor was greatly pleased. It can even be said that Jiang's words are subtle and indirect.
> 理宗朝，有待詔馬遠畫《三教圖》。黃面老子則跏趺中坐，猶龍翁儼立於傍，吾夫子乃作禮於前。此蓋內璫故令作此，以侮聖人也。一日傳旨，俾古心江子遠作贊，亦故以此戲之。公即贊之曰：「釋氏趺坐，老聃傍睨，惟吾夫子，絕倒在地。」遂大稱旨。其辭亦可謂微而婉矣。[100]

This anecdote is preserved in the *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語 (Wild Words from Eastern Qi) by Zhou Mi 周密 (1232–1298). Zhou is known as a fine poet, a descendent of a prestigious clan, and a Song loyalist after the demise of the Song. Because his grandfathers served as imperial attendants who were respectively involved in managing

[99] "Dragon-like old man" alludes to one story in the *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian). After Confucius visited Laozi, Confucius praised laozi in front of his disciples because he thought Laozi resembled a dragon whose means of travel was unpredictable. Therefore, Laozi's sobriquet dragon-like old could indicate the inferiority of Confucius. I would like to thank Professor Charles Hartman for pointing out this connection. See Sima Qian 司馬遷, *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), 63.2140.

[100] Zhou Mi 周密, *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語, punctuated and collated by Zhang Maopeng (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 12.222.

the imperial entourage and composing edicts, and that Zhou heard stories from them in his childhood, Zhou expressed strong confidence that his records were authentic.[101] The anecdote on the *Scroll of the Three Teachings* is supposed to be amusing, but one that requires knowledge about the Three Teachings at the court. Given the body language of the Buddha, Laozi, and Confucius on the original scroll, it is evident that the power relationship between the Three Teachings prioritizes Buddhism and places Confucianism lowest. The first important piece of information is that Ma Yuan creates the scroll under the command of a palace eunuch, which taps into a Song political and religious phenomenon—palace eunuchs were often Buddhist or Daoist practitioners who involved themselves in religious activities at the imperial court and palace. Therefore, making the eunuch the villain is probably a Confucian reflection on the role of eunuchs at that time.[102] The author then expects his readers to take the cue and understand why asking Jiang Ziyuan to write the encomium was meant to tease this Confucian literatus. Jiang's eulogization reverses the power relationship presented on the scroll. The phrase *juedao* 絕倒 or "falling on the ground" is a play on words because *juedao* can be caused by both

[101] Zhou Mi, *Qidong yeyu*, 4.

[102] As Ho Koon Wan has shown in his study on the epitaphs of three Song-dynasty eunuchs, for example, two out of the three eunuchs were Buddhist or Daoist practitioners, and all the three eunuchs participated in religious activities at the court. Charles Hartman has recently argued that scholars have underestimated the significance of Song palace eunuchs in the governance structures in the Song dynasty. He points out that eunuchs often acted as emperors' agents and were heavily associated with officials at the court. In addition, Buddho-Daoist coalition with eunuchs was not new for Song literati. As Hartman has noted, what Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) attempted to challenge in the ninth century was associated with the alliance between Buddhists, Daoists, eunuchs, and Hanlin 翰林 academicians. See He Guanhuan 何冠環, *"Xiancun de sanpian Songdai neichen muzhiming"* 現存的三篇宋代內臣墓誌銘, *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiusuo xuebao*, no. 52 (2011): 33–62; Charles Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 151–164; Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 151.

reverence and humor.[103] By adding the two layers of meaning to the body language, Jiang creates a subtle hierarchy of contempt in which Confucius is placed at the top because he laughs at both the Buddha and Laozi. Emperor Lizong in the anecdote acts as the arbiter of the two different power relationships. His satisfaction with the twist presented by Jiang can be understood as his verdict, in which Confucianism is favored the most.

As biased as it may be, this anecdote raises some crucial questions. Why would a scroll on the Three Teaching matter in the first place? Why would it make sense to rank Buddhism, rather than Daoism, superior on the original scroll? And what view in the political and cultural spectrum of the time did Jiang Ziyuan's reversal represent? These are some questions that we can answer only after documenting the changes in Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings from medieval to Song China.

This chapter concentrates on the issue of whether or not the Three Teachings shared one origin because I hope that my analysis can clarify for us changes and continuities of Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings from the medieval period to the Song. In the first section, I explore a transition in medieval Chinese Buddhist discussions. Early medieval Buddhist apologists opposed the idea that the Three Teachings derived from one origin. By the ninth century, a new intellectual thread emerged—the Three Teachings were considered homologous, but Buddhism was the one that could reach the origin/Dao. In the second section, I discuss the continuation of this new thread from the ninth century into the Northern Song. A new phenomenon in relation to the social context appeared in the Northern Song. Leading Buddhists began to invite

[103] I owe this finding of the play on words to Professor Charles Hartman.

the emperor to be the arbiter who could balance the power dynamic among the Three Teachings at the emperor's court. In the third section, I investigate a significant transition in the Southern Song. On the Buddhist side, the Chan Buddhist master Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163) began to propagate the idea that the Three Teachings led to one Dao. At the imperial court, Song Emperor Xiaozong (r. 1162–1189) argued for a universal Dao shared by the Three Teachings. I argue that this doctrinal transition resulted from Buddhist concessions to, and its incorporation into, imperial power. As such, leaders of the Buddhist clergy secured their prominent status at the court at the cost of the Buddhist argument that emerged in the ninth century—Buddhism was superior to Confucianism and Daoism in understanding the Dao.

Buddhist Views on the Three Teachings before the Song

Often regarded as a foreign religion, Buddhism and its followers had to constantly justify its position at the imperial court and in society ever since it spread into China. Hence, Buddhism developed complex relations with its primary competitors, Confucianism and Daoism. Doubtlessly, this section cannot do justice to such a significant development, even in a synoptic fashion. Instead, I will focus on illustrating several threads, especially those regarding the origins and compatibility of the Three Teachings, that provide intellectual background for my discussion on how Buddhists at the Song court reinvented early Buddhist ideas about its relation to the other two teachings.

In the early collection of Buddhist apologetics, the *Hongming ji* 弘明集 (Collection on the Propagation and Clarification [of Buddhism]), Sengyou 僧祐 (445–518), the compiler, summarizes the hostility confronting Buddhism in two concise lines: "Crooked Confucians, who defend *wen* (literature/culture), reject Buddhism as an alien teaching. Sinister Daoists with crafty words maintain that Buddhism has identical methods [with Daoism]" 守文曲儒則拒為異教巧言左道則引為同法.[104] This allegation presents two fronts of attack that, Sengyou thinks, Buddhism has been coping with—alienation and appropriation. We can find the issue of alienation in some earliest Buddhist apologetics such as the *Mouzi lihuo lun* 牟子理惑論 (Treatise on the Resolution of Doubts by Mouzi, hereafter, *Mouzi*). Therein, the apologist Mouzi defends Buddhism against established Chinese traditions of the time. A good example of alienation is that Mouzi is questioned why Buddhist monks shave their heads, a practice not in accord with the *Xiaojing* 孝經 (Classic of Filial Piety) and thus contrary to Confucian traditions. In response, Mouzi deploys three counterarguments. First, people under necessary scenarios should be able to choose not to follow the traditional rules. Second, there are precedents in which ancient sages cut their hair or harmed their bodies. And yet, they received no criticism. In my following discussion, I will emphasize the importance of the third argument with a direct quote from the *Mouzi*:

> Monks renounce their homes and possessions, forgo having wives and children, and do not listen to music nor gaze at the beautiful. This could be termed the

[104] Sengyou, *Hongming ji*, T 2102, 52:1a12–13.

> perfection of the virtue of yielding. How does this go against the words of the sages or fail to conform to filial piety?
> 沙門捐家財棄妻子，不聽音視色，可謂讓之至也。何違聖語不合孝乎？[105]

Here Mouzi argues that Buddhist practices are compatible with ideas essential to Confucianism, such as *rang*, the virtue of yielding priority to others. Consequently, Buddhism should not be considered a foreign teaching unsuited for Chinese society.

The problem of appropriation became pronounced with the rise of religious Daoism. Evidence has shown that Daoists before the sixth century borrowed passages and even whole texts from Buddhist literature.[106] Some Daoists even provided a theoretical foundation to justify the similarities between Buddhism and Daoism. Stephen Bokenkamp has recently presented the case of epistolary exchanges between Zhang Rong 張融 (444–497) and Zhou Yong 周顒 (d. 493?), in which Zhang as a Daoist practitioner claims that Daoism and Buddhism share the same origins/roots (*ben* 本) and can provide access to the ultimate (*ji* 極). In that event, Buddhism and Daoism are merely two different traces (*ji* 迹) that derive from the same origin. Siding with Buddhism, Zhou opposes Zhang's claim by limiting the grounds of the discussion to texts related to

[105] Sengyou, *Hongming ji*, T 2102, 52:3a1–2.

[106] Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Stages of Transcendence: The *Bhūmi* Concept in Taoist Scripture," in *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, ed. Robert E. Buswell, Jr. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1990), 119–47; Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao*, 130–32; Chrstine Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 1–19; Bokenkamp, *A Fourth-Century Daoist Family*, 18–24.

philosophical Daoism and then attempts to contend that Daoism and Buddhism arose from different origins.[107]

These two battlefields of alienation and appropriation continued into seventh-century Buddhist apologetics. As Thomas Jülch has summarized, the Buddhist monk Falin 法琳 (572–640), in his *Bianzheng lun* 辨正論 (Defense of What is Correct), attempts to prove that Buddhist teaching is congruent with Confucian values. For my discussion, it is worth noting that one passage in the *Bianzheng lun* equates the Confucian notion of the Five Constants (*wuchang* 五常), namely benevolence, integrity, ritual propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness, with the Buddhist Five Precepts (*wujie* 五戒), namely no killing, no sexual misconduct, no stealing, no alcohol-drinking, and no false speech.[108] Here Falin's argument can be seen as a continuation and extension of the third reasoning in the *Mouzi*—the compatibility between Confucianism and Buddhism.

Attacking Daoism's appropriation, inferiority, and falsehood (*wei* 偽), Buddhist monk Xuanyi 玄嶷 (fl. 690s) composed the *Zhenzheng lun* 甄正論 (Treatise of Revealing the Correct) in which he strongly opposed the idea of the Three Teachings of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism sharing common origins and traces. The passage goes:

---

[107] Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "The Origins of the Origin Debates: Buddhist Responses to Daoist Accounts of the Origins of Buddhism (5th–6th Centuries)," in *Buddhism and Its Religious Others: Historical Encounters and Representations*, ed. C.V. Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 176–88.

[108] Thomas Jülch, "In Defense of the Saṃgha: The Buddhist Apologetic Mission of the Early Tang Monk Falin," in *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel: Aspects of the Relationship between Buddhist Saṃgha and the State in Chinese History*, ed. Thomas Jülch (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016), 18–93; Falin, *Bianzheng lun*, T 2110, 52:493b10–494b17.

> The Three Teachings are divided into groups. The nine currents [of thoughts] are separate. Their origins and traces are different. Their meanings and intentions are very divergent.
> 夫三教群分，九流區別。本跡斯異，義意猶殊。[109]

The text then goes on to elaborate on the disparities between Buddhism and Daoism. Here the tension between the shared and different origins remains. Xuanyi does not endorse the idea that the Three Teachings share the same origins. Once again, the idea of shared origins possibly comes from Xuanyi's opponents, namely Daoists of the time.[110] Moreover, Xuanyi brings Confucianism into the discourse. Although he does not censure Confucianism as harshly as he does to Daoism, Xuanyi places Buddhism higher than Confucianism because he only regards Confucianism as a teaching of "small humanness" (*xiaoren* 小仁). In contrast, Buddhism is the one who possesses "great kindness" (*dahui* 大惠).[111]

In the ninth century, the Huayan master Zongmi's 宗密 (780–841) *Yuanren lun* 原人論 (Inquiry into the Origin of Man) presented a refreshingly milder argument in the ongoing rivalry between Daoism and Buddhism. As Peter Gregory has pointed out, Zongmi held an inclusive view of both Daoism and Confucianism. In the preface of the *Inquiry* Zongmi wrote:

---

[109] Translation is based on Thomas Jülch's work with my own changes. Xuanyi, *The Zhenzheng Lun by Xuanyi: A Buddhist Apologetic Scripture of Tang China*, trans. Thomas Jülch (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), 157; Xuanyi, *Zhenzheng lun*, T 2112, 52:570a17–18.

[110] Xuanyi, *The Zhenzheng Lun by Xuanyi*, trans. Thomas Jülch, 11–13.

[111] Falin, *Bianzheng lun*, T 2112, 52:570b6.

> Confucius, Laozi, and Śākyamuni are all utmost sages who responded to matters [of the world] in accordance with their own times and set up the teachings as different paths. They made the inner (i.e., Buddhism) and the outer (i.e., the other two teachings) complement one another to benefit the masses; they encouraged myriad deeds to illuminate causes and effects as well as beginnings and endings; they investigated myriad phenomena to elucidate the root and branches of birth and arising. Although [the actions] were all from sagely intentions, there are the substantial and the expedient among them. The other two teachings only had the expedient whereas Buddhism had both. As for encouraging the myriad deeds, punishing the evil, and promoting the good, they contributed in common to [good] governance. This is where one can follow and practice all Three Teachings. Considering the ultimate principles and complete natures of the then-thousand religions (*fa*), with respect to the original source, only Buddhism breaks through to the font.
> 然孔、老、釋迦皆是至聖，隨時應物，設教殊塗。內外相資，共利群庶；策勤萬行，明因果始終；推究萬法，彰生起本末。雖皆聖意而有實有權，二教唯權，佛兼權實。策萬行，懲惡勸善，同歸於治，則三教皆可遵行；推萬法窮理盡性，至於本源，則佛教方為決了。[112]

This passage has three points deserving our further attention. First, Zongmi acknowledges that the founders of the Three Teachings are all sages. Although they set up their teachings in different fashions, the Three Teachings turn out to be complementary. This claim naturally resolves the issue of alienation in that all the Three Teachings are juxtaposed without even mentioning the division between barbarians and the central kingdom (*zhongguo* 中國). To be able to make such a claim, here Zongmi distances himself from his predecessors, such as Xuanyi, because Daoism is no longer a false teaching under this perspective. It is equally important to note that this mode of tolerating other teachings is not new, given the aforementioned Buddhist traditions.

[112] Translation is based on Peter Gregory's work with my own changes. Peter N. Gregory, *Tsung-mi and the Sinification of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 256–61; Guifeng Zongmi, *Yuanren lun*, T 1886, 45:708a08–13.

Second, Zongmi emphasizes that all Three Teachings convene to make contributions at one pivot—governance, that is, the successful management of the empire and its subjects.

Third, although Zongmi reckons that one can follow all Three Teachings, he still opines that Buddhism is the only teaching that understands the true source or *benyuan* of all phenomena. Zongmi once again differs from Xuanyi and Zhang Rong because the passage implies that the Three Teachings have one origin, namely *ben* (root) or *benyuan* (root source) in the text. It is only that Buddhism is the teaching that has access to the origin. Against the intellectual background of Zongmi's time, it is noteworthy that Zongmi's *Yuanren lun* was written in response to the committed Confucian literatus Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824), who wrote the *Yuanren* (Origin of Humanity). More broadly, the *Yunren lun*, as shown in the passage above, challenges Han Yu's view that both Buddhism and Daoism derive from barbaric cultures and should be eliminated to make space for Confucianism, the very teaching representing the culture of the central kingdom.[113] Again, we see here an apologist's efforts to rescue Buddhism from being alienated.

Zongmi's stance was carried into the tenth century. Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 (904–976), a high-ranking Chan Buddhist master in the Wu-Yue kingdom (907–978), discussed the origin of the Three Teachings in his *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄 (Record of the Source-Mirror):

[113] Gregory, *Tsung-Mi and the Sinification of Buddhism*, 83–84; For study of Han Yu alienating Buddhism and Daoism, see Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity*, 146–152.

> Although the Three Teachings differ, there is no other origin [than Buddhism] if the dharma realm is used to include them. As for Confucianism and Daoism, the hundred and the nine schools, they generally do not leave the dharma realm. The situation resembles that of hundreds of rivers returning to the ocean. Buddhism, as the source of perfection, is the single vehicle of marvelous doctrines. In other words, the hundred schools are like the light of fireflies. How can it match the great illumination? It is similar to the fact that the ocean does not return to hundreds of rivers.
> 然則三教雖殊，若法界收之，則無別原矣。若孔老二教，百氏九流，總而言之，不離法界，其猶百川歸於大海。若佛教圓宗。一乘妙旨。別而言之，百家猶若螢光，寧齊巨照？如大海不歸百川也。[114]

What Zongmi and Yanshou have in common is that they both consider Buddhism to be the origin and goal of the Three Teachings.[115] The contrast between the light of fireflies and the great illumination harkens back to the mode of argumentation that Confucianism merely relates to small humaneness, whereas Buddhism is a manifestation of great kindness. In other words, Confucianism and Daoism are good, but Buddhism is much better and more encompassing.

In sum, from Mouzi to Yanshou, the Buddhist discourses on the origins and compatibility of the Three Teachings had been focused on solving the two issues of alienation and appropriation. The discourse started with Buddhists' attempts to make the religion compatible with Confucian teachings and different from what they regarded as their Daoist imitators. Hence, Buddhist apologists contended that Daoism did not and could not take part in the sources of the Buddhist teaching. It seems that a transition in

[114] Yongming Yanshou, *Zongjing lu*, T 2016, 48:608b16–20.

[115] Albert Welter has pointed out that Zongmi's works inspired Yanshou and his *Zongjing lu*. Yanshou's stance on the relationship among the Three Teachings was likely under Zongmi's influence. Albert Welter, *Yongming Yanshou's Conception of Chan in the Zongjing Lu: A Special Transmission within the Scriptures* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 47–48.

the discourse occurred between the seventh and the ninth century. First, Buddhist writers began to include Confucianism as a branch derived from the origin. Second, Daoism was considered a beneficial, other than a false, teaching in the new perspective. Consequently, the compatibility between Daoism and Buddhism was enhanced. Third, Buddhists began to argue that the Three Teachings have a shared origin, namely Buddhism, rather than different origins. As I will demonstrate later, these elements and changes were accepted and reinvented in Song Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings.

Defending Buddhism to Emperors: Northern Song Buddhists on the Three Teachings

Reading through Song dynasty Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings, one can discern an intriguing phenomenon—a considerable number of the texts were written either to persuade the emperors and ministers or to meet imperial demands. It remains unsurprising that Buddhist leaders often chose to raise the problem of the Three Teachings to emperors because the imperial apparatus was usually the primary mechanism to support or oppress Buddhist clergy.[116] In this section, I select writings from two Buddhist monks, Zanning 贊寧 (919–1001) and Qisong 契嵩 (1007–1072), to show that Northern Song Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings to a large extent continued those from the ninth century, but with one difference—Buddhist apologists actively appealed to emperors as the arbiter to balance the power arrangement among the Three Teachings. Although some scholars suggest that Zhang Shangying 張商英 (1043–

[116] Jülch, ed., *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel*, 1–7.

1121) composed the *Hufa lun* 護法論 (In Defense of the Dharma) in response to Emperor Huizong's (r. 1100–1126) anti-Buddhist policies, I have purposely left out this text because of the problem with dating it.[117]

1. Zanning on the Three Teachings and Imperial Power

In the late tenth century, the Song court was establishing itself as a new political center governing a reunified empire. The Buddhist clergy at that time was confronted with significant challenges. In North China, Buddhism under the Later Zhou (951–960), the dynasty preceding the Song, experienced persecution that attempted to constrain the size of Buddhist clergy and monasteries. After the founding of the Song, the first two Song emperors strived to bring South China under their control. Since Buddhism flourished in the South throughout the ninth century, the Song court, after annexing the South, found it necessary to incorporate influential southern Buddhist clergy into the government. The Buddhist leader chosen by the Song court was the *Vinaya* monk Zanning who served as the highest Buddhist official in the Wu-Yue kingdom before being summoned to the Song court. In 978, Zanning escorted the relics of the body of Śākyamuni from Ming prefecture (modern Ningbo) to the capital as a religious symbol of Wu-Yue's submission. He thereafter became a prominent Buddhist compiler and an

[117] As Chi-chiang Huang has pointed out, Song Buddhist texts rarely mention the *Hufa lun*. Additionally, the text contains the phrase "Emperor Huizong" (*Huizong Huangdi* 徽宗皇帝), the emperor's posthumous title. Containing this title indicates that the *Hufa lun* could have been composed or edited after Huizong's reign. In that case, Zhang Shangying cannot be the author because he died during Huizong's era. Since one can write a whole essay on the textual problem, I have decided to leave this text aside for the time being. See Huang Qijiang 黃啟江, *Bei Song fojiao shi lungao* 北宋佛教史論稿 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1997), 378–399.

official serving the Song court. As Albert Welter has suggested, Zanning's success to a large extent was due to his talent in *wen* (literature/culture) and his social networking with literati at the time.[118]

Facing the rising Song imperial power that attempted to legitimize its rule using an amalgamation of different cultural elements, Zanning adopted an amiable stance on the Three Teachings and assigned the role of directing the Three Teachings to the emperor. His stance is elaborated in his *Da Song sengshi lüe* 大宋僧史略 (Great Song Historical Digest of the Sangha), a history of the Buddhist clergy compiled at the command of Emperor Taizong (r. 976–997). Zanning begins his concluding remarks with a hypothetical conversation between himself and an interlocutor, in which the important point is to prove Buddhism's usefulness to the emperor:

> Question: Why does the *Sengshi lüe* seek the origins of affairs?
> Reply: I desire to revitalize the Buddhist Dao and cause the correct dharma to be sustained for an extended period of time.
> Question: The current Son of Heaven values the Buddhist Dao, honors Daoism, and practices Confucian techniques. This has brought about [an era of] great peace. The revitalization [of the Buddhist Dao] has already occurred. How can a single monk like you turn the wheel of power and speak of revitalizing the Buddhist Dao?
> Reply: It is that I desire to assist this revitalization.
> 問曰。略僧史求事端。其故何也。答曰。欲中興佛道令正法久住也。曰方今天子重佛道崇玄門。行儒術致太平。已中興矣。一介比丘力輪何轉。而言中興佛道耶。答曰。更欲助其中興耳。[119]

[118] In 1000, Wang Yucheng 王禹偁 (954-1001), a well-known literatus of the time, wrote a preface for Zanning's collected works, giving a detailed account of Zanning's life. Wang Yucheng, *Xiaoxu ji* 小畜集 (*Sibu congkan* edition), 20. For governmental policies toward Buddhism in the Later Zhou and other kingdoms of the time, see Benjamin Brose, "Credulous Kings and Immoral Monks: Critiques of Buddhists during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms," *Asia Major* 27, no. 1 (2014): 73–98.

[119] Translated by Skonicki with my alterations. See Douglas Skonicki, "Using History to Defend Buddhism's Place in the Socio-Political Order: An Analysis of Zanning's *Sengshilüe*," *Monumenta*

In Zanning's writings, the term "wheel of power" or *lilun* 力輪 often refers to rulers and ministers (*wangchen* 王臣).[120] By turning the wheel of power, the interlocutor asks the means by which Zanning can convince the emperor of his vision for revitalizing Buddhism. In response, Zanning regards Buddhist revitalization as a further step to reconsolidate the emperor's effort to direct the Three Teachings' affairs. He then goes on to present a sophisticated argument on the relationship between the Three Teachings and imperial power.

As Douglas Skonicki has demonstrated, Zanning in the *Sengshi lüe* bases his arguments on a cyclical conception of history—the Three Teachings all experienced prosperous and deteriorating periods. In Zanning's view, the state-sponsored persecutions of the Three Teachings in the past were due to imperial favoritism in which the emperor

Serica—Journal of Oriental Studies 64, no. 1 (2016): 61–62; Zanning, *Da Song sengshilüe jiaozhu* 大宋僧史略校注, punctuated and annotated by Fu Shiping 富世平 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2015), B.228.

[120] The word *lilun* appears in early Vinaya texts in Chinese Buddhism. For example, there is a passage from the 4th century *Mahāsānghika-vinaya* (*Mohe sengqi lü* 摩訶僧祇律): "The Thus-come, the Worthy of Offerings, and the Perfectly Enlightened (all three are the Buddha's titles) always are born into the clans of kṣatriyas and brahmans. These two castes [respectively] have two kinds of wheels—the Wheel of Power and the Wheel of Dharma. Our monastics rely on the protection of the Wheel of Power and thus are enabled to bring ourselves security" 如來應供正遍知常在二家生剎利婆羅門家有二種輪力輪法輪諸出家人賴力輪護故得以自安. It is worth noting that the Wheel of Power belongs to the kṣatriya. Thus, the term is an Indian equivalent for those who hold political and military power. As an eminent monk from the Vinaya school, Zanning must have studied this text and incorporated the language into his own writing. In his *Song Gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (Song Biographies of Eminent Monks), Zanning straightforwardly writes: "Doesn't the Wheel of Power refer to rulers and ministers" 力輪王臣是歟? See Zanning, *Song gaoseng zhuan*, T 2061, 50:743a12–13. I thank Professor Jan Nattier for her help in interpreting the textual variants from the *Mahāsānghika-vinaya*. She points out that there are different sequences for the "Wheel of Power" and "Wheel of Dharma" in different editions of the Vinaya text and the one in which "Wheel of Power" comes first fits into our conventional understanding of the two castes—kṣatriya hold power and brahma take charge of the brahmanical teachings and rituals. Faxian 法顯, *Mohe sengqi lü*, T 1425, 22:510c28–511a01.

showed predilection to one teaching and inflicted punishments on the other teachings. Zanning's solution is to suggest that the emperor do away with favoritism and maintains an unbiased stance on the Three Teachings.[121] Following Skonicki's findings, I will highlight three aspects in my discussion. First, Zanning assigns the emperor a dominant role, namely the head of the single family (*yijia zhi jun* 一家之君) of the Three Teachings. The emperor is then expected to harmonize the Three Teachings in an unbiased fashion. Second, after recounting the persecutions that the Three Teachings historically suffered, Zanning makes a point that all the Three Teachings eventually recovered from the persecutions and became even stronger. This confident statement implicitly warns emperors that Buddhism will be revived in the end, even if the state initiates another persecution. And third, Zanning draws on the thread of compatibility in Buddhist traditions and requests that Buddhist clerics respect Daoism and Confucianism:

> I would like to advise my fellow monks that we together remain vigilant and protect each other without committing any mistakes. How can the dharma become established If the ruler does not tolerate [us]? Moreover, Daoists guard their [three] treasures and refrain from taking the lead in the world. What obstacle is there for monks to be charitable and harmonize with them? This comports with the Buddha's statement that we should respect and trust everything. We should trust the former sage Laozi and in the former teacher Confucius. Without these two sages, how could we highlight and promote the Buddhist teaching? How could we go forward together and help the ruler surpass Fu Xi and the Yellow Emperor?
> 奉勸吾曹，相警互防，勿罹愆失。帝王不容，法從何立？況道流守寶，不為天下先。沙門何妨饒禮以和之？當合佛言一切恭信，信于老君先聖也，信于孔子先師也。非此二聖曷能顯揚釋教，相與齊行，致君於羲黃之上乎？[122]

[121] Skonicki, "Using History to Defend Buddhism's Place in the Socio-Political Order," 47–71.

[122] Translated by Skonicki with my alterations. Skonicki, "Using History to Defend Buddhism's Place in the Socio-Political Order," 67; Zanning, *Da Song sengshilüe jiaozhu*, B.228.

Here Zanning alludes to a passage in the *Dao de jing* 道德經 or the *Classic of the Way and its Power*: "I have three treasures to hold and keep: The first is compassion; the second is frugality; the third is not daring to take the lead in the world" 我有三寶持而保之一曰慈二曰儉三曰不敢為天下先. This allusion to the *Dao de jing* had already been well-received by the Buddhist clergy before the Song. For instance, as critical of Daoism as he is, Xuanyi praised the three treasures for their ability to improve people's deeds (*xing* 行).[123] By juxtaposing the third treasure of humility and the formulaic Buddhist statement "respect and trust everything,"[124] Zanning implies that there is intellectual common ground between Daoism and Buddhism that can lead to harmonious coexistence. More tellingly, Zanning argues that the Three Teachings will form a unified force to assist the emperor's governance as soon as they can co-exist in harmony.

Zanning walks a fine line between promoting the Buddhist teaching and offending the emperor and potential rivals. On the one hand, Zanning insists that Buddhism is a teaching superior to Daoism and Confucianism, and reminds the emperor of the strength that the Buddhist clergy had demonstrated in the past. On the other hand, he calls on his

[123] Xuanyi, *The Zhenzheng Lun by Xuanyi*, 107; Xuanyi, *Zhenzheng lun*, T 2112, 52:566b19.

[124] This phrase appears in early Chinese Buddhist texts as *yiqie gongjing* 一切恭敬, which often means "respecting the Buddha and his teaching in every possible way." Searching in the Taisho cannon and the CBETA, Zanning seems to be the first person who used *yiqie gongxin* 一切恭信. Further, Zanning turned the phrase's meaning into a new direction, that is, from respecting Buddhism to trusting all teachings. For the usage of *yiqie gongjing* in early Chinese Buddhist texts, such as the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā* translated by Lokakṣema (fl. 170–190 CE) and the *Lotus Sūtra* translated by Dharmarakṣa (fl. 265–309 CE), see Zhiloujiachen 支婁迦讖, *Daoxing bore jing* 道行般若經, T 224, 8:477c15; Zhu Fahu 竺法護, *Zheng Fahua jing* 正法華經, T 263, 9:69a15.

Buddhist fellows to make peace with the other two teachings, and entrusts the management of the Buddhist clergy to the emperor.

As Skonicki has pointed out, Zanning's historical approach to discuss the relationship among the Three Teachings was not continued among later Buddhist thinkers in the Song. Speaking of the reverberations of Zanning's argument at the imperial court, however, I disagree with Skonicki's observation that Taizong was the only Song emperor who echoed the unbiased stance that Zanning proposed.[125] For example, as I have shown in Chapter 1, Emperor Zhenzong, who was the successor of Taizong and allegedly favored Daoism in his "Daoist" campaign beginning at 1008, was in fact looking for a cult centered around the imperial family and himself. Therefore, it is not surprising to see him stating the following in the winter of 1013:

> The establishments of the Three Teachings have the same aim. Generally, they all exhort people to perform the good. But only those with advanced insight can string them together. Those with stagnant affections and biased views would find differences as soon as they lay eyes on [the Three Teachings]. But they stray far from the Dao.
> 三教之設，其旨一也，大抵皆勸人為善。惟達識者能總貫之。滯情偏見，觸目分別，則於道遠矣。[126]

The backstory of this statement would provide the ground for further analysis. On December 27, 1013, the Buddha's relics or *śarīra* were discovered in two halls in the grandiose Palace of Responding to Jade Purity (Yuqing zhaoying gong 玉清昭應宮), a

[125] Skonicki, "Using History to Defend Buddhism's Place in the Socio-Political Order," 70.

[126] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 81.1853.

palace dedicated to the heavenly texts and later to the Divine Ancestor. Zhenzong then summoned the Chief Councilors and made the statement translated above. With all the Daoist background that the palace had, Zhenzong's claim can be understood as his justification for utilizing Buddhism, in addition to Daoism, to legitimize his rule. Another underlying meaning is that Zhenzong is a person with advanced insights and thus capable of managing the Three Teachings. After Zhenzong, the narrative that the emperor supported all the Three Teachings recurred in several Northern Song Buddhist compilations created under imperial command.[127] In short, evidence shows that most of the Northern Song emperors from time to time performed the role as director of the Three Teachings that Zanning had envisioned in the late tenth century. Although we should not rush to conclude that Song emperors unequivocally accepted Zanning's proposal and applied it to their religious practices at the court, it is safe to say that Zanning's new thread of Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings came to be well-received among Song emperors and Buddhist compilers at the court. As I will show below, this new thread had significant reverberations during and beyond the Song.

2. Qisong's Memorial to Emperor Renzong (r. 1022–1063)

The intellectual and religious trends changed drastically during the tenth and eleventh centuries. Scholars following traditional historiography have documented the

[127] For example, the *Jianzhong jingguo xu denglu* 建中靖國續燈錄 (Continued Lamp Record Compiled in the Jianzhong Jingguo Era), completed in 1101, praised Emperor Zhezong (r. 1085–1100) for "revering and merging the Three Teachings" 崇際三教. The *Jiatai pu denglu* 嘉泰普燈錄 (Universal Lamp Record Compiled in the Jiatai Era), published in, likewise portrays Emperor Gaozong (r. 1127–1162) as a ruler who "regarded the Three Teachings the same" 三教一致. See Weibai 惟白, *Jianzhong jingguo xu denglu*, X 1556, 750a11–12; Zhengshou 正受, *Jiatai pu denglu*, X 1559. 421c3.

most salient piece of the story, namely the Ancient-style Learning Movement (Guwen yundong 古文運動). At that time, some leading Song literati turned their focus to Confucian *wen* and established their cultural and political status through associating *wen* with the Confucian Dao. With their emphasis on *wen* and the Dao being Confucian, Ancient-style Learning scholars, such as Shi Jie 石介 (1005–1045), Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩 (1007–1072), and Li Gou 李覯 (1009–1059), often reflected Han Yu's stance and opposed Buddhist and Daoist practices and ideas in their writings.[128] Against this intellectual background, Chan Buddhist monk Qisong, based in Hangzhou, remonstrated against this brewing anti-Buddhist sentiment. Probably following Zanning's precedent, he chose Emperor Renzong as the arbiter to settle this dispute. In Qisong's own words, "I desire to rely on our emperor to beguile and convince [the critics of Buddhism]" 欲往賴吾帝而勸誘之.[129]

Qisong's strongest and defining action to involve the emperor was his "Ten-thousand-word Memorial to Emperor Rezong" (Shang Renzong huangdi wanyan shu 上仁宗皇帝萬言書). We know little about exactly how and when Qisong submitted this memorial. As Wang Shengduo has demonstrated, the textual history of Qisong's biography is a complex one because later Buddhism writers tended to include anecdotes

[128] Hong Shufen 洪淑芬, *Rufo jiaoshe yu Song dai ruxue fuxing* 儒佛交涉與宋代儒學復興 (Taipei: Da'an chubanshe, 2008), 124–31; Peter K. Bol, *"This Culture of Ours:" Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 177–88; Guo Shaoyu 郭紹虞, *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi* 中國文學批評史, 5th ed. (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2010), 333–83.

[129] Qisong, *Tanjin wenji* 鐔津文集, T 2115, 52:690c25.

about how Qisong impressed Ancient-style Learning scholars.[130] Therefore, my discussion about dating and contextualizing the memorial will primarily depend on two texts. The first is the biography that the Confucian literatus Chen Shunyu 陳舜俞 (1026–1076), who as Qisong's friend, composed in early 1076, not long after Qisong's death in 1072. The second is the collective preface to Qisong's *Chuanfa zhengzongji* 傳法正宗記 (Record of the True Lineage of the Transmission of the Teachings). Several monks at Wanshou Chan monastery (Wanshou chanyuan 萬壽禪院) in Hangzhou composed the preface when they put Qisong's book into print in 1064.

Qisong's coming to the Song capital Kaifeng and then the imperial court was associated with two political figures, Li Duanyuan 李端願 (d. 1091) and Wang Su 王素 (1007–1073). Both Li and Wang were born and raised in prestigious families. Li Duanyuan was the great-grandson of Li Chongju 李崇矩 (924–988), a military commander who helped expand the Song empire's territory in the 960s. Duanyuan's father Li Zunxu 李遵勖 (988–1038) was Taizong's son-in-law and the compiler of the Buddhist *Tiansheng guangdenglu* 天聖廣燈錄 (Extensive Lamp Record Compiled in the Tiansheng Era [1023–1032]).[131] Li Duanyuan entered bureaucratic serve through his *yin* (protection) privilege because his mother was Taizong's daughter, the Xianmu 獻穆

[130] Wang Shengduo, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu*, 102–06.

[131] For a study on Li Zunxu's involvement with the compilation of the *Tiansheng guangdeng lu*, see Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati*, 161–208.

Princess. He later served as the prefect of various places.[132] Wang Su was the son of Wang Dan 王旦 (957–1017) who was Zhenzong's Chief Councilor for twelve years. Wang Dan witnessed and acquiesced in Zhenzong's religious projects that aimed to sacralize the imperial house and the emperor himself. Wang Su received imperial favor from the very beginning of his career. Renzong recruited Wang Su, who was merely twenty years old or so at that time, into the Academy (Xueshi yuan 學士院), an institution for imperial edict-drafters. According to Gong Yanming, drafters in the Academy also served as imperial consultants and often developed close relationship with the emperor. In Wang Su's case, although he did not pass the civil service examination, Renzong favored him enough that the emperor granted him the status of Presented Scholar (*jinshi* 進士).[133]

The model of "technocratic-Confucian continuum," proposed by Charles Hartman to analyze structures of governance in the Song, is particularly useful here. Li Duanyuan and Wang Su both straddled the porous border of technocracy and Confucian institutionalism, but they leaned toward the technocratic end. Although Li Duanyuan later became a prefect, a role better categorized as Confucian institutionalist, Li had his political career precisely due to his aristocratic identity. Similarly, Wang Su began his career as an edict-drafter, a position tied more to the imperial palace than the outer

[132] Tuotuo et al., *Songshi*, 464.13567–71. For research on the *yin* privilege in the Song, see Winston W. Lo, *An Introduction to the Civil Service of Sung China: With Emphasis on Its Personnel Administration* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987), 102–09; Gong Yanming, *Songdai guanzhi cidian*, 27.

[133] Xu Song, *Song huiyao jigao*, *xuanju*31.5847; Tuotuo, *Songshi*, 320.10402–03; Gong Yanming, *Songdai guanzhi cidian*, 14.

imperial court. Furthermore, Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086), the famously committed Confucian literatus, accused Wang Su of being morally corrupt, which is an indicator that Wang Su was seen as an outcast by Confucian institutionalists.[134]

It was these two figures who helped Qisong establish his fame at the court. Li Duanyuan was the first powerful person who noticed Qisong's writings and commended him in front of Renzong. With this encouragement, Qisong traveled from Hangzhou to the capital Kaifeng in 1061 in the hope that he could come into contact with the emperor and court officials. There, he met his second patron Wang Su who was the prefect of the capital area at that time. Wang submitted Qisong's writings to Renzong. On December 20, 1061, Qisong presented his "Ten-thousand-word Memorial" to the court. The emperor then ordered the Bureau of Transmitting the Dharma (Chuanfa yuan 傳法院) to include Qisong's writings in the Buddhist canon in 1062. Only after this imperial recognition, did high-ranking scholar-officials such as Han Qi 韓琦 (1008–1075), the Chief Councilor of the time, begin to grant Qisong audiences. Not long after the journey, Qisong returned to Hangzhou.[135] It is worth noting that the two technocrats, Li Duanyuan and Wang Su, played a major role in bringing Qisong to the court and propagating his writings.

---

[134] Sima Guang 司馬光, *Sushui jiwen* 涑水記聞, punctuated and collated by Deng Guangming and Zhang Xiqing (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989), 10.198–99.

[135] Chen Shunyu 陳舜俞, *Duguan ji* 都官集 (Siku quanshu edition), 14; Qisong, *Chuanfa zhengzong ji* 傳法正宗記, T 2078, 51: 716a14–24; Qisong, *"Shang Renzong huangdi wanyan shu"* 上仁宗皇帝萬言書, in *Quan Song wen*, 36: 764.120. I disagree with Skonicki's narrative that it was Han Qi who helped Qisong procure the permission to memorialize Rezong. See Douglas Skonicki, "A Buddhist Response to Ancient-Style Learning: Qisong's Conception of Political Order," *T'oung Pao*, no. 97 (2011): 7.

As Douglas Skonicki has demonstrated, the key argument that Qisong makes in his "Ten-thousand Word Memorial" and his other writings is that Ancient-style Learning thinkers falsely opposed Buddhism even though Buddhism is the most beneficial teaching to the emperor's governance.[136] To prove the point, Qisong's "Ten-thousand-word Memorial" equates the Buddhist Dao with the Kingly Dao (*wangdao* 王道):

> The Kingly Dao is the August Ultimate. The August Ultimate is called the Impartial Dao. And the Buddhist Dao is called the Impartial Dao, too.
> 夫王道者皇極也。皇極者中道之謂也。而佛之道亦曰中道。[137]

The term "August Ultimate" first appears in the "Grant Plan" (Hongfan 洪範) of the *Book of Documents*. As Yü Ying-shih has pointed out, Confucian exegetes in the Han and Tang dynasties explained the word as "grand mean" (*dazhong* 大中), which should be understood as an ideal model for a ruler to govern the state.[138] Here, I gloss *zhongdao* as the Impartial Dao because the memorial later interprets both August Ultimate and the *zhongdao* as "not partial nor deviant" (*bupian buxie* 不偏不邪). Therefore, Qisong continued the established explanation of the August Ultimate and expected the emperor to act as an impartial arbiter. Since Qisong uses *zhongdao* as a concept that can be applied to various aspects of governance, Qisong's argument about the importance of the ruler's impartiality seems to implicitly harken back to Zanning's proposal that the ruler

[136] Skonicki, "A Buddhist Response to Ancient-Style Learning," 1–36.

[137] Qisong, "Shang Renzong huangdi wanyan shu," 110.

[138] Yu Yingshi 余英時, *Zhu Xi de lishi shijie* 朱熹的歷史世界 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2004), 808–845.

should be the person who balances the Three Teachings. Moreover, since the Kingly Dao conforms with the Buddhist Dao, Qisong suggests that anti-Buddhist critiques from Ancient-style Learning scholar-officials are contradictory to the path of governance that the emperor should follow, and that the emperor should take responsibility to correct the erroneous critiques. Qisong's stance would have gone straight against the Kingly Dao that Confucian institutionalists proposed at that time. As Charles Hartman has demonstrated, the Confucian reformer Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052) in 1025 submitted a memorial to Emperor Renzong in which Fan defined the Kingly Dao as "the governance of pre-Qin antiquity as understood and taught by Confucius." Fan's contemporaneous Confucian institutionalists, such as Ouyang Xiu and Shi Jie, further associated the Kingly Dao with Confucian literati governance, a way of conducting state affairs that envisioned the recreation of the ancient benevolent governance.[139] What relevant to my discussion is that Qisong's interpretation of the Kingly Dao can be understood as Confucian institutionalists' rival idea that competed with the Confucian Kingly Dao for imperial sponsorship.

Qisong's memorial further urges the emperor to be a sage who can elaborate on ancient sages' essence (*ti* 體) and traces (*ji* 跡):

> [Buddhism] examines sages' essence from afar and does not stop at discussing their traces nearby. However, people often cannot see the distant essence, and Buddhist monks often are restrained by the close traces. Only Your Majesty is a sage who can discern both the distant and the close, can give rise to the distant essence and make Confucians understand, and can instruct about the close traces and cause Buddhist monks to see through them. The traces belong to teachings, but the essence belongs to the Dao. If there were no Dao, their teachings would

[139] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 239–42.

become rootless. If there were no teachings, the Dao would become obscured. Therefore, teachings and the Dao rely on each other.
推聖人之遠體。不止論其近迹耳。然遠體者人多不見。近迹者僧多束執。惟陛下聖人。遠近皆察。幸陛下發其遠體。使儒者知之。諭其近迹。使僧者通之。夫迹者屬教。而體者屬道。非道則其教無本。非教則其道不顯。故教與道相須也。[140]

According to Qisong, the ancient sages, whose essence Buddhism and the emperor can elaborate on, refer to ancient legendary rulers, namely Yao, Shun, the Yellow Emperor, Fuxi, and the Divine Farmer. These ancient sages possessed the essence a long time ago. It is implied that all the Three Teachings can speak about the ancient sages' traces, and yet only Buddhism can access the essence. Since the ancient rulers' essence that Buddhism can interpret is part of the Dao, Qisong yet again suggests that the ancient Kingly Dao and the Buddhist Dao are the same. As for traces and teachings, the memorial later states that it was appropriate to use only one teaching to govern the people during the "golden age" of the Three Dynasties (*sandai* 三代), namely Xia, Shang, and Zhou. But because one teaching was not sufficient for governance after the Three Dynasties that Buddhism emerged in Chinese society.[141] This is to say, the coexistence of

[140] A similar argument can be found in Qisong's "Huangwen" 皇問 (Inquiry of August), where Qisong argues that Confucianism merely reveals traces while Buddhism discusses the root. In understanding the "Huangwen," I disagree with Yü Ying-shih's observation that the difference between Qisong's usage of *jiao* 教 (teaching) and Dao is an equivalent of the disparity of *neisheng* 內聖 (sage inside) and *waiwang* 外王 (king outside) in Confucianism. According to Yü, Qisong uses *huang* 皇 and *di* 帝 respectively to refer to *jiao* and Dao. Therefore, by saying "*huang* and *di* should be unified.," Qisong advocates for a unity of the teaching(s) and the Dao, which resembles the unity of sagehood and kingship in Confucian discourses of the time. However, Qisong gives definitions of *huang* and *di* earlier in the "Huangwen"—*huang* means the virtue of origin and *di* means the virtue of Heaven. In this regard, both *huang* and *di* points to the Dao, to which only Buddhism can provide the access. Precisely because of this, Qisong argues that Buddhism is superior to Confucianism in exploring the Dao or, in his other words, "root" and "essence." See Yu Yingshi, *Zhu Xi de lishi shijie*, 81; Qisong, *Tanjin wenji*, T 2115, 52.672a27–c09.

[141] Qisong, "Shang Renzong huangdi wanyan shu," 111.

the Three Teachings of the day is a result of the necessity of governance. Therefore, Qisong opines that the emperor should act as a sage of the time who teaches Confucians about the sages' essence that only Buddhists of the time understood, and teaches Buddhists about Confucian and Daoist traces (i.e., their ideas, practices, and organizations).

With this argument, the memorial later invokes a line from Zongmi's "Yuanren lun"—"[the Three Teachings] all return to [good] governance" (*tonggui yu zhi* 同歸於治). In this regard, Zongmi and Qisong's arguments point to the same logic. The ruler should apply all Three Teachings to his governance while being aware that Buddhism is the only one that can illuminate the Dao.[142] In Qisong's own words, "Our Buddhist teachings indeed are the source of the Dao of sages and the root of goodness in the world" 吾佛法實聖賢之道源天下之善本. The only difference is that the ruler's role is implied in Zongmi's "Yuanren lun," whereas Qisong's "Ten-thousand-word Memorial" straightforwardly exhorts Emperor Renzong. Once again, we see active involvement of emperors in the Northern Song Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings.

Emperor as the Unifier: The Case of Xiaozong and "Yuan Dao bian"

In this section, I will use Emperor Xiaozong's (r. 1162–1189) essay "Yuan Dao bian" 原道辨 (Dispute over the "Origins of the Way") and its receptions amongst

[142] *Tonggui yu zhi* originally comes from the *Book of Documents*. But Qisong's usage of it clearly is in line with Zongmi's, as I have translated in the first section. Scholars have paid attention to the intellectual connections between Qisong and Zongmi regarding the heart-mind and doctrinal classification (*panjiao* 判教). See Qian Mu 錢穆, *Zhongguo xueshu sixiangshi luncong* 中國學術思想史論叢 (Taipei: Jinglian chuban shiye gongsi, 1998), 5:128; Skonicki, "A Buddhist Response to Ancient-Style Learning," 13–14.

Buddhist clerics and Confucian literati as a case to illustrate a new phenomenon of Buddhist polemics about the Three Teachings. My research suggests that in the twelfth century, Xiaozong accepted the Buddhist formula that categorized the Three Teachings as cultivation methods for different aspects of life. However, this imperial acceptance came along with a compromise made by the Buddhist clergy. Different from their predecessors in the Northern Song, Southern Song Linji Chan Buddhist monks endorsed the idea that only sages such as Xiaozong were able to unify the Three Teachings under universal Dao. As such, leaders of the Linji Buddhist sect secured their prominent status at the imperial court.

1. Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1086–1163) on the Three Teachings

Before delving into Xiaozong's essay, we need to first sketch Xiaozong's intellectual sources against his contemporary milieu. As I will show, the Chan Buddhist master Dahui Zonggao and his disciples provided the fodder that drove the emperor to compose the "Yuan Dao bian."

Zonggao was known as an active interlocuter with scholar-officials. As Miriam Levering has pointed out, in addition to his Buddhist masters, Zonggao was under the significant influence of the famous scholar-official Zhang Shangying, who once served as the Chief Councilor at Huizong's court and was a lay Buddhist. After he relocated to the South after the fall of the Northern Song in 1127, Zonggao befriended Zhang Jun 張浚 (1097–1164), who was a political magnate in the 1130s and later wrote him a stupa inscription after Zonggao's death. With Qin Gui 秦檜 (1090–1155) claiming power at the

imperial court, Zonggao was exiled to the far south in 1141. Even in the difficult time during the exile, he had the companionship of Zhang Jiucheng 張九成 (1092–1159), an important scholar in the early Daoxue 道學 (Learning of the Way) fellowship. After Qin Gui's death, Zonggao was able to return to the capital Lin'an in early 1156. Zonggao received great imperial favor after Xiaozong ascended the throne in 1162. The new emperor granted him the honorific title Dahui or Great Wisdom along with other benefits and honors. By the time Zonggao passed away in 1163, he had become one of the most prominent Buddhist monks in the Song empire.[143]

For my discussion here, I highlight three aspects of Zonggao's circumstances after his relocation to the South in 1127. First, Emperor Gaozong (r. 1127–1162), under whose reign Zonggao mostly lived, publicly expressed his disinterest in Buddhism. The Buddhist policies under Gaozong aimed to utilize Buddhist resources for the financial benefit of the state.[144] Gaozong's policies explain why Zonggao did not receive significant imperial recognition until Xiaozong's era. Second, despite Gaozong's disinterest, anti-Buddhist sentiments in fact subsided compared to the situation under Huizong. For example, a group of monks based in Lin'an successfully persuaded the

[143] Jeffrey L. Broughton and Elise Yoko Watanabe, trans., *The Letters of Chan Master Dahui Pujue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 3–6; Hong Shufen, *Rufo jiaoshe yu Song dai ruxue fuxing*, 42–72; Miriam Levering, "Dahui Zonggao and Zhang Shangying: The Importance of a Scholar in the Education of a Song Chan Master," *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, no. 30 (2000): 115–39; Jiang Yibin 蔣義斌, *Songdai rushi tiaohelun ji paifolun zhi yanjiu* 宋代儒釋調和論及排佛論之演進 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1988), 139–145. Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi's Ascendancy* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1992), 27–28; Zhang Jun 張浚, "Dahui pujue chanshi taming" 大慧普覺禪師塔銘, in *Dahui pujue chanshi yulu* 大慧普覺禪師語錄, T 1998A, 47:836b14–837b18.

[144] Wang Shengduo, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu*, 213–220; Patricia Ebrey, "Song Government Policy," in *Modern Chinese Religion I: Song-Liao-Jin-Yuan (960-1368 AD)*, eds. John Lagerwey and Pierre Marsone (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014), 1:92–94.

government to reverse Huizong's policy that ranked Buddhist monks lower than Daoist priests in ceremonial assemblies.[145] Third, Zonggao came to know Xiaozong very early, even before Xiaozong was promoted to the crown prince in 1160. And again, it was palace eunuchs and Xiaozong's personal attendants who served as messengers between the prince and Zonggao. The connection between Zonggao and Xiaozong was so strong that the Chan master, shortly before his death, felt obliged to write the last memorial to the emperor.[146]

Zonggao's statements about the Three Teachings are primarily preserved in the *Dahui Pujue chanshi yulu* 大慧普覺禪師語錄 (Recorded Sayings of Chan Master Dahui Pujue, hereafter *Dahui yulu*). Xuefeng Yunwen 雪峰蘊聞 (fl. late 12th century), Zonggao's disciple, compiled not only Zonggao's sayings but also his poems, sermons, and letters into the *Daihui yulu*. Yunwen submitted this work to Emperor Xiaozong in 1171, not long after Zonggao's death. Xiaozong then ordered the work to be included in the Buddhist canon.[147] Therefore, the *Daihui yulu* can be understood as Yunwen and his Buddhist community's attempt to present Zonggao's ideas and life to the emperor. My discussion below will be premised on this text, more specifically on the sections of "General Sermons" (*pushuo* 普說), "Dharma Talks" (*fayu* 法語), and "Letters" (*shu* 書).

---

[145] Zanning, *Da Song sengshilüe jiaozhu*, 234–240.

[146] Zhang Jun, *"Dahui pujue chanshi taming"*, 47:836b14–837b18; For Emperor Xiaozong and Zonggao's interaction and intellectual tie, see Miriam Levering, "Ch'an Enlightenment for Laymen: Ta-Hui and the New Religious Culture of the Sung" (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 1978), 37–38; Jiang Yibin, *Songdai rushi tiaohelun ji paifolun zhi yanjiu*, 146–152.

[147] For a textual history of Zonggao's writings, see Xu Shuya 許淑雅, "Dahui Zonggao de zhuzuo qingkuang yu fenlei lunxi" 大慧宗杲的著作情況與分類論析, *Zhonghua foxue yanjiu*, no. 15 (2014): 37–98.

These sections preserve a relatively complete picture of how Zonggao presented himself when he faced different social groups and what Yunwen intended to have the emperor know about Zonggao's social engagements.

I try to understand under what social circumstances and how Zonggao discussed his views on the Three Teachings. For the analysis, I have surveyed all 98 entries from "General Sermons," "Dharma Talks," and "Letters" in the *Daihui yulu* to see to whom Zonggao gave sermons or wrote letters.[148] The result is summarized in the pie chart below. Additionally, I have included a more detailed table of the data in the Appendix.

[148] By "sermons," I refer to the contents in both "General Sermons" and "Dharma Talks." For the primary sources, see Xuefeng Yunwen, *Dahui pujue chanshi yulu*, T 1998A, 47:863a19–943a19.

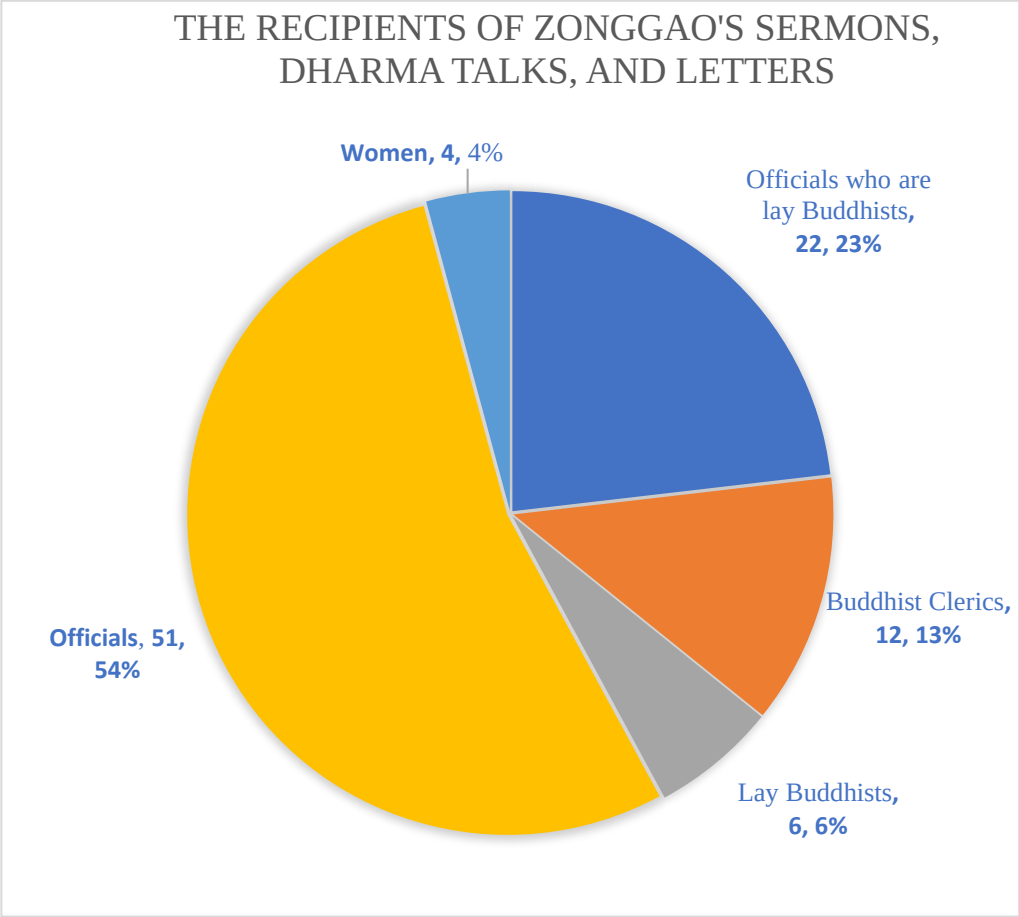

Figure 6 Recipients of Dahui Zonggao's Sermons, Dharma Talks, and Letters

The first and most obvious finding is that the majority of Zonggao's sermons and letters went to government officials. If we combine "officials" and "officials who were lay Buddhists," that sums up to 77%. Although the four female recipients did not hold any substantial posts in the Song government, three of them were granted honorific ranks by the state. The second discovery is that many of the sermons and letters also went to lay Buddhists and Buddhist clerics, which sits at 42% after combining all the components.[149]

[149] By "lay Buddhists," I mean those that Zonggao use *jushi* 居士 (literally house dweller) and Daoren 道人 (literally Dao person) to refer to in his writings.

Third, most of the non-laymen officials, with a few exceptions, consisted of those who were engaging in Chan Buddhist practices and asking for Zonggao's mentorship.[150] All the findings are reasonable given that the *Dahui yulu* is a text created to meet imperial demands. Indeed, the presentation of a close relationship between Zonggao and officials would emphasize Buddhism's value to the emperor in governing the state.

There are eight out of the 98 entries where Zonggao discusses the compatibility among the Three Teachings or between any two of the Three Teachings. The eight sermons or letters were transmitted to eight officials who were not lay Buddhists at that time. Seven out of the eight were civil (*wen* 文) officials who received Confucian education. Hence, it is safe to say that Zonggao's discussions of the Three Teachings in the *Dahui yulu* targeted a group of scholar-officials who had more diverse intellectual interests and were well-versed in more than one teaching.

A close look at the discussions about the Three Teachings shows that Zonggao makes three points that repeatedly appear in the eight entries. First, Zonggao urges scholar-officials to "correct their method of [cultivating] heart-and-mind (*zheng xinshu* 正心術)." Although Zonggao acknowledges that this idea comes from Confucianism, he insists that rectifying the heart-and-mind can also be accomplished through understanding the "matter of life and death" (*shengsi shi* 生死事), namely *saṃsāra*.[151] Second, Zonggao

---

[150] For exceptions, one example has been translated by Jeffrey Broughton and Elise Yoko Watanabe. A scholar-official compiled his own version of the *Diamond Sutra* and sent it to Zonggao. In reply, Zonggao wrote a letter to express his disappointment and rejection over the new compilation. See Broughton and Watanabe, trans., *The Letters of Chan Master Dahui Pujue*, 295–305.

[151] Three sermons and one letter mention this point. They are "To County Magistrate Luo" (Shi Luo Zhixian 示羅知縣), "To Documents Manager Cheng" (Shi Cheng Jiyi 示成機宜), and "To Court Instructor

reckons that one should not purposely pursue the Dao and should strictly put what the sages of the Three Teachings agree with (e.g., the Daoist three treasures mentioned in the Zanning section) into daily life. By doing so, one will "naturally and quietly merge into the Dao" 自然默默與之相投.[152] Third, "although the sages of the Three Teachings established their teachings differently, their Dao leads to the same place" 三教聖人立教雖異而其道同歸一致. Because Zonggao proposes a universal Dao, he opposes the idea that one can only choose one path from the Three Teachings to achieve the Dao.[153]

We should not take Zonggao's arguments at their face value because, as I have demonstrated, they were produced in conversations with scholar-officials who were interested in more than one teaching. Thus, it is not surprising that Zonggao suggests that Buddhism is superior to the other two teachings in other places of his writing.[154] However, we also need to avoid underestimating these arguments' influence at the

---

Mo" (Shi Mo Xuanjiao 示莫宣教), and "In Reply to Academician of the Baowen Hall Liu" (Da Liu Baoxue 答劉寶學). See Xuefeng Yunwen, *Dahui pujue chanshi yulu*, T 1998A, 47: 897b14–898b10, 911c24–913a24, 913a25–913b29, 925a06–926a18.

[152] See "To County Magistrate Luo," "To Prefect Xiong Cibu of E," (Shi E shou Xiong Cibu 示鄂守熊祠部), "To Documents Manager Cheng," and "To Court Instructor Mo," in *Dahui pujue chanshi yulu*, T 1998A, 47: 897b14–898b10, 898b18–899a17, 911c24–913a24, 913a25–913b29.

[153] See "General Sermons Invited by Office Manager Qian" (Qian Jiyi qing pushuo 錢計議請普說), "To Defender-in-Chief Zhang" (Shi Zhang Taiwei 示張太尉), "To Court Instructor Mo," and "In Reply to Principal Graduate Wang" (Da Wang Zhuangyuan 答汪狀元), in *Dahui pujue chanshi yulu*, T 1998A, 47: 884c12–886b01, 905c05–906b09, 913a25–913b29, 932a22–933a24.

[154] For example, Zonggao, in one letter, criticized the Daoist concept of the heart-and-mind as a false method. Similarly, as Morten Schlütter has demonstrated, although Zonggao and members of the Linji Chan Buddhism criticized their Buddhist rivalries of the Caodong tradition for spreading false methods of meditation, namely "silent illumination Chan" (*mozhao Chan* 默照禪), their attacks were mainly directed toward members of the educated elite. In other words, these attacks should be seen as their "marketing strategy" to attract patrons from the literati. See Broughton and Watanabe, trans., *The Letters of Chan Master Dahui Pujue*, 231; Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 104–121.

imperial court. Xiaozong's connection with Zonggao did not fade away with the master's death. On December 12th, 1169, nine years before composing the "Yuan Dao bian," the emperor summoned Xuefeng Yunwen to the imperial palace. After their conversation, the emperor said: "The Three Teachings are one. It's just that they belong to different schools" 三教一也但門戶不同.[155]

2. Emperor Xiaozong's "Yuan Dao bian"

During most of his reign, Xiaozong ruled the empire in the presence of Emperor Emeritus Gaozong who was his foster father and the Southern Song's founding emperor. Despite Gaozong's supervision, Xiaozong attempted to centralize power in his court. As Nap-yin Lau has pointed out, Xiaozong administratively and fiscally strengthened his authority by appointing his favorites and weakening state councilors. After ruling for sixteen years, the emperor wrote the "Yuan Dao bian" in late 1178 or early 1179, in which he argued against the Confucian chef-d'oeuvre, the "Yuan Dao" 原道 (Origins of the Way) composed by Han Yu.[156] Han asserted that Confucianism was the only one among the Three Teachings that possessed the correct Dao. Thus, those who side with the Confucian Way should "make humans of these people (i.e., Buddhists and Daoists), burn their books, and make homes of their dwellings" 人其人, 火其書, 盧其居.[157] Because of

[155] Xu Song, *Song huiyao jigao*, 9977.

[156] I adopt Lau Nap-yin's dating because the late 1178 or 1179 is the only period in which the official titles of the people who are involved in the event match the historical accounts. Nap-yin Lau, "The Absolutist Reign of Sung Hsiao-tsung" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1986), 4–5, 58–63, 92–104, 193–94.

[157]. Han Yu 韓愈, "Yuan Dao" 原道, in *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu* 韓昌黎文集校注, collated and punctuated by Ma Qichang 馬其昶 (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1986), 1.19. For English

Han's attitude toward Buddhism, Song Buddhist apologetics such as Qisong often took issues with Han Yu. However, Zonggao did not strongly attack Han Yu; rather, he found a way to dismiss Han's criticism by transcending the competition among the Three Teachings.[158] In this regard, Xiaozong went further than Zonggao and connected himself to the stance that Qisong held.

Against Han Yu's appeal, Xiaozong's essay starts with the lament that Han failed to "surmise the intention of sages" 揆聖人之用心. The essay then uses an imagined interlocutor to present the prevailing notion that Buddhism is "completely irrelevant to worldly matters" 於世事了不相關 and thus unable to participate in Confucian practices. The emperor rebuts this notion with the interchangeability between the Buddhist Five Precepts and the Confucian Five Constants, an aforementioned thread that had long existed in Buddhist traditions. The essay then deploys a similar rhetorical tactic and argues that Daoism and Confucianism are compatible as well:

> Yang Xiong (53 BCE–18 CE) reckons that Laozi abandoned benevolence and integrity, and eliminated ritual propriety and music. Based on the traces in Laozi's writing, what he cherishes are three things: compassion, frugality, and daring not take the lead in the world. Confucius said: "cordial, proper, deferential, frugal, and unassuming."[159] He also said: "The greatest is nothing but benevolence."[160]

translation, see Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom comp., *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 1:573.

[158] Hong Shufen, *Rufo jiaoshe yu Song dai ruxue fuxing*, 236–37.

[159] Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont trans., *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1998), 1.10.73.

[160] This phrase might come from a passage in the *Book of Rites* where Confucius thinks one of his disciples, Zhuansun 顓孫, is benevolent and "takes his benevolence as what is important" 以其仁為大. See Wang Pinzhen 王聘珍, *Dadai liji jiegu* 大戴禮記解诂 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983) 6.110.

> Isn't what Laozi calls "kindness" the greatest benevolence? Isn't "daring not take the lead in the world" the greatest unassumingness? When Laozi discusses ways for governance, he thinks that [different ways] should support each other; what he values is tranquility and unity.[161] Do all of these really go against Confucius?
> 彼揚雄以老氏棄仁義、滅禮樂。今迹老子之書，其所寶者三：曰慈、曰儉、曰不敢為天下先。孔子則曰：温良恭儉讓。又曰：惟仁為大。老子之所謂慈，豈非仁之大者耶？曰不敢為天下先，豈非讓之大者耶？至其言治道則互見偏舉，所貴者清静寧一，而與孔聖果相背馳乎？[162]

Xiaozong's argument here reminds us of Zonggao's view in the *Dahui yulu* where Zonggao emphasizes the compatibility between the Daoist notions of "three treasures" and "tranquility" and Confucian ideas.[163] In addition to the compatibility as we have seen in the previous Buddhist discourse, the essay further argues that the Three Teachings all originated from a shared origin, namely the Dao, and takes Confucianism as an example:

> Confucius' demeanor is of the middle Dao, and he is a sage. As for a sage's deeds, is there anyone of them that does not accord with ritual propriety, music, benevolence, and integrity? How can one name [the sage's deeds]? They resemble motions of Heaven and Earth and cycles of *yin* and *yang*, which have no starting and ending points. How can [the motions and the cycles] have the intention to establish differences among spring, summer, autumn, and winter? All [the four seasons] are but names that the sage is forced to use. The same idea can be applied to disparities among benevolence, integrity, ritual propriety, and music. Sages used them to establish the [Confucian] teaching and govern the world. They had no choice but to do so. If we follow the names that [sages] are forced to use

[161] Xiaozong's point here resonates with what Emperor Huizong says in his commentary on the *Dao de jing*. Therein, Huizong criticizes people who intentionally and painstakingly pursue the Dao and points out that their flaw results from the fact that "some of them depend on a one-sided [teaching] and some of them are blinded by an incomplete [learning]" 或倚於一偏或蔽於一曲. In his commentary, Huizong also stresses that "the way of governance values tranquility" 治道貴清靜. See Song Huizong, *Song Huizong yujie daode zhenjing* 宋徽宗御解道德真經, ZHDZ 10:13, 2.628c, 4.700c.

[162] My discussion and translation of the "Yuan Dao bian" are based on the punctuated version the *Quan Song wen*. See Song Xiaozong, "Yuan Dao bian" 原道辨, in *Quan Song wen* 全宋文 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2006), 236:297–98. For an alternative translation of the whole essay, see Morten Schlütter, "China's Three Teachings and the Thought of Emperor Xiaozong," *Occasional Papers* 6 (1990): 151–61.

[163] Xuefeng Yunwen, *Dahui pujue chanshi yulu*, T 1998A, 47: 905c05–906b09, 913a25–913b29.

> and fathom [where their source lies], we find the Dao which is the progenitor of benevolence, integrity, ritual propriety, and music. Benevolence, integrity, ritual propriety, and music are indeed the Dao's tools.
> 孔子從容中道，聖人也。聖人之所為，孰非禮樂，孰非仁義，又烏得而名焉？譬如天地運行，陰陽循環之無端，豈有意為春夏秋冬之別哉？皆聖人强名之耳。亦猶仁義禮樂之別，聖人所以設教治世，不得不然也。因其强名，推而求之，則道也者，仁義禮樂之宗也；仁義禮樂者，固道之用也。

The distinction between the progenitor (*zong* 宗) and tools (*yong* 用) deserves particular attention because it devalues the fundamental Confucian ideas as instrumentalized labels that cannot comprehensively represent the Dao. In this light, Buddhist and Daoist ideas originally have no conflict with their Confucian counterparts; meanwhile, the ideas from the Three Teachings are named differently only because sages were forced to give them those names in order to utilize them for the better good. It is worth noting that the progenitor Dao does not belong to any one of the Three Teachings. Instead, it is a universal Dao that comes before the Three Teachings. Therefore, the essay harshly criticizes those who emphasized distinctions between the Three Teachings as the inferior among the Three Teachings (*sanjiao moliu* 三教末流). Only when it comes to the Three Teachings' functions does the essay become compartmental:

> Cutting off thoughts and taking no actions, Buddhism and Daoism are merely to cultivate oneself. Establishing the Five Constant Relationships,[164] Confucius used them to govern the all-under-heaven. The distinction between them particularly lies in where they implement [the ideas].
> 夫佛老絶念無爲，修一身而已矣。孔子立五教以治天下者也，特所施不同耳.

[164] They are integrity of father (*fuyi* 父義), compassion of mother (*muci* 母慈), fraternity of older brother (*xiongyou* 兄友), obedience of younger brother (*digong* 弟恭), and filial piety of son (*zixiao* 子孝). See Yang Bojun 楊伯峻, *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 638.

The functional dichotomy between Confucianism and the other two teachings demarcates self-cultivation from governance and ideologically excludes Confucianism from the emperor's body and mind. Following this assertion, the essay then spells out its most famous dictum, a statement on the Three Teachings' compartmentalized functions:

> Therefore, one can use Buddhism to cultivate the mind, Daoism to nurture the body, and Confucianism to rule the world. [If one does so,] what else would he be confused about?
> 以佛修心，以道養生，以儒治世則可也，又何惑焉？

3. Confucian Literati's Response to the "Yuan Dao bian"

As soon as Xiaozong finished composing the "Yuan Dao bian," he ordered Gan Bing 甘昺 (fl. late 12th century), a palace eunuch,[165] to deliver the manuscript to Shi Hao 史浩 (1106–1194).[166] Gan Bing was the younger brother of Gan Bian 甘昪 (fl. late 12th century), a high-ranking palace eunuch and one of the "favored close" (*jinxi* 近習) of the emperor. Shi was a significant political figure of the time. He was appointed as Chief Councilor twice under Xiaozong's reign and had a special bond with the emperor. When the emperor was still a candidate for crown prince, Shi served as his tutor and eventually aided him in securing the position of heir apparent.[167] As a result, Shi later became one of

[165] Tuotuo, et al., *Song shi*, 469.13672–73.

[166] Li Xinchuan 李心傳, "Yuan Dao bian yiming sanjiao lun" 原道辨易名三教論, in *Jianyan yilai chaoye zaji* 建炎以來朝野雜記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000), *yi*.3.544.

[167] Jiang Yibin 蔣義斌, *Shi Hao yanjiu: jianlun Nansong Xiaozong chao zhengju ji xueshu* 史浩研究兼論南宋孝宗朝政局及學術 (Taipei: Huamulan chubanshe, 2009), 29–30.

the two officials who received posthumous sacrifices together with the emperor in the ancestral temple.[168]

I follow Charles Hartman's taxonomy and categorize Shi Hao and his like-minded colleagues together into Confucian literati and Gan Bing into technocrats. According to Hartman's reconstruction, the political history at the Song imperial court between 1162 and 1182 largely centered around the impasse between Confucian literati and technocrats. When Shi Hao was presented with the emperor's essay around early 1179, he had recently resigned as the Chief Councilor due to a disagreement with Xiaozong's support for technocrats in settling a judicial matter. After that, Shi became Court Lecturer (Shijiang 侍講). 1179 was also the year when Xiaozong concluded his short-term advocacy for Confucian institutionalists and returned to the policy of balancing the power dynamics amongst Confucian literati and technocrats.[169] Xiaozong's move then can be understood as an attempt to reshape the religious dynamics at the court, in which Confucianism will be allotted less importance. Especially given that the palace eunuch Gan Bing delivered the essay to Shi Hao, this reconfiguration can be seen as an extension of the Confucian-technocratic standoff.

Shi Hao's reply started with an extremely humble tone:

---

[168] Tuotuo, et al., *Song shi*, 396.12069.

[169] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 278–340; Zhang Weiling 張維玲, *Cong Nansong zhongqi fan jinxi zhengzheng kan daoxue xing shidafu dui huifu taidu de zhuanbian* (1163–1207) 從南宋中期反近習政爭看道學型士大夫對恢復態度的轉變 (Taipei: Mulanhua wenhua chubanshe, 2010), 106–07; Li Xinchuan, "Shi Wenhui yi zhijian quwei," *Jianyan yilai chaoye zaji*, *yi*.7.615–16.

> I, your humble subject, bowed before [the manuscript] hundreds of times, unrolled the scroll, read it aloud, and admired the loftiness and marvels of your sagely learning. You have paid attention to the Dao of emperors and kings because there has not been a moment when you are not into it. This is a very difficult achievement for the emperors and kings in history. I admire, submit to, praise, and exclaim over [your learning] to the extent that I cannot clearly express myself.
> 臣百拜展誦，仰見聖學高妙。留神帝王之道，蓋無時頃不在其中。此歷古帝王所甚難得者。臣欽服贊嘆，不能名言。[170]

Despite all the efforts to commend the emperor's intellectual achievement, the reply turns to express Shi Hao's grave concerns over the emperor's blatant disagreement about Han Yu's "Yuan Dao." Shi gave three major reasons. First, Shi emphasizes that "those who speak of the Dao" 言道者 from the Tang to the present have never belittled the "Yuan Dao," which implies that Confucianism's supremacy over the other two teachings has become common understanding. Second, he declares that what Han supported was "the lineage by which [former] emperors and kings transmitted the Dao" 帝王傳道之宗. Shi's reply then reiterates this lineage of the transmission of the Dao as expressed in from the "Yuan Dao":

> Yao → Shun → Yu → King Tang of Shang → King Wen of Zhou → King Wu of Zhou → Duke of Zhou → Confucius → Mencius[171]

[170] Shi Hao, *Maofeng zhenyin manlu*, 10.195.

[171] As Christian Soffel and Hoyt Tillman have noted, the Confucian lineage of sages established by Han Yu contains two important *daotong* 道統 (the succession and transmission of the Dao) topoi that later prevailed in the Song dynasty: 1) the Dao had been lost since Mencius; 2) Han Yu implicitly claimed the position of successor of the Dao. The positive reception of Han Yu among Song Confucians offers another facet to prove Han Yu's significance in forming the cultural norms of the Song. See Christian Soffel and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman, *Cultural Authority and Political Culture in China: Exploring Issues with the Zhongyong and the Daotong during the Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2012), 88.

The selected kings and Confucians in this lineage rejected the orthodoxy of any other figures outside of this genealogy. In other words, Xiaozong's legitimacy in this version of Confucianism resides in whether he acknowledges and actively takes part in the lineage that Han Yu proposes. Last, Shi argues that Han Yu's "intention lies in aiding the world and establishing Confucian teaching, and thus people dared not dispute [the "Yuan Dao"] after his death" 意在於扶世立教所以人不敢議其後. The three reasons essentially defend Confucian superiority and its value for imperial authority, which manifests a strong tendency to uphold the norms that Han Yu had proposed.

The reply then proceeds to offer an alternative view more inclusive than that of Han Yu's; therein, Shi concedes that the Three Teachings' ideas could essentially be identical and share a common origin, but the progenitor has to be Confucianism. In other words, it is the realm of Confucianism that contains Buddhism and Daoism, not the other way around. It is striking how similar Shi Hao's logic is to what we have seen in the Buddhist discussions since the ninth century. In order to turn the Three Teachings into a unity, Shi Hao's reply harkens back to the *Great Learning* and presents the renowned Confucian classic as the shared origin:

> The Dao of the Great Learning indicates that only after things are investigated can knowledge be extended. Once one extends his knowledge, his thoughts will become sincere. Once his thoughts become sincere, his heart-and-mind will be rectified. Once his heart-and-mind is rectified, he will be cultivated. Once he is cultivated, his family will be well-arranged. Once his family is well-arranged, the state will be well-governed. Once the state is well-governed, all-under-heaven will be pacified. One can use this way to cultivate the heart-and-mind, nourish

> life, and govern the world. There is no sphere [of life] in which it is not appropriate.
> 盖大學之道，物格而後知至。知至而後意誠，意誠而後心正，心正而後身修，身修而後家齊，家齊而後國治，國治而後天下平。可以修心，可以養生，可以治世，無所處而不當矣。[172]

The substitution of Confucian body-and-mind cultivation for Buddhist and Daoist ones again resonates with the "Yuan Dao," for Han Yu also cites the idea of "rectifying the heart-and-mind" from the Great Learning as a rejoinder to Buddhist and Daoist methods of cultivating the mind.[173] Despite its attempt to protect Confucian supremacy at the court, Shi Hao's contention is more inclusive than Han Yu's because Shi acknowledges the similarities between Confucian doctrines and their Buddhist and Daoist counterparts. The reply neither denounces Buddhism and Daoism nor advises the emperor to abandon his interest in them. Toward its end, the reply expects Emperor Xiaozong to "slightly alter the last passage" 稍竄定末章. To put it another way, the emperor is advised to abandon his functional compartmentalization regarding the Three Teachings and the blatant disagreement with Han Yu. Since Shi Hao's reply is not straightforwardly against Buddhism and Daoism, his stance would represent the interests of moderate Confucian

[172] Shi Hao, *Maofeng zhenyin manlu*, 10.195–96.

[173] After citing the *Great learning*, Han Yu writes: "What the ancients called rectifying the heart-and-mind and making thoughts sincere were things they actually put into practice. Yet today those who would rectify their heart-and-minds do so by rejecting the empire and the state and by abrogating the natural principles of human relations: although they are sons, they do not regard their fathers as fathers. Although ministers, they do not regard their ruler as ruler. Although subjects, they do not attend to their duties" 然則古之所謂正心而誠意者將以有為也今也欲治其心而外天下國家滅其天常子焉而不父其父臣焉而不君其君民焉而不事其事. See de Bary, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 1: 572; Han Yu, *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu*, 1.17.

literati despite the fact that some among this group, like Shi himself, might be a sympathizer of the Daoxue scholars.[174]

Xiaozong responded to the challenge from moderate Confucian literati in a perfunctory manner. After Cheng Dachang 程大昌 (1123–1195), another Court Lecturer and a close friend of Shi, expressed similar opinions, the emperor decided to change the title of his essay from "Yuan Dao bian" to "Sanjiao lun" 三教論 (Discussions of the Three Teachings).[175] Confronted with the Confucian supremacy established among Confucian literati, the emperor took a step back and showed his respect to the cultural and political norm on the surface. However, the emperor did not completely accept the Confucian literati's advice. Changing the title might just have been paying lip service, for he did not make any changes to the main text.

3. Buddhist Ascendancy and the "Yuan Dao bian"

Another version of Emperor Xiaozong's "Yuan Dao bian" was collected into the *Yunwo jitan* 雲臥紀譚, or *Records and Discussions from Reclining on Clouds*, a collectanea of Buddhist anecdotes. Around 1188, ten years after the "Yuan Dao bian" was composed, Zhongwen Xiaoying 仲溫曉瑩 (c. 1120–?), another disciple of Zonggao, finished compiling the *Yunwo jitian*.[176] The text preserved in this Buddhist collectanea is

[174] Although Shi Hao recommended Daoxue scholars to Emperor Xiaozong as Chiang I-pin has noted, this should not be taken as evidence to support that he was a member of the Daoxue fellowship, for his lack of direct involvement in Daoxue affairs. See Jiang Yibin, *Shi Hao yanjiu*, 73.

[175] Li Xinchuan, "Yuan Dao bian yiming sanjiao lun," *yi*.3.544.

[176] Xiaoying left Jingshan temple and started his reclusive life in 1171. In 1178, he moved to Mount Gan 感 in Fengcheng 豐城 County of West Circuit of Jiangnan (modern Fengcheng in Jiangxi province) because

very similar to the version from Shi Hao's collected works; however, there is a significant disparity when it comes to the endings of the two versions. Thus, it would be very useful for our analysis to juxtapose the two endings here:

> a. The version preserved by Shi Hao:
> Han Yu's discussion only follows the Three Teachings' traces [in history] and does not discuss what unifies them. Therefore, I have composed the "Yuan Dao bian."
> 愈之論從其迹而已，不言其所以同者，故作「原道辨」。
> b. The version preserved by Zhongwen Xiaoying:
> Only a sage can unify the Three Teachings, and I cannot but discuss it.
> 唯聖人為能同之，不可不論也。[177]

Although it is nearly impossible to determine which of the two versions is closer to the original essay, their divergent implications deserve more attention. According to ending A, Han Yu's essay fails to discover what unifies the Three Teachings, namely their shared origin, because Han only discusses different historical traces they left. Going in a different direction, ending B implies that the emperor himself is the sage who can homogenize the Three Teachings because he himself is the one who claims to have cacophony caused by Han Yu's statement. The emperor does so by assigning Three Teachings different functions. It is worth noting that this is not the first time that Xiaozong positioned himself as a sage who could coordinate various resources to reach great success. In his 1169 "Yongren lun" 用人論 (A Discourse on Employing Officials),

---

one of his disciples was able to shelter him. After moving to Mount Gan, he began to compile the *Yunwo jitan*. After finishing it around 1188, he then wrote a letter to one of his friends at Jingshan temple. See Zhongwen Xiaoying, "Yunwo anzhu shu" 雲臥菴主書, in *Yunwo jitan* 雲臥紀譚, X 1610, 2. 680c08–684b6.

[177] Shi Hao, *Maofeng zhenyin manlu*, 10.195; Zhongwen Xiaoying, *Yunwo jitan*, X 1610, 2.672a10–11.

Xiaozong claimed that he as the ruler *could* and *should* judge and manage talents. In proving this statement, the essay alludes to the *Zhuangzi* to imply that Xiaozong is the sage who accords with Heaven and thus can organize talents with different abilities.[178]

The statements of the two endings would fit respectively into the interests of Confucian and Buddhist communities. For Confucian literati, Shi Hao was the person who successfully persuaded the emperor to alter the essay's title. Given that the emperor's essay and Shi's reply are juxtaposed in Shi's collected works, ending A could potentially give Shi and his like-minded peers more credit for this triumph, even if merely changing the title was not a complete victory. For Buddhist monks, making the emperor a sage who unites the Three Teachings could potentially help Buddhism obtain a favorable position at the court and stimulate the emperor to further patronize Buddhism and especially the Linji Chan sect, to which Zonggao and his disciples belonged. In this regard, the members of the Linji Chan sect continued their predecessors' efforts in the Northern Song to promote Linji Chan at the imperial court.[179] But different from their predecessors, the Southern Song Linji Buddhists were able to reach a higher level, that is, from scholar-officials and imperial relatives to the emperor.

In addition to Xiaoying, another disciple of Zonggao also made an effort to turn Xiaozong into a living divinity. On March 25, 1183, the emperor granted the Linji school the *Yuanjue jing* 圓覺經 (*Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment*) annotated by himself, a text

[178] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 52–54.

[179] For research on Linji Chan Buddhism's ascendancy in the Northern Song imperial court, see Welter, *Monks, Rulers, and Literati*.

concentrating on the cultivation of the wonderous heart-and-mind of perfect enlightenment (*yuanjue miaoxin* 圓覺妙心). Biefeng Baoyin 別峰寶印 (1109–1191), a leading Linji Chan master at the time, composed an encomium to express his deep gratitude to the emperor:

> As for ancient Buddhas and the current Buddha 古佛與今佛,
> their wide and long tongues[180] are the same 同一廣長舌.
> In a place where wheel ruts do not exist 於無途轍中,
> they make tracks appear for things 為物啟途轍.
> They spread open thousands of layers of clouds 撥開千嶂雲,
> to set free a sky of moonlight 放出一天月.
> Universally, they make people on the vast ground 普令大地人,
> completely illuminated by their words 言下悉照徹.
> Enlightenment [that] cannot be [further] perfected 覺亦無可圓,
> and illusions [that] cannot be [further] eliminated 幻亦無可滅.
> Only the void that is also nothing but void— 只此無亦無,
> a bit of snow in a heated furnace 紅爐一點雪.
> Touching head to the ground before [ancient] Buddhas and the [current] Buddha 稽首佛與佛,
> word by word, their ideas have no difference 字字無異說.[181]

Although the poem mentions the pursuit of perfect enlightenment and eliminating illusions that come out of the sutra, the significant message here is that the emperor is regarded as a living Buddha whose teaching appears to be the same as that of the ancient Buddhas. Therefore, even though we have no extant records regarding whether or not

[180] *Prabhūta-tanu-jihva* is one of the thirty-two marks of a Buddha, which refers to a tongue big enough to cover his face. This marvel also appears in the *Lotus Sutra*. See Leon Hurvitz trans., *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 286.

[181] Song Xiaozong, *Yuzhu Yuanjue jing* 御註圓覺經, X 251, 1.152a18–22.

Emperor Xiaozong had read and responded to Xiaoying's collectanea, we might be able to find some hint from the emperor's reaction to Baoyin's encomium: "After reading it through the second watch of night (9–11 PM), the emperor was greatly pleased and summoned Baoyin soon after that" 既經乙夜之覽皇情大悅已而宣對.[182] All these signs strongly suggest that Xiaozong favored Chan Buddhism and probably practiced Chan methods of cultivating the heart-and-mind.

Situating the "Yuan Dao bian" and the responses from the Buddhist clergy in the political milieu of the time, the Chan Buddhist masters undoubtedly secured their place at the court over Confucian literati. The advice from Shi Hao and his Confucian colleagues was not well-received because Xiaozong insisted on his criticism of Han Yu. However, placing the essay and its Buddhist support in the long durée of Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings, we see that Zonggao and the other Chan masters abandoned the idea that Buddhism was the only teaching able to fully access the Dao.

Conclusion

Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings witnessed considerable changes from the early medieval period to the Song dynasty. What I have shown in this chapter primarily concerns one thread. Buddhist apologists in medieval China refuted the idea of shared origin(s) between the Three Teachings despite acknowledging their compatibility. Beginning in the ninth century, Buddhist discussions of the Three Teachings embraced the idea of a shared origin with one condition—Buddhism is the only teaching that can

[182] Zhongwen Xiaoying, *Yunwo jitan* X 1610, 1. 670b3.

explicate the origin. The Northern Song continued this idea that Buddhism was superior and represented the origin of the Dao, even though Buddhist monks, such as Zanning, accorded the role of supervising the Three Teachings to the emperor. A significant change occurred in the Southern Song. Under the influence of Dahui Zonggao and other Linji Chan Buddhists, Emperor Xiaozong laid claim to the supervising role and argued for a shared origin for the Three Teachings, namely a universal Dao unique to any of the Three Teachings. More importantly, Xiaozong implied that he was the sage that could unify/homogenize (*tong* 同) the Three Teachings. Given what we have learned thus far, this probably is one of the earliest records that can be regarded as the predecessor of the later well-known notion of "unifying the Three Teachings into one" (*sanjiao heyi* 三教合一). Xiaozong's statement continued to impact Southern Song Buddhist discussions. For example, the monumental Buddhist history, the *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (*Comprehensive History of the Buddhist Patriarchs*), completed in 1269 also included the Buddhist ending of the "Yuan Dao bian" where Xiaozong was presented as the sage who could unify the Three Teachings.[183]

The Buddhist ascendancy at the court did not come at no cost. Since the leaders of Linji Chan Buddhism supported Xiaozong's statement, they made a great compromise in that their endorsement relinquished the claim that Buddhism was the only teaching that could access the Dao. Moreover, Buddhism during this process became closely associated with the imperial apparatus, especially technocrats. As I have demonstrated in

[183] Zhipan 志磐, *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀, T 2035, 49.430a17–18.

Qisong, Zonggao, and Xiaozong's cases, the leading Buddhist monks connected themselves to the emperors through palace eunuchs and imperial attendants who were primarily technocrats. More tellingly, Xiaozong utilized Buddhism to counterbalance Confucian literati's ideological influence at the court, which positioned Buddhism as the opposition to Confucian institutionalism. Therefore, Xiaozong weaponized his contemporary Buddhist ideas as a technocratic device to construct the universal Dao that he desired for his reign and his dynasty.

Now let us go back to the anecdote in the *Qidong yeyu* analyzed at the beginning of this chapter. There is little doubt that the narrative is written from the perspective of Confucian literati. The presentation of Buddhism at the court is more or less exaggerated because Buddhist clerics in the Southern Song had begun to abandon their old assertion that under certain circumstances that Buddhism is superior to Confucianism and Daoism. Interestingly, Confucian literati, such as Shi Hao, were among the people who promoted the idea that Confucianism was superior to the other two teachings. Therefore, the presentation of Buddhism in the story can be understood as a Confucian understanding of the power structure among the Three Teachings at the court—Buddhism is the most favored one by the emperor. And of course, it must be an "evil" technocratic eunuch who gives the order to create such an "unacceptable" painting. Jiang Ziyuan's reversal of the power dynamics with his joke thus represents the unfulfilled dream that Confucians would fight their way to the top and obtains imperial acceptance. As always, history never fails to offer playful déjà vu. Buddhists in the Southern Song accepted what their predecessors hated—the Three Teachings arose from the same origin; Confucians in the

Southern Song learned from Buddhist apologists from the ninth to the early twelfth century and claimed all Three Teachings were contained within one Confucian Dao.

CHAPTER 3

CONFRONTING BUDDHISM AND DAOISM AT THE IMPERIAL COURT: A COMPARISON BETWEEN WANG ANSHI (1021–1086) AND ZHU XI (1130–1200)

This chapter investigates a topic that has been inadequately studied—the Wang Anshi 王安石 administration's religious policies. Although scholars have touched on Wang Anshi's attitude toward Daoism and Buddhism, discussions are primarily centered on his philosophical works or his response to Buddhist apologists.[184] Rarely do scholars discuss religious policies under Wang Anshi's councillorship (1068–1076), probably because the New Policies as one of the major reforms in Chinese history have preoccupied scholars' imagination of this time.[185] Therefore, I will present in this chapter the case of the Temple of the Central Great One (*zhong Taiyi gong* 中太一宮), a temple completed in 1073 to worship the deity Great One (Taiyi 太一 or 太乙) in the Song capital Kaifeng, in hope to enhance our nuanced understanding of the historical

[184] Jiang Yibin 蔣義斌, *Songdai rushi tiaohelun ji paifolun zhi yanjiu* 宋代儒釋調和論及排佛論之演進 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1988), 22–58; Thomas Jülch, "Wang Anshi's 'Treatise on Great Men,'" *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 66, no. 2 (2013): 197–204.

[185] For example, most biographies of Wang Anshi and studies of the New Policies do not discuss Wang Anshi's religious policies at the imperial court. See James T. C. Liu, *Reform in Sung China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959); Paul Jakov Smith, "Shen-Tsung's Reign and the New Policies of Wang An-Shih," in *The Cambridge History of China: Part One: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907-1279*, ed. John W. Chaffee and Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 5:347–483; Paul Jakov Smith, "Anatomies of Reform: The Qingli-Era Reforms of Fan Zhongyan and the New Policies of Wang Anshi Compared," in *State Power in China, 900-1325*, ed. Patricia Ebrey and Paul Jakov Smith (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2016), 153–91; Jonathan Pease, *His Stubbornship: Prime Minister Wang Anshi (1021-1086), Reformer and Poet* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2021); Qi Xia 漆俠, *Wang Anshi bianfa* 王安石變法 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1959); Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘, *"Beisong zhengzhi gaigejia Wang Anshi"* 北宋政治改革家王安石, in *Deng Guangming quanji* 鄧廣銘全集 (Shijiazhuang: Heibei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2003), 1:1–298.

landscape.[186] Surveying primary sources about the temple's construction, the first section discusses how Song Emperor Shenzong (r. 1067–1085) initiated the construction of the Temple of the Central Great One and debates over the project. The second section explores the Daoist eschatology behind the temple construction. The third section shows how Wang Anshi and his primary aide at the time, Lü Huiqing 呂惠卿 (1032–1111), envisioned a Confucian theory to explain the temple construction and how they thought of the Daoist components in the worship of the Great One. The fourth section returns to Song Emperor Xiaozong's essay "Yuan Dao bian" discussed in Chapter 2 and delves into the Southern Song Confucian Zhu Xi's 朱熹 reaction to Xiaozong's essay. In doing so, I hope to make a comparison between Wang Anshi and Zhu Xi in terms of their attitudes toward other religions at the imperial court, because the comparison offers a lesson on how Confucian literati should approach Daoism and Buddhism in order to achieve their own highest level of political success.

My research suggests that this temple's theological framework derived from Confucian and Daoist traditions, in which the Han weft-text tradition and the Daoist Lingbao 靈寶 (Numious Treasure) tradition played significant roles. Confronted with censures from the opponents of the Wang administration and its New Policies, Wang Anshi, often regarded as a Confucian scholar-official, collaborated with Shenzong to make the temple construction possible. Although Lü Huiqing utilized the *Rites of Zhou* (*Zhouli* 周禮) as the ground for the temple construction, both Wang and Lü tolerated the

[186] My reconstruction of the chronology of events during Wang Anshi's councillorship has greatly benefitted from Liu Chengguo's recent year-by-year biography of Wang Anshi. See Liu Chengguo 劉成國, *Wang Anshi nianpu changbian* 王安石年譜長編 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2018).

Daoist components of the temple. In addition, Wang befriended the temple's director, Chen Jingyuan 陳景元 (1035–1094), a renowned Daoist priest. In contrast, Zhu Xi firmly stood against Xiaozong's essay and the Buddhist influence on the emperor; moreover, he championed his version of Confucianism as the only correct teaching for the emperor.

The Inception of the Temple of the Central Great One

On May 11, 1070, Emperor Shenzong received a report on the entrance exam for court academicians. The reporter stated that people had summarized the current state policies in three concise lines: "Heavenly warnings are not worth fearing, others' opinions not worth caring about, and ancestor's precedents not worth preserving" 天變不足懼人言不足恤祖宗之法不足守, and the exam question reflected this circulating saying.[187] This was no trivial matter because future Edict-drafters, Chief Councilor, and Assistant Councilors would in most cases need to first pass this exam.[188] Shenzong summoned Wang Anshi, then Assistant Councilor, to verify if Wang and his State Council knew about the "Three Not-worths." In reply, Wang first denied that he was aware of this saying, but then either partially or fully agreed with not caring about others' opinions and not preserving ancestor's precedents. The only sentence that Wang trod with extra caution was that on heavenly warnings:

[187] Scholars have debated over whether or not Wang Anshi had actually said the "Three Not-worths" (*san buzhi* 三不足). Most recent scholarship concludes that Wang Anshi had not said it, and the rumor was due to the fabrication of his political components. I have no interest in joining the debate. My purpose of citing this exchange between Shenzong and Wang Anshi is to discuss Wang's reaction. For a summary of the debate, see Li Huarui 李華瑞, *Wang Anshi bianfa yanjiu shi* 王安石變法研究史 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2004), 509–22.

[188] Gong Yanming, *Songdai guanzhi cidian*, 14.

> Your Majesty handles state affairs by yourself and has no lingering enjoyment nor dissolute deeds. You conduct everything in fear of harming the masses. This precisely is dreading heavenly warnings.
> 陛下躬親庶政，無流連之樂，荒亡之行，每事惟恐傷民，此即懼天變。[189]

Wang's response is worth further unpacking because Wang and Shenzong's New Policies at that time were under considerable pressure. About twenty-five days before the court audience on the "Three Not-worths," Wang Anshi and his conservative rival Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086) famously had an exchange of letters during which Sima warned Wang, "all-under-heaven are having tumultuous opinions" 天下議論恟恟.[190] At this point, any disasters, such as severe drought, flood, and warfare, would be taken as heavenly warnings against the legitimacy of Wang's administration. Wang's response in front of Shenzong then attempts to prevent this undesired consequence by emphasizing preemptive actions—since Shenzong has been practicing good governance and constraining his desires, the emperor and his administration (i.e., Wang Anshi and his reformist colleagues) should not be blamed for any portents.

During the following year, Zhenzong promoted Wang Anshi to Chief Councilor, and thus Wang obtained strong control of the Council of State (Zhongshu menxia 中書門下).[191] However, a warning of disasters soon arrived. In 1071, Court Astrologer Zhou

---

[189] Huang Yizhou 黃以周, et al., comp., *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian shibu* 續資治通鑑長編拾補 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 7.346. For discussion of this event, also see Pease, *His Stubbornship*, 206–07.

[190] Sima Guang 司馬光, *Sima Guang ji* 司馬光集, punctuated and collated by Li Wenze 李文澤 and Xia Shaohui 霞紹暉, (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 2010), 60.1264.

[191] Paul Jakov Smith, "Anatomies of Reform: The Qingli-Era Reforms of Fan Zhongyan and the New Policies of Wang Anshi Compared," 170–76.

Cong 周琮 (fl. 1060s–1070s) divined the awaiting calamities and proposed to the emperor the construction of the Temple of the Central Great One:

> According to the calculation based on the *Scripture of the Great One*, the seventh year of the Xining reign (1074), which is a *jiayin* year, matches the numbers of *yang*-nine and one-hundred-six. This year will mark the return to the beginning of the cycle (*yuan*). The scripture says that the Master of the Year (Jupiter) would have the disaster of *yang*-nine, the Great One would have the distress of one-hundred-six, and all the calamities would occur in the beginning or end of a cycle. When *yang*-nine and one-hundred-six meet *guiyou* and *jiayin* years, there will be a cluster of catastrophes. If we can have the deity Great One of Five Blessings move to the central capital, anomalies will be eliminated, and auspices will be brought about. Detailing [the precedents], the Great One of Five Blessings entered the *xun* abode of the southeast in the *jiashen* year of Yongxi reign (984). Consequently, [the imperial court] constructed the Eastern Temple of Great One in Su village. When the deity entered the *kun* position of the southwest in the *jisi* year of Tiansheng reign (1029), [the court] then built the Western Temple of Great One in Baijiao town. I hope that [Your Majesty] will scrutinize the precedents and respectfully build a temple in order to invite the Great One of Five Blessings to the capital.
> 據太一經推算，熙寧七年甲寅歲，太一陽九、百六之數，至是年復元之初。故經言太歲有陽九之災，太一有百六之厄，皆在入元之終，或元之初。陽九、百六，當癸丑、甲寅之歲，為災厄之會，而得五福太一移入中都，可以消異為祥。竊詳五福太一自雍熙甲申歲入東南巽宮，故修東太一宮於蘇村，天聖己巳歲入西南坤位，故修西太一宮於八角鎮。伏望稽詳故事，崇建宮宇，迎五福太一於京師。

We do not have enough evidence to pinpoint which *Scripture of the Great One* is the one Zhou Cong refers to, nor can we say this scripture is Confucian or Daoist. But as Stephen Bokenkamp has demonstrated, the synonym of disasters, *yang*-nine and one-hundred-six (*yangjiu bailiu* 陽九百六), arose from Liu Xin's 劉歆 (50?–23 BCE) *Santong li* 三統曆 (Triple Dispensation Calendar). When Liu devised the Triple Dispensation system, he had to reconcile the Triple Dispensation epoch of 4,617 years based on the lunar calendar with the Jupiter epoch of 4,560 years. In order to fill the fifty-seven-year gap between the two

epochs, Liu added fifty-seven disaster years to the Jupiter epoch and slipped the fifty-seven years at different times in the 4,560 years. For example, there would be nine years of drought (i.e., *yang*-nine) after the first 106 years (i.e., one-hundred-six) into the epoch; and then there would be nine years of flood (i.e., *yin*-nine) after another 374 years. The sum of the added disaster years is fifty-seven and thus makes the total years in accordance with that in the Triple Dispensation system. The Han weft-text tradition and Daoism later developed Liu Xin's system, and different methods of calculation emerged in the process.[192] But certainly in Zhou Cong's proposal, the term *yuan* denotes a big cycle that contains three small cycles, namely the three dispensations (*tong*), regardless of how they are defined.

Therefore, Zhou Cong suggested that the imperial court should take action to prevent the foreseeable calamities that would occur three years later in a *jiayin* year and the beginning of another *yuan*. To support his argument, Zhou utilized the precedents from Emperors Taizong and Renzong's reigns. However, it is worth noting that no intentions to avert future catastrophes were involved in the constructions of the Temples of the Eastern and Western Great One as far as the government documents reveal. Taizong in 981 followed the suggestion from a thaumaturge (*fangshi* 方士) and constructed the Temple of the Great One in Suzhou in the Jiangnan region in the southeast, and then moved the temple to Su village, a place in the southeastern suburb of the capital Kaifeng in 983. Renzong and Empress Dowager Liu (969–1033) in 1028 accepted the proposal from court astrologers and ordered the construction of the Temple of the Western Great One in Bajiao town in the

[192] Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Time after Time," 63–67.

southwestern suburb of the capital. The old temple thereafter became the Temple of the Eastern Great One. Although both constructions adhered to the locations of the Great One on the celestial sphere, they merely aimed to bring blessings to imperial subjects without any mention of disasters.[193] I have included a map below to show the relative positions of the three temples built for the Great One. As I will show later, this connection between the Great One and looming crises possibly derived from Daoist beliefs at the time.

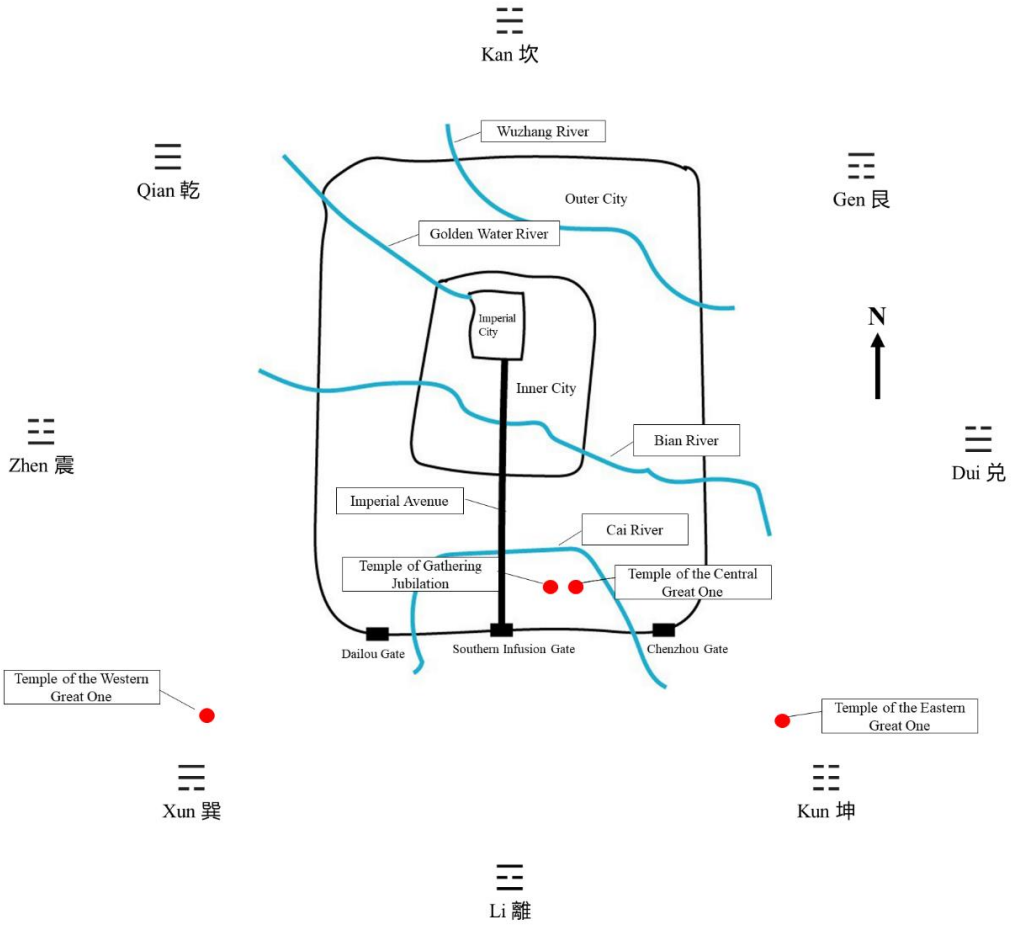

Figure 7 Relative Positions of the Three Temples of the Great One in Kaifeng[194]

[193] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 22.503–04, 24.545, 106.2469.

[194] This map is drawn by the author based on the Northern Song Kaifeng map in the *Historical Maps of China*. See Cheng Guangyu 程光裕 and Xu Shengmo 徐聖謨, *Zhongguo lishi ditu* 中國歷史地圖 (Taipei: Zhongguo wenhua daxue chubanbu, 1980), 2:8.

On November 30, 1071, Emperor Shenzong approved the plan to construct the Central Temple of the Great One inside the capital city Kaifeng.[195] However, Shenzong's approval was soon met with an objection from the political magnate Wen Yanbo 文彥博 (1006–1097), then Military Affairs Commissioner (Shumi shi 樞密使). When he submitted a memorial to oppose the construction plan that he deemed expensive, Wen had served twice as Chief Councilor under Emperor Renzong and was among the most influential opponents of the New Policies. The opening part of the memorial reads:

> I, your servant, notice that [the state] is building the Great One Temple to pray for blessings for your subjects. I heard that Great One was the noble among heavenly deities. Since the heavenly way values simplicity, all constructions for this purpose should be plain. [A ruler] should not engage in the craftiness of carving and engraving, participate in the magnificence of gold and jade, overspend, and overwork the constructors. He should complete a construction in no time and place bright gods in the temple. [In doing so,] pious and pure sincerity will fill Your Majesty's heart-and-mind and cause fortunes of divine response. This is an indubitable principle.
> 臣伏見修建太一宮，為民祈福。臣聞太一，天神之貴者。天道貴質，凡所營繕，謂宜簡質，不務雕鏤之巧，不事金碧之華，不重費，不太勞。不日成之。明神安之。虔潔之誠，內充天人之心，交感神應之福，其理必然。[196]

Although Wen Yanbo agreed with the decision to build the temple, he opposed the exorbitant costs for temple decorations, which was not a rare argument before and during his time.[197] This was not the first time that Wen criticized Shenzong's policies. Earlier in

---

[195] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 228.5543.

[196] Wen Yanbo 文彥博, *Lugong ji* 潞公集 (Ming Jiajing edition), 20.

[197] For example, there was a strong tradition of criticizing the high expenses of building Buddhist temples since medieval China. See Jülch, ed., *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel*, 1–7.

1070, he advised the emperor to abolish the Finance Planning Commission (Zhizhi sansi tiaoli si 制置三司條例司), a pivotal bureau invented for the New Policies. It is said that he also questioned Shenzong and Wang Anshi's plan to create more sinecures for state-owned temples to retire officials who were critical of the reformist government.[198]

The tension between the Bureau of Military Affairs (hereafter, BMA) led by Wen Yanbo and the New Policies institutions directed by Wang Anshi and supported by Emperor Shenzong was very notable. According to Sima Guang's diary, Shenzong and Wang Anshi intended to establish a new personnel institute to control the system of official promotions and demotions in the BMA. This move caused a backlash from Wen Yanbo, which resulted in an exchange between the emperor and Wang Anshi on the necessity of the BMA in 1070. During the exchange, Wang implied that the BMA should be disbanded so that power would further be centralized in the emperor's hands.[199] The most discussed exchange among Wen, Wang, and Shenzong happened on April 14, 1070. After a heated debate over the pros and cons of the New Policies, this exchange ensued:

> [Wen] Yanbo: "The institutions established by the [imperial] ancestors are well-preserved. There is no need to change them only to lose people's support."
> The emperor: "Changing the institutions indeed would cause unpleasant feelings among scholar-officials. But how would it be inconvenient for the masses?"
> Yanbo: "Your Majesty are governing all-under-heaven with scholar-officials, not with the masses!"
> The emperor: "How can all scholar-officials think the reform is wrong? There, of course, are scholar-officials who think we should reform."

---

[198] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 211.5128, 5129.

[199] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 211.5138–39.

> 彦博又言：“祖宗法制具在，不須更張以失人心。”上曰：“更張法制，於士大夫誠多不悅，然於百姓何所不便？”彦博曰：“爲與士大夫治天下，非與百姓治天下也。”上曰：“士大夫豈盡以更張爲非，亦自有以爲當更張者。”

Wang Anshi then continued the conversation by pointing out the necessity of the reform.[200] Pertinent to my discussion here is how much Shenzong was aware of the difference between those like Wen Yanbo and Wang Anshi. Even though they were all considered scholar-officials, they held diverging views on Shenzong's policies.

As I will show later, Wang Anshi, in contrast to Wen Yanbo, supported the construction of the Temple of the Central Great One. With Wen's previous opposition to temple sinecures, it is tempting to view the 1071 memorial as yet another effort by Wen Yanbo to counter the policies of Shenzong and Wang Anshi. However, Shenzong ignored Wen Yanbo's criticism. The Temple of the Central Great One was completed on May 26, 1073. The new construction was located in the outer city of Kaifeng, east to the Temple of Gathering Jubilation (Jixi guan 集禧觀). According to the temple stele inscription composed by Lü Huiqing, Wang Anshi's primary aide at the time, this grandiose temple had murals on which heavenly deities were painted:

> Its corridors and rooms are painted with the assembly of hundreds of gods. There are the Five Thearchs, the sun and moon, and stars in Heaven, and the Five Sacred Peaks and Four Rivers on Earth, none of which are not positioned according to their rank and title. The commonalities and disparities of ranking and clothing, the altar's standards, and the norms of prayers and sacrifices are all based with the aid of Daoist explanations on the learning of the Great One.

[200] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 221.5369.

其廊廡四壁，圖百神之朝，天至於五帝日月星辰，而地至於五嶽四瀆，莫不咸在其位號。尊卑服物同異與夫壇場之制，禱祀之儀，皆以太乙之學為本，而參用道家之說焉。[201]

Daoist Clergy and the Temple of the Central Great One

On the day of the construction's completion, Emperor Shenzong appointed Daoist priest Chen Jingyuan to supervise the Temple of the Central Great One. Chen, whose style name was Master of Cyan Void (Bixu zi 碧虛子), held the salary/status-indicative rank of Supervisor of the Left Precinct (Zuojie dujian 左街都監, rank 5 among the twelve ranks for Buddhist and Daoist officials) at that time. According to Chen Jingyuan's biographies preserved in the Daoist canon, he became active at the imperial court because he was introduced to Wang Gui 王珪 (1019–1085) right after Shenzong ascended the throne. During Shenzong's reign, Wang Gui worked with Wang Anshi and served as Assistant Councilor and later Chief Councilor. Chen Jingyuan became prominent at the court after he established a connection with Wang Gui. Over this course, Zhenzong became familiar with Chen's Daoist writings. For instance, Chen in 1072 submitted to Shenzong his compilation *Daode zhenjing cangshi zuanwei pian* 道德真經藏室纂微篇 (Subtleties Culled from the Storehouse of the Way and Its Power).[202]

---

[201] Lü Huiqing 呂惠卿, *"*Song zhongtaiyigong beiming*"* 宋中太乙宮碑銘, ZHDZ 48:29, 646a–b.

[202] The earliest biography for Chen Jingyuan is written by Daoist exegete Xue Zhixuan 薛致玄 (?–1271) and preserved in his exegesis to Chen Jingyuan's *Subtleties Culled from the Storehouse of the Way and Its Power*. See Xue Zhixuan 薛致玄, *Daode zhenjing cangshi zuanwei kaiti kewen shu* 道德真經藏室纂微開題科文疏, ZHDZ 10:9, 1.485c–88a. For studies on Chen Jingyuan's life and works, see Yamata Takashi 山田俊, "Hekikyoshi Chin Keigen no shisō" 碧虛子陳景元の思想, *Shūkan tōyō gaku* 68 (1991): 38–56; Lu Guolong 盧國龍, "Lun Chen Jingyuan de daojiao xueshu" 論陳景元的道家學術, *Zongjiao zhexue*, no. 3 (1995): 357–73; Wang Shengduo, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu*, 125–29.

Most relevant to my discussion is Chen's *Yuanshi wuliang duren shangpin miaojing sizhu* 元始無量度人上品妙經四註 (Four Commentaries on Wonderful Superior Book of Primordial and Immeasurable Salvation, hereafter, the *Four Commentaries*). In the fall of 1067, about a half year into Shenzong's reign, Chen Jingyuan completed this compilation in which he collected four commentaries to the *Book of Salvation* respectively from Daoists Yan Dong 嚴東 (fl. 485), Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 (fl. 640), Xue Youqi 薛幽棲 (fl. 754), and Li Shaowei 李少微. This work by Chen is the most important one among the extant commentaries to this fundamental text of the Lingbao Daoist tradition.[203] Intriguingly, this text entails passages about avoiding disasters of the *yang*-nine and one-hundred-six and the worship of the Great One, which could have been the reason why Shenzong appointed Chen Jingyuan as the abbot of the Temple of the Central Great One. In his preface to the *Four Commentaries*, Chen provides a description of cosmogony and then explains why the *Book of Salvation* was transmitted to the human realm:

> The Metal Mother of the Tortoise Terrace (i.e., Queen Mother of the West) took pity on the calamities of the *yang*-nine and one-hundred-six, paid a visit to the Jade Capitoline, and sincerely requested for the distribution [of *the Book of Salvation*]. When Xuanyuan, the Yellow Emperor, was on a quest for the Dao at the northern side of Emei Mountain, he kowtowed in front of an august being[204] and received the transmission of the precious instructions.

[203] Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Sources of the Ling-Pao Scriptures," in *Tantric and Taoist Studies: In Honor of R.A. Stein*, ed. Michel Strickmann (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1983), 2:434–86.

[204] The august beings refers to August One of Heavenly Perfection (Tianzhen huangren 天真皇人). According to Hsieh Shu-Wei, this deity's role in the Lingbao tradition is the translator of celetial texts, a kind of writing created by deities. Humans cannot read and interpret the texts without a prior translation

> 龜臺金母憫陽九百六之災，親禮玉京，懇請流布。洎乎軒轅黃帝問道于峨嵋之陰，稽首皇人，載傳寶訓。[205]

Thereafter comes the story of the emergence of the Lingbao scriptures that a Daoist student would know by heart—Ge Xuan 葛玄 (164–244) received the scripture from the Perfected Being of the Supreme Ultimate (Taiji zhenren 太極真人) and began to disseminate the scripture.[206] The section translated above has two crucial components. First, it demonstrates that the *Book of Salvation* could be a solution to the anticipated catastrophes that Shenzong sought to exorcize by building the Temple of the Central Great One. Second, as I have shown in my first chapter, the Yellow Emperor was considered one reincarnation of the Song Divine Ancestor. Therefore, including the Yellow Emperor in the lineage of the scripture's transmission would associate this scripture with the imperial Zhao family and potentially result in imperial patronage.[207]

Further discussions of the Great One and the *yang*-nine and one-hundred-six are preserved in the third *juan* or fascicle of the four *juan* of the *Four Commentaries*. The *juan* starts with the creation of the cosmos and then gives a list of high deities as the

done by Augest One. See Xie Shiwei 謝世維, *Tianjie zhi wen: Wei Jin Nanbeichao lingbao jingdian yanjiu* 天界之文魏晉南北朝靈寶經典研究 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 2010), 103–15.

[205] Chen Jingyuan, *Yuanshi wuliang duren shangpin miaojing sizhu* 元始無量度人上品妙經四註, ZHDZ 3:30, 353c.

[206] Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, 150.

[207] As Hsieh Shu-Wei has noted, the plot that August One transmits teachings or scriptures to the Yellow Emperor also appears in in early Daoist texts, such as the *Baopu zi* 抱樸子 (Master Who Embraces Simplicity) and the *Taishang lingbao wufu xu* 太上靈寶五符序 (Array of the Five Talismans of the Numinous Treasure). See Xie Shiwei 謝世維, *Tianjie zhi wen*, 154–60. But as far as we know, Chen Jingyuan's *Four Commentaries* is the earliest record of the Yellow Emperor in the *Book of Salvation*.

result of the cosmogony. Therein, we find the Great One. According to the commentators cited by Chen Jingyuan, the Great One resides in the Palace of Upper Clarity (Shangqing gong 上清宮), which is the synonym of the Palace of Purple Tenuity (Ziwei gong 紫微宮).[208] When the Great One descends to the human realm, he would lodge in one's brain or, more literally translated, mud pellet (*niwan* 泥丸). The Great One "has a body with black upper part and red lower part, wears the Hat for Penetrating the Heavens, and sees with protruding eyes" 形黑上而赤下頭戴通天之冠縱目而視. Constantly visualizing the Great One would bring longevity to the practitioner.[209]

Later in the third *juan*, Chen Jingyuan cites the commentaries to gloss the below sentence from the main text of the *Book of Salvation*:

> The Dao says: "The movements of Heaven and Earth also have their misfortunes and endings."
> 道言："夫天地運度，亦有否終。"

All four commentaries following this sentence use the "*yang*-nine and one-hundred-six" to interpret this line; Cheng Xuanying's commentary details two ways of calculating the cycles. According to Cheng, the two methods come respectively from the *Book of Changes* (*Zhouyi* 周易) and the *Book of the [Former] Han* (*Hanshu* 漢書) as shown in the table below.

Version from the *Book of Changes*	Version from the *Book of the [Former] Han*

[208] As I will show later in this chapter, Purple Tenuity was precisely where the Great One located in the star charts of Chen Jingyuan's time.

[209] Chen Jingyuan, *Yuanshi wuliang duren shangpin miaojing sizhu*, ZHDZ 3:30, 3.397c–98b.

19 years = 1 *zhang* 章	1 *yuan* 元 = 4,617 years
4 *zhang* = 1 *bu* 部	After three *yuan* (13,851 years), there will be the end of a great *kalpa*.
20 *bu* = 1 *tong* 統	
3 *tong* = 1 *yuan* 元 = 4,620 years (with 54 disastrous years included)	

Table 4 Calculations of "Yang-nine and One-hundred-six" in the *Four Commentaries on the Book of Salvation*

Similar to Liu Xin's Three Dispensation system, we see here a cyclical view of the cosmos and disasters. The human realm forever lives in the cycles measured by the units from *zhang* to *yuan*. Based on the version from the *Book of Changes*, *yang* numbers are always odd numbers. Consequently, one *yuan* of 4,620 years would have nine years of droughts (*han* 旱) and fires (*huo* 火) lasting seven, five, three, or one year(s). Because *yin* numbers are always even numbers, there would be floods (*shui* 水) lasting eight, six, four, or two years. Small-scale droughts would occur after 160 years (i.e., one-hundred-six) into the *yuan*. There would be small-scale calamities, such as droughts, fires, or floods, after 300 years into the *yuan*. After 900 years into the *yuan*, large-scale catastrophes, such as droughts and floods lasting respectively for nine years and eight years, would emerge. The version from the *Book of the [Former] Han* adds another layer to the cycles. After three *yuan* of 13,851 years, there would be an apocalypse that marks the ending of the current *kalpa* cycle. By that time, "Heaven and Earth will perish" 天地消亡.[210] It is worth noting that numbers here seem to be less important than the idea of

[210] Chen Jingyuan, *Yuanshi wuliang duren shangpin miaojing sizhu*, ZHDZ 3:30, 3.406b–c.

the cyclical cosmology. If we follow the calculation from the *Book of Changes,* the number does not add up to 4,620 years even after taking out the fifty-four disastrous years.

Despite the looming catastrophes that would destroy humanity, the *Four Commentaries* do provide a solution to the problem, which is to rely on the instructions from *the Book of Salvation*:

> The Dao says: "When the movements of Heaven and Earth come to an end, one should still retreat, burn incense, and recite this scripture. When stars are mislocated, and the sun and moon are lost and dim, one should still retreat, burn incense, and recite this scripture. When the four seasons lose normalcy, and *yin* and *yang* are disordered, one should still retreat, burn incense, and recite this scripture. When the ruler of a kingdom meets a disaster, and wars broadly arise, one should still retreat, burn incense, and recite this scripture. When plagues are rampant, and the multitudes are dead or harmed, one should still retreat, burn incense, and recite this scripture. When teachers and friends pass away, one should still retreat, burn incense, and recite this scripture. This is because the merits of retreat and scripture-reciting are copious. In the upper realm, they eliminate heavenly catastrophes and protect emperors; in the lower realm, they avert disease and save the multitudes. Because life and death depend on retreating and scripture-reciting, and their blessings are innumerable, we call [the deities] Heavenly Beings of Immeasurable Universal Salvation."
> 道言：夫天地運終，亦當修齋，行香誦經。星宿錯度，日月失昏，亦當修齋，行香誦經。四時失度，陰陽不調，亦當修齋，行香誦經。國主有灾，兵革四興，亦當修齋，行香誦經。疫毒流行，兆民死傷，亦當修齋，行香誦經。師友命過，亦當修齋，行香誦經。夫齋戒誦經，功德甚重，上消天灾，保鎮帝王，下禳毒害，以度兆民。生死受賴，其福難勝，故曰無量普度天人。[211]

This passage points to the heavenly warnings illustrated by Court Astrologer Zhou Cong. First, the ominous Jupiter in Zhou Cong's report would fall into the category of the

[211] Chen Jingyuan, *Yuanshi wuliang duren shangpin miaojing sizhu*, ZHDZ 3:30, 3.407c–08b.

anomaly of mislocated stars. Second, the abnormal four seasons and *yin* and *yang* would be associated with droughts and floods due to the *yang*-nine and one-hundred-six. Third and most importantly, the *Book of Salvation* offers a way to protect the emperor through appropriate ritual procedures. Although there is not enough evidence to pinpoint the details of why Shenzong decided on Chen Jingyuan as the abbot, it is safe to say that Chen was indeed a fitting candidate for the position, because he compiled the *Four Commentaries* that would have supplied Shenzong with necessary rituals to counter the potential heavenly warnings. Indeed, according to Chen Jingyuan's biographies, part of his duty as the abbot was to correct the errors of Daoist rituals used in the temple. Later under Shenzong's reign, Chen took charge of the examination for Daoist clerics. One of the materials for the examinations was the *Book of Salvation*.[212]

Wang Anshi, Lü Huiqing, and the Temple of the Central Great One

1. Wang Anshi's Attitude toward Buddhism and Daoism at the Imperial Court

Although Wang Anshi traditionally is regarded as a Confucian literatus, scholars have demonstrated Wang Anshi's eclectic attitude toward Buddhism and Daoism.[213] For example, Wang Anshi at one point in his life wrote a letter to the famous *guwen* 古文 (ancient culture/literature) literatus Zeng Gong 曾鞏 (1019–1083), in which Wang criticized Zeng Gong's narrow view of classics (*jing* 經) and urged Zeng to read beyond

[212] Xue Zhixuan, *Daode zhenjing cangshi zuanwei kaiti kewen shu*, ZHDZ 10:9, 1.486c.

[213] Wang Shengduo, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu*, 115–121; Jiang Yibin, *Songdai rushi tiaohelun ji paifolun zhi yanjiu*, 22–58.

Confucian classics.[214] Wang Anshi's strong defense of Buddhism in the letter is frequently cited by scholars:

> Nowadays, things disturbing mores are not from Buddhism, but from learned scholar-officials indulging themselves in profits and desires. They only pay lip service to praise each other, but know nothing about self-cultivation.
> 方今亂俗不在於佛，乃在於學士大夫沉沒利欲，以言相尚，不知自治而已。[215]

Scholars have touched on Wang Anshi's discussions of Buddhism at the imperial court,[216] but further explanation of their implications for the state's religious policies is needed. The most important discussion transpired on June 4, 1072, during a meeting between Shenzong and the members of the State Council led by Wang Anshi:

> Emperor Shenzong said to Wang Anshi and his fellows: "Cai Que (1037–1093) discussed the exam held in the Imperial Academy, but in an extremely hasty fashion."
> Feng Jing (1021–1094), [then Assistant Councilor]: "I heard that most examinees plagiarized the works of Wang Anshi and his son. The examiner hated this and thus restrained such behavior."
> Shenzong: "I intend to standardize the Dao and its virtues. If I indeed mean to implement the Dao's teachings, how can I let [examinees] write baseless assumptions? Those [questions and answers] with the same words as in the *Book of Odes*, the *Book of Documents*, and standard phrases should not be changed in exams."
> Wang Anshi: "Both the *Book of Odes* and the *Book of Documents* have the saying, 'show kindness to those who are distant and help those who are near.' [Examinees] should not use language that differ from [the classics to describe this saying]. I read Buddhist writings. They match [this saying from] the classics. This

[214] According to Liu Chengguo's research, we do not know about the exact time when Wang Anshi wrote the letter. See Liu Chengguo, *Wang Anshi nianpu changbian*, 2060–62.

[215] Wang Anshi, *Linchuan xiansheng wenji* 臨川先生文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959), 778–79.

[216] Pease, *His Stubbornship*, 250–51.

is because their principle is the same. Although [Buddhist writings and Confucian classics] are far away from each other, their match is as fitting as that of military tallies."
Shenzong: "The Buddha is a person from the Western Regions. Given his language is different, to what degree do his doctrines differ [from that in Confucian classics]?"
Wang Anshi: "In my humble opinion, if [teachings] conform to Principle, even if they are divergent as ghosts from gods, the gist has nowhere to be changed."
Shenzong: "Indeed!"
上謂王安石等曰："蔡確論太學試，極草草。" 馮京曰："聞舉人多盜王安石父子文字，試官惡其如此，故抑之。"上曰："要一道德。 若當如此説，則安可臆説？《 詩》、《 書》 法言相同者，乃不可改。"安石曰："柔遠能邇，《詩》、《書》 皆有是言，別作言語不得。 臣觀佛書，乃與經合，蓋理如此，則雖相去遠，其合猶符節也。"上曰："佛西域人，言語即異，道理何緣異？" 安石曰："臣愚以爲苟合於理，雖鬼神異趣，要無以易。"上曰："誠如此。"[217]

Although Feng Jing supposedly should collaborate with Wang Anshi in the State Council, Feng had a partnership with Wen Yanbo in the BMA at the beginning of Zhenzong's reign and continued to oppose the New Policies after being promoted to Assistant Councilor.

The background of this conversation is that Shenzong approved Wang Anshi's plan to reform the Civil Service Examination on March 5, 1071. Wang planned that examinees should be tested on the *Analects* and the *Mencius*, and could choose to be tested on one other Classic including: the *Book of Odes*, the *Book of Documents*, the *Book of Change*, the *Rites of Zhou*, and the *Book of Rites*. Among the test materials, the reformers led by Wang Anshi regarded the *Book of Odes*, the *Book of Documents*, and the *Rites of Zhou* as the guiding classics. On May 3, 1073, the imperial court initiated an

[217] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 233.5659–60.

exegesis project for the three classics. Wang Anshi annotated the *Rites of Zhou*, and his son Wang Pang 王雱 (1044–1076) and aide Lü Huiqing were responsible for the other two classics. The project was completed in the summer of 1075 and resulted in the well-known *New Meanings of the Three Classics* (*Sanjing xinyi* 三經新義). On August 27, 1075, Shenzong gave the new exegesis to all levels of academies as their textbook.[218] Therefore, by "standardizing the Dao and its virtues" (*yi daode* 一道德), Shenzong meant that the Civil Service Examination was supposed to use the learning/Dao of Wang Anshi, Wang Pang, and Lü Huiqing in order to bring scholar-officials on the same page with regard to ideas, customs, and morality.

Clearly, Shenzong and Wang Anshi envisioned a unified teaching that could transform scholar-officials into followers of the New Policies. But one conspicuous characteristic of this teaching is its eclecticism. Wang Anshi agreed that examinees must cite Confucian classics verbatim; at the same time, he did not exclude other ways to interpret Principle (*li* 理). After Shenzong raised the question about disparities between Buddhism and Confucianism, Wang replied with a strong statement emphasizing that these two teachings would reflect the same Principle. Thus, Wang Anshi advocated for a universal but inclusive diversity in state ideology, that is, he would agree with only a fixed set of principles and provide explanations for the principles in his own language but still allow different teachings to use different language to interpret the principles. As we will see in this chapter, this universal but inclusive diversity did not only apply to Buddhism but also to Daoism at the imperial court.

[218] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 220.5334–36, 243.5917, 266.6525.

2. Wang Anshi and the Temple of the Central Great One

There is no extant record of whether or not Wang Anshi agreed with the construction of the Temple of the Central Great One immediately after Zhou Cong's proposal. However, we do have records about his exchange with Shenzong after the temple's completion in 1073. When Shenzong was about to conduct the rituals to place the image of the Great One in the newly constructed temple, he originally did not involve Wang Anshi in the ritual procedure despite precedents for having the Chief Councilor as Envoy of Reverent Placement (Fengan shi 奉安使), the primary officiant of the rituals. Instead, the emperor sought to appoint Assistant Councilors to this position. Wang Anshi disagreed with this plan. He opined that the Great One was a Heavenly Thearch and deserved a higher liturgical status. As a result, Wang Anshi served as Envoy of Reverent Placement. The fact that Wang requested to be the primary officiant of the rituals revealed that he must have deemed this temple and his position in the ritual procedure to be important. I will explain this significance in the following subsection.

After Chen Jingyuan became the abbot, he and Wang Anshi developed a companionship, probably because they both are natives of Jiangxi, and their hometowns were only thirty-eight miles distant from each other. Chen Jingyuan requested retirement from the temple in 1075 and anticipated returning to Lu Mountain, a sacred site for Daoist practitioners near Chen's hometown Nancheng county (modern Nancheng, Jiangxi

province). But Shenzong rejected the request and kept Chen at the court until 1083.[219] At some point in 1075, Wang Anshi composed a poem on behalf of Chen Jingyuan and wrote it on the wall of the Temple of the Central Great One. The poem reads:

> My bureaucratic body has bureaucratic duties 官身有吏責,
> Encountering things, I have encountered grudges and doubts 觸事遇猜嫌.
> With my wild nature, how can I bear this 野性豈堪此?
> Bound for Lu Mountain, I shall return 廬山歸去來.[220]

Despite being a poem composed for Chen Jingyuan, this poem also points to Wang Anshi's plight at that particular stage of his life. Wang Anshi had implored Shenzong to retire him several times since the New Policies started. He finally retired from the central government in 1074 but was soon summoned back to the court in early 1075. Soon after Wang was appointed as Chief Councilor again, a schism between him and his fellow reformer Lü Huiqing left the political climate deteriorated and Wang disappointed, especially because Lü Huiqing allegedly slandered him.[221] Given Wang's desire for retirement and his conflict with Lü Huiqing, this poem could have reflected the experiences of both Wang and Chen Jingyuan at the court. In other words, they both might have wished to retire from official duties and undesired political currents, and this

[219] According to Chen's biography composed by Xue Zhixuan. Chen came from prefecture Jianchang 建昌, which was a prefect next to Wang Anshi's hometown Fuzhou 撫州. Xue Zhixuan, *Daode zhenjing cangshi zuanwei kaiti kewen shu*, ZHDZ 10:9, 1.486a–87a.

[220] Wang Anshi, *Linchuan xiansheng wenji*, 26.301. The phrase "I shall return" (*guiqulai* 歸去來) alludes to the famous "Verses on Returning Home" (Guiqulai xi ci 歸去來兮辭) by Tao Qian 陶潛 (365–427). See Tao Qian, *Tao Yuanming ji* 陶淵明集, collated and annotated by Lu Qinli 逯欽立 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), 5.159–63.

[221] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 220.5334–36, 243.5917, 252.6168–69; 266.6532–6534; For a summary of the events, see Pease, *His Stubbornship*, 297–352.

poem may have spoken for both of them. This is yet another piece of evidence to demonstrate Wang's connections to this temple and its abbot. Inferring from these connections and Wang's seeming silence over the expensive construction, it was surely impossible that Wang Anshi held the same opinion as Wen Yanbo, who advised the emperor to keep the construction and decoration simple and budget low.

3. Lü Huiqing and the Temple of the Central Great One

The most crucial connection between the reformers and the Temple of the Central Great One is the stele inscription that Lü Huiqing composed for the temple in 1073. At that time, Lü Huiqing and Wang Anshi had not parted ways. About four months before the temple's completion, Lü, with Wang's recommendation, was appointed as Examiner of the Affairs of the Five Offices of the Secretariat (Jianzheng zhongshu wufang gongshi 檢正中書五房公事). This was a significant position. Since the Finance Planning Commission, the headquarters of the New Policies, was abolished in 1070, the central government moved the management of the New Policies to the Council of State.[222] And because the Secretariat, or the Secretariat-Chancellery (Zhongshu menxia 中書門下) in its full name, was synonymous with the Council of State at that time, Lü's promotion was essentially elevating him to be second only to Wang Anshi. Despite the existence of Assistant Councilors, it was Lü Huiqing who managed all clerks in the department and operated the production and distribution of documents. As Charles Hartman points out, it

[222] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 211.5128–29; 241.5884.

was crucial in the structures of Song governance to have the ability to produce and distribute valid documents.[223] It is hard to underestimate Lü Huiqing's importance to Wang Anshi. Therefore, given his status as the primary aide to Wang Anshi and a staunch advocate of the New Policies, Lü's thoughts expressed on the stele inscription probably reflected those of the reformers, especially Wang Anshi, at the imperial court.

Lü Huiqing composed this inscription in a tone that spoke to Emperor Shenzong. Part of the inscription explains the theory behind the worship of the Great One and the temple construction:

> I, your servant, have examined the "Spring Office" in the *Rites of Zhou*. The responsibility of Lineage Officer is to offer sacrifices to heavenly deities. Their ranks reach as venerable as Lord on High of Bright Heaven and as low as Director of Clan, Director of Destinies, Wind Master, and Rain Master. Those who study ritual propriety have matched the deities with [stars] in astrological books; [therein,] the deities all have prominent positions. Furthermore, the Lineage Officer's subordinates include Sire Pingxiang and Sire Baozhang who manages celestial positions and their allotted areas and fields in order to observe deviants and auspices. The Divine Aide controls the method of three celestial bodies (i.e., the sun, the moon, and stars) to map the residences of ancestral spirits, heavenly deities, and earthly gods, and discusses their names and features to reach them. The Grand Invoker takes charge of words for the six invocations to pray for good fortunes.[224] Indeed, the Lineage Officer administers the deities' sacrificial ceremonies, Sire Pingxiang and Sire Baozhang predict their movements, the Divine Aide outlines their residences' locations, and the Grand Invoker handles prayers. Combining these duties, they all are ritualists' business. Although the name of Great One is not seen in the classics, historians in different periods recorded that its star was located to the south of Heavenly One in the Purple Palace, and so regarded the Great One as a deity of the Heavenly Thearchs. The deity can deploy sixteen gods and know their good and bad deeds. His kingdom is

[223] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 80–83.

[224] The six invocations in the *Rites of Zhou* refer to Peaceful Invocation (*shunzhu* 順祝), the Invocation of Correct Destiny (*nianzhu* 年祝), Auspicious Invocation (*jizhu* 吉祝), Exorcising Invocation (*huazhu* 化祝), Propitious Invocation (*ruizhu* 瑞祝), and Curative Invocation (*cezhu* 策祝). See Ruan Yuan 阮元, ed., *Zhouli zhushu* 周禮注疏, (Qing Jiangqing edition), 25.383.

located in the second North Stars; the most reddishly bright one is his throne. The Three Terraces are his heavenly stairway which the Great One steps on to ascend and descend. Historians' discussions about constellations cannot be thoroughly examined. But their assumptions all derive from transmissions from master to disciple, stars' locations all can be calculated, and many of their divinations are effective. Seeing in historians' words how venerable the Great One is, we know that the old statement—the Great One is the noble among heavenly deities, his assistants are the Five Thearchs, and [the state] places him at the primary position in suburban rituals—is not exclusive to the Bo person's method and the Han imperial household's regulations.[225] Because the business of the ritualists has become scattered and lost, the divination of Sire Pingxiang and Sire Baozhang has transformed into the method of patterns and conditions of Court Astrologer. Daoist clerics [now] draw the deities' images, specify the differences between the deities' clothing, objects, ranks, and titles, and formulate the standards for altars and ceremonies. They have virtually obtained the remaining meaning of [the *Rites of Zhou*] as "the Divine Aide outlines the locations of deities' residences, and the Grand Invoker prays for good fortunes."

臣伏攷《周禮·春官》。宗伯之職，典祀天神，其尊達於昊天上帝，其卑逮於司中、司命、風師、雨師。而為禮學者當之以星官之書，皆有著位。而宗伯之屬官，則有馮相氏、保章氏，掌會天位與夫封域分野以觀天下之祆祥；而凡以神仕者，掌三辰之法以猶鬼、神、示之居，辯其名物而致之；而太祝掌六祝之辭，以祈福祥。蓋宗伯總其祀之典，馮相氏、保章氏主其變動之占，凡以神仕者圖其居之所在，而太祝掌其祈。合而言之，皆禮官之事而已。太乙之號，雖不經見，而歷代史官，著其星在紫宮天一之南，以為天帝神也。主使十六神，知其咎休。所在之國，北辰第二星；最赤明者，乃其座也，而三台為天階，太乙躡之以上下。史官之言星，雖不可盡攷，然其說有師承，其位皆可指數，而其占之效者亦眾。觀其言太乙之尊如此，則昔之言天神之貴曰太乙，其佐曰五帝，以至主之以為郊，則非特亳人之方，漢家之制而已。蓋禮官之事既以散亡，而馮相、保章氏之占，流而為日官式局之法，而道家之所以圖其像，制其服物位號之差，壇場禱祀之法，殆得所謂「凡以神仕者圖其居之所在，與夫大祝祈福祥」之遺意也。[226]

[225] Bo person refers to Miu Ji 謬忌 of the time of Han Emperor Wu (141–81 BCE), who advised the emperor to worship the Great One. See Sima Qian, *Shiji*, 12.456.

[226] Lü Huiqing, "Song zhongtaiyigong beiming," ZHDZ 48:29, 646b.

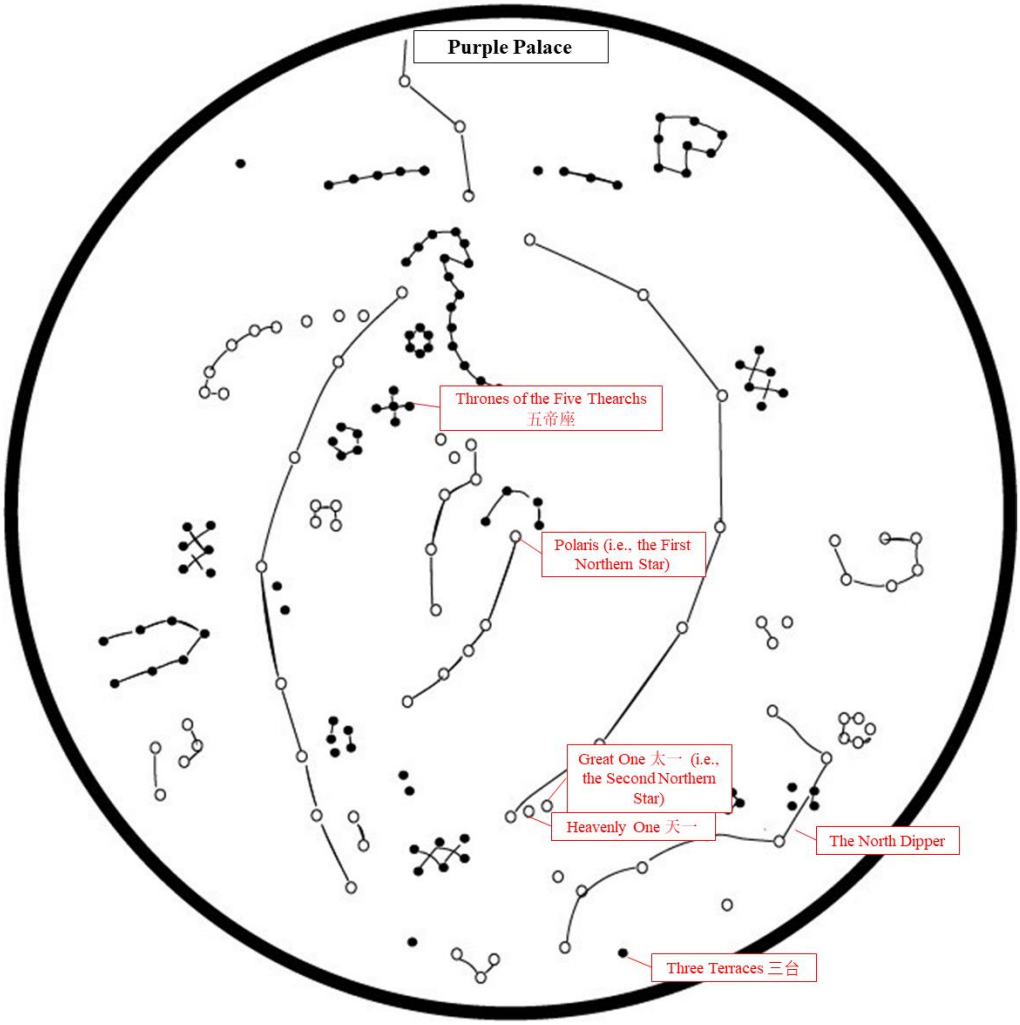

Figure 8 Star Map of the Purple Palace[227]

I have included above a star map that scholar-officials contemporaneous with Lü would have drawn upon to grasp the locations of the constellations and stars.

[227] This map is drawn by the author. The map's prototype comes from "The Map of the Stars in the Purple Tenuity Enclosure on a Celestial Globe" (Huixiang ziweiyuan xing zhi tu 渾象紫微垣星之圖) completed by Su Song 蘇頌 (1020–1101) in the early 1190s. See Su Song 蘇頌, *Xin yixiang fayao* 新儀象法要 (Shoushange congshu edition), 2.

The above passage is *the* pivotal one for us to understand how Lü Huiqing and his like-minded colleagues conceptualized the Great One. First, according to Lü, two branches of theories in his time could offer ways by which people understood the Great One. One was the methods of Court Astrologer, and the other was Daoist images, objects, and rituals. Second, Lü Huiqing turned to historical records for the proof of the Great One's existence in the past. Under his description, the Purple Palace (*zigong* 紫宮), more commonly known as Purple Tenuity Enclosure (*ziwei yuan* 紫微垣), is where heavenly deities reside. Furthermore, the Great One belongs to the category of Heavenly Thearchs, who are emperor-like gods. This anthropomorphic deity has dimmer stars (i.e., the black dots on the star map) as his aides or, in this case, the Three Terraces, as his stairway. Consequently, it is only natural that this celestial emperor must have a correlation with the emperor in the human realm. Third, Lü Huiqing utilized the *Rites of Zhou* to encompass all the explanatory branches. Of course, his reasoning would sound weak to modern readers. Because the Zhou dynasty had Court Astrologers, such as Sire Pingxiang and Sire Baozhang, and worshipped heavenly deities, the current practices of Daoists and Court Astrologers to worship the Great One must have followed the layout from this Confucian classic. Last but not least, Lü Huiqing did not discredit Daoism and court astrology despite the overarching feature of the *Rites of Zhou*.

As Yü Ying-shih has pointed out, one significant intellectual trend during the Northern Song period was "returning to the Three Dynasties of Xia, Shang, and Zhou" (*huixiang sandai* 回向三代). Scholar-officials of the time weaponized the Three

Dynasties as a golden age in order to criticize the status quo and push for reform.[228] Wang Anshi and Lü Huiqing were not strangers to this trend because they were working on the *New Meanings of the Three Classics* by the time of the temple's completion. These new commentaries to the three classics would serve as the canonical framework for the New Policies. The importance of the *Rites of Zhou* to Wang Anshi is well known among the students of the Song dynasty history. The only classic among the *New Meanings of the Three Classics* annotated by Wang Anshi is the *Rites of Zhou*. Peter Bol has argued that Wang Anshi's commentary to the *Rites of Zhou* can be seen as Wang's attempt to find his way to order the world, and Wang could have imagined this way as a heavenly way (*tian zhi dao* 天之道) independent from human will.[229] The usage of the *Rites of Zhou* in Lü Huiqing's stele inscription shows a very similar characteristic. We can take the translated passage as Lü's effort to install the passage from the *Rites of Zhou* as an all-encompassing and universal principle for the Great One worship. More importantly, Lü Huiqing did not imagine this principle would in any way be at odds with the theories from court astrology and Daoism. He wisely praised the emperor for his dependence on those two views because they reflected the meaning already established in the Confucian classic. Given the close political and intellectual collaboration between Lü Huiqing and Wang Anshi at the time of the inscription's composition, it is very possible that this vision was also shared by Wang Anshi.

[228] Yu Yingshi, *Zhu Xi de lishi shijie*, 1:184–98.

[229] Peter K. Bol, "Wang Anshi and the Zhouli," in *Statecraft and Classical Learning: The Rituals of Zhou in East Asian History*, ed. Benjamin A Elman and Martin Kern (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 229–51.

Now, let us return to Wang Anshi's preemptive actions to avert heavenly warnings and disasters discussed in the first section. The construction and operation of the Temple of the Central Great One could have been yet another example of Shenzong and Wang Anshi acting preemptively. The goal of acting according to the heavenly way, in Wang's view, appeared more important than fearing potential warnings and disasters. The same view was also displayed in an incident in the fall of 1075. After an ominous comet emerged in the night sky, Shenzong was busy criticizing himself and apologizing for his horrendous governance that could have caused the heavenly warning. Wang Anshi advised the emperor to calm down. According to Wang, "the heavenly way is remote" 天道遠; and even if Court Astrologers would have divinations based on celestial movements, "trusting it or not should be the matter of humans." 所信者人事而已. Wang added that since Shenzong had practiced virtuous governance, the emperor should not be apologetic for a warning that could well be a false alarm.[230] In short, Wang Anshi and his ally Lü Huiqing, based on their version(s) of Confucian learning, advocated for a universal principle of worshiping Heaven and heavenly deities, and trusted practices following this principle would avert calamities for the empire. However, Wang and Lü did not envision that this Confucianism-based universal principle would persecute other teachings. Conversely, they searched for commonalities among separate teachings and bracketed them under the ways or principles that they supported.

Zhu Xi's Response to the "Yuan Dao bian:" A Comparison

[230] Li Tao, *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian*, 269.6597–98

In this section, we will return to Emperor Xiaozong's "Yuan Dao bian" to scrutinize Zhu Xi's response to Xiaozong's essay and compare this case with religious policies under Wang Anshi's administration. The comparison between Wang Anshi and Zhu Xi is not new to scholarship. Yü Ying-shih has famously conceptualized the time that Zhu Xi lived in as "Post-Wang Anshi Era" (*hou Wang Anshi shidai* 後王安石時代). The idea is that Wang for about eight years of his life achieved the Confucian ideal of "obtaining imperial support and practicing the Dao" (*dejun xingdao* 得君行道). More specifically, Shenzong stood by Wang Anshi between 1068 and 1075 to implement the New Policies and Wang's learning (i.e., his understanding of the Dao), and thus fended off criticisms against Wang's administration. It was a rare occurrence in Chinese political history that Zhu Xi in his life also desired to accomplish. But Zhu Xi failed. His learning, or more broadly the Daoxue (Learning of the Dao) that Zhu Xi advocated, never became dominant at the imperial court while Zhu was alive.[231] Certainly, there are many reasons that could account for Wang Anshi's success and Zhu Xi's failure at the court. Here I only focus on one possibility for my discussion, namely their attitudes toward other teachings utilized by Song emperors.

On November 20, 1188, Zhu Xi, the ultimate leader of the Daoxue fellowship of the time,[232] sent Emperor Xiaozong a strong memorial in which he criticized the ideas presented in the "Yuan Dao bian." As scholars have discussed, Zhu Xi had only a few

[231] Yu Yingshi, *Zhu Xi de lishi shijie*, 8–9.

[232] According to Hoyt Tillman, from 1182 to 1202, Zhu Xi claimed the responsibility to lead the fellowship and wielded greater power within the fellowship than he previously did. See Tillman, *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi's Ascendancy*, 133–44.

chances to see and talk to Song emperors. As for Xiaozong, Zhu Xi presented three memorials to the emperor respectively in 1163, 1180, and 1188. Although they all advised the emperor to implement the Confucian way to "correct his heart-mind" (*zhengxin* 正心), the 1188 one is the strongest in tone among the three. My focus here is this 1188 memorial. According to Charles Hartman, a fundamental thread of political conflicts under Xiaozong's reign was the tension between Confucian literati and technocrats. Xiaozong throughout most of his reign sought to balance the forces of Confucian literati and technocrats. After decades of fighting, Confucian literati achieved a small victory in the 1180s, but the triumph had more to do with the monarch's adjustments than with Confucian protests. Among the most powerful technocrats, the inner court official Zeng Di 曾覿 (1109–1180) died in 1180, another inner court official Wang Bian 王抃 (d. 1184) was removed from the court in 1182, and the palace eunuch Gan Bian 甘昪 removed in 1188.[233] Though limited, these moves still opened up ways for Confucian literati to persuade Xiaozong to follow the Confucian Dao.

Additionally, on November 9, 1187, Emperor Emeritus Gaozong died. He had abdicated the throne 24 years earlier but remained influential at the court and adopted a conservative attitude to political reform and irredentism.[234] After Gaozong's death, Xiaozong for the first time had complete imperial power. Consequently, he began to

[233] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 278–340.

[234] Lau, "The Absolutist Reign of Sung Hsiao-tsung," 4–56. Kobayashi Akira has noted that Emperor Xiaozong employed many military officials due to the neccessity to gain power under the control of the retired Emperor Gaozong. Kobayashi Akira 小林晃, *"Nansō kōsōchō niokeru taijōkōtei no eikyōryoku to kōtei sokkinseiji"* 南宋孝宗朝における太上皇帝の影響力と皇帝側近政治, *Tōyōshi kenkyūkai* 71, no. 1 (2012): 69–97.

make changes to the political landscape. As Yü Ying-shih shows, Xiaozong began to employ more officials associated with the Daoxue fellowship while distancing those from what Yü terms "bureaucrat faction" (*guanliao jituan* 官僚集團).[235] As a result, Zhou Bida 周必大 (1126–1204), who leaned toward the Daoxue fellowship, was appointed as Chief Councilor on March 26, 1187. About five months later, Zhou Bida ordered Yang Wanli 楊萬里 (1127–1206) to recommend Zhu Xi for the position of West Jiangnan Circuit Judicial Commissioner (Jiangnan xilu tidian xingyu gongshi 江南西路提點刑獄公事).

Due to the political momentum, Zhu Xi was summoned to the imperial court for an audience and had a long conversation with Emperor Xiaozong on July 3, 1188. The next day, Zhu Xi was appointed as Vice Minister of the Ministry of War, but he refused to take the post, allegedly because of his foot ailment.[236] Xiaozong summoned Zhu Xi again in the fall of 1188. Instead of attending the audience, Zhu Xi chose to write a memorial with more than 13,000 characters, his longest one, to further elaborate on his ideas.

The memorial lays out six urgent tasks (*jiwu* 急務): 1) the guidance of the heir-apparent, 2) the selection and appointment of high officials, 3) the betterment of orderly bureaucratic procedures, 4) the transformation of social customs, 5) loving the people and

[235] Yu Yingshi, *Zhu Xi de lishi shijie*, 2:531–94, 623–85.

[236] Wang Maohong 王懋竑, *Song Zhuzi nianpu* 宋朱子年譜 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1982), 3.139.

nourishing their strength, and 6) reform of the military administration.[237] More importantly, the memorial says to the emperor, "The great root for all-under-heaven is your heart-and-mind" 天下之大本者陛下之心, and advises him to "rectify his heart-mind." As Conrad Schirokauer has summarized, moralization, following the logic of Zhu Xi, serves as a starting point of a chain reaction leading to the world's rectification.[238] More importantly, this project of moralization must adhere to the Confucian teaching that conforms with Zhu Xi's vision rather than that of Buddhism, Daoism, or any other Confucian schools. Thus, the memorial presents a fierce disagreement over the "Yuan Dao bian":

> Cheng Hao (1032–1085) opposed [Buddhism and Daoism] and often said: "They consider themselves to have reached divinity and understood transformations, but they are insufficient to understand things and accomplish enterprises.[239] Although they claim that they have nothing but thoroughness and ubiquity, they are actually outside of principles for human relations; [they also claim that] they have fathomed the deep and the subtle, but they cannot access the way of Yao and Shun. Learnings in the world, if not innately shallow and stagnant, will inevitably take the way [of Yao and Shun]." Hence, [Buddhism and Daoism] are called "weeds on the correct path and obstacles at sages' door that one must break open and then can enter the way."[240] Alas! This truly can be called words that have reached the Principles. Your Majesty, I lament that nobody has informed you about [the Daoxue Confucianism]. This has resulted that you excessively listening to insane and false ideas from those shaved heads, really regarding their ideas to be in accordance with the sagely way, and going so far as to divide ruling mind,

[237] Zhu Xi 朱熹, "Wushen fengshi" 戊申封事, in *Zhuzi quanshu* 朱子全書 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002), 20:589–609; Conrad Schirokauer, "The Political Thought and Behavior of Chu Hsi" (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1960), 176.
[238] Conrad Schirokauer, "The Political Thought and Behavior of Chu Hsi," 167.

[239] Cheng Hao here cites the phrase "disclose things or complete affairs" 開物成務 from "The Great Treatise" (Xici 系辭) from the *Book of Changes*; I made some changes to the translation on the basis of the context. See Richard Wilhelm trans. *The I Ching or Book of Changes*, rendered into English by Cary F. Baynes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), 316.

[240] Cheng Yi 程頤, "Mingdao xiansheng xingzhuang" 明道先生行狀, in *Er Cheng ji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 11.638.

> body, and people into three techniques and place Confucianism the lowest. Humbly, I worry for you that such a [Buddhist] mind will damage your governance; and I worry that your thesis spreads in the present and future. If you do not consider my words to be right, your sagacity must be so elevated, and you must have been studying [your way] for a long time. However, speaking of rectifying the mind, cultivating the body, and benefiting all-under-heaven, where are your learning's achievements? How can you not ponder why this is so and immediately reverse [your deeds]?
> 程顥常闢之曰：自謂窮神知化，而不足以開物成務。言為無不周徧，而實外於倫理；窮深極微, 而不可以入堯舜之道。天下之學自非淺陋固滯， 則必入於此。是謂正路之榛蕪，聖門之蔽塞，闢之而後可與入道。嗚呼！ 此真可謂理到之言。惜乎其未有以聞於陛下者，使陛下過聽髣徒誑妄之説，而以為真有合於聖人之道，至分治心、治身、治人以為三術，而以儒者之學為最下。則臣竊為陛下憂此心之害於政事，而惜此説之布於來今也。如或未以臣言為然，則聖質不為不高，學之不為不久。而所以正心修身以及天下者，其效果安在也？是豈可不思其所以然者而亟反之哉？[241]

First, the memorial quotes the words from Cheng Hao as a source of credibility. The Northern Song Daoxue precursor lends his loyal protégé cultural authority to exclude Buddhism and Daoism from the Daoxue definition of the correct Dao. In addition to exclusiveness, Cheng's words open up a way to introduce the transmission and succession of the Dao (*daotong* 道統) that Zhu Xi promotes. Right after the above cited passage, there is a note in small characters in which Zhu Xi directs the emperor to his own account of the transmission and succession of the Dao. According to Zhu Xi, it was Cheng Hao, Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), and their mentor, Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–1073), who received the Way uninterruptedly from Confucius and Mencius; and Shao Yong 邵雍 (1011–1077) and Zhang Zai 張載 (1020–1077) aided the former three masters to expand its influence. As Hoyt Tillman has noted, the issue that concerned Zhu

[241] Zhu Xi, "Wushen fengshi," in *Zhuzi quanshu*, 611–12.

Xi greatly since the early stage of his intellectual development was to reduce the diversity in the Daoxue fellowship and advance his own view of transmission and succession.[242] Therefore, the 1188 memorial can be understood as Zhu's effort to present his version of the transmission and succession of the Way to the emperor. Unlike the Confucian literati Shi Hao and Cheng Dachang mentioned in the second chapter, Zhu's version is much narrower and concentrates on his select figures from the Song scholars.

Second, Zhu Xi introduces his view of the transmission and succession of the Dao by completely refuting the emperor's ideas and the Buddhist influence behind those ideas. To Zhu Xi, the compartmental view in terms of the Three Teachings' different functions was a false theory that derived from the Buddhist invasion of the emperor's mind. Moreover, Zhu Xi's claim that the "Yuan Dao bian" places Confucianism in the lowest status, deliberately or not, misrepresented the emperor's stance on Confucianism in that Xiaozong's essay regards the Three Teachings as equals that could assist the emperor in different aspects of life. Compared to the moderate position that we saw in Shi Hao's case, Zhu's memorial lambasts the Buddhist claim to supremacy in cultivating the mind and belittles Buddhist clerics as "shaved heads." In other words, Zhu Xi's reprimand is the strongest statement by Confucian literati and represents his Daoxue fellowship's stance on the "Yuan Dao bian." Third, the 1188 memorial castigates the efficacy of the emperor's learning. By questioning Xiaozong's achievements, Zhu Xi

[242] Tillman, *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi's Ascendancy*, 82, 116. In 1189, one year after the memorial, Zhu started to highlight the term *daotong* in his preface to the commentary on the *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸). Hoyt Tillman also has noted that the emphasis of the preface is on the Cheng brothers as opposed to the earlier pro-Zhou Dunyi account in *Yiluo yuanyuan lu* 伊洛淵源錄 (*Records of the Evolution of the Yiluo School of the Chengs*). The 1188 memorial also reflects the change where the Cheng brothers are projected as figures more important than Zhou Dunyi.

brings up the fact that it has been about ten years since the emperor wrote his essay. In this way, the memorial implicitly suggests that the implementation of the ideas presented the "Yuan Dao bian" has been fruitless.

Xiaozong responded lukewarmly to this memorial. The memorial arrived at the palace early in the evening (around 8:45 PM). Although the emperor reportedly had gone to sleep, he got up and read the memorial. The next day, the emperor appointed Zhu Xi as Court Lecturer.[243] However, the offer was too insignificant for Zhu to accept and to implement his Dao at the imperial court, especially compared to when Wang Anshi received the position of Assistant Councilor after an audience with Shenzong in 1068. Zhu Xi refused the emperor's offer once again.[244] Xiaozong's response to Zhu Xi's 1188 memorial already showed more respect than the emperor afforded Zhu's 1180 memorial. As Charles Hartman has noted, his response to Zhu Xi's 1180 memorial could be translated into "this takes me for a fool" 是以我為妄也 or "this takes me for a cipher" 是以我為亡也.[245]

Conclusion

The case of the Temple of the Central Great One and the case of Zhu Xi's 1188 memorial provide a glimpse into Wang Anshi's and Zhu Xi's attitudes toward other teachings. As I have shown, the temple's construction and the worship of the Great One

[243] See Tuotuo et al., *Song shi*, 429.12762.

[244] Shu Jingnan 束景南, *Zhuzi dazhuan* 朱子大傳 (Fuzhou: Fujian jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992), 722–23.

[245] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 275–76.

were justified by three theories during Shenzong's reign—court astrology, Daoism, and the learning promoted by Wang Anshi and Lü Huiqing. Wang Anshi and Lü Huiqing proposed an all-encompassing and universal principle for the temple's construction, so they did not exclude court astrology and Daoism from the game. This move resonated with Wang Anshi's exchange with Shenzong about "standardizing the Dao and its virtues" because the standardized system for social and moral transformation would tolerate other teachings as long as they pointed to the same principle. Zhu Xi, on the other hand, pushed an extremely inflexible agenda to Xiaozong and attempted to compel the emperor to accept Zhu's version of Confucianism as the only correct way for self-cultivation and state governance. Wang Anshi and Lü Huiqing's stance resulted in a collaboration between their learning and the other views at the court involved in the worship of the Great One. Wang even befriended the Daoist abbot of the temple. Wang Anshi's handling of the temple construction did not cause any immediate trouble for him, and he remained as Chief Councilor until 1076, despite his short retirement from the central government in 1074. In fact, Shenzong supported Wang's proposal to elevate the rituals for setting up the image of the Great One. On the contrary, although Xiaozong began to employ more Confucian literati and retire some old technocrats, the emperor was unwilling to offer Zhu Xi a position that would allow him to implement his version of Confucianism in the central government, but only to give "sermons" to the emperor about morality and policy.

CONCLUSION

Imperial Religion and The Regulated Syncretic Field

In all three cases, we see that what Song Emperors Zhenzong, Xiaozong, and Shenzong ultimately envisioned was neither Confucianism nor Buddhism and Daoism. Their views resonate with the notion of "Imperial Religion" proposed by Geoffrey Goble. Additionally, I want to point out that the pool of religious and cultural sources of the Imperial Religion was ever growing in the Song. One emperor's legacy could be recycled by another emperor as they deemed fit. For instance, we saw that Song Emperor Zhenzong utilized the precedents of divine ancestor established by the Tang emperors, but the cult of the Song Divine Ancestor eventually distanced itself from its Daoist origin and entered the sphere of the worship of heaven. New standards, practices, and precedents became established and available to be recycled and altered by later emperors.

Conceptualizing the Three Teachings in late imperial China, Timothy Brook suggests that we understand their relationship as a condominium: "The Three Teachings lived together in late-imperial China with a considerable degree of harmony: equal in principle, equally available to worshippers, and free to associate and interact in a multitude of ways." Therefore, he opposes the view that the Three Teachings became synthesized in late imperial China because, after all, they were three entities with separate organizations and canonical texts.[246] My research suggests that syncretism might have had happened in a different location, namely the imperial court.

[246] Timothy Brook, "Rethinking Syncretism: The Unity of the Three Teachings and Their Joint Worship in Late-Imperial China," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 21, no. 1 (1993): 13–44.

In understanding Chinese religions in local society, Edward Davis proposes the concept of "syncretic field" in which we see a cultural nexus defined by hierarchy (*sheng* 聖) and efficacy (*ling* 靈). Cosmic hierarchy would differentiate elements from the cultural nexus and reorder them into a hierarchy, such as ranks and positions of gods in a temple. The need for efficacy would disrupt hierarchy because it pulls supernatural power from various levels of the nexus into a small unity, such as a household or the altar of the Earth God. Religious elements would undergo changes because of the need of efficacy where their doctrines and practices are freely and constantly synthesized.[247]

In my research, I see a parallel between local society and the imperial court in terms of the syncretic field. In the case of Song emperors, what they desired was not primarily efficacy, although the issue of efficacy remained important in rituals, such as prayers for rain and curative rituals at the court. One commonality between Emperors Zhenzong, Shenzong, and Xiaozong is that they respectively envisioned a universal cult, a universal teaching, and a universal religious truth. Zhenzong sought to spread the cult of the Song Divine Ancestor through state-wide temple infrastructure; Shenzong planned to establish and implement a universal teaching—Wang Anshi's New Learning, regardless of how inclusive the teaching was, to transform officials and the masses; and Xiaozong proposed a religious truth that, he thought, could resolve the tensions among the Three Teachings and unify them under his rulership. Additionally, Charles Hartman has noted that Song Emperor Huizong (r. 1100–1108) also shared this universality in

[247] Davis, *Society and the Supernatural in Song China*, 200–25.

making his political and religious policies.[248] In achieving their versions of "universalism" and legitimacy, they produced amalgamations of religious and cultural elements in which the differences and divisions between sects became trivial. Imperial power in this regard became a centripetal force that drew resources from the cultural and religious repertoire of the time. Therefore, I would call this religious power structure at the imperial court a "regulated syncretic field" where religious and cultural doctrines, rituals, and other practices were regulated and shaped by imperial visions. The products of this field resulted from cherry-picking and assembling certain components of existing religious ideas and practices, and were often syntheses of the Three Teachings of the time.

Collaborating with Song emperors in creating an imperial religion, representatives of the Three Teachings had to make compromises and sometimes abandon defining characteristics of their own traditions. As I have shown, Zhenzong utilized the characteristics and probably titles of the Daoist deity Mao Ying and the legends of the Yellow Emperor to create for himself a divine ancestor; Shenzong deployed techniques from Daoism to exorcize future calamities but allowed Wang Anshi and Lü Huiqing to impose a universal theory to encompass Daoist practices; and Xiaozong accepted the Buddhist idea that the Three Teachings derived from one origin, but made himself the person who could explain what the origin was. Therefore, leaders of the Three Teachings functioned as negotiators between the imperial religion and the teachings they represented. The results of these negotiations would determine to what extent the ideas

[248] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 209–12.

and doctrines of a certain teaching were accepted into the imperial religion. When leaders failed to gain adequate imperial patronage, they often retreated to local society to secure their continued flourishing, as we saw in the cases of the Song Divine Ancestor and Buddhist discourse on the Three Teachings. This dual structure resulted in the divergence between imperial religion and local teachings, and this divergence suggests that elite proponents of the Three Teachings, to a great degree, did not have the leverage to fulfill their plans at the court without major compromises.

The Three Teachings in the Techno-Confucian Continuum

Buddhist and Daoist officials were attached to institutions of the outer court, such as the Court of State Ceremonies and the Bureau of Sacrifices. But as other scholars have noted, it was Song emperors who enjoyed the ultimate power to appoint Buddhist and Daoist clerics to the posts of religious officials.[249] Therefore, as we have seen in the three cases presented in this dissertation, Daoist and Buddhist clerics needed technocrats, who often had access to the emperor, to be their liaisons to imperial authority. Furthermore, we have seen that when addressing the emperor, committed Confucians such as Zhu Xi strongly opposed Buddhism and Daoism, and that Buddhist apologists expressed concerns to the emperor about Confucian attacks against Buddhism. These events reveal that Buddhism and Daoism were often at odds with the institutions that Confucian literati attempted to install at the imperial court. Therefore, to better understand the structures of Song governance, I suggest that, as shown in the table below, we add Buddhism and

[249] Tang Daijian, *Songdai daojiao guanli zhidu yanjiu*, 177–79; Wang Shengduo, *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu*, 469–74.

Daoism vs. Confucianism to the list of imperial technocrats vs. Confucian institutionalists that Charles Hartman has proposed.[250] As aforementioned, these categories only provide the two ends a political and intellectual spectrum on which players in the system can be placed.

Imperial Technocrats	Confucian Institutionalists
Aristocratic (*gui* 貴)	Non-aristocratic (*jian* 賤)
Clerical (*li* 吏)	Official (*guan* 官)
Military (*wu* 武)	Civil (*wen* 文)
Palace (*gong* 宮)	Court (*chao* 朝)
Female (*nü* 女)	Male (*nan* 男)
Buddhism and Daoism (*fodao* 佛道)	Confucianism (*ru* 儒)

Table 5 Modified Table of Imperial Technocrats vs. Confucian Institutionalists

Patriarchal Governance

Now let us return to a question I asked in the Introduction: Why did Buddhism and Daoism in the Song not suffer from severe state-wide persecution? No doubt, there are many reasons that could account for the disappearance of severe persecution against Buddhism and Daoism in the Song. Here, I would like to revisit one thread that I have discussed in Chapter 2. When Buddhist monk Zanning appealed to Emperor Taizong to

[250] Hartman, *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*, 16–17.

treat the Three Teachings equally, he employed the metaphor that the emperor should assume the role of the patriarch of the household of the Three Teachings. An emperor in this context was put in a parental position, or a house lord (*yijia zhi jun* 一家之君) in Zanning's words, to discipline his "sons" and manage them as his own possessions, but at the same time to ensure their well-being. We can observe this patriarch-arbiter role recurring in the Song period, especially when Emperor Xiaozong acted as a sage to resolve controversies among the Three Teachings. Therefore, I would call this phenomenon "patriarch governance,"[251] in which the relationship between the imperial state and the Three Teachings is understood as a father-son correlation and governing the Three Teachings as domestic regulation. Buddhism, in this view, became an integrated member/property of the religious household ruled by the male emperor and thus was not subject to persecution. This patriarch-arbiter tradition continued in late imperial China. For example, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋, Ming Emperor Taizu (r. 1368–1398), once composed an "Essay on the Three Teachings" (Sanjiao lun 三教論) in which he also suggested that the Three Teachings had one principle (*li* 理) and were thus beneficial instruments in his imperial governance and in educating stupid people (*yuren* 愚人) in the world.[252]

[251] This term is inspired by Ting Guo's study on contemporary Chinese politics. Ting Guo, "'So Many Mothers, So Little Love': Discourse of Motherly Love and Parental Governance in 2019 Hong Kong Protests," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 34 (2022): 3–24.

[252] Romeyn Taylor, "An Imperial Endorsement of Syncretism: Ming T'ai-tsu's Essay on the Three Teachings: Translation and Commentary," *Ming Studies* 16 (Spring 1983): 31-38.

REFERENCES

Sources from Daoist Canonical Collections

Daoist works are cited from the *Zhengtong daozang* 中華道藏 using the abbreviation ZHDZ. These texts will be cited by numerical order, such as 1:1. The first number indicates the volume and the second the text number in that volume. See Zhang Jiyu 張繼禹, ed., *Zhonghua daozang* (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2004).

ZHDZ 3:30 *Yuanshi wuliang duren shangpin miaojing sizhu* 元始無量度人上品妙經四註

ZHDZ 10:9 *Daode zhenjing cangshi zuanwei kaiti kewen shu* 道德真經藏室纂微開題科文疏

ZHDZ 10:13 *Song Huizong yujie daode zhenjing* 宋徽宗御解道德真經

ZHDZ 30:31 *Tianxin zhengfa xiuzhen daochang shejiao yi* 天心正法脩真道場設醮儀

ZHDZ 34:1 *Shangqing lingbao dafa* 上清靈寶大法

ZHDZ 43:28 *Wushang huanglu dazhai licheng yi* 無上黃籙大齋立成儀

ZHDZ 48:5 *Sancai dingwei tu* 三才定位圖

ZHDZ 48:15 *Maoshan zhi* 茅山志

ZHDZ 48:21 “Zhangxian mingsu huanghou shou shangqing bi falu ji” 章獻明肅皇后受上清畢法籙記

ZHDZ 48:29 “Song zhongtaiyigong beiming” 宋中太乙宮碑銘

Sources from Buddhist Canonical Collections

Buddhists works are cited from the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 (1924–1932) and the *Dai nihon zokuzōkyō* 大日本續藏經 (1905–1912), respectively using the abbreviations T and X.

T 224 *Daoxing bore jing* 道行般若經 (*Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā*)

T 263 *Zheng Fahua jing* 正法華經

T 1425 *Mohe sengqi lü* 摩訶僧祇律

T 1886 *Yuanren lun* 原人論

T 1998A *Dahui pujue chanshi yulu* 大慧普覺禪師語錄

T 2016 *Zongjing lu* 宗鏡錄

T 2035 *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀

T 2061 *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳

T 2078 *Chuanfa zhengzong ji* 傳法正宗記

T 2110 *Bianzheng lun* 辨正論

T 2102 *Hongming ji* 弘明集

T 2112 *Zhenzheng lun* 甄正論

T 2115 *Tanjin wenji* 鐔津文集

X 251 *Yuzhu yuanjue jing* 御註圓覺經

X 1556 *Jianzhong jingguo xu denglu* 建中靖國續燈錄

X 1559 *Jiatai pu denglu* 嘉泰普燈錄

X 1610 *Yunwo jitan* 雲臥紀譚

Sources in East Asian Languages

Azuma Jūji 吾妻重二. *Sōdai shisō no kenkyū: Jukyō dōkyō bukkyō o meguru kōsatsu* 宋代思想の研究儒教道教仏教をめぐる考察. Suitai: Kansai daigaku tōzai gakujutsu kenkyūjo. 2009.

Chen Shunyu 陳舜俞. *Duguan ji* 都官集. Siku quanshu edition.

Chen Yinke 陳寅恪. *"Deng Guangming Songshi zhiguanzhi kaozheng xu"* 鄧廣銘宋史職官志考證序. In *Jinming guan conggao erbian* 金明館叢稿二編, 245–46. Taipei: Liren shuju. 1981.

Chen Zhi'e 陳植鍔. *Bei Song wenghuashi shulun* 北宋文化史述論. Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe. 1992.

Cheng Guangyu 程光裕 and Xu Shengmo 徐聖謨. *Zhongguo lishi ditu* 中國歷史地圖. Vol. 2. Taipei: Zhongguo wenhua daxue chubanbu. 1980.

Cheng Yi 程頤. “Mingdao xiansheng xingzhuang” 明道先生行狀. In *Er Cheng ji* 二程集, 11.638. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1981.

Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘. “Beisong zhengzhi gaigejia Wang Anshi” 北宋政治改革家王安石. In *Deng Guangming quanji* 鄧廣銘全集, 1:1–298. Shijiazhuang: Heibei jiaoyu chubanshe. 2003.

Du Yue 杜樂. “Song Zhenzong chao zhonghouqi de shensheng yundong” 宋真宗朝中後期的神聖運動. M.A. Thesis. Peaking University. 2011.

Ge Hong 葛洪. *Shenxian zhuan jiaoshi* 神仙傳校釋. Edited by Hu Shouwei. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 2010.

Gong Yanming 龔延明. *Songdai guanzhi cidian* 宋代官制辭典. 2nd ed. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 2017.

Guo Shaoyu 郭紹虞. *Zhongguo wenxue pipingshi* 中國文學批評史. 5th ed. Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan. 2010.

Han Yu 韓愈. “Yuan Dao” 原道. In *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu* 韓昌黎文集校注, edited by Ma Qichang 馬其昶. Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe. 1986.

He Guanhuan 何冠環. “Xiancun de sanpian Songdai neichen muzhiming” 現存的三篇宋代內臣墓誌銘. *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiusuo xuebao*, no. 52 (2011): 33–62.

Hong Shufen 洪淑芬. *Rufo jiaoshe yu Song dai ruxue fuxing* 儒佛交涉與宋代儒學復興. Taipei: Da’an chubanshe. 2008.

Huang Qijiang 黃啟江. *Bei Song fojiao shi lungao* 北宋佛教史論稿. Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan. 1997.

Huang Yizhou 黃以周, ed. *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian shibu* 續資治通鑑長編拾補. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 2004.

Jiang Yibin 蔣義斌. *Shi Hao yanjiu: jianlun Nansong Xiaozong chao zhengju ji xueshu* 史浩研究兼論南宋孝宗朝政局及學術. Taipei: Huamulan chubanshe. 2009.

———. *Songdai rushi tiaohelun ji paifolun zhi yanjiu* 宋代儒釋調和論及排佛論之演進. Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan. 1988.

Kobayashi Akira 小林晃. *"Nansō kōsōchō niokeru taijōkōtei no eikyōryoku to kōtei sokkinseiji"* 南宋孝宗朝における太上皇帝の影響力と皇帝側近政治. *Tōyōshi kenkyūkai* 71, no. 1 (2012): 69–97.

Kobayashi Masayoshi 小林正美. "Sankyō kōshō niokeru kyō no kannen" 三教交渉における教の観念. In *Rikuchō Dōkyō shi kenkyū* 六朝道教史研究. Sōbun sha. 1990.

Kubota Kazuo 久保田和男. *"Gyokusei shōō kyū no kenzō to sono enjō: Sō shinsō kara jinsō (ryūtaikō) jidai no seiji bunka no henka ni yosete"* 玉清昭応宮の建造とその炎上宋真宗から仁宗劉太后時代の政治文化の変化によせて. *Toshi bunka kenkyū* 12, no. 3 (2010): 139–52.

Lei Wen 雷聞. *Jiaomiao zhiwai: Sui Tang guojia jisi yu zongjiao* 郊廟之外隋唐國家祭祀與宗教. Beijing: Sanlian shudian. 2009.

Li Huarui 李華瑞. "Songchao jiruoshuo zairenshi" 宋朝積弱說再認識. *Wenshizhe*, no. 6 (2013): 33–42.

———. "Songdai jianyuan yu zhengzhi" 宋代建元與政治. *Zhongguoshi yanjiu*, no. 4 (1996): 65–73.

———. *Wang Anshi bianfa yanjiu shi* 王安石變法研究史. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe. 2004.

Li Jingde 黎靖德. *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類. Edited by Wang Xingxian. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1986.

Li Tao 李燾. *Xu zizhi tongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1980.

Li Xinchuan 李心傳. "Yuan Dao bian yiming Sanjiao lun" 原道辨易名三教論. In *Jianyan yilai chaoye zaji* 建炎以來朝野雜記. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 2000.

Liu Chengguo 劉成國. *Wang Anshi nianpu changbian* 王安石年譜長編. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 2018.

Liu Qiugen 劉秋根. "Yijiujiuyi nian guoji songshi yantaohui shuyao" 一九九一年国际宋史研讨会述要. *Hebei daxue xuebao*, no. 4 (1991): 85–87.

Liu Zijian 劉子健. “Fengshan wenhua yu Songdai mingtiang jitian” 封禪文化與宋代明堂祭天. In *Liang Song shi yanjiu huibian* 兩宋史研究彙編, 3-9. Taipei: Lianjing chuban shiye gongsi. 1987.

Lu Guolong 盧國龍. “Lun Chen Jingyuan de daojiao xueshu” 論陳景元的道家學術. *Zongjiao zhexue*, no. 3 (1995): 357–73.

Meng Yuanlao 孟元老. *Dongjing menghua lu jianzhu* 東京夢華錄箋注. Edited by Yi Yongwen. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 2006.

Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩. *Xin Wudai shi* 新五代史. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1974.

Qi Xia 漆俠. *Wang Anshi bianfa* 王安石變法. Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe. 1959.

Qian Mu 錢穆. *Zhongguo xueshu sixiangshi luncong* 中國學術思想史論叢. Vol. 5. Taipei: Jinglian chuban shiye gongsi. 1998.

Qisong. “Shang Renzong huangdi wanyan shu” 上仁宗皇帝萬言書. In *Quan Song wen* 全宋文, edited by Zeng Zaozhuang, 36:110–20. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe. 2006.

Ruan Yuan 阮元, ed. *Zhouli zhushu* 周禮注疏. Vol. 3. Qing Jiangqing edition.

Shu Jingnan 束景南. *Zhuzi dazhuan* 朱子大傳. Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe. 1992.

Si Yizu 司義祖, ed. *Song da zhaoling ji* 宋大詔令集. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1962.

Sima Guang 司馬光. *Sima Guang ji* 司馬光集. Edited by Li Wenze 李文澤 and Xia Shaohui 霞紹暉. Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe. 2010.

———. *Sushui jiwen* 涑水記聞. Edited by Deng Guangming and Zhang Xiqing. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1989.

Sima Qian 司馬遷. *Shiji* 史記. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1982.

Song Xiaozong. *“Yuan Dao bian”* 原道辨. In *Quan Song wen* 全宋文, 236:297–98. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe. 2006.

Su Song 蘇頌. *Xin yixiang fayao* 新儀象法要. Shoushange congshu edition.

Tang Daijian 唐代劍. *Songdai daojiao guanli zhidu yanjiu* 宋代道教管理制度研究. Beijing: Xianzhuang shuju. 2003.

Tao Qian 陶潛. *Tao Yuanming ji* 陶淵明集. Edited by Lu Qinli 逯欽立. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1979.

Tuotuo. *Songshi* 宋史. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1977.

Wang Anshi 王安石. *Linchuan xiansheng wenji* 臨川先生文集. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1959.

Wang Maohong 王懋竑. *Song Zhuzi nianpu* 宋朱子年譜. Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan. 1982.

Wang Pinzhen 王聘珍. *Da Dai Liji jiegu* 大戴禮記解诂. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1983.

Wang Shengduo 汪聖鐸. *Songdai zhengjiao guanxi yanjiu* 宋代政教關係研究. Beijing: Renmin chubanshe. 2010.

Wang Yucheng 王禹偁. *Xiaoxu ji* 小畜集. Sibu congkan edition.

Wen Yanbo 文彥博. *Lugong ji* 潞公集. Ming Jiajing edition.

Xia Song 夏竦. “Gu Jinziguangludafu Jianjiaolibushangshu Youshenwuweidajiangjunzhishi Shichijiekangzhouzhujunshi Kangzhoucishi Chongbenzhoutuanlianshi Shangzhuguo Kaiguobo Shiyiqibaihu Zengzhennanjunjiedushi Taiyuan Wanggong muzhiming” 故金紫光禄大夫檢校禮部尚書右神武衛大將軍致仕使持節康州諸軍事康州刺史充本州團練使上柱國開國伯食邑七百户贈鎮南軍節度使太原王公墓誌銘. In *Quan Song wen* 全宋文, edited by Zeng Zaozhuang, 16:226–29. Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe. 2006.

Xie Conghui 謝聰輝. *Xin tiandi zhi ming: Yuhuang zitong yu feilian* 新天帝之命玉皇梓潼與飛鸞. Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan. 2013.

Xie Shiwei 謝世維. *Tianjie zhi wen: Wei Jin Nanbeichao lingbao jingdian yanjiu* 天界之文魏晉南北朝靈寶經典研究. Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan. 2010.

Xu Shuya 許淑雅. “Dahui Zonggao de zhuzuo qingkuang yu fenlei lunxi” 大慧宗杲的著作情況與分類論析. *Zhonghua foxue yanjiu*, no. 15 (2014): 37–98.

Xu Song 徐松. *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿. Edited by Liu Lin, Shu Dagang, and Yin Bo. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe. 2014.

———. *Song huiyao jigao bubian* 宋會要輯稿補編. Edited by Chen Zhichao. Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian weisuo fuzhi zhongxin. 1988.

Yamata Takashi 山田俊. “Hekikyoshi Chin Keigen no shisō” 碧虛子陳景元の思想. *Shūkan tōyō gaku* 68 (1991): 38–56.

Yang Bojun 楊伯峻. *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhu* 春秋左傳注. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1981.

Yin Cuiqi 尹翠琪. “Zhengtong daozang ben sancai dingwei tu yanjiu: Bei Song Huizong chao de daojiao yuzhou shenpu” 正統道藏本三才定位圖研究北宋徽宗朝的道教宇宙神譜. *Guoli Taiwan daxue meishishi yanjiu jikan*, no. 33 (2012): 113–62.

Yu Yingshi 余英時. *Zhu Xi de lishi shijie* 朱熹的歷史世界. Beijing: Sanlian shudian. 2004.

Yue Shi 樂史. *Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記. Edited by Wang Wenchu 王文楚. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 2007.

Zanning. *Da Song sengshilüe jiaozhu* 大宋僧史略校注. Edited by Fu Shiping 富世平. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 2015.

Zhang Junfang 張君房. *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤. Edited by Li Yongcheng. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 2003.

Zhang Weiling 張維玲. *Cong tianshu shidai dao guwen yundong: Bei Song qianqi de zhengzhi guocheng* 從天書時代到古文運動北宋前期的政治過程. Taida chuban zhongxin. 2021.

———. “Songchu nanbei wenshi de hudong yu nanfang wenshi de jueqi: jujiao yu Xu Xuan jiqi houxue de kaocha” 宋初南北文士的互動與南方文士的崛起聚焦於徐鉉及其後學的考察. *Taida wenshizhe xuebao*, no. 85 (2016): 175–217.

Zhao Dongmei 趙冬梅. “Jiemi yige bi Qingping le geng zhenshi de Song Renzong” 揭秘一個比清平樂更真實的宋仁宗. *WeChat*, June 4, 2020.

———. “Qingping le li cangzhe naxie lishi de caidan” 清平樂裡藏著哪些歷史的彩蛋. *WeChat*, June 12, 2020.

Zhou Mi 周密. *Qidong yeyu* 齊東野語. Edited by Zhang Maopeng. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 1983.

Zhu Xi 朱熹. "Wushen fengshi" 戊申封事. In *Zhuzi quanshu* 朱子全書, 20:589–609. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe. 2002.

Zhu Yongqing 朱永清. "Jipin jiruo yihuo zaoji zhi shi: minguo yijiang liang Song pingjia de shanbian yu jiujie" 積貧積弱抑或造極之世民國以降兩宋評價的嬗變與糾結. *Huizhou xueyuan xuebao* 39, no. 2 (2019): 106–15.

———. "Shenge yu zhengzhi: Zhao Song shengzu chongbai xinlun" 神格與政治趙宋聖祖崇拜新論. *Ningxia shifan xueyuan xuebao* 40, no. 8 (2019): 69–76.

張維玲. *Cong Nansong zhongqi fan jinxi zhengzheng kan daoxue xing shidafu dui huifu taidu de zhuanbian* 從南宋中期反近習政爭看道學型士大夫對恢復態度的轉變. Taipei: Huamulan chubanshe. 2010.

Sources in Western Languages

Ames, Roger T., and Henry Rosemont, trans. *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*. New York: Ballantine Books. 1998.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London and New York: Verso. 2006.

Barrett, T. H. *Taoism under the T'ang: Religion & Empire during the Golden Age of Chinese History*. London: Wellsweep. 1996.

Benn, Charles. "Religious Aspects of Emperor Hsüan-Tsung's Taoist Ideology." In *Buddhist and Taoist Practice in Medieval Chinese Society: Buddhist and Taoist Studies II*, edited by David W. Chappell, 127–45. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. 1987.

Bokenkamp, Stephen R. *A Fourth-Century Daoist Family: The Zhen'gao, or Declarations of the Perfected, Volume 1*. Oakland: University of California Press. 2021.

———. *Ancestors and Anxiety: Daoism and the Birth of Rebirth in China*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 2007.

———. "Sources of the Ling-Pao Scriptures." In *Tantric and Taoist Studies: In Honor of R.A. Stein*, edited by Michel Strickmann, 2:434–86. Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises. 1983.

———. “Stages of Transcendence: The Bhūmi Concept in Taoist Scripture.” In *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, edited by Robert E. Buswell, Jr., 119–47. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i. 1990.

———. “The Origins of the Origin Debates: Buddhist Responses to Daoist Accounts of the Origins of Buddhism (5th–6th Centuries).” In *Buddhism and Its Religious Others: Historical Encounters and Representations*, edited by C.V. Jones, 176–88. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2022.

———. “The Silkworm and the Bodhi Tree: The Lingbao Attempt to Replace Buddhism in China and Our Attempt to Place Lingbao Daoism.” In *Religion and Chinese Society: Volume I: Ancient and Medieval China*, edited by John Lagerwey, 320–22. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press. 2004.

———. “Time after Time: Taoist Apocalyptic History and the Founding of the T’ang Dynasty.” *Asia Major* 7, no. 1 (1994): 59–88.

Bol, Peter K. *“This Culture of Ours:” Intellectual Transitions in T’ang and Sung China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1992.

———. “Wang Anshi and the Zhouli.” In *Statecraft and Classical Learning: The Rituals of Zhou in East Asian History*, edited by Benjamin A Elman and Martin Kern, 229–51. Leiden and Boston: Brill. 2010.

Boltz, Judith M. *A Survey of Taoist Literature: Tenth to Seventeenth Centuries*. Berkeley: Institute for East Asian Studies. 1987.

Brook, Timothy. “Rethinking Syncretism: The Unity of the Three Teachings and Their Joint Worship in Late-Imperial China.” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 21, no. 1 (1993): 13–44.

Brose, Benjamin. “Credulous Kings and Immoral Monks: Critiques of Buddhists during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms.” *Asia Major* 27, no. 1 (2014): 73–98.

Broughton, Jeffrey L., and Elise Yoko Watanabe, trans. *The Letters of Chan Master Dahui Pujue*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2017.

Cahill, Suzanne E. “Taoism at the Sung Court: The Heavenly Text Affair of 1008.” *Bulletin of Sung and Yüan Studies*, no. 16 (1980): 23–44.

Campany, Robert Ford. “On the Very Idea of Religions (In the Modern West and in Early Medieval China).” *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 287–319.

———. *The Chinese Dreamscape: 300 BCE–800 CE*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center. 2020.

Chao, Shin-yi. "Daoist Examinations and Daoist Schools during the Northern Song Dynasty." *Journal of Chinese Religions*, no. 31 (2003): 1–37.

———. *Daoist Ritual, State Religion, and Popular Practice: Zhenwu Worship from Song to Ming (960–1644)*. London and New York: Routledge. 2011.

Chen, Jinhua. *Monks and Monarchs, Kinship and Kingship: Tanqian in Sui Buddhism and Politics*. Tokyo: Scuola italiana di studi sull'Asia orientale. 2002.

Chen, Xi, and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman. "Ghosts, Gods, and the Ritual Practice of Local Officials during the Song: With a Focus on Zhu Xi in Nankang Prefecture." *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies* 44 (2014): 287–323.

Cheung, Hiu Yu. *Empowered by Ancestors: Controversy over the Imperial Temple in Song China (960-1279)*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press. 2021.

Choi, Mihwa. *Death Rituals and Politics in Northern Song China*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2017.

Davis, Edward L. *Society and the Supernatural in Song China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. 2001.

de Bary, Wm. Theodore, and Irene Bloom, eds. *Sources of Chinese Tradition*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 1999.

Ebrey, Patricia Buckley. *Emperor Huizong*. Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press. 2014.

———. "Portrait Sculptures in Imperial Ancestral Rites in Song China." *T'oung Pao* 83, no. 1/3 (1997): 42–92.

———. "Song Government Policy." In *Modern Chinese Religion I: Song-Liao-Jin-Yuan (960-1368 AD)*, edited by John Lagerwey and Pierre Marsone, Vol. 1. Leiden; Boston: Brill. 2014.

Egan, Ronald. *Word, Image, and Deed in the Life of Su Shi*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center. 1994.

Goble, Geoffrey C. *Chinese Esoteric Buddhism: Amoghavajra, the Ruling Elite, and the Emergence of a Tradition*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2019.

Grant, Beata. *Mount Lu Revisited: Buddhism in the Life and Writings of Su Shih*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press. 1994.

Gregory, Peter N. *Tsung-Mi and the Sinification of Buddhism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1991.

Guo, Ting. “‘So Many Mothers, So Little Love’: Discourse of Motherly Love and Parental Governance in 2019 Hong Kong Protests.” *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 34 (2022): 3–24.

Halperin, Mark. *Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960–1279*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center. 2006.

Hansen, Valerie. *Changing Gods in Medieval China, 1127–1276*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2014.

Hartman, Charles. *Han Yü and the T’ang Search for Unity*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1986.

———. *Structures of Governance in Song Dynasty China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2023.

———. *The Making of Song Dynasty History: Sources and Narratives, 960-1279 CE*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2021.

Hughes, April. *Worldly Saviors and Imperial Authority in Medieval Chinese Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press. 2021.

Hurvitz, Leon, trans. *Scripture of the Lotus Blossom of the Fine Dharma*. New York: Columbia University Press. 1976.

Hymes, Robert P. “Sung Society and Social Change.” In *The Cambridge History of China: Part Two: Sung China, 960–1279*, edited by John W. Chaffee and Denis Twitchett, 5:526–664. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2015.

———. *Way and Byway: Taoism, Local Religion, and Models of Divinity in Sung and Modern China*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 2002.

Jia, Jinhua. *Gender, Power, and Talent: The Journey of Daoist Priestesses in Tang China*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2018.

Jülch, Thomas. “In Defense of the Saṃgha: The Buddhist Apologetic Mission of the Early Tang Monk Falin.” In *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel:*

Aspects of the Relationship between Buddhist Saṃgha and the State in Chinese History, edited by Thomas Jülch, 18–93. Leiden; Boston: Brill. 2016.

———, ed. *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel: Aspects of the Relationship between Buddhist Saṃgha and the State in Chinese History*. Leiden; Boston: Brill. 2016.

———. "Wang Anshi's 'Treatise on Great Men.'" *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 66, no. 2 (2013): 197–204.

Kirkland, Russell. "Dimensions of Tang Taoism: The State of the Field at the End of the Millennium." *T'ang Studies*, no. 15/16 (1997–1998): 79–123.

Kohn, Livia. *Laughing at the Tao: Debates among Buddhists and Taoists in Medieval China*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1995.

Kuhn, Dieter. *The Age of Confucian Rule: The Song Transformation of China*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 2011.

Lagerwey, John. *Wu-Shang Pi-Yao: Somme Taoiste Du Vle Siècle*. Paris: Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient. 1981.

Lau, Nap-yin. "The Absolutist Reign of Sung Hsiao-Tsung." Ph.D. dissertation. Princeton University. 1986.

Levering, Miriam. "Ch'an Enlightenment for Laymen: Ta-Hui and the New Religious Culture of the Sung." PhD dissertation. Harvard University. 1978.

———. "Dahui Zonggao and Zhang Shangying: The Importance of a Scholar in the Education of a Song Chan Master." *Journal of Song-Yuan Studies*, no. 30 (2000): 115–39.

Li, Wanmeng. "From Peach Blossom Spring to Grotto-Heavens: Literati Writing on Daoist Sacred Geography in Song (960-1279) China." Dissertation. University of California, Los Angeles. 2022.

Liu, James T. C. *Reform in Sung China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 1959.

Lo, Winston W. *An Introduction to the Civil Service of Sung China: With Emphasis on Its Personnel Administration*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. 1987.

Mollier, Chrstine. *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. 2008.

Pease, Jonathan. *His Stubbornship: Prime Minister Wang Anshi (1021-1086), Reformer and Poet*. Leiden; Boston: Brill. 2021.

Protass, Jason. *The Poetry Demon: Song-Dynasty Monks on Verse and the Way*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press. 2021.

Raz, Gil. “Imperial Efficacy: Debates on Imperial Ritual in Early Medieval China and the Emergence of Daoist Ritual Schemata.” In *Purposes, Means and Convictions in Daoism: A Berlin Symposium*, edited by Florian C. Reiter, 83–109. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz. 2007.

Robinet, Isabelle. *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*. Translated by Phyllis Brooks. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1997.

Robson, James. *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak in Medieval China*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Asia Center. 2009.

Rothschild, N. Harry. *Emperor Wu Zhao and Her Pantheon of Devis, Divinities, and Dynastic Mothers*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2015.

———. *Wu Zhao: China’s Only Woman Emperor*. New York: Pearson Longman. 2008.

Schipper, Kristofer, and Franciscus Verellen, eds. *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. 2004.

Schirokauer, Conrad. “The Political Thought and Behavior of Chu Hsi.” Ph.D. dissertation. Stanford University. 1960.

Schlütter, Morten. “China’s Three Teachings and the Thought of Emperor Xiaozong.” *Occasional Papers* 6 (1990): 151–61.

———. *How Zen Became Zen: The Dispute over Enlightenment and the Formation of Chan Buddhism in Song-Dynasty China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press. 2008.

———. “Vinaya Monasteries, Public Abbacies, and State Control of Buddhism under the Song.” In *Going Forth: Visions of Buddhist Vinaya*, edited by William Bodiford, 136–60. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press. 2005.

Seidel, Anna. “The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-Tzu and Li Hung.” *History of Religions*, no. 9 (1969–1970): 216–47.

Sharf, Robert H. *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press. 2002.

Skonicki, Douglas. “A Buddhist Response to Ancient-Style Learning: Qisong’s Conception of Political Order.” *T’oung Pao*, no. 97 (2011): 1–36.

———. “Using History to Defend Buddhism’s Place in the Socio-Political Order: An Analysis of Zanning’s Sengshilüe.” *Monumenta Serica—Journal of Oriental Studies* 64, no. 1 (2016): 47–71.

Smith, Paul Jakov. “Anatomies of Reform: The Qingli-Era Reforms of Fan Zhongyan and the New Policies of Wang Anshi Compared.” In *State Power in China, 900-1325*, edited by Patricia Ebrey and Paul Jakov Smith, 153–91. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press. 2016.

———. “Shen-Tsung’s Reign and the New Policies of Wang An-Shih.” In *The Cambridge History of China: Part One: The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907-1279*, edited by John W. Chaffee and Denis Twitchett, 5:347–483. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2009.

Soffel, Christian, and Hoyt Cleveland Tillman. *Cultural Authority and Political Culture in China: Exploring Issues with the Zhongyong and the Daotong during the Song, Jin and Yuan Dynasties*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag. 2012.

Tillman, Hoyt Cleveland. “A New Direction in Confucian Scholarship: Approaches to Examining the Difference between Neo-Confucianism and Tao-Hsueh.” *Philosophy East and West* 42, no. 3 (1992): 455–74.

———. *Confucian Discourse and Chu Hsi’s Ascendancy*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press. 1992.

Tillman, Hoyt Cleveland, and Margaret Mih Tillman. *Making China Confucian Again: The Zhu Family’s Mission for Family, Society, Business, and Nation*. Manuscript.

Welter, Albert. *Monks, Rulers, and Literati: The Political Ascendancy of Chan Buddhism*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. 2006.

———. *The Administration of Buddhism in China: A Study and Translation of Zanning and the Topical Compendium of the Buddhist Clergy*. Amherst, New York: Cambria Press. 2011.

———. *Yongming Yanshou’s Conception of Chan in the Zongjing Lu: A Special Transmission within the Scriptures*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2011.

West, Stephen H. “The Pains of Pleasure: The Lanterns of Kaifeng.” In *Senses of the City: Perceptions of Hangzhou and Southern Song China, 1127–1279*, edited by Joseph S. C. Lam, Shuen-fu Lin, Christian De Pee, and Marin Powers, 109–47. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press. 2017.

Wilhelm, Richard, trans. *The I Ching or Book of Changes*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1977.

Woolley, Nathan Ben. “Religion and Politics in the Writings of Xu Xuan (917-92).” Ph.D. dissertation. The Australian National University. 2010.

Xiong, Victor. “Ritual Innovations and Taoism under Tang Xuanzong.” *T’oung Pao* 82, no. 4/5 (1996): 258–316.

Xuanyi. *The Zhenzheng Lun by Xuanyi: A Buddhist Apologetic Scripture of Tang China*. Translated by Thomas Jülch. Abingdon: Routledge. 2019.

APPENDIX A

RECIPIENTS OF DAHUI ZONGGAO'S SERMONS, DHARMA TALKS, AND LETTER

Inviters/Recipients	Religious Identity	Political Identity	Official Rank (As of the Moment Sending the Letter/Sermon/Dharma Talk)	Gender	With contents about the compatibility of the Three Teachings	Genre
Anonymous	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	General Sermons
Master Dingguang 定光	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	General Sermons
Huang Deyong 黃德用	Lay Buddhist	N/A	None	M	N	General Sermons
Née Ji 計 (Chief Councilor Zhang Jun's mother)	Lay Buddhist	N/A	Grand Lady of Qin State 秦國太夫人	F	N	General Sermons
Office Manager Qian 錢 (Qian Qi 錢圻)1	N/A	Government Official	Office Manager of the Breau of Millitary Affairs 計議	M	N	General Sermons
Hermitage Head Fu 傅	Lay Buddhist	N/A	None	M	N	General Sermons
Vice Minister Liu 劉	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Vice Minister 侍郎	M	N	General Sermons
Office Manager Fu 傅	N/A	Government Official	Office Manager of the Millitary Commissioner 經幹	M	N	General Sermons
Anonymous	Lay Buddhist	N/A	None	M	N	General Sermons
Anonymous	Lay Buddhist	N/A	None	M	N	General Sermons

Government Staff of Xingan 新淦 County	N/A	Government Official	N/A	M	N	General Sermons
Office Manager Qian 錢 (Qian Qi 錢圻)2	N/A	Government Official	Office Manager of the Breau of Millitary Affairs 計議	M	Y	General Sermons
Zheng Cai 鄭偲	Lay Buddhist	N/A	None	M	N	General Sermons
Vice Administrator of Prefecutral Affairs Sun 孫	N/A	Government Official	Vice Administrator of Prefectural Affairs 通判	M	N	General Sermons
Lay Devotee Qingjing 清淨	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Supervisor 提舉	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Dongfeng 東峰	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Vice Administrator of Prefectural Affairs 通判	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Zhitong 智通	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Supervisor of Daoist Temple 提宮	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Miaozheng 妙證	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Assitant Director 寺丞	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Wuxiang 無相	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Palace Attendant 直殿	M	N	Dharma Talks
Dao Learner Zhenru 真如	Lay Buddhist	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Dao Learner Konghui 空慧	Lay Buddhist	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Kuoran 廓然	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Documents Manager 機宜	M	N	Dharma Talks

Lay Devotee Juekong 覺空	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Vice Administrator of Prefectural Affairs 通判	M	N	Dharma Talks
County Defender Huang 黃 of Xinyu 新喻 (1156)	N/A	Government Official	County Defender 縣尉	M	N	Dharma Talks
County Magistrate Luo 羅	N/A	Government Official	County Magistrate 知縣	M	Y	Dharma Talks
Prefect of E 鄂 Xiong Shuya 熊叔雅	N/A	Government Official	Prefect of E	M	Y	Dharma Talks
Judicial Commissioner Xu 徐(敦濟)	N/A	Government Official	Judicial Commissioner 提刑	M	N	Dharma Talks
Instructor Bao 鮑	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Instructor 教授	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Miaojing 妙淨	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Abbey Director 觀使	M	N	Dharma Talks
Documents Manager Lü 呂	N/A	Government Official	Documents Manager 機宜	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Kuairan 快然	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	County Magistrate 知縣	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Miaoxin 妙心	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Vice Administrator of Prefectural Affairs 通判	M	N	Dharma Talks
Née Cao 曹	N/A	N/A	Lady of Yongning 永寧 Prefect	F	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Miaozhi 妙智	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Academician of the Fuwen 敷文 Hall	M	N	Dharma Talks

Defender-in-chief Zhang 張(益之)	N/A	Government Official	Defender-in-chief 太尉	M	Y	Dharma Talks
Documents Manager Zeng 曾	N/A	Government Official	Documents Manager 機宜	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Zhongzheng 中證	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	County Magistrate 知縣	M	N	Dharma Talks
Judicial Commissioner Xu 徐(敦立)	N/A	Government Official	Judicial Commissioner 提刑	M	N	Dharma Talks
Documents Manager Chen 陳	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Documents Manager 機宜	M	N	Dharma Talks
Dao Learner Kongxiang 空相	Lay Buddhist	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Documents Manager Fang 方	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Documents Manager 機宜	M	N	Dharma Talks
Dao Learner Miaoyuan 妙圓	Lay Buddhist	N/A	None	F	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Taixu 太虛	Lay Buddhist	N/A	Palace Attendant 直殿	M	N	Dharma Talks
Lay Devotee Miaoming 妙明	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Director 知省	M	N	Dharma Talks
Documents Manager Cheng 成	N/A	Government Official	Documents Manager 機宜	M	Y	Dharma Talks
Gentleman of Propagating Moral Transformation Mo 莫	N/A	Government Official	Gentleman of Propagating Moral Transformation 宣教	M	Y	Dharma Talks

Chan Monk Zunpu 遵璞	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Chan Monk Miaodao 妙道	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Chan Monk Zhiyan 智嚴	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Chan Monk Zhili 知立	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Chan Monk Miaoquan 妙詮	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Chan Monk Chongmi 冲密	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Buddhist Lecturer Daoming 道明	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Chan Monk Miaozong 妙總	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Dharma Talks
Vice Minister Zeng 曾	N/A	Government Official	Vice Minister 侍郎	M	N	Letters
Vice Grand Councilor Li 李(漢老)1	N/A	Government Official	Vice Grand Councilor 叅政	M	N	Letters
Supervising Secretary Li 江	N/A	Government Official	Supervising Secretary 給事	M	N	Letters
Military Affairs Commissioner Fu 富	N/A	Government Official	Military Affairs Commissioner 樞密	M	N	Letters

Vice Grand Councilor Li 李(漢老)2	N/A	Government Official	Vice Grand Councilor 叅政	M	N	Letters
Vice Minister Chen 陳	N/A	Government Official	Vice Minister 少卿	M	N	Letters
Edict Attendant Zhao 趙	N/A	Government Official	Edict Attendant 待制	M	N	Letters
Administrator of Judicial Court Xu 許	N/A	Government Official	Administrator of Judicial Court 司理	M	N	Letters
Academician of the Baowen Hall Liu 劉	N/A	Government Official	Academician of the Baowen 寶文 Hall	M	Y	Letters
Vice Administrator of Prefecutral Affairs Liu 劉	N/A	Government Official	Vice Administrator of Prefectural Affairs 通判	M	N	Letters
Grand Lady of Tai 泰 State	N/A	N/A	Grand Lady of Tai 泰 State	F	N	Letters
Chief Councilor Zhang 張(浚)	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Chief Councilor 丞相	M	N	Letters
Judicial Commissioner Zhang 張	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Judicial Commissioner 提刑	M	N	Letters
Hanlin Academician Wang 汪	N/A	Government Official	Hanlin Academician 內翰	M	N	Letters

Fiscal Commissioner Xia 夏	N/A	Government Official	Fiscal Commissioner Xia 夏	M	N	Letters
Secretary Lü 呂 1	N/A	Government Official	Secretary 舍人	M	N	Letters
Director Lü 呂	N/A	Government Official	Director 郎中	M	N	Letters
Secretary Lü 呂 2	N/A	Government Official	Secretary 舍人	M	N	Letters
Principal Graduate Wang 汪	N/A	Government Official	Principal Graduate 狀元	M	Y	Letters
Administrator of the Hall Zong 宗	N/A	Government Official	Administrator of the Hall 直閣	M	N	Letters
Assistant Councilor Li 李 (泰發)	N/A	Government Official	Assistant Councilor 叅政	M	N	Letters
Director of the Court of Imperial Clan Zeng 曾	N/A	Government Official	Director of the Court of Imperial Clan 宗丞	M	N	Letters
Instructor Wang 王	N/A	Government Official	Instructor 教授	M	N	Letters
Vice Minister Liu 劉(季高)	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Vice Minister 侍郎	M	N	Letters
Director Li 李	N/A	Government Official	Director 郎中	M	N	Letters
Academician of the Baowen Hall Li 李	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Academician of the Baowen 寶文 Hall	M	N	Letters

Vice Minister Xiang 向	Lay Buddhist	Government Official	Vice Minister 侍郎	M	N	Letters
Instructor Chen 陳	N/A	Government Official	Instructor 教授	M	N	Letters
Supervisor Lin 林	N/A	Government Official	Supervisor 判院	M	N	Letters
County Magistrate Huang 黃	N/A	Government Official	County Magistrate 知縣	M	N	Letters
Instructor Yan 嚴	N/A	Government Official	Instructor 教授	M	N	Letters
Vice Minister Zhang 張	N/A	Government Official	Vice Minister 侍郎	M	N	Letters
Academician of the Xianmo 顯謨 Hall Li 李	N/A	Government Official	Academician of the Xianmo 顯謨 Hall	M	N	Letters
Instructor Yang 楊	N/A	Government Official	Instructor 教授	M	N	Letters
Military Affairs Commissioner Lou 樓	N/A	Government Official	Military Affairs Commissioner 樞密	M	N	Letters
Defender-in-chief Cao 曹	N/A	Government Official	Defender-in-chief 太尉	M	N	Letters
Vice Minister Rong 榮	N/A	Government Official	Vice Minister 侍郎	M	N	Letters
Supervisor of Transit Authorization Huang 黃	N/A	Government Official	Supervisor of Transit Authorization	M	N	Letters

County Magistrate Sun 孫	N/A	Government Official	County Magistrate 知縣	M	N	Letters
Secretary Zhang 張	N/A	Government Official	Secretary 舍人 and Principal Graduate 狀元	M	N	Letters
Chief Councilor Tang 湯(思退)	N/A	Government Official	Chief Councilor 丞相	M	N	Letters
Judicial Commissioner Fan 樊	N/A	Government Official	Judicial Commissioner 提刑	M	N	Letters
Monk Shengquan gui 聖泉珪	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Letters
Elder Gushan Dai 鼓山逮	Buddhist Cleric	N/A	None	M	N	Letters