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## Critical Patronage: A Few Southern Song Confucians and Daoism

### ABSTRACT:

Southern Song scholar-officials, threatened by powerful external dynasties and committed to a restoration of the classical Way, inherited the predicaments and ambitions of their Northern Song predecessors. In many ways, they broke new ground, however, since some literati sought to strengthen the nation and its heritage through a Confucian militancy that pointedly disparaged Daoists and their works. Specifically, this article examines how prominent writers, such as Lou Yue, Wei Liaoweng, and Huang Zhen, used prefaces and abbey commemorations not to praise Daoist clergy and temples but to slight and condemn them. Such unprecedented displays of open hostility on Daoist turf reflect the radical self-fashioning and cultural purification undertaken by Southern Song Confucians.

### KEYWORDS:

*Neo-Confucianism, Daoism, heterodoxy, Southern Song, Wei Liaoweng, Huang Zhen, abbeys*

Commemorating places means putting things in their place. These efforts sometimes have a *pro forma* quality, but during the Song dynasty (960–1279) became complex literary works, warranting detailed attention, as seen in a 1179 inscription for a Daoist abbey at Mount Longduo 龍多山, in contemporary Chongqing municipality. The inscription's author, assistant district magistrate Zhao Mao 趙懋, noted that most of the religious sites at the mountain belonged to the Buddhist church. At one crag stood, obscured by cypresses, a Daoist abbey. Commemorations (*ji* 記) ostensibly celebrate success, but Zhao chose to portray decay and failure.

There was a Daoist with a small cap and unkempt hair, ragged clothes and a rustic appearance. He held his tablet upside down as he greeted me. I entered and sighed that Laozi's 老子 clan came from China and circulated with our Ru 儒. They together spoke of the Way and its power, and benevolence and righteousness. Their learning was only a little different [from the Ru] and that was all. As for the Buddhists, they came out of a different country in the Western Regions. They were last to enter China. Their words vio-

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lated extremely those of the sages. Yet their disciples occupied the rivers and mountains. They cut off fertile and beautiful pieces of land, and what they built was always extravagant. People vied to give [the Buddhists] cash and silk.<sup>1</sup> They viewed the Laozi's concepts of purity, reducing thoughts, and diminishing desires as being distant and removed. It is not only that Longduo is like this. That being so, since their disciples also cannot support themselves, then [people] slight them.

一道士小冠而蓬髮，弊衣而菜色。顛倒手板以揖余。入<sup>2</sup>歎老氏出中國，與吾儒相馳逐，同言道德仁義。其見視特小小不同。不至如佛出西域異國。最晚入中土。其言最背戾於聖人。然其徒占據江山，<sup>3</sup>盡割膏腴形勝之地，又所建置輒豪華。人爭以金帛棄予之，視老氏清淨少思寡欲者遠絕。非但龍多然也。然亦其徒不自植立，方嗤鄙之。

The Daoist presence cuts a sorry figure, unable to preserve basic appearances. On his outing at the mountain, Zhao presumably saw many Buddhist temples before coming to this Daoist site, but nothing required him to compare Buddhists and Daoists. Daoists, in Zhao's view, deserve a higher position, thanks to their Chinese origins and general compatibility with Ru principles, but Buddhists held the upper hand. Furthermore, popular feeling tends to scorn Daoists for their obscure doctrine and dependence on lay society. Zhao goes on, in a following part of his inscription, to quote the same Daoist cleric, who asserts that the Western Jin 晉-dynasty adept Feng Gailuo 馮蓋羅 ascended to heaven at this site and that the feat could be verified in Daoist records. As for the twelfth-century abbey at Mount Longduo, the cleric claims that he had built the entire structure himself, with only the aid of his wife and children. This first section of Zhao's inscription ends with the cleric's summary and Zhao's judgment: "The Way cannot move people, and so donors are few. The building's dilapidation cannot make people gaze on it, and so those who serve it are scarce. It is

<sup>1</sup> This work is titled "Longduo shan Zhidao guan ji" 龍多山至道觀記. I follow the text in *Quan Song wen*, which includes the preceding two sentences and reads "rivers and mountains" (*jiangshan* 江山); see Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊, ed., *Quan Song wen* 全宋文 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue, guji zhengli yanjiusuo, 2006; hereafter cited as *QSW*), vol. 272, p. 338. The *QSW* version parallels the text as given in the county gazetteer *Tongnan xianzhi* 潼南縣志 (1911 edn.), j. 5, p. 2b. However, the *QSW* editors say they use the *Songdai Shuwen jicun* 宋代蜀文輯存 version, which actually omits the two sentences and substitutes "them 之" for "rivers and mountains." See Fu Zengxiang 傅增湘, ed., *Songdai Shuwen jicun* 宋代蜀文輯存 (Hong Kong: Longmen shudian, 1971), j. 72, p. 7b.

<sup>2</sup> I read this character as 入, or "enter," as seen in Fu, *Shuwen jicun*, j. 72, p. 7b, instead of 人, "person," given in *QSW*, vol. 272, p. 338.

<sup>3</sup> "Longduo shan Zhidao guan ji"; see also Fu, *Shuwen jicun*, j. 72, pp. 7a–8b.

only my wife and children [who work on it with me].’ I regarded him as strange and laughable, and did not press him further. 道不足以動人而施者寡. 囊不足以瞻眾而役者希. 不過與妻孥雜作耳. 余且怪且笑, 不復詰.”<sup>4</sup> Few inscriptions have more unpromising beginnings.

The second part of Zhao’s inscription reported a drastic turn in the abbey’s fortunes. A drought suffered in the abbey’s area prompted Zhao to offer the Daoist financial assistance if the latter’s rituals could bring rain. The cleric accepted the proposal, conducted the ceremonies with great effort, and the ensuing downpour led to a bountiful harvest and the promised funds, which stirred the local wealthy to contribute their own resources as well.

The third part reports that thirteen years later, in 1179, Zhao received a request from the Daoist for the commemorative text. Quoting the cleric’s letter of request extensively, Zhao’s commemoration informed its readers that the Daoist “greatly exaggerated the place 頗誇其所.” That said, one might expect fulsome descriptions from Zhao, but he only listed different buildings and provided specific figures about the stones, trees, bamboo, grain supplies, cash, and the labor days necessary to finish a certain large construction task. Zhao noted, moreover, that the court had honored the abbey by conferring land and enfeoffing Feng Gailuo as a Perfected Man 真人.<sup>5</sup> Finally, among the construction workers, several had become registered Daoists 道士, and local people found their prayers answered during times of drought and excessive rain. In this case, one can see how effective ritual action, performed at the state’s behest, has transformed a forlorn place into a vibrant cult center.

In the text’s conclusion, Zhao reassessed the Daoist religion, his opinion modified in the wake of the abbey’s recent prosperity and recognition.

The origins of the Daoists derive from the *Changes*. Their techniques of cultivation and tempering, and their *jiao* offering-rituals are all rooted in the Five Phases; they take them from the Eight Trigrams; they respect *yang* and slight *yin*. They apprehend what the *Changes* calls “completing the transformations,” but their “circulation of the way of ghosts and spirits”<sup>6</sup> is coarse and unrefined. The lofty already can fly and soar beyond their forms. The lowly

<sup>4</sup> “Longduo shan zhidao guan ji,” *QSW*, vol. 272, p. 338.

<sup>5</sup> See Xu Song 徐松, comp., *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1964), “Daoshi” 道釋, j. 1, p. 1a. Feng was said to have ascended to heaven in 309.

<sup>6</sup> See *Zhouyi* 周易, “Xici” 繫辭 (SSJZS edn.; Ruan Yuan 阮元, ed. [Taipei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1997]), vol. 1, p. 150.

pray at shrines and give offerings on behalf of others. They can have what moves [the deities] and summons clouds and rain. If their learning attains the marvelous, then they circulate through heaven and earth, assist in transformative education, and join with Fuxi, Shennong, the Yellow Emperor, Yao, Shun, and others.

Today, Daoists in petty fashion use their construction works to compete for supremacy with the teachings of the western foreign countries in the trivial matters of forms and implements. What a pity! Although it is so, what their refined spirit concentrates on and what intention and *qi* unify can make illusion and emptiness into substance, and transform non-being into being. Viewing him in comparison with worldly Daoists who are fond of property and wealth, and cherish their wives and children, is he not worthier? So I write for him. The Daoist is surnamed Li, and his name is Daobei. As for his wife and children, he probably had them before he became a Daoist.

且道家者流，其原出於易。其修煉之術，醮祭之法，皆本於五行，取諸八卦，尊陽而卑陰。得易所謂成變化而行鬼神之道，粗而不精。高者已能飛昇騰躍，出於形骸之外。下者爲人禱祠祭祀，而能有感召致雲雨。使學造其妙，則道家者流潛天地，贊化育，與伏羲，神農，黃帝，堯，舜氏等矣。今道士又起區區以土木與西域異國之教爭勝負於形器之末。惜夫！雖然，精神之所專，志氣之所一，能幻空爲實，化無爲有。視世之道士好貨財，私妻子者，不又賢乎。因爲之書。道士李姓，名道備。妻子蓋未出家爲道士時有也。<sup>7</sup>

Zhao's conclusion assesses Daoism and the Chinese tradition in intriguing ways.<sup>8</sup> First, the small differences between Ru and Daoists, noted thirteen years earlier, now go unmentioned. To Zhao, the two groups share an essential identity, rooted in the Confucian canon and basic Chinese cosmological assumptions. Second, Zhao makes no references to the *Daodejing* 道德經 and its injunctions regarding self-cultivation and non-action. Instead, Daoists are associated primarily with ritual practice, based primarily in the cosmology and processes of the *Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經). Third, Zhao distinguishes between higher and lower classes of Daoists, who might be characterized as celestial and earth-bound, respectively. The former resemble transcendents 仙

<sup>7</sup> "Longduo shan Zhidao guan ji," p. 339.

<sup>8</sup> By "Daoism," I refer to a group of learned Chinese traditions that includes the following: early texts classified under the *Daojia* 道家 category (namely *Daodejing* 道德經, *Zhuangzi* 莊子, and *Liezi* 列子); early and medieval cults of immortality and divine transcendents (*shenxian* 神仙); and the practices and tenets of the ecclesiastical organization that began with the Way of the Celestial Masters (Tianshidao 天師道) in the 2d c. AD. While the strict definition employed by scholars today focuses on the third element, Song scholar-officials commonly combined all three when they referred to *daojia*, *daojiao* 道教, or *Laoshi liu* 老氏流.

in their roaming through the skies and making common cause with the sages in order to better the world. The latter sort, which presumably includes the Daoist cleric at Mount Longduo, contribute to society's well-being through prayers and liturgies. Zhao chides them as unrefined and devoted to material matters, claiming that their works are driven by a misguided competition with their adversaries, the Buddhist sangha. This criticism appears paradoxical, in light of Zhao's initial contempt for Daoist penury, and he indeed makes a sudden about-face, as he credits Daoism for prizing this-worldly matters such as fine buildings and families, and commends them as worthy. Fourth, nowhere does Zhao fault any Daoists, superior or inferior, with betraying Laozi's basic import, wasting society's resources, or representing a larger pattern of cultural decline.

Composing celebratory texts was part of the literatus's job description, and such texts abound in the collected works of scholar-officials. By the Song, commemorations honored all sorts of newly-built or renovated structures, such as schools, walls, halls, studios, temples, bridges, or irrigation projects. Sometimes commemorations were carved into stone stelae at the given site, but often they were not. Ancient-prose standard-bearers of the late part of Tang and in Song, though, at times used these literary opportunities to go well beyond the subjects at hand and discuss at length larger philosophical, political, and historical issues. To locate a strict methodology in the face of such variety is nearly impossible. Virtually all commemorations, however, honor in some way the place or person being discussed. Zhao Mao does so as well, albeit belatedly and with considerable qualification.

Inscriptions of this kind constitute some of our richest sources concerning how Southern Song literati fitted the Daoist tradition into Chinese civilization. The Confucian-Daoist relationship involved many issues, such as the Chinese pantheon, ritual practices, imperial patronage, ecclesiastical prosperity and penury, canonical legitimacy, and the responsibilities of the Ru toward community and the Confucian enterprise. In particular, this article will focus mainly on the inscriptions of Lou Yue 樓鑰 (1137-1213), Wei Liaoweng 魏了翁 (1178-1237), and Huang Zhen 黃震 (1213-1280). These writers varied widely in their political fortunes and scholarly pursuits. I choose them because they wrote for Daoists more than did most Southern Song men, and because, like Zhao Mao, they chose in their works to belittle and condemn Daoists. Their telling, unusual exhibitions of disapproval, whose like went unseen in the Northern Song, opened the Confucian struggle against

heterodoxy on a new front, assaulting Daoists on their own turf. Their defiance of conventions reflected both Daoism's uncertain status in contemporary literati culture and exemplified, in radical fashion, a view of the Ru mission that put all literary endeavors at the service of an exclusivist Confucian Way. The commemorative works examined here did indeed constitute "critical patronage." Although they criticized Daoists, through their very existence and circulation, they served to support the Daoist church. Without such texts, posterity would have no record of individual Daoists and their accomplishments. Consequently, literati essays played a critical, essential role in maintaining the memory of the Daoist presence in the Chinese landscape.

#### CONFLICTING APPROACHES

Two intellectual contexts informed the works of Lou, Wei, and Huang. First, Daoists and the Chinese state had assisted each other for centuries. Priests had conducted legitimation and propitiatory rituals for dynasties, and enlisted the gods to protect defend the empire's communities against disruptions in the political and natural order. The Song government had patronized temples and clergy especially under the reigns of Song Zhenzong 宋真宗 (r. 998–1022) and Huizong 宋徽宗 (r. 1101–1125), notable in their enthusiasm and generosity.<sup>9</sup> The patronage relationship drew its strength from the assumption that the imperial (and implicitly Confucian) and Daoist world-views at root shared some vital compatibility, and that official sponsorship of Daoist works did not constitute any slackening in the state's commitment to the Way of the ancient sages. In its most elaborated form, this view proposed a "Unity of the Three Teachings," or *sanjiao heyi* 三教合一, meshing Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism.<sup>10</sup> In the Song, ref-

<sup>9</sup> See Suzanne Cahill, "Taoism at the Sung Court: The Heavenly Text Affair of 1008," *Bulletin of Sung-Yüan Studies* 16 (1980), pp. 23–44; Jin Zhongshu 金中樞, "Lun Bei Song monian zhi chongshang daojiang" 論北宋末年之崇尚道教, in Songshi zuotan hui 宋史座談會, ed., *Songshi yanjiu ji* 宋史研究集 (Taipei: Zhonghua congshu bianshen weiyuanhui, 1974; 1975), vol. 7, pp. 291–392; vol. 8, pp. 207–78, and Shin-yi Chao, "Huizong and the Divine Empyrean Palace Temple Network," in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Maggie Bickford, eds., *Emperor Huizong and Late Northern Song China: The Politics of Culture and the Culture of Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006), pp. 324–58.

<sup>10</sup> For examples of Three Teachings-influenced works, see the commentaries on the *Daodejing* composed by Wang Pang 王雱 (1042–1076) and Su Che 蘇轍 (1039–1112), in *Daode zhenjing jizhu* 道德真經集註 (DZ 706) and *Daode zhenjing zhu* (DZ 691), respectively. ("DZ" refers to the numbering system for works in the Daoist canon as given in Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, eds., *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang* [Chicago: U. Chicago P., 2004].) The former remarks, "The substance of the yin-yang of the *Changes*, the Being and Non-being of Laozi, and the Buddhists' form and emptiness is as one 易之陰陽, 老之有無, 以至於佛氏之色空, 其實一致"; DZ 706, j. 1, p. 4a. (All references to titles in

erences to Daoist-Confucian affinities appear in prefaces written for *Daodejing* commentaries and in commemorations for Daoist temple complexes, often with imperial ties.<sup>11</sup> In a 1091 commemoration for a major Kaifeng palace, Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101) highlighted the conceptual similarities between the two teachings and credited Huang-Lao statecraft with having settled and guided the Han dynasty.

The roots of the Daoists derive from the Yellow Emperor and Laozi. Their Way takes purity and quiescence, and non-action as its fundamental heritage, takes vacuity and brightness, and responding to all things as its function, and takes compassion and thrift, and non-contention as proper conduct. It joins with the theories of the Zhou *Changes*, “What is the world thinking? What is it considering? (The people of the world walk different roads and arrive at the same place),”<sup>12</sup> and the *Lunyu*’s ‘The benevolent are tranquil and live long.’<sup>13</sup> They are like this and that is all ... 道家者流，本出於黃帝，老子。其道以清淨無爲爲宗，以虛明應物爲用，以慈儉不爭爲行。合於周易“何思何慮，(天下同歸而殊塗),” 論語“仁者靜壽”之說，如是而已 ...

The Han arose, and his excellency Gai ruled with Huang-Lao.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, Cao Shen took their words as his teacher and said that the Way of ruling honored purity and quiescence, and so the people would be naturally settled. [The dynasty] took this as its policy, and the world lauded it, saying, “Xiao He created the model, straight as drawing a ‘one.’ Cao Shen replaced him. He upheld it and did not fail. He bore its purity and quiescence, and the commoners thereby were settled and peaceful.”<sup>15</sup> The subsequent rule of [Han] Wen[di] (r. 179–57 BC) and [Han] Jing[di] (r. 156–41 BC) largely relied on Huang-Lao. The [emperors] purified

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the Daoist canon cite *Zhengtong Daozang* 正統道藏 [Taipei: Xinwenfeng chubanshe, 1977].) Song emperor Xiaozong 宋孝宗 (r. 1164–1189) also supported the Unity of the Three Teachings, as seen in his “Yuandao lun” 原道論, a riposte to Han Yü’s broadside against the Buddhist and Daoist religions. See “Bowu huibian, shenyi dian, ershibu” 博物彙編, 神異典, 二氏部, in *Gujin tushuo jicheng* 古今圖說集成 (Chengdu: Zhonghua shuju, Bashu shushe, 1985), j. 57, p. 23a–b (p. 60439a–b)

<sup>11</sup> For works that cite Laozi’s beneficial counsel in ruling the empire, see Han Yuanji 韓元吉 (1118–1187), “Laozi lun” 老子論, *QSW*, vol. 216, pp. 62–63; Mou Yan 牟巘 (1227–1311), “Du Nangu Laozi yuanzhi xu” 杜南谷老子原指序, *QSW*, vol. 335, pp. 258–59.

<sup>12</sup> See “Xici,” p. 148.

<sup>13</sup> *Lunyu* 6/23.

<sup>14</sup> *Shiji* credits Gai Gong with assisting Cao Shen in pacifying the Qi kingdom with Huang-Lao policies in the early Han; see *Shiji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1959) 54, pp. 2028–29.

<sup>15</sup> Su quotes from Sima Qian’s biography of Cao Shen; *ibid.* 54, p. 2031.

their minds and reduced endeavors. They lightened taxes and relaxed judicial punishments. They did not speak of weapons, and the world was rich. 漢興，蓋公治黃老。而曹參師其言，以謂治道貴清淨，而民自定。以此爲政，天下歌之曰：“蕭何爲法，顛若畫一。曹參代之，守而勿失。載其清淨，民以寧壹。”其後文景之治，大率依本黃老。清心省事，薄斂緩獄。不言兵而天下富。<sup>16</sup>

Conceptually and historically, Daoism had meshed with Ru values. Others concurred with Su Shi. Lu You 陸游 (1125–1210), commemorating in 1203 a court-sponsored renovation of a Lin'an 臨安 palace, noted, “[Daoist works] are devoted to the closeness between father and son, and the righteous relations between lord and subject. There is no difference [between them] and the surviving books of Yao, Shun, the Duke of Zhou, and Confucius. 而篤於父子之親，君臣之義。與堯，舜，周公，孔子遺書無異。”<sup>17</sup> Literary testimonials to doctrinal harmony also could be seen far from the capital as well, as Song officials lent their talents, for example, to assist Daoist ritual entreaties to deities and compose “green memorials 青詞” to help relieve communities suffering from inclement weather.<sup>18</sup> In addition, state magistrates on occasion assumed the role of Daoist officiants and conducted exorcistic rituals on behalf of their subjects.<sup>19</sup> Implicit here was an all-encompassing conception of the Way that harmonized all apparent incommensurabilities into a single whole.

Some Ru, however, stressed not compatibility, but difference. Neo-Confucianism, or the Learning of the Way (*daoxue* 道學) movement, arose during the Southern Song to a position of intellectual hegemony and eventually state orthodoxy. Blending moral metaphysics and social practice, Neo-Confucians sought to restore the Way of the ancient sages, as they found it manifested in the Confucian canon.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> “Shangqing chuxiang gong bei” 上清儲祥宮碑, in Kong Fanli 孔凡禮, ed., *Su Shi wenji* 蘇軾文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986), j. 17, p. 503.

<sup>17</sup> See “Dongxiao gong bei” 洞霄宮碑, *QSW*, vol. 223, p. 180. The text appears also in the Daoist gazetteer, *Dongxiao tuzhi* 洞霄圖志, which contains an additional line, “they are precisely the great import of our teachings 則正吾教之大指.” See *Dongxiao tuzhi* 洞霄圖志, in *Zhongguo Daoguanzhi congkan* 中國道觀志叢刊 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 2000), vol. 16, j. 6, p. 11b.

<sup>18</sup> For an introduction to this genre, see Franciscus Verellen, “Green Memorials: Daoist Ritual Prayers in the Tang-Five Dynasties Transition,” *Tang Studies* 35 (2017), pp. 51–86.

<sup>19</sup> Judith Magee Boltz, “Not by the Seal of Office Alone: New Weapons in Battles with the Supernatural,” in Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory, eds., *Religion and Society in Tang and Sung China* (Honolulu: U. Hawai'i P., 1993), pp. 241–305.

<sup>20</sup> For short reviews of Zhu Xi's views of Daoists, see Wing-tsit Chan, “Chu Hsi and Daoism,” in idem, *Chu Hsi: New Studies* (Honolulu: U. Hawai'i P., 1989), p. 486–508; Julia Ching, “Chu Hsi and Daoism,” in idem, *The Religious Thought of Chu Hsi* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2000), pp. 152–70. For a magisterial study of *daoxue* thinkers' engagement with Dao-

Contemporary thinkers believed that the Chinese had neglected this Way since the Eastern Zhou dynasty and had suffered accordingly. Among the parties corrupting Chinese society were the Daoists and Buddhists, branded as “heterodoxy,” or *yiduan* 異端, in Confucian polemics. Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824), the forerunner of the Song Confucian revival, in perhaps his best-known work denounced Daoism along with Buddhism for its pernicious influence and sought its elimination.<sup>21</sup> The eleventh-century luminaries Ouyang Xiu 歐陽脩 (1007–1072), Shi Jie 石介 (1005–1045), and Li Gou 李覲 (1009–1059) criticized Laozi’s followers, with particular aversion to transcendents and immortality cults.<sup>22</sup> Commemorating a Daoist hall that housed imperial calligraphy, Ouyang proposed that Buddhism owed its strength to theories of karmic retribution, which enabled the sangha to manipulate popular hopes and fears. By contrast, Daoism, in its abstractness, lacked widespread appeal and needed state support to thrive.<sup>23</sup> Other scholar-officials shared Ouyang’s perception of Daoists as less threatening than the Buddhists.<sup>24</sup> By the mid-thirteenth century, Daoists had taken on a pathetic cast, according to Ouyang Shoudao 歐陽守道 (1209–?). Like Zhao, Ouyang expressed his views in an occasion-genre, in this case a preface (*xu* 序) about the writer’s seeing off a Daoist priest.

To sum up, the periods of [Daoist] success indeed have been few, and that is all. I calculate that among them there is nothing of benefit, but do not know why those who want to be their disciples generation after generation have never been lacking. The Tang had *shidaiifu* who abandoned office to become Daoists. Today there are none. It is only the young and the weak from the villages who in their bewilderment join them and cannot return [to lay life]. Under the circumstances, they must grow old and end their days there.

ism, see Kong Linghong 孔令宏, *Songdai lixue yu Daojia, Daojiao* 宋代理學與道家, 道教 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2006).

<sup>21</sup> “Yuandao” 原道, in Liu Zhenlun 劉真倫, ed., *Han Yu wenji huijiao jianzhu* 韓愈文集彙校箋注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2010), j. 1, pp. 1–4.

<sup>22</sup> See James T. C. Liu, *Ou-yang Hsiu: An Eleventh-Century Neo-Confucianist* (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1967), pp. 157–58; “Kejie yi Zhao Shou” 可嗟貽趙狩, in Chen Zhie 陳植鏗, ed., *Culai Shi xiansheng wenji* 徂徠石先生文集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), j. 7, pp. 75–76. Also see, “Magu shan fu” 麻姑山賦; “Yi xian fu” 疑仙賦; and “Fuguo ce, diwu” 富國策, 第五, in Wang Guoxuan 王國軒, ed., *Li Gou ji* 李覲集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), j. 1, pp. 2–3, 3–4; 16, pp. 140–42. Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–1086), sharply criticized *daojia* works; See his “Laozi” 老子 and “Zhuang Zhou” 莊周, in Tang Wubiao 唐武標, ed., *Wang Wengong wenji* 王文公文集 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1974), j. 37, pp. 310–13.

<sup>23</sup> “Yushu ge ji” 御書閣記, in Li Yian 李逸安, ed., *Ouyang Xiu quanji* 歐陽脩全集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2001), j. 39, pp. 567–68.

<sup>24</sup> See Chen Chun, *Neo-Confucian Terms Explained: The Pei-hsi tzu-i*, Wing-tsit Chan, trans. and ed. (New York: Columbia U.P., 1986), pp. 168–69.

How sorrowful indeed! 要其得志之時亦無幾耳。計其間無可利，顧不知何以願爲其徒者之代不乏也。唐有士大夫棄官爲道士者，今無之。惟閭里少弱之子誤投其身不克自返，勢不得不終老於此，亦可悲也。<sup>25</sup>

In this passage, Daoism has offered nothing that scholar-officials might draw from or fit into the classical tradition. Daoist clergy did not deserve admiration or even intellectual challenge, but were to be pitied. Ouyang employs a preface to assail heterodoxy, as Han Yu had done to Buddhists centuries earlier.<sup>26</sup> Yet Buddhism's prestige and institutional power in Han's day far surpassed that possessed by the Daoist church in the mid-thirteenth century. A literary approach that once might look like courageous resistance now resembles gratuitous bullying. The preface reminds its audience that Ru were vastly superior to men in other learned traditions.

#### CONSPICUOUS SILENCES: LOU YUE

Lou Yue's works illustrate, in more implicit ways, how a scholar-official kept his distance from Daoists. A prominent scholar-official, Lou won acclaim for his political probity and clear, vigorous prose.<sup>27</sup> Although he greatly admired Zhu Xi, he did not share Zhu's animus toward the sangha and instead composed many laudatory texts for Buddhists.<sup>28</sup> The Daoists received a different treatment from him, as seen in two works notable not only for what they say but also in what they do not say.

Lou Yue's longer text concerns a Daoist abbey in his native Mingzhou 明州.<sup>29</sup> The commemoration's beginning notes that local Buddhists vastly outnumber their Daoist counterparts, a rhetorical move which readers might interpret as an intentional slight. To explain this difference, Lou cites Ouyang Xiu's theory, discussed earlier, and then quotes that eleventh-century master's praise for exceptional Daoist priests: "As for those among them that can rely on their own strength and not give up – are they not worthier than the rest of their kind? 其間能自力而不

<sup>25</sup> "Zeng Liu Daoshi xu" 贈劉道士序, *QSW*, vol. 346, pp. 413–14. Elsewhere in the text, dated to 1265, Ouyang characterizes the clergy as penurious and hungry, but he eventually praises his supplicant, Liu Qingchun 劉慶椿, for his broad learning and command of parallel prose.

<sup>26</sup> "Song Futu Wenchang shi xu" 送浮圖文暢師序, in Liu, *Han Yu wenji*, j. 10, pp. 1073–74.

<sup>27</sup> For biographies of Lou, see *Songshi* 宋史 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977) 395, pp. 12045–48; Herbert Franke, ed., *Sung Biographies* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1976), pp. 668–72.

<sup>28</sup> For Lou Yue's support for the Learning of the Way, see Shu Youchun 束有春, *Lixue guwen shi* 理學古文史 (Zhengzhou: Daxiang chubanshe, 2010), pp. 182–88. Lou wrote eight commemorations for Buddhist temples, eight stupa inscriptions, and two prefaces for Buddhist texts.

<sup>29</sup> Internal evidence suggests Lou wrote the work in the first decade of the thirteenth century.

廢者，豈不賢于其徒者哉。”<sup>30</sup> The extended reference to Ouyang’s work suggests Lou implies that he concurs with his judgment.

In the second part, Lou relates local history. We learn that the abbey has close ties with the glory of the Lou family. Originally, the site housed a nature god shrine, but Daoists during Song Huizong’s reign built a palace (*dian* 殿) and a cloister. Lou concentrates, though, on the local magistrate, Lou Yi 樓昇 (1085 *jinshi*), Lou’s grandfather, who drained a large lake in 1117 to reclaim farmland.<sup>31</sup> The ensuing large harvest prompted local elders to erect a living shrine to him and appoint a Daoist, He Siyuan 何思遠, to manage the site. The cleric expanded the shrine, “apprehended the true ways of Huang-Lao 得黃老之真風,” and displayed a formidable ritual prowess, driving away demonic creatures, taming the Huai River to enable the passage of thousands of boats, helping Lou Yi quell bandits, and delivering rain to the region. These feats gained official recognition and the court’s bestowal of a plaque.

In the final sections, Lou Yue turns the focus to himself and assumes the personae of filial son and wise elder. He expresses regret that he never knew his grandfather, notes that his grandfather’s image remains at the shrine, and mentions that he knew He Siyuan, who was familiar with Lou’s grandfather. He’s successor expanded the site and practiced the rituals taught by He, which Lou deems “conduct befitting a grandson 孫行.” When this priest requests a commemoration, Lou acts the Confucian curmudgeon. Literary compositions, he scoffs, cannot truly transmit legacies, and great ecclesiastical buildings inevitably rise and fall into disrepair. The quest for permanence, whether in textual or physical form, is futile.

Do you believe that with [your] jade palaces and flowered lodges of today, resting on the surpassing landscapes of famous mountains and grotto treasuries, where those in dawn-cloud-colored caps and starred robes stroll at ease, that they all inherently are like this? At their start, they are like this, and that is all. Moreover, they cannot match necessarily the impressiveness of your residence. In cases where the site became splendid and sagely, although it is said, “it had its destiny,” [their fortunes] also depend on people. 存以爲今之琳宮蕊館，據名山洞府之勝，霞冠星襪搖曳其間者，皆固然耶。

<sup>30</sup> “Wangchun shan Penglai guan ji” 望春山蓬萊觀記, in Gu Dapeng 顧大朋, ed., *Lou Yue ji* 樓鑰集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2010), j. 54, pp. 989-91.

<sup>31</sup> The work aroused controversy, benefiting some families but ruining others. For more on this matter and other features of Lou Yi’s career, see Linda Walton, “Kinship, Marriage, and Status in Song China: A Study of the Lou Lineage of Ningbo, c. 1050-1250,” *Journal of Asian History* 18.1 (1984), pp. 37-77, esp. 41-45.

其創始之初，亦若是而已。又未必能如子之居之壯也。其寢致雄聖者，雖曰有數，亦存於人爾。<sup>32</sup>

In his following conclusion, Lou instructs the Daoist to return and remind his disciples to strive in their practice, and the cleric promises to comply.

Compared with conventional commemorations for Daoist palaces and abbeys, and Lou's own texts for Buddhist temples, this work contains several telling silences. We hear nothing about Daoist ideals. We hear nothing about the site's physical details, although Lou probably had seen the place. Most significantly, we hear very little about He Siyuan, who served as abbot for nearly twenty-five years, knew Lou's grandfather, and eventually won court recognition. This reticence appears striking in light of Lou's point, made by other literati, that the prosperity of religious institutions depended on their leaders. Such assertions commonly followed praise for outstanding clerics, but not here. Yet the abbey owes its existence to Lou's ancestor, and caring for that ancestor's spirit is one of the clergy's main duties. Moreover, while He is an exceptional Daoist, Lou does not praise him, although the shrine and abbey owes its prestige in large part to He's ritual prowess, his strong ties with the unseen world, and his extensive local support. Instead, Lou highlights the Daoists' subordination.

In another inscription, written in 1212. Lou similarly keeps the Daoist church at arms-length. This essay commemorates a shrine for the cleric Zhou Xia 周霞, who practiced in Jianzhou 建州, Fujian. Locals venerated Zhou during his life, and they built the temple in his honor after his death. Reports of his spirit's efficacy reached the court, which enfeoffed Zhou with the title, "Perfected Man of Infused Response 沖應真人." According to Lou, a tale in Hong Mai's (1123-1202) *Hong Mai's Yijianzhi* 夷堅志 discussed Zhou, but the anecdote unfortunately does not survive in the present-day version of that anthology. In any event, officials, possessing additional materials about Zhou, including a record of conduct 行狀, prevailed on Lou to compose a shrine commemoration. Zhou, then, won respect as a holy man – from the court, local people, and respected Song officials.

Lou Yue's text, however, treats Zhou Xia with a clear lack of enthusiasm. As he did earlier, Lou at the start undercuts his subject's significance. He asks: "The theories of divine transcendents are so obscure! Do these beings exist or not? It cannot be known 神仙之說，茫乎邈哉。有

<sup>32</sup> "Wangchun shan Penglai guan ji."

邪無邪，不可得而知也。”<sup>33</sup> After submitting the cases for both sides, Lou presents himself as an agnostic, but only after dismissing hagiographies as hyperbole: “Although their biographies are mostly exaggerations, what the eyes and ears do not encounter does not necessarily not exist. 傳記雖多夸言，然耳目所不及者，非必無之。” The exercise effectively splits the difference; he acknowledges the legitimacy of the supplicants’ request while establishing that he does not share their views.

This detachment continues as Lou turns to Zhou's biography. Records of conduct usually abound with details from their subjects’ lives, but Lou does not use this presumably rich material. He discusses Zhou only in very general terms, noting that the cleric was blessed with transcendent bones 仙骨, and that his wife conducted herself without blemish. In assessing Zhou’s career as an adept, Lou emphasizes the limitations of his achievements: “As he approached the end of his life, he still had not arrived at the place where form and spirit are both marvelous, and one easily elevates and flies off. They are indeed rare who, as the saying goes, ‘with one encounter follow the winged ones’ 及其垂成，猶未至于形神俱妙，輕舉飛昇之地。則世之謂一有遇而遂羽化者又難矣。”<sup>34</sup> Put otherwise, the Daoist came up short in his ambition. That Zhou did not rank among the most elite transcendents, of course, did not prevent him from becoming a cult figure, revered by local people and recognized by the state. We learn no cases of the shrine’s numinous power, and, as in the Mingzhou commemoration, the writer remains silent about the site’s appearance.

The text’s conclusion shifts away from Daoist matters. Northwest Fujian deserves acclaim for its scenery and talented natives, and Lou stresses that many of the latter do not belong to the clergy: “I daresay that it is not only the prosperity of divine transcendents and Daoists! 蓋不止神仙道家之盛也。”<sup>35</sup> In the essay’s last section, Lou laments that he never visited Fujian and, as if remembering a petty detail at the last moment, supplies Zhou’s full name. Looking at the essay in structural terms, the commemoration’s inner parts fulfill, barely, the supplicants’ intentions. The opening and closing sections, however, which raise doubts about the existence of Daoist divinities, praise local landscape and luminaries, and recall an unsatisfied wanderlust, distance the writer (and his readers) from the nominal subject, and thus diminish it. In

<sup>33</sup> “Jianning fu Chongying Zhou zhenren ci ji” 建寧府沖應周真人祠記, Gu, *Lou Yue ji*, j. 52, p. 977. Lou repeats his skepticism also in a colophon for a Daoist history. See “Ba Xie Guanmiao Hunyuan shilu” 跋謝觀妙混元實錄, *ibid.*, j. 69, pp. 1225–26.

<sup>34</sup> “Jianning fu Chongying Zhou zhenren ci ji,” *ibid.*, j. 52, pp. 977–78.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

these two essays, then, Lou Yue consents to relate Daoist history but refuses to celebrate it.

#### A FUNDAMENTALIST CASE: WEI LIAOWENG

Wei Liaoweng stands as one of the most prominent Neo Confucians of his time.<sup>36</sup> Along with Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 (1178–1235), Wei spearheaded the *daoxue* cause as the movement recovered from the 1195–1206 “spurious learning 偽學” proscription.<sup>37</sup> His forceful memorials to the court helped win state recognition of the eleventh-century paragons Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–1073), Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), and Cheng Hao 程灝 (1032–1085), and he propounded the Learning of Way's vision in many occasional texts, such as school commemorations and funeral inscriptions. A scholar of unusual breadth, Wei in his commentarial scholarship encompassed the Five Classics (*wujing* 五經), as well as the Four Books (*sishu* 四書), and his views bear the imprint of Zhang Shi 張栻 (1133–1180) and Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 (1139–1193), as well as that of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200). Wei seconded Zhu in his unconditional rejection of Buddhism, and his voluminous extant works include no texts written for the sangha. Yet Wei wrote seven commemorations for Daoists, and, more explicitly than Lou Yue had done, he dispensed with formulaic appreciation and chose to denounce and complain.<sup>38</sup> He deplored that even scholar-officials who condemned Buddhists and Daoists still wrote (as he did) texts on their behalf. The Ru were different: “In the texts of the ancestral Ru, they never discarded the public

<sup>36</sup> For studies of Wei, see Hou Wailu 侯外廬 et al., *Song Ming lixue shi* 宋明理學史 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe 1984), pp. 615–21; Cai Fanglu 蔡方鹿, *Wei Liaoweng pingzhuàn* 魏了翁評傳 (Chengdu: Bashu chubanshe, 1993); James T. C. Liu, “Wei Liao-weng's Thwarted Statecraft,” in Robert P. Hymes et al., *Ordering the World: Approaches to State and Society in Sung China* (Berkeley: U. California P., 1993), pp. 336–48; Hu Zhaoxi 胡昭曦 et al., *Songdai Shuxue yanjiu* 宋代蜀學研究 (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1997), pp. 143–62; Zhang Wenli 張文利, *Wei Liaoweng wenxue yanjiu* 魏了翁文學研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008); Hirata Shigeki 平田茂樹, “Nan-Sō shitaifu no nettowaaku to komyunikeshyon: Ki Ryoō no ‘Seishū kyōjū’ jidai o tekagari toshite” 南宋士大夫のネットワークとコミュニケーション, 魏了翁の“靖州居住”時代を手がかりとして, *Tōhoku daigaku Tōyōshi ronshū* 東北大學 東洋史論集 12 (2016), pp. 215–49.

<sup>37</sup> See Conrad Schirokauer, “Neo-Confucians Under Attack: The Condemnation of Wei-hsiieh,” in John Winthrop Haeger, ed., *Crisis and Prosperity in Sung China* (Tucson: U. Arizona P., 1975), pp. 163–98.

<sup>38</sup> The essays written for Daoists not examined in this article are: “Chengdu fu Lingying guan cihao ji” 成都府靈應觀賜號記, *QSW*, vol. 310, pp. 268–69; “Chengdu fu chaozhen guan ji” 成都府朝真觀記, *QSW*, vol. 310, pp. 316–17; “Yangzhou Tianqing guan shengzu dian ji” 揚州天慶觀聖祖殿記, *QSW*, vol. 311, pp. 1–2. The first one concerns a shrine to the deity Zhenwu 真武, lauded by Wei for its responsiveness to commoners' requests. The second reports the construction of a shrine to Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 (181–234 AD), and the third discusses a palace belonging to the imperial cult, and looked after by Daoist clergy. I do not discuss them because they do not articulate Wei's views of the Daoist tradition.

interest for the sake of personal matters 先儒之文，未嘗以私而廢公。”<sup>39</sup> A literatus with a brush meant a Confucian on duty.

### *Irreconcilable Differences*

Wei's contentiousness finds full expression in a 1211 commemoration for a renovated Daoist abbey in Hanzhou 漢州 (in present-day western Sichuan). On this ostensibly felicitous occasion, Wei questions the very basis of the Daoist tradition. He argues,

Now as for the Daoists, their origins do not appear in the sages' classics. Since the time Laozi was a scribe for the Zhou, he wrote his book to make clear his ideas to all, and they have been nothing more than practices of serene care and empty response to cleanse the self, and that is all. The world has seen those who strove to be Laozi but did not match him. At first they did not learn from his restraint and in vain admired his loftiness. They only wanted to soil their times and had rash intentions to go beyond the known world to seek what they called the Way. Thereupon, with the absurd techniques of the divine transcendents, some could seize opportunities and sway the grandiose intentions of rulers. Through the ages and over the years, these notions still have not yet disappeared. Alas! How obscured is the Way!”

且道家者流，其始不見於聖人之經。自老聃氏爲周柱下史，著書以自明其說，亦不過恬養虛應以自淑其身者之所爲爾。世有爲老氏而不至者。初無得於其約而徒有慕乎其高。直欲垢濁斯世妄意於六合之外求其所謂道者。於是神仙荒誕之術，或得以乘間抵巇而蕩搖人主之侈心。歷世窮年，其說猶未泯也。嗚呼。道其不明矣夫。<sup>40</sup>

This passage condemns the Daoist tradition in various ways. The writer strips Daoists of canonical authority, noting their absence in the Confucian classics. Laozi appears neither as a deity nor sage, but only as a government employee. The description of the *Daodejing* lacks any reference to divine beginnings, cosmology, or even shrewd statecraft, and the work functions simply as a guide for basic self-cultivation. Its

<sup>39</sup> See “Chen Gui du qi di wei daoshi huashu” 陳圭度其弟爲道士化疏, *QSW*, vol. 312, pp. 19–20. Wei cites works of Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) and Zeng Gong 曾鞏 (1019–83), specifically “Song Futu Wenchang shi xu” 送浮圖文暢師序,” in Liu, *Han Yu wenji huijiao jianzhu*, j. 10, p. 1073–74, and “Xiandu guan sanmen ji” 仙都觀三門記, in Chen Xingzhen 陳杏珍, ed., *Zeng Gong ji* 曾鞏集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), j. 17, p. 274, respectively. While these earlier works criticize Buddhists and Daoists, the two men explain that the ties of friendship and native place obligated them to compose the texts. The occasion for Wei's text formally announced the ordination of a Daoist priest. Unlike Han and Zeng, he kept the attention firmly on his own personal situation and characterized his Daoist supplicants as relentless pests, which suggested why such hypocrisy persisted among the literati.

<sup>40</sup> “Hanzhou Kaiyuan guan ji” 漢州開元觀記, *QSW*, vol. 310, p. 282.

followers have proved unable to even reach its rudimentary standards and instead distinguish themselves by their mediocrity, confusion, and malice, seen even at the highest ranks of the empire. A modest start has resulted in deplorable consequences. That said, despite its pernicious influence, the tradition has unaccountably survived, to the great detriment of the true Way.

For Wei Liaoweng, the Daoists' recent achievement in Hanzhou reflects nothing less than the decline of orthodox Chinese culture. The essay's start does not refer to the cleric's request for his text, the nearby landscape, or anything related to Daoism. Rather, Wei commences with the origins of civilization itself, with the *Hetu* 河圖, the *Luoshu* 洛書, and then the six classics, composed by the sages. These works, he avers, drawing from the *Appended Statements* (*Xici* 繫辭) to the *Book of Changes* as well as the *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong* 中庸), articulated and encompassed in full the essence (*ti* 體) and function (*yong* 用) of the Way.<sup>41</sup> Later ages, he laments at length, failed to grasp this cohesiveness and fixed on parts at the expense of the whole, and the clever and worthy then mistakenly exceeded the Mean.<sup>42</sup> This extended discussion, which precedes the passage cited at the start of this article, signifies that contemporaries live in a long-benighted world, and that their actions cannot escape the imprint of this ignorance.

Having established a basic, dismal context, Wei turns to the site's history and continues his condemnation. The temple complex, named Kaiyuan guan 開元觀, was part of Tang Xuanzong's 唐玄宗 (r. 712–755) empire-wide campaign to establish Daoism as part of the state religion.<sup>43</sup> In Wei's view, this patronage grew out of a spiritual torpor produced by extended peace, tempting officials "to neglect affairs, abandon ethics, and cast their minds away toward intangible places 外事物, 棄倫理, 以委其心於無所執著之地."<sup>44</sup> The state-sponsored religious grandiosity, which betrayed Laozi's original import, swept the empire, and consequently such shrines 祠 now could be found everywhere. In this account, Daoism has been enjoying prosperity for centuries uninterrupted. Few commemorations characterize Daoist history in such linear terms, but, equally important, Wei does not celebrate this ubiquity as a cause for

<sup>41</sup> For more on Wei's views of the *Changes*, see Cai, *Wei Liaoweng pingzhuan*, pp. 208–19.

<sup>42</sup> 知者過之; in sect. "Zhongyong" 中庸, *Liji* (SSJZS edn.; Ruan Yuan 阮元, ed. [Taipei: Yinwen yinshuguan, 1997]), vol. 5, p. 880.

<sup>43</sup> The order came in 738. See T. H. Barrett, *Taoism Under the Tang: Religion and Empire during the Golden Age of Chinese History* (London: WellSweep, 1996), p. 59.

<sup>44</sup> "Hanzhou Kaiyuan guan ji," p. 262.

celebration but simply notes the fact, showing an uncommon reluctance to draw larger lessons.

Wei then informs his readers about the renovated site, and in a way that belittles the Daoists. Significantly, he allows the Daoist who requested his essay, one Duan Qiangang 段謙光, to relate these events.

The abbey's disrepair had gone on for a long time. We assessed the old site, and the northwest corner was low and sunken. We piled up earth to make a place of tiles and bricks. In the side sections that collapsed, they were places where brambles and foxes made their home. As for the abbey's founding, it has been several hundred years until today. Although it barely survived and is not abandoned, it was destroyed and neglected like this. As I dressed and ate within, I was ashamed and ill at ease. So I filled [in the holes], stopped up [the gaps], put in order [what was chaotic] and shaved off [what was excessive]. The sunken was raised, and the filthy was cleaned. Then I arranged for the materials and recruited labor. In front I made (one missing character) basilica; in back I made (one missing character) basilica. As for the Perfected Man Chen Taichu, the ages have passed down that it was in this prefecture that he was released by fire. Now I had also his image painted and enshrined him. His excellency Su Wenzhong of Meishan knew of this matter.<sup>45</sup> Why don't you write for us the chronology of this construction to inform generations to come?

觀之圯久矣。相其舊址。西北隅地卑且凹。積爲瓦礫之場。其旁之降者，則荆棘狐狸之所居也。觀之始基，今數百年。雖僅存不廢，而壘壞廢缺若此。吾衣食其中，常忸弗寧。乃填乃闕，乃治乃削。凹者以凸，蕪者以潔，則慮材鳩庸。前爲□殿，後爲□殿。陳太初真人，世傳謂火解于是州者，今亦繪而祠之。其事則眉山蘇文忠公嘗識之矣。子盍爲我述其繕營之始末，以詔來世也。<sup>46</sup>

This account deserves attention in part for what goes unsaid. Apart from providing Duan's name, Wei says nothing about Duan, remaining silent about his bearing, his conduct, his learning, and his reputation. Neither does he remark at all on the site's appearance, although the abbey was located at the prefectural seat, where Wei as prefect probably had seen it. The Daoist says nothing about his duty toward his heritage or the religious purposes of his efforts, or about how the refurbished abbey will help to spread the Way or shelter traveling clergy. We learn only that the place's bleak dilapidation upset Duan, prompting him to

<sup>45</sup> See "Chen Taichu shijie" 陳太初尸解, in Kong, *Su Shi wenji*, j. 72, pp. 2322–23.

<sup>46</sup> "Hanzhou Kaiyuan guan ji," p. 282.

rebuild on a large scale. In commemorations not for the Daoist church, Wei sometimes supplies copious details about their construction, and so their absence here is conspicuous.<sup>47</sup>

In addition, although Duan's reference to the Chen Taichu shrine and Su Shi's account bridges the Daoist and Ru traditions, Wei does not rise to the bait and elaborate the point. His conclusion sounds general themes and emphasizes distance and incompatibility.

I said, "Ai! In the Way of the Ru, one wishes to find it in oneself,<sup>48</sup> and there is simple essence and true practice. One does not seek it in external adornment to dazzle people. How much more so for the extravagance of grand constructions – how should I submit to this? Even so, there is one thing among these [Daoist matters]. With regard to heterodoxies, if we assess them from the perspective of our Way, it has nothing which fits them. However, as for Laozi's concept of 'dimly visible, it seems as if it were there,'<sup>49</sup> I daresay it has what approaches the purport of the great *Changes*' 'setting store by life.'<sup>50</sup> Yet for what they call 'concentrating the breath to reach the utmost suppleness,'<sup>51</sup> and 'seeking the root and returning to one's destiny,'<sup>52</sup> if one sees [in the *Changes*] that 'the very great lose their place,'<sup>53</sup> [then] further there is a gap."

余曰：噫！儒者之道，欲其自得之而純體實踐焉。非求乎外飾以眩諸人也。況土木之崇侈，於余乎奚取。雖然，有一于此。異端之教，揆諸吾道之中皆弗合也。然而老氏緜綿若存之說者，蓋有近於大易生生之旨。而其所謂專氣，致寂歸根復命，視夫窮大而失其居者，則又有間矣。<sup>54</sup>

Wei's discussion shifts perspectives, but in the end keeps the Daoists at arm's length. He objects that the Way does not require landmarks. Some commemorative texts, albeit seen more in works for Buddhist rather than Daoist temples, proposed that impressive structures moti-

<sup>47</sup> Wei's commemorations often provide precise numbers of the cash, labor, and grain supplied for construction projects. See, e.g., "Yongkang jun pingshi qiao mianfu yi ji" 永康軍評事橋免夫役記, *QSW*, vol. 310, pp. 262–65; "Meizhou Daiying tang ji" 眉州戴英堂記, *QSW*, vol. 310, pp. 302–4; "Tongchuan zhuan yunsi chongjian dongya ji" 潼川轉運司重建東衙記, *QSW*, vol. 310, pp. 344–46; and "Meizhou chuang gong yuan ji" 眉州創貢院記, *QSW*, vol. 310, pp. 426–28.

<sup>48</sup> *Mengzi* 4B.14.

<sup>49</sup> *Daodejing*, chap. 6.

<sup>50</sup> "Xici," p. 149.

<sup>51</sup> *Daodejing*, chap. 10. Wei cites this reference in another commemoration, to be discussed, below.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 16.

<sup>53</sup> "Xugua" 序掛, *Zhouyi*, p. 188.

<sup>54</sup> "Hanzhou Kaiyuan guan ji," *QSW*, vol. 310, p. 283.

vated people to do good.<sup>55</sup> Even one magistrate, who identified himself as a Zhu Xi follower, and attacked Daoist conceptions of the Way, still held that repairing public monuments (such as Daoist abbeys) served the general welfare.<sup>56</sup> For Wei, though, these collateral benefits did not warrant attention. Wei's comments tack back and forth, as he finds potentially analogous passages from the *Daodejing* and *Changes* but then rejects them with his use of unequivocal language, such as "heterodoxies," and assertion of incommensurabilities. The insistence on difference is also an insistence on Ru superiority. After this passage, Wei exhorts Duan to devote the same attention to self-cultivation that he has given to the abbey's renovation, concluding, "I still hope you will return to the Ru intentions 尚庶幾歸儒之意."<sup>57</sup> This stern dressing-down, we are told, left the Daoist "looking lost 憊然," and he promises to relay Wei's instructions to his own flock. Wei thus cedes no ground, as he ignores standard literary practice and refuses to commend Daoist ideals or clergy. A rebuilt abbey, with a history of nearly five hundred years, presents not a cause for congratulation but a premise for polemic.

Other Daoist constructions came in for similar treatment. During the 1206 rebellion of the Sichuan official Wu Xi 吳曦, Daoists at a local abbey constructed a terrace 臺, at which they conducted rituals to aid the government's counter-insurgency.<sup>58</sup> After the rebellion's collapse, the clergy turned to Wei for a commemoration. Although Wei reported the basic facts, he again said nothing about the specific rites practiced, the site's landscape, the qualities of the individual priests, and said even less about Daoist doctrine. Wei commends the Daoists for their selflessness but stops short of suggesting Daoism might supplement 補 the ruling institutions of the empire or that there might be transformation through education 教化, as some Song-era writers did when characterizing Daoist and Buddhist works.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, Lu Dian 陸佃 (1042–1102), "Taizhou Huangyan xian miaozi si ji" 台州黃巖縣妙智寺記, *QSW*, vol. 101, pp. 221–22; Deng Su 鄧肅 (1091–1132), "Nanjian Tianning suxiang ji" 南劍天寧塑像記, *QSW*, vol. 183, p. 176; Han Yuanji 韓元吉 (1118–1187), "Jianan Baiyun shan chongfan chansi luohantang ji" 建安白雲山崇梵禪寺羅漢堂記, *QSW*, vol. 216, pp. 179–80.

<sup>56</sup> Du Fan 杜範 (1182–1245), "Wanling daoyuan ji" 宛陵道院記, *QSW*, vol. 320, p. p 258–59. The official was Wang Sui 王遂 (1202 *jinshi*).

<sup>57</sup> "Hanzhou Kaiyuan guan ji," *QSW*, vol. 310, p. 283.

<sup>58</sup> See Denis Twitchett et al., ed., *Cambridge History of China, vol. 5: Part One, The Sung Dynasty and Its Precursors, 907–1279* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2009), pp. 800–2.

<sup>59</sup> See Xie Cong 謝枋 (fl. 1092), "Fenzhou Pingyao xian Qingxu guan ji" 汾州平遙縣清虛觀記, *QSW*, vol. 122, pp. 217–19; Fan Hao 范浩, "Jingde si Zhutian ge ji" 景德寺諸天閣記, *QSW*, vol. 179, p. 153; Zhang Jun 張浚 (1097–1164), "Tianning wanshou chansi zhitian ji" 天寧萬壽禪寺置田記, *QSW*, vol. 188, pp. 128–29.

Instead, Wei returns to the Neo-Confucian quandary, the tragic gap between ancient glory and contemporary lassitude. In particular, he extols the ties in high antiquity between humanity and the gods, and by weaving passages from *Shangshu* 尚書, *Guoyu* 國語, and *Zhouli* 周禮, he outlines the canonical ritual system. Deities and diviners kept to their proper places, and a comprehensive framework regulated smoothly the intercourse between the divine and human. This perfect order reached down to the shamans, whose performance was impeccable and vital to the mission of the sage-kings.

Even with shamans and shamanesses, their abilities and knowledge could be taken as a model. Their perspicacity could render [the unseen world] transparent and sparkling. They did not flatter or slander, but were relied on by the gods. This is how the thearchs and kings established the charge and established their intentions on behalf of the common people. 雖巫覡之人, 其才知足以比義. 其聰明足以照徹. 不諂不誣, 而爲神所依. 此帝王所以爲斯民立命立心者也.<sup>60</sup>

In this idyll, ritual officiants, regardless of social status, practiced the rites correctly and thus ensured their transformative power.

Having presented such a performative ideal, Wei makes the current turpitude especially distressing and calls for unusual measures. He again decries that the decline of the Way has left people worshipping the wrong deities and in improper ways. In this case, the aggrieved writer directs his fire at his scholar-official colleagues, who ought to know better.

Even though they are students of the classics and are scholars, they usually are content with the baseness of [the rituals] they see and hear, and puzzled at the transformations of *yin* and *yang*. They are tempted by selfish considerations of gain and loss, and violate the classics, with its statutes and regulations. They respect what one (or, what they should) not put at a distance, and they put at a distance what they should not respect.<sup>61</sup> 雖經生學士, 徃徃安見聞之陋以疑陰陽之化. 怵利害之私以佛典則之經. 敬不以遠, 遠不必敬.<sup>62</sup>

This passage, beginning also with the concessive particle *sui* 雖, forms a pair with the one above, underscoring the contrast between past order and current chaos. Literati have failed intellectually and

<sup>60</sup> “Jiangyuan xian Daqing guan Yunceng tai ji” 江原縣大慶觀雲層臺記, *QSW*, vol. 310, p. 319.

<sup>61</sup> Wei refers to *Lunyu* 6/22, making a play on words with Confucius’s injunction to revere ghosts and spirits but keep them at a distance. Literati, he charges, do not preserve the correct distance.

<sup>62</sup> “Jiangyuan xian Daqing guan Yunceng tai ji,” p. 320.

morally; they ignore the basic rules of *yin* and *yang*, which underlie all creation, and no longer put the interests of the commonweal first. Lacking appropriate models, commoners sink into religious depravity. As a result, when the vicissitudes of life or the perils of natural disaster and war reasonably prompt people to request assistance from the gods, the efforts of the incognizant authorities fall short. Under these circumstances, Daoist ceremonies constitute the lesser of two evils and warrant notice, if not acclaim.

The people naturally make offerings to [the gods], and those who serve as functionaries do not understand [what is required]. Presently, as for the vestiges of the [of ancient rituals'] felicitations, the prayers, the propitiatory rites, and ritual wine, if one can see them only here [under Daoist auspices], how could this not be honored? 民自祠焉，爲吏者弗及知也。今祝祈祭醮之遺，乃若僅見於斯，不亦可尙矣乎。<sup>63</sup>

These vestiges inspire Wei, as he presents himself, to seek to explain the Zhou ritual system to the abbot, presumably hoping that the Daoist would convert and enlist in the Ru cause. In the event, the cleric died, and Wei leaves his successor, who requested the commemoration, with stern instructions to erect a stele and stay the course.

The Ru of the Han said, "Those who understand the nature of heaven and earth cannot be confused by the spirits and oddities. Those who know the feelings of the myriad things cannot be deceived by phenomena from different categories."<sup>64</sup> If we do not understand moral principles with great clarity,<sup>65</sup> how can we fully grasp the border between heaven and humanity, and not be taken in by vulgar customs? 漢儒有言：明天地之性者，不可惑以神怪；知萬物之情者，不可罔以非類。吾儕苟非理明義精，其能通天人之分際而不受於流俗乎。<sup>66</sup>

Wei's parting words return to Neo-Confucian fundamentals. His words could well have fallen on receptive ears, because Daoists concurred with Ru that confusing oddities must be brought to heel and that proper relations between the seen and the unseen worlds be reimposed.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> The remark comes from Gu Yong 谷永 in response to Han Chengdi's 漢成帝 (r. 32–7 BC) enthusiasm for spirits. See *Han shu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962) 25, p. 1260.

<sup>65</sup> 理明義精; trans. by Wing-tsit Chan, trans. and ed., in Chu Hsi and Lü Tsu-ch'ien, *Reflections on Things at Hand: The Neo-Confucian Anthology* (New York: Columbia U.P., 1967), p. 122.

<sup>66</sup> "Jiangyuan xian Daqing guan Yunceng tai ji," p. 320.

In this essay, Wei significantly does not use the term “heterodoxies.” The struggle on this occasion does not lie between the Ru and the other two teachings, but between the orthodox 正 and the common 俗. If Neo-Confucians necessarily could not represent Daoists as orthodox, in this instance Daoists proved themselves as “uncommon.” The adversaries are “those who act as *li*,” that is, *weilizhe* 爲吏者. The term *li* refers normally to the notoriously venal clerks and runners whom monarchs and scholar-officials needed to run the empire. Clerks and runners, however, do not execute, let alone determine, local state ritual practice. Rather, the label here faults careless Confucian magistrates and prefects, whose slackness has rendered them indistinguishable from their ethically suspect underlings. Under these circumstances, Daoists resemble much more the “true” Ru and prompt Wei’s use of the first-person, plural pronoun *wuchai* 吾儕, suggesting some sort of provisional united front against misguided contemporaries, based on general concern for society’s welfare. Wei conceivably might have further remarked about Daoist liturgy [and its efficacy], which had its roots with the Celestial Masters movement in Wei’s native Sichuan over a millennium earlier.<sup>67</sup> To do so, however, would start, albeit not finish, erasing the boundaries between the Daoist and Confucian ways, and, as seen in the Kaiyuan guan dedication, Wei reduces Daoism essentially to the *Daodejing* and its prescriptions for individual self-improvement. This intellectual position enables Wei at once to acknowledge the Daoists, keep them at a distance, and uphold the mission to revive the Confucian Way.

*Courtesy and Contention*

In other works for the Daoist church, Wei follows literary custom by presenting details about the specific landmark, but still expresses at length his Neo-Confucian perspective. The result suggests a writer adopting different, even discordant, voices in the same text. The effect reflects perhaps how the various responsibilities felt by Wei pulled him in multiple directions. To see these dynamics at play, we turn to a 1212 inscription for an abbey northeast of Chengdu. In the first two-thirds of this composition, Wei “plays it straight” and delivers the generic information found in countless such works by late-imperial literati. That is, he recounts two prodigious events from 1015, where an abbey pillar suddenly bore the wondrous shapes of the Big Dipper and a Daoist.

<sup>67</sup> Wei composed several green memorials and related ritual petitions employed by Daoist priests seeking divine assistance to aid the local community in various ways, such as timely rain or sunshine. See *QSW*, vol. 311, pp. 442–47; vol. 312, pp. 1–16.

He relates that the court, learning of these auspicious signs, conferred honors on the abbot who saw the images and then renovated the structure, and that the state, during the reigns of Zhenzong and Huizong, bestowed plaques and favor on the abbey. He reports that a resident cleric, presumably the current abbot, pursued Wei for six years for a text and also presented him with copious records and pictures of the site. Duly informed, Wei details the names of no fewer than ten highlights of the nearby landscape, lists fifteen separate palaces, shrines, towers, and halls, and notes their position with respect to each other, as if dictating to someone drawing up a map. In addition, we learn that the place's religious history began in 736, when an unnamed holy man moved there. Past history and sustained prosperity move Wei to sigh, "Ah, how majestic! 猗其偉歟."<sup>68</sup> When compared with the two commemorations discussed earlier, this one appears to have come from the hand of a different writer. The same literatus who condemned a site with only two palaces for its grandiosity now itemizes a multitude of on-site structures and expresses his admiration. What explains this change? One could posit, for example, the presence of imperial patronage, the abbot's persistence, or the undeniable vigor and purpose reflected in the abbey's impressive scale. In honoring the clergy, their industry and persistence, and their ties with the dynasty, this account adheres to conventions and fulfills the expectations of those who requested the text and most of those who read it.

In the essay's final third, however, Wei returns to his central preoccupation, the restoration of the Confucian order. Shifting to matters more commonly found in polemics or essays for Confucian schools, he recalls the ancient four-class system (scholars, farmers, craftsmen, and merchants), replaced now in his view by a system of six groups (the newcomers being the Buddhist and Daoist clergy). This reference reminds readers that high antiquity in its perfection had no place (or need) for Daoists. In addition, the point lumps Daoists with Buddhists, and the latter's presence diminishes the Daoists and their separate claims to authority. According to Wei, these recent arrivals succeed through their theories of moral conduct and retribution, which echoes Ouyang Xiu's explanation of Buddhism's appeal.<sup>69</sup> Having disposed of these

<sup>68</sup> "Ziyun shan Chongxian guan ji" 紫雲山崇仙觀記, *QSW*, vol. 310, p. 267.

<sup>69</sup> As noted earlier, Ouyang believed that Daoism needed official favor to thrive. In this case, however, state support arrives only after the appearance of extraordinary signs. Earlier in the text Wei pronounced himself baffled about how the surrounding landscape gave rise to the auspicious portents on the column. The remark implies that neither the resident clergy's performance nor Daoist deities might deserve credit for their manifestation.

secondary matters, Wei finishes by reviewing for his flock elementary matters that apparently have gone forgotten.

Those that dress in Ru robes and caps fill the world. How can one not say: It derives from Confucius? As for Confucius's virtue, its great essentials cause people to consider what is close at hand and to start from below,<sup>70</sup> to be circumspect when one is alone and to study to improve oneself.<sup>71</sup> As for affairs and things, one brings forth what one knows and then expands on it, to the point where one rules the country and pacifies the world. In sum, his Way is of the utmost conciseness and is easy to understand. It is of the utmost immediacy and is easy to practice. 服儒衣冠者滿天下。豈不曰自孔氏? 孔氏之德, 大要使人近思下學, 謹獨爲己。即事即物以致其知而充之, 以至於治國平天下。其道蓋至約而易知, 至近而易行者也。<sup>72</sup>

The remarks characterize Confucian learning in familiar ways. As part of a commemoration for a Daoist abbey, they can be read as a polite, veiled, but unmistakable criticism of Laozi and his followers. That Wei stresses the immediacy of Ru studies suggests that Daoism (and Buddhism) commence with distant, intangible issues. Highlighting the centrality of self-control and self-motivation here implies a key difference from presumably the more social, less rigorous approaches of Confucianism's counterparts. Moreover, the Sage's teachings bring the empire to order (whereas Daoism and Buddhism cannot), and the initiated can readily grasp and put them into effect (whereas Daoism and Buddhism apparently pose insurmountable intellectual and practical difficulties).

As Wei admits, however, this vision does not fit early-thirteenth-century reality. Few literati can devote themselves entirely to their Confucian calling, while monks, priests, and nuns adhere to their masters' teachings, constantly acquire new followers, and, intriguingly, even surpass scholar-officials in the worldly endeavors of civil construction and cultural preservation. "Even with respect to building palaces and temples, and collecting texts from the past, the Ru rarely can match them 雖繕營宮廟, 裒聚遺文, 儒者亦鮮及之."<sup>73</sup> The reference to books is curious, because Wei earlier mentioned a scripture loft 經樓 only in passing. This image, I would argue, shows the writer's exasperation with his *own* kind, who apparently require reminding that the Ru origi-

<sup>70</sup> *Lunyu* 14/35.

<sup>71</sup> *Lunyu* 14/24.

<sup>72</sup> "Ziyun shan Chongxian guan ji," p. 267.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

nated with Confucius. Literati, Wei suggests, suffer from extreme confusion, and this Daoist success in collecting scripture calls attention to the general Confucian lassitude. Viewed in its entirety, the essay calls to mind a Neo-Confucian, distracted at first from his duties by a stubborn cleric, but who cannot wait until the essay's conclusion before he plunges back to his main charge of rescuing, with every tool at hand, the Sage's mission.<sup>74</sup>

A final commemoration, for Jinsu Abbey 金粟觀, echoes the first two works discussed earlier in its forceful elucidation of Confucian-Daoist differences. Wei composed this essay in 1225, several years after the others and during his brief recall to a court position. In this case, the abbey was located neither in Sichuan nor Lin'an but in Fujian, suggesting that Wei's literary fame had spread through the empire. Like the text discussed above, this one is organized in two parts. Nearly the entire first half of the work is given over to the Daoist Huang Quhua's 黃去華 description of the site. As before, Wei details the features of the surrounding landscape, cites imperial patronage, and names several structures, including one called Three Teachings Hall (Sanjiao tang 三教堂), a place that was often the setting of extraordinary events. The Daoist legends Zhongli Quan 鍾離全 and Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 had been there, and on another occasion an unnamed member of the Perfected transformed millet into gold. In addition, we learn that the construction effort took nine years and required three million cash. This detail, typical of Wei's occasional pieces and commemorations, in this case suggests as well a gracious writer, willing to allow the clergy to represent itself in its own voice. Many writers then would have simply added a few general approving comments and concluded their essay.

Here, however, an otherwise innocuous account draws a Neo-Confucian's combative response. Beginning with the chilly comment, "I reviewed these matters, and there was that which I did not understand 余閱其事而有未喻者," Wei contests at length aspects of the Daoist heritage found in Huang's report.<sup>75</sup> He dismisses first the prospects for ecumenical compatibility, implicit in the name Three Teachings Hall, and asserts that no consensus exists on what might persuasively link Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. He then objects to two key Daoist concepts, transcendents and wondrous transformations. To wit, all *qi* that combines to form life must inevitably scatter upon its demise, and the absence of tangible proof necessarily throws into

<sup>74</sup> For a similar inscription, lamenting that Confucians cannot match the steadfastness of the Daoist clergy, see Lü Tao 呂陶 (1026–1105), "Jizhen guan ji" 集真觀記, *QSW*, vol. 74, p. 48.

<sup>75</sup> "Quanzhou Zimao shan Jinsu guan ji" 泉州紫帽山金粟觀記, *QSW*, vol. 310, p. 342.

doubt the existence of such immortal (and anomalous) beings, “One traces [transcendents] but they cannot be seen. That being so, then is there *qi* that combines but does not disperse? 跡之而不可見。然則氣有聚而不散者乎。”<sup>76</sup> Wei employs the same empirical perspective to rule out miraculous transformations; if millet can become gold, then sensory realities become unreliable. Consequently, key features of the Daoist’s exposition are untenable, and Wei must reject his request. “Now I say then that I have not understood [these matters] and will not go back to look for something that my mind is content with, in order to force myself to write on your behalf. You certainly know that it would be impossible. 今余於是說未之有得，而不復返求乎心之所安。爲爾強書之，決知其不可也。” One can imagine that other literati turned down Buddhist and Daoist clergy on similar grounds. No other writer, however, so elaborately wrote the reasons for his refusal.

The Daoist proves undaunted, but the Neo-Confucian remains unmoved. Huang Quhua searches for persuasive Confucian precedents and cites Yan Zhenqing’s 顏真卿 (709–785) commemoration for an altar to the transcendent Magu 麻姑, written in 771.<sup>77</sup> Yan’s celebrated work summarized how the fourth-century hagiographical anthology *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳 had handled the life of the transcendent Wang Yuan 王遠, and, importantly, Yan expressed no skepticism about the contents of Wang’s biography.<sup>78</sup> Yan’s tacit credence in wondrous matters then leads Huang to insist on the possibility of extra-mundane realms. Wei, though, will have none of it and refers to Wang’s belittling of Ma Gu’s feat of transmuting grain into “cinnabar” as “transformation tricks 狡獪變化.” He then clinches the argument, at least perhaps for a Confucian audience, by recalling that the Sage did not speak of oddities, feats of strength, disorder, or spirits.<sup>79</sup> In sum, Wei condemns at length what the Daoist believes makes the Quanzhou abbey exceptional and worthy of a written record.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. Some literati, nonetheless, could reconcile transcendents with *yin-yang* ontology. See Zhao Cigong 趙次公 (fl. early-12th c.), “Huang Lu zhenren bei ji” 黃鹿真人碑記, *QSW*, vol. 206, p. 338–39.

<sup>77</sup> See “Magu xiantan ji” 麻姑仙壇記, in *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), j. 338, pp. 4a–5b. For an analysis of this text and the subsequent Daoist reception of Yan, see Amy McNair, *The Upright Brush: Yan Zhenqing’s Calligraphy and Song Literati Politics* (Honolulu: U. Hawai’i P., 1998), pp. 81–95. For a translation of the second half of Yan’s text, see *ibid.*, pp. 85–86.

<sup>78</sup> See Ge Hong 葛洪 (283–343 AD), *Shenxian zhuan jiaoshi* 神仙傳校釋, Hu Shouwei 胡守爲, coll. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2010), pp. 92–118. For an English translation, see Robert Ford Campney, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong’s Traditions of Divine Transcendents* (Berkeley: U. California P., 2002), pp. 259–70.

<sup>79</sup> *Lunyu* 8/21. Elsewhere Wei decries contemporary literati who used Confucius’s silence as an excuse to dabble in occult matters. See “Meizhou Weixian miao ji” 眉州威顯廟記, *QSW*,

In the conclusion, Wei salvages aspects of the Daoist heritage. This effort would justify presumably the text's existence and ensure its circulation and survival. On the one hand, he writes off Daoism's objectionable features as "latter-day corruptions 未流之弊," or recent overgrowth that can and should be cut away for the health of the original organism. These excrescences include the cult of transcendents and miracles, of course, but also, surprisingly, Daoist austerity. The latter, he contends, seeks to "diminish in a profound way the self for the sake of survival 深自齋縮以全吾生." This desire assumes, incorrectly, a duality between the Way and its myriad manifestations, and thus loses sight of the overall interconnected coherence of the cosmos.<sup>80</sup> On the other hand, a few parts of the *Daodejing* are palatable and win Wei's grudging approval.

The source of your master is "dimly visible, as if it were there."<sup>81</sup> It is what he called "concentrating the breath to the point of utmost suppleness."<sup>82</sup> This is only nourishing with tranquility and responding with vacuity to naturally enhance one's own conduct. It is not very harmful. That being so, it has never strayed from the principle of movement and quiescence, and there has never been a single hair's worth of difference between it and the incipencies of stillness and response. 爾師之初, 綿綿若存. 所謂專氣致柔, 此不過恬養虛應以自淑其身者之所爲. 未甚害也. 然而動靜之理未嘗相離, 寂感之幾間不容髮.<sup>83</sup>

Wei cited the same *Daodejing* passages eighteen years earlier in his Kaiyuan guan commemoration. His affirmation of the first excerpt, one speculates, lies in this: despite the Daoist Way's near-ineffable qualities, it remains part of the tangible, intelligible world. In the case of the second excerpt, "utmost suppleness" prepares the ground for the complete responsiveness that characterizes the Confucian sage, who acts without self-interest or partiality.<sup>84</sup> In drawing these correspondences,

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vol. 310, p. 301. In the commemoration for a Zhuge Liang shrine at a Sichuan abbey, Wei disputes at length the cleric's contention that Zhuge became a transcendent. See "Chengdu fu Chaozhen guan ji," *QSW*, vol. 310, pp. 316-17.

<sup>80</sup> Intriguingly, Liu Guan 柳貫 (1270-1342) in a 1327 commemoration uses precisely the same language as Wei, as well as the same parallels with the *Book of Changes*. Liu, however, praises the Daoists, without any qualification, let alone criticism. See "Yuncong shan chongzhen guan ji" 雲從山崇真觀記, in Liu Zunjie 柳遵傑, ed., *Liu Guan shiwen ji* 柳貫詩文集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe 2004), j. 14, p. 292.

<sup>81</sup> *Daodejing*, chap. 6

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 50.

<sup>83</sup> "Quanzhou Zimao shan Jinsu guan ji," p. 343.

<sup>84</sup> 寂感; see "Xici," in *Zhouyi*, p. 154. The full passage reads, "The *I* is without thought and

Wei presents himself as tolerating rather than openly approving of Daoism, leaving the reader with the view that Ru and Daoist learning share little common ground and have no solid basis for productive intellectual exchange. In his parting instructions, Wei enjoins Huang and his disciples to investigate the cited passages from the Daoist classic and hopes that they will eventually lead the Daoists to become Ru. Having received his instructions, the cleric assents, and the text ends. In sum, the writer assumes by turns the roles of willing stenographer, fierce critic, and stern taskmaster. The Daoist wins recognition for his many years of hard work and will return with a record containing vital details for posterity. He does so, however, only after suffering a tongue-lashing that pronounced his heritage as flawed and inferior.

When compared to Wei's first pair of essays reviewed here, these latter two resemble compromises. Wei abides by literary and social conventions, supplies the expected details, and lends his name to the clergy's efforts. The Daoists leave with what they came for: a work by a Confucian luminary that will publicize and immortalize their renovated site of practice. On the other hand, Wei withholds his own praise and keeps Ru concerns at the center of these texts. The Jinsu Abbey commemoration marked Wei's final work for Daoists. One speculates that Wei after 1225, during his very productive years compiling commentaries in Jingzhou 靖州, no longer saw fit to write against his own intellectual interests. For their part, the Daoist clergy perhaps decided that Wei's name no longer warranted the pointed skepticism and antagonism found in his works.

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without activity. Silent and unmoving, when stimulated it then penetrates all situations under heaven. If it were not the most spiritual thing under heaven, how could it be like this? 易无思也，无爲也，寂然不動，感而遂通天下之故。非天下之至神，其孰能與於此。” Trans. Joseph Adler, in Kidder Smith, Jr., et al., *Sung Dynasty Uses of the I Ching* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1990), p. 191. Daoists also drew this parallel; see Wang Daoming 王道明, “Da Yuan Fengxiang fu Qishan xian guancun chuangjian tongxuan guan ji” 大元鳳翔府岐山縣官村創建通玄觀記, in Wang Zongyu 王宗昱, ed., *Jin Yuan Quanzhen jiao shike xinbian* 金元全真教石刻新編 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2005), p. 81.

Joseph Adler has noted that while the original text describes the *Yi*, Zhu Xi extended the characterization also to the mind, and Wei Liaoweng appears to follow Zhu in this respect. See Adler, in Smith et al., *Sung Dynasty Uses*, p. 191. For his part, Zhu Xi saw the practice of concentrating *qi* as evidence of Daoism's passivity and craftiness: “Laozi's learning seeks only to withdraw and submit, and to not struggle with you. If there is the slightest mind to plan and think, then one's *qi* is coarsened. Thus he says, 'I do my utmost to attain emptiness; I hold firmly to stillness.' Moreover, he says, “in concentrating *qi* to reach the utmost suppleness, can you be like a newborn babe?” . . . [Laozi] is only a person who withdraws and takes advantage of the situation. 老子之學只要退步柔伏，不與你爭。才有一毫主張計較思慮之心，這氣便粗了。故曰“致虛極，守靜篤”；又曰“專氣致柔，能如嬰兒乎。” . . . 便是箇退步占便宜底人。” See Li Jingde 黎靖德, ed., *Zhuzi yulei* 朱子語類 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994), j. 125, p. 2996. Zhu's first reference comes from chap. 16 of the *Daodejing*.

*An Instructive Comparison*

To sum up, Wei Liaoweng questions the notion that renovations of Daoist religious sites warrant unqualified approval. He repeatedly decries the decadence of present-day learned society. He rejects the notions of the miraculous, the wondrous, and realms beyond the mundane world, supported by believers in the transcendents. He accepts only with reluctance the possibility that Daoists may help rule and civilize the empire. He insists on the unquestioned primacy of the Ru tradition. Daoist teachings, he held, lacked canonical legitimacy, and their postulation of a realm beyond the mundane world reflected a deep confusion that had only served China ill.

Comparing Wei with Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 (1178–1235) is instructive.<sup>85</sup> Contemporaries and historians have often paired the two men. Both took their *jinsi* degree in 1199 and after 1208 played central roles in the legitimation of *daoxue* among literati and at the court. They spent much of their political careers in local positions, leaving behind records as able, energetic administrators. Like Wei, Zhen compiled important commentaries, most notably on the *Great Learning* (*Daxue* 大學). They parted company, however, when the matter turned to Daoism. Like Wei, Zhen Dexiu assigned great importance to the ritual duties of local officials and the use of the spirits to serve the community.<sup>86</sup> Unlike Wei, he saw Daoists as appropriate allies in this effort. While Daoists had no place in the Confucian canon, their rituals had come to replace over the centuries those set down in the *Rites of Zhou*, and these rites still might serve to expel demons, prevent disasters, and bring good fortune to the people.<sup>87</sup> What mattered most, he emphasized, was sincere, respectful performance, which rendered those differences secondary. In a colophon, Zhen joined with Wei in doubting the existence of transcendents but added, “These notions are obscure and muddled, and are

<sup>85</sup> For a literary comparison of Wei and Zhen, see Zhang, *Wei Liaoweng wenxue yanjiu*, pp. 183–99. For analyses of Zhen, see Hou, *Lixue shi*, pp. 608–15; William Theodore de Bary, *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart* (New York: Columbia U.P., 1981), pp. 78–91, 98–126; He Jun 何俊, *Nan Song Ruxue jiangou* 南宋儒學建構 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2004), pp. 337–49; William Theodore de Bary, “Chen Te-hsiu and Statecraft,” in Hymes, *Ordering the World*, pp. 349–79.

<sup>86</sup> On Zhen Dexiu as a local official, see Kojima Tsuyoshi 小島毅, “Bokumin kan no inori: Shin Tokushu no bai” 牧民官の祈り, 真德秀の場合, *SZ* 100.11 (1991), pp. 42–76; Matsumoto Kōichi 松本浩一, *Sōdai no Dōkyō to minkan shinyō* 宋代の道教と民間信仰 (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 2006), pp. 120–28.

<sup>87</sup> See in particular, “Dai Zhou Daozhen Huanglupu shuo” 代周道珍黃籙普說, *QSW*, vol. 313, pp. 333–35; “Ba Cai Zhenren gao bei” 跋蔡跋蔡真人誥碑, *QSW*, vol. 313, pp. 191–92. See also “Ba Huang Zongyu Wuzhen jiangyi” 跋黃宗禹悟真講義, *QSW*, vol. 313, p. 215; “Ba Taiyi Tianzun yingyan lu” 跋太一天尊應驗錄, *QSW*, vol. 313, pp. 224–25; and “Ba *Chi Songzi jing*” 跋赤松子經, *QSW*, vol. 313, pp. 226–27.

not easy to fathom. Yet if the heavens truly have transcendent people, they certainly are loyal subjects and filial sons who become so. It is not something that one can attain through luck. 其說眇茫荒忽，未易測知。然使天上真有仙人，必忠臣孝子爲之。非可倖而致也。”<sup>88</sup> This telling, qualifying remark underscores how for this Neo-Confucian the cosmos’s essential coherence lay in the primacy of moral norms, which held sway even for phenomena that defied orthodox yin-yang cosmology. His perspective acknowledged too that Daoism had grafted itself a secure place in state institutions and ritual. In this respect, Zhen Dexiu, faced with an imperfect world, was a pragmatist.

Wei approached Daoism as a Confucian fundamentalist. Canonical authority remained his single yardstick, common ground with Daoist ideas barely existed, and notions of the compatibility of the Three Teachings were anathema. The Confucian agenda could not be put to the side, because the struggle for cultural hegemony needed to be waged whenever possible. Wei’s essays suggest a deep pessimism; Daoist practices and works were insufferably heterodox. On the other hand, these essays evinced a certain optimism: to promote the Confucian cause in this unconventional fashion might awaken peers to their responsibilities and perhaps even convert thoughtful members of the Daoist clergy.

#### FUNDAMENTALISM ELABORATED: HUANG ZHEN

Wei Liaoweng’s use of canonical criteria is echoed, albeit with greater subtlety, in the commemorations of Huang Zhen.<sup>89</sup> A native of Cixi 慈溪 (in present-day eastern Zhejiang), Huang passed the *jinshi* examinations in 1256, after *daoxue* (then labeled the Learning of Principle, or *lixue* 理學) had become state orthodoxy. His service in local positions won him a reputation for committed, energetic administration, and his accounts of local society and government have left us with perhaps the most detailed portrait of rural south China on the eve of the Mongol invasion.<sup>90</sup> A Song loyalist, he refused to collaborate with the

<sup>88</sup> “Ba Huang Zongyu *Wuzhen jiangyi*,” p. 215.

<sup>89</sup> For accounts of Huang’s career and scholarship, see Qian Mu 錢穆, “Huang Dongfa xue-shu” 黃東發學述, in *Songshi zuotan hui* 宋史座談會, ed., *Songshi yanjiu ji* 宋史研究集 (Taipei: Zhonghua congshu bianshen weiyuan hui, 1976), vol. 8, pp. 1–28; Hou, *Lixue shi*, pp. 622–44; Zhang Wei 張偉, “Lun Huang Zhen lixue sixiang di shidai tese ji qi lishi diwei” 論黃震理學思想的時代特色及其歷史地位, *Hangzhou daxue xuebao* 杭州大學學報 26.1 (March 1996), pp. 20–26; He, *Nan-Song Ruxue*, pp. 374–79.

<sup>90</sup> Many social historians have used Huang’s work extensively. See, for example, Robert P. Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen: The Elite of Fu-chou, Chiang-hsi, in Northern and Southern Sung* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1986); idem, *Way and Byway: Daoism, Local Religion, and Models of Divinity in Sung and Modern China* (Berkeley: U. California P., 2002); Joseph

Yuan government and, after Lin'an's fall in 1276, starved himself to death. More than half of his surviving written corpus consists of commentary on the classics, histories, various masters, and literary works.<sup>91</sup> A fourth-generation member of Zhu Xi's intellectual lineage, Huang faulted many *daoxue* adherents, most notably Lu Jiuyuan, for being led astray by Chan Buddhist or Daoist nostrums, and few contemporaries matched Huang's condemnation of heterodoxy.<sup>92</sup> Specifically, his commemorations undercut and ignore key aspects of the Daoist heritage, such as the possibility of miraculous transformation, the existence of a powerful unseen bureaucracy (with its deities, officials, and procedures), and the state's centuries-long recognition and support of the Daoist world view.

#### *Deities and Mistaken Identities*

The Daoist pantheon was central to Daoist religious practice. The divinities, in their civil and martial offices, responded to the clergy's appeals and brought bountiful harvests, delivered timely rainfall, and exorcised malevolent influences. Their most exalted ranks, such as the Three Purities or *Sanqing* 三清, had their likenesses honored in temples at court and throughout the empire, and were characterized in Daoist scripture as various incarnations of Laozi. Such claims rankled some Neo-Confucians, such as Zhu Xi and Huang Zhen, who noted reports of Lao Dan's death in the *Zhuangzi* and held that Laozi ought to be considered only as a human ghost.<sup>93</sup> Just below this trinity stood the Jade Sovereign or *Yudi* 玉帝 (sometimes also *Yuhuang* 玉皇). As noted earlier, Confucians, in their composition of green memorials, frequently appealed to Daoist divinities. As servants to the state, literati had no choice but to comply with the liturgical requirements. As writers, however, they had much greater freedom to respond as they saw fit and

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P. McDermott, "Land Tenure and Rural Control in the Liangzhe Region during the Southern Sung," Ph.D. diss. (Cambridge University, 1978).

<sup>91</sup> Notably, the 18th-c. *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 editors did not place his work among the separate literary collections, or *bieji* 別集, but among the Confucian masters, or *rujia* 儒家.

<sup>92</sup> Huang Zhen deeply admired Han Yu and the latter's uncompromising opposition to Buddhism and Daoism. See Gu Shuguang 谷曙光, "Lun ji Song xue zhe Huang Zhen de Han Yu yanjiu: yi Huang Zhen 'Huangshi richao' zhi 'Du Hanwen' wei zhongxin" 論季宋學者黃震的韓愈研究, 以黃震 "黃氏日抄" 之 "讀韓文" 為中心, *Henan shehui kexue* 河南社會科學 (2016.5), pp. 108–15. Huang also offered scathing assessments of *Zhuangzi* and *Baopuzi* 抱朴子, urging that the former writing be burnt and claiming the latter was a forgery. See Zhang Wei 張偉 et al., ed., *Huang Zhen quanji* 黃震全集 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang daxue chubanshe, 2013), j. 55, pp. 1738–39, 1756–58.

<sup>93</sup> Li, *Zhuzi yulei*, j. 125, p. 3003. Huang cites this passage in his review of *Zhuzi yulei*. See Zhang, *Huang Zhen quanji*, j. 38, p. 1380.

offer their own views about proper religious practice and conceptions of divinity.

In a commemoration for a Jade Sovereign Palace, located near present-day Suzhou, Huang Zhen both affirms the deity's authority and promotes his own Neo-Confucian agenda.<sup>94</sup> The site had a long history: it was commemorated in 986 by Wang Yucheng 王禹偁 (954–1001).<sup>95</sup> Huang's essay has three parts: the Neo-Confucian Huang poses a problem and a question; then the Daoist, Zhang Yilei 張一雷, responds; finally, the Neo-Confucian accepts the response and elaborates further.<sup>96</sup> This framework creates clear identities and power relationships. First, Huang's personal concerns become the essay's core, and the site's particulars receive almost no mention, at least in the prose section. Second, the question-answer-approval sequence establishes a clear hierarchy, in which the subject must satisfy the official.<sup>97</sup> Finally, by turning to a Daoist priest to explain the Jade Sovereign, Huang both presents an opinion from "authoritative sources" (that is, a Daoist) and preserves his own righteous Confucian purity, untainted by familiarity with, let alone expertise in, uncanonical books.

The essay's short first section relates Huang's unease with contemporary religious practices. People at present have abandoned ancient norms, and the worship of the supreme, celestial deity, once the exclusive preserve of the Son of Heaven, now has spread throughout the empire, with even commoner participation. Moreover, contemporaries conduct their sacrifices to ancestors at temples and use images to pay homage to those ancestors and even heaven, in this case seen in the Jade Sovereign Palace. These cultural changes, of course, reflect the decline of the Way, lamented on countless occasions in Confucian literature. The canon goes neglected, customs stray, and history becomes a discontinuous, tragic process. Huang professes himself to be incapable of explaining this deterioration and refers to a question posed to the Daoist Zhang, who had requested the commemorative text. The

<sup>94</sup> "Yuhuang dian ji" 玉皇殿記, in Zhang, *Huang Zhen quanji*, j. 86, pp. 2317–18.

<sup>95</sup> "Xinxiu Taihe gong ji" 新修太和宮記, *QSW*, vol. 7, pp. 85–87.

<sup>96</sup> Huang adopts a similar structure in another abbey commemoration. See "Xubai guan ji" 虛白觀記, in Zhang, *Huang Zhen quanji*, j. 88, p. 2376. On this occasion, Huang interprets the term *xubai*, or vacant, which derives from the expression 虛室生白 in the *Zhuangzi*, as representing Neo-Confucian concepts of "mind" (*xin* 心) and "principle" (*li* 理). See Guo Qingfan 郭慶藩, ed., *Zhuangzi jishi*, sect. "Renjianshi" 人間世 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961) j. 4, p. 150.

<sup>97</sup> Huang received the *jinshi* degree in 1256, and Suzhou gazetteers report that he served as District Defender during the Baoyou 寶祐 reign (1253–1259). The text then probably was written in the 1257–1259 period. See *Suzhou fuzhi* 蘇州府志 (1379 edn.), j. 7, pp. 7b–8a.

question remains unspecified, but presumably refers to the Jade Sovereign's claim to authority.

In the second section, the Daoist, Zhang, makes his case on philosophical and historical grounds. Intriguingly, only at the end of his explanation does Zhang refer to the Jade Sovereign. Instead, he first elaborates on heaven's omnipotence that governs all of creation. The sages appropriately recompensed heaven with sacrifices. Devotion to heaven steadily grew in subsequent ages and reached an apex in Song Zhenzong's reign. Zhang sees nothing amiss in these changes. Using ritual implements as a metaphor for canonical ritual practice, he speculates, "It all probably was simply the extension of the 'earthenware and gourd [vessels],<sup>98</sup> and straw mats."<sup>99</sup> How could we Daoists dare to go beyond our station? 殆皆陶匏秸席之推爾，豈吾道家者敢僭乎。” Thus where Huang found history to be a tale of unfathomable degeneration, Zhang sees intelligibility, continuity, and prosperity. Far from promoting deviant activities, Daoists have mindfully submitted to classical authority and carry out the sages' intentions.

Eventually, the Jade Sovereign returns to the Daoist explanation in a circuitous and surprising way. Zhang starts from the commonplace cosmological notion that *qi* 氣 constitutes the stuff of the entire cosmos. The seen and the unseen worlds, being of the same material, must operate then according to one common principle, or *li* 理. After repeating these general Neo-Confucian tenets, Zhang then alludes to a vision experienced by Wen Qiao 溫嶠 (288–329), a heroic Jin-dynasty general and official.<sup>100</sup> At a deep pool, Wen used lighted rhino horn and saw, illuminated in the water's depths, carts, horses, and men dressed in vermilion. Those figures, Zhang explained, were simply officials from the Water Bureau 水府官, an underworld agency frequently referred to in Daoist literature. They had their counterparts in the Heavenly Bureau 天府, where the Jade Sovereign reigned and had sent messages through dreams to humans for centuries.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, a venerated, down-to-earth figure, Wen Qiao, had confirmed long ago that an unseen Daoist monarchy and bureaucracy existed. But significantly, nowhere in Zhang's excursus does he mention Laozi, let alone the Celestial Masters,

<sup>98</sup> 陶匏; see *Liji*, "Jiao tesheng" 郊特牲, pp. 489, 504.

<sup>99</sup> 秸席. This rare expression appears in the *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 account of Tang Taizong's 唐太宗 (r. 627–49) *fengshan* 封禪 sacrifices. See Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 et al., *Xin Tang shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975) 50, p. 349.

<sup>100</sup> Fang Xuanling 房玄齡, *Jin shu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974) 67, p. 1795; and Li Fang 李昉, *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1961) 294, p. 2337.

<sup>101</sup> Wen dreamed later that someone chastised him for crossing impertinently the boundaries of the seen and unseen, and he died soon after; *ibid.*

Tang emperor Xuanzong, or Song emperor Huizong. Huang Zhen commends the Daoist, praising his application of the ancient and manifest to explain the present-day and hidden. In the event, we are led to see that “new,” non-canonical practices differ from canonical ones only superficially; they fundamentally heed the same precepts of hierarchy, subordination, grace, and recompense.

With the palace’s legitimacy confirmed, Huang in the third part finishes the essay in a surprisingly polemical fashion. He turns to castigate unnamed Buddhists, who, believing in their enlightenment, maintain that they have escaped the bounds of heaven and earth, a claim not even made for Sakyamuni himself. Consequently, Huang says that he prefers Laozi to Buddha, because the former roots his theories in heaven.<sup>102</sup> That said, he hastens to qualify his choice, noting that licentious cults, or *yinci* 淫祠, often attach themselves to Daoist temples, and those who gather there regrettably are of mixed quality. This criticism of the Daoist religion continues into the final passage, where Huang uses the term Jade Sovereign only as the name of a building, not a divinity. The true name of the god, Huang insists, is the ancient, hallowed title, Supreme Thearch, or *shangdi* 上帝.<sup>103</sup>

I further only regard the Jade Emperor Palace as honoring the Supreme Thearch, to venerate the Supreme Thearch’s presence and solemnize the human heart’s proper respect. If it causes everyone in the world who is reverent and offers incense to act as they do at the Jade Emperor Palace, then I expect that it will be sufficient to supplement worldly teachings. 余又獨取玉皇殿之尊上帝，儼上帝之如在，肅人心之正敬。使天下崇飭香火者皆如玉皇殿之爲，則亦庶乎足以裨世教。

Huang Zhen does not exalt the god’s majesty, which would highlight unseen forces and put the writer in a subordinate position. Rather, he focuses on the human world and stresses the moral transformation of his social inferiors, the temple devotees.

The essay’s coda in verse, or *ming* 銘, breaks with convention and deserves our notice. It mentions Wang Yucheng’s earlier commemorative text, and its differences from that written by Huang are telling. First, Wang had devoted most of his essay to the site’s history, providing biographical details about the abbey’s founders, dating notable con-

<sup>102</sup> That the Buddhists articulate complex conceptions of “heaven” goes ignored by Huang.

<sup>103</sup> For more on this deity, see Sarah Allan, “On the Identity of Shang Di 上帝 and the Origin of a Celestial Mandate (Tian Ming 天命),” *EC* 31 (2007), pp. 1–46.

structions, and naming important buildings. Second, more significantly, Wang accepted without qualification the abbey's religious identity. The text begins by extolling the Way and Laozi's teachings, with language borrowed from the *Daodejing*. Later, Wang refers to elements of Daoist ritual, such as prayers to the Three Offices 三官, the rites of the Seven Retreats 七齋,<sup>104</sup> pacing the void 步虛, and the use of registers and petitions 籙章. This solicitude for the heavenly gods, Wang tells us, results in blessings for commoners. The account evinces no sense of distance or unfamiliarity with Daoist scripture, divinities, or liturgy. We hear no trace of Confucian self-consciousness nor see any necessity to link the abbey and its activities with classical norms. Third, Wang's coda is quite brief in his restating the basic facts about the abbey's location and founders, and their purpose, in the style of most *ming*. On the other hand, in Huang Zhen's text the coda is much longer and introduces information not found in the prose section, such as later reconstructions (1053, 1253) and their official managers, dream revelations, and remarkable wartime survivals. In fact, Huang's coda resembles a standard commemoration, albeit in verse form. Inscriptions usually present historical facts in prose, not in poetry, and this odd choice perhaps explains why Qing-era Suzhou gazetteers reproduce Wang's text but do not mention Huang's essay, let alone excerpt from it.<sup>105</sup>

Commemorating buildings dedicated to gods and spirits calls attention to power. This example is no exception. In this essay, however, the strongest party is not the deity but the author. Huang rewrites the conventional commemoration script, introduces a Neo-Confucian backdrop, places unexpected players at center stage, and consigns nominally leading characters to the wings. To wit, nothing about the subject at hand requires mention of Buddhists, but Huang introduces them into the text nonetheless. By doing so, he reminds readers that while Daoist buildings deserve a place in the written record, Daoist teachings still were part of the *yiduan*, which had deluded countless people. Heterodoxy needed refutation wherever possible; to forgo an opportunity, apparently, would mean to let slip one's Confucian guard and suggest cultural legitimacy where none was warranted.

<sup>104</sup> Wang possibly refers here to the Seven Grades 七品 of Retreats 齋. See Fabrizio Pregadio, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Taoism* (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 1216–18.

<sup>105</sup> *Suzhou fuzhi* 蘇州府志 (1883 edn.; Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1970), j. 40, pp. 31a–32a.

*Retaking Territory*

Daoist abbeys and cloisters often were located on impressive mountains. Mountains, as Edouard Chavannes said, were China's divinities. By their loftiness they appeared to bring to heel their surrounding terrain and thus could become terrestrial representations of authority. Political rulers regularly sent offerings to mountain deities to secure divine aid. As is well known, the Daoist religion articulated a complex sacred geography, with an empire-wide network of peaks, ranges, and grotto-heavens.<sup>106</sup> This Daoist superscription, to use Prasenjit Duara's term, joined not only classical religious practice but also incorporated the cult of the transcendents, who frequently dwelled in the mountains.<sup>107</sup> Fortunate mortals there might encounter holy men and women, and perhaps receive from them esoteric formulae, powerful talismans, sound advice, or at least could gaze on splendid Daoist palaces. By the mid-thirteenth century, this association between mountains and Daoists constituted part of the bedrock of the Chinese religious and literary imagination.

Like many scholar-officials, Huang Zhen composed a commemoration for a mountain abbey, but he imposed his Confucian stamp in ways that diverged from conventional practice. The abbey's location, at Mount Linggu 靈谷山 (in present-day Fuzhou 撫州 prefecture, Jiangxi), had earlier attracted literati attention. In a preface for a poetry collection, Wang Anshi 王安石 (1019–1086) characterized the mountain as teeming with spirits, temples, and diverse flora and fauna that imbued it with a special aura.<sup>108</sup> For Huang Zhen, the mountain's divine qualities drew from more orthodox sources, as seen in the following passage.

Heaven opened, and the earth split; the rivers flowed and the mountains towered. Thearchs thrived and kings arose, and they drew lines that designated the wilds and split the prefectures. Each one at the high mountains fixed them in the register of sacrifices. Those in the four quarters became marchmounts, those in the nine prefectures became strongholds, and those in the states

<sup>106</sup> The secondary scholarship on this subject is voluminous. For an important recent work, see James Robson, *Power of Place: The Religious Landscape of the Southern Sacred Peak (Nanyue 南嶽) in Medieval China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

<sup>107</sup> See Prasenjit Duara, "Superscribing Symbols: The Myth of Guandi, Chinese God of War," *JAS* 47.4 (November 1988), pp. 778–95.

<sup>108</sup> See "Linggu shi xu" 靈谷詩序, in Tang, *Wang Wengong wenji*, j. 36, pp. 430–31. In Wang's view, "The spirit of dragon and serpent, the elegance of tiger, leopard, and pheasant, the material quality of cypress, cedar, camphor, and arrow bamboo, all emerge from this mountain; and spirit woods, ghostly tombs, and holes of goblins, as well as the observatories of transcendents, Sakyamuni's disciples, and the peculiar and incongruous all join in taking refuge there." See Hymes, *Way and Byway*, p. 80 (modified translation).

of the feudal lords became famous mountains in their realms. These became the assemblies of wind and *qi*; these became the residences of the gods. They acted to bring forth clouds and ex-pectorate dew, blessing the myriad things and being the basis from which the people's livelihood derives. Thus they are what the sages attended to and are where the creator abides. When it came to the Qin and Han, [people] began to call them 'perfected' and 'transcendents.'<sup>109</sup> In truth they were nothing more than our Sages. As for Fuzhou's highest mountain, that is Linggu! Linggu is the summit of the myriad mountains. Yinzhen Abbey moreover is at the summit of Mount Linggu, and this abbey moreover resides in the Register of Sacrifices.<sup>110</sup>

天開地闢而川流山峙。帝興王起而畫野分州。各于高山以定祀典。在四則爲嶽。在九州則爲鎮。在諸侯之國則爲境內名山。是爲風氣之聚，是爲神明之居。是爲興雲吐露潤澤萬物。民生利賴之所從出。故聖人之所事，即造化之所在。至秦漢，始以真仙稱，實則不外吾聖人者乎。若撫州之高山，其惟靈谷乎。靈谷在萬山絕頂。隱真觀又在靈谷山絕頂。此觀其又祀典之寓者乎。<sup>111</sup>

Mount Linggu thus owes its significance solely to its height and especially to the state's imprimatur – an entry in the official register of sacrifices.<sup>112</sup> Accorded the ritual devotion of government officials, the peak takes its place among a sort of feudal, topographical network. In Huang's representation, mountains become sages and the creators of civilization, bestowing the people with sustenance and protection. This anthropomorphization enables Huang to dismiss the Daoist titles of "perfected" and "transcendent" as no more than mistaken identities of earlier deities, akin to the Jade Emperor-Supreme Thearch mixup seen earlier.<sup>113</sup> Put simply, Huang Zhen goes out of his way to dissolve

<sup>109</sup> Robert Hymes translates the term as "Perfected Immortals," that is, as a binome, and views it as denoting only the three transcendents in Fuzhou; Hymes, *Way and Byway*, p. 115. In this passage, I understand the expression in a more general sense and treat it as an abbreviation of two terms.

<sup>110</sup> "Fuzhou Linggu shan Yinzhen guan ji" 撫州靈谷山隱真觀記, in Zhang, *Huang Zhen quanji*, j. 88, pp. 2360–61.

<sup>111</sup> Huang uses much of the same language and makes similar points in "Xiangshan Huiling sixian ci ji" 相山會靈四仙祠記, Zhang, *Huang Zhen quanji*, j. 88, p. 2375.

<sup>112</sup> For an examination of the Song expansion of the register of sacrifices, see Valerie Hansen, *Changing Gods in Medieval China* (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1990), pp. 79–104.

<sup>113</sup> In another commemoration, Huang terms misguided an elite family's centuries-long devotion to the perfected. Family members understood the perfected to be bureaucratic divinities, such as Perfected Lords 真君 and Perfected Ministers 真宰. Huang, however, following Zhu Xi's commentary on *Zhongyong* 中庸, advocated that *zhen* 真 ought to be understood as "sincerity." Thus the object of worship ceases to be a class of deities and becomes an abstract Confucian virtue. See "Fengzhen daoyuan ji" 奉真道院記, Zhang, *Huang Zhen quanji*, j. 88, pp. 2371–72;

the synthesis linking classical and Daoist conceptions of landscape and divinities.

This demystification continues in his description of the Linggu site's physical details. Far from being an example of Daoist palatial magnificence, the abbey until recently had looked decrepit and abandoned. According to its abbot, no one of importance had visited it for over a century. We are told that the abbey had been "inserted loftily in the middle of the sky and could not bear being rocked about in the wind; its dilapidation had been nearly complete 此觀危插半空, 不堪飄搖, 摧圮幾盡."<sup>114</sup> Gazing at its reconstructed facade, Huang emphasizes remoteness rather than grandeur: "Amid the wind and dew of the blue darkness, the flying corner eaves lie far in the distance. They gaze down at the human realm; [the place looks] only as large as a single fist 青冥風露間, 飛甍縹緲. 下瞰人寰, 僅盈一握."<sup>115</sup> Thus while Yinzhen Abbey there no longer faces imminent collapse, it remains isolated and insignificant, a speck on the mountain face, almost unworthy of concern or even notice. Despite its residence on a numinous peak, the abbey's ability to exert spiritual authority over the landscape appears negligible. This portrayal removes Daoists from the world below so as to neutralize their spiritual influence.

Huang asserts his Confucian authority in other ways. Yinzhen Abbey at Mount Linggu came to his attention by chance, not while on a leisurely stroll but while he was on duty, urging peasants to sow barley in the hills. The abbey's place in the register of sacrifices and the practical difficulties of rebuilding the site drew his admiration and his consent to write the commemoration. Huang quickly adds, however, that only clergy completely free from worldly considerations 世慮 deserve to reside there, in a reminder of the state's ultimate dominion over the place.<sup>116</sup> Continuing to place his personal views and experience front and center, Huang recalls that the climb to the summit taxed his strength and determination, but that his eventual success exhilarated him, to the point where, "I wished to ride the wind and wander like a spirit to the eight bournes 欲凌風神遊八極." Despite its un-Confucian overtones, one should interpret this remark simply as elite courtesy, comparable to Huang's closing references to Qiu's abilities in com-

and Zhu Xi, *Sishu zhangzhu jizhu* 四書章句集注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), p. 31.

<sup>114</sup> "Fuzhou Linggu shan Yinzhen guan ji." The passage is partially translated in Hymes, *Way and Byway*, p. 115.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114-46 passim, esp. pp. 142-44.

<sup>116</sup> Of course, the previous century-long absence of elite visitors to the abbey might suggest to readers that this rule would be difficult to enforce.

posing verse and his self-cultivation. The expression stops well short of any identification with a Daoist perspective and seconds well-worn literary responses to mountain heights. In this case, one accomplished, diligent literatus expresses respect for another, but the boundaries between their respective teachings remain sharply drawn.

Huang does not explain how such a remote temple could win state recognition, and so we turn to an inscription written over a century later by the forty-third Celestial Master, Zhang Yuchu 張宇初 (1361–1410).<sup>117</sup> Zhang's text relates how a local man encountered three transcendents at the peak in 1109. Following a series of miracles, a Daoist constructed an abbey there in 1117, and the court shortly bestowed a plaque.<sup>118</sup> These events account for the site's inclusion in the register of sacrifices. The transcendents, we are told, responded without fail to commoner prayers in times of flood, drought, and pestilence, and this record of numinous power suggests why the resident Daoist, Qiu Shoujing 丘守靜, would seek to rebuild such a remote building. Zhang, however, says nothing about the abbey's late thirteenth century history, referring neither to Qiu's reconstruction nor to Huang's text. Similarly, Huang's silence concerning the three transcendents raises questions, as noted by Robert Hymes in his important book on Song religion. Hymes argues that Huang sought to reinforce central government control over Fuzhou elites, who had resisted Huang's famine relief measures. As part of this effort, Huang strove to minimize particularistic ties between local elites and local divinities.<sup>119</sup> By ignoring Linggu's local miracles, Huang denied Fuzhou's elites their special claims to divine patronage. The local gods, the three transcendents were not truly local but part of a larger whole. Legitimate worship meant going through bureaucratic channels, that is, through officials appointed by the court.

Leaving the question of Southern Song localism aside, I would contend that the issue indeed turns on bureaucracy, or, more accurately, two bureaucracies, the classical and the Daoist. As is well known, these two structures of power shaped each other enormously. Medieval Daoists adopted the Han government as their model, while Southern Song magistrates adopted Daoist rites to exorcise baleful supernatural forces.<sup>120</sup> Yinzhen Abbey received its plaque during Song Huizong's reign.

<sup>117</sup> For a short biography of Zhang, see Pregadio, *Encyclopedia of Taoism*, pp. 1239–40.

<sup>118</sup> See Zhang Yuchu 張宇初, "Linggu shan Yinzhen guan ji" 靈谷山隱真觀記, in *Xianquan ji* 峴泉集 (SKQS Wenyuange edn.), j. 2, pp. 68b–70a. For a partial English translation, see Hymes, *Way and Byway*, p. 85.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 5.

<sup>120</sup> Secondary scholarship abounds on this theme. See, e.g., Anna Seidel, "Imperial Treasures and Daoist Sacraments: Daoist Roots in the Apocrypha," in Michel Strickmann, ed.,

Neo-Confucians regarded such official support as anathema. Zhu Xi urged that Daoist clergy be prohibited from participation in state rituals for nature gods and be permitted to worship only their own divinities.<sup>121</sup> Huang Zhen went further and denied the existence of Daoist deities altogether. Qiu Shoujing, one surmises, would not only appeal to the three transcendents; as a *daoshi* 道士, he could call on a range of celestial civil and martial officials, depending on his individual Daoist rank and the registers and talismans to which that rank entitled him. Being part of an ecclesiastical structure of universalist dimensions, Qiu posed a greater potential threat to Confucian orthodoxy than would an overseer of a local shrine. Huang certainly “does Ch’iu a sort of discourtesy,”<sup>122</sup> as Hymes puts it, by rejecting the concept of Daoist divinities and drawing readers’ attention to that rejection. Huang, we might speculate, saw himself as writing not only for learned men in Fuzhou but also for literati throughout the empire. Other men might seek common ground where the Ru might join with the Daoists, however temporarily, but this writer would grant no compromises.

To return to the issue of territory, Huang Zhen assigns Yinzhen Abbey to the category of “jade palaces and brahma buildings 琳宮梵宇,” which, being so difficult of access, become “places where human traces do not reach 人跡不到處.”<sup>123</sup> This characterization consigns the temple to the fringes of civilization and virtual irrelevance, redeemed only by its unexplained presence on a government register. A century later, Zhang Yuchu’s inscription describes the local geography very differently. Far from being a desolate, lonely spot, Mount Linggu and by extension Yinzhen Abbey become parts of a larger community. Zhang provides an extended, 360-degree panorama from the summit, naming nearly two dozen mountains, distinctive rock faces, springs, ponds, wells, gazebos, and rivers. We see a well-populated, well-connected, numinous landscape, constituting “a metropolis of transcendents and a land of the perfected 仙都真境.”<sup>124</sup> Names, of course, serve to domesticate untamed territory, and the general effect of Zhang’s depic-

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*Tantric and Daoist Studies in Honour of R. A. Stein*, Melanges Chinois et Bouddhiques 21 (Brussels: Institut Belge des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1983), vol. 2, pp. 291–371; Boltz, “Not by the Seal of Office Alone.”

<sup>121</sup> Li, *Zhuji yulei* 125, p. 3005. Some Southern Song literati objected to the official use of Buddhist and Daoist clergy for prayers for rain. See Pi Qingsheng 皮慶生, *Songdai minzhong cishen xinyang yanjiu* 宋代民眾祠神信仰研究 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2006), pp. 195–203.

<sup>122</sup> Hymes, *Way and Byway*, p. 115.

<sup>123</sup> “Fuzhou Linggu Yinzhen guan ji,” p. 2360.

<sup>124</sup> “Yinzhen guan ji,” j. 2, p. 69b.

tion connects the worlds of humanity and Daoist divinities much more closely than in the tableau painted by Huang.

## CONCLUSION

Confucians might fault Daoists on several points. Daoist texts did not belong to the canon, and the concepts of transcendence and transcendents could not be readily verified. Contemporary clergy and their followers were few and barely respectable. That they had endured through centuries attested mostly to the distressing intellectual and moral feebleness of the literati. Daoists were both symptoms and causes of grave problems plaguing Chinese culture.

Both Southern Song literati identified with Neo-Confucianism (Wei and Huang), as well as those who were not part of the *daoxue* fellowship (Zhao and Lou), scorned Daoists in texts that Daoists had requested from them. These essays are unusual. No such extended broadsides against the Daoist tradition appear in Northern Song commemorations. Scholar-officials might disapprove of Daoism and reject the Unity of the Three Teachings, but one then could simply refuse to write for clergy; for example, no inscriptions for Daoist or Buddhist temples appear in the works of *daoxue* stalwarts Zhu Xi, Zhang Shi 張軾 (1133–1180), Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙 (1137–1181), and Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 (1139–1193). A Confucian might also simply note a few particulars but exhibit no religious enthusiasm, as did Chen Liang 陳亮 (1143–1194) and Hong Zikui 洪咨夔 (d. 1236).<sup>125</sup> Thus the militancy seen here seems quizzical; Daoists did not challenge Confucianism's intellectual hegemony, Daoist influence over state policy was minimal, and Southern Song court patronage of the church fell far short of that seen in the Northern Song. Indeed, writing for Daoists aided them, confirming their worth as subjects fit for elite consideration, and immortalizing individuals and places in the historical memory.

These texts, however, are more than exercises in intellectual shadow-boxing. They reflect the persona of the embattled Neo-Confucian, displaying what William Theodore de Bary once characterized as the movement's "paranoid style."<sup>126</sup> As the Southern Song came under increasing pressure, these scholar-officials fought bitterly for all cultural

<sup>125</sup> "Chongjian Zixiao guan ji" 重建紫霄觀記, Deng Guangming 鄧廣銘, ed., *Chen Liang ji* 陳亮集 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), j. 25, pp. 280–81. Hong attributed the general poverty of Daoist establishments to the tenets of "purity, quiescence, and non-action 清淨無爲," and compared Daoists favorably with Buddhists, whom Hong charged with duplicity and parasitic luxury; "Dongxiao gong shitian ji" 洞霄宮施田記, *QSW*, vol. 307, pp. 227–28.

<sup>126</sup> de Bary, *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy*, p. 16.

territory, unwilling to concede within a constricted empire any space that they deemed belonged to Confucian control. In this struggle, Daoists, few in number and often lacking in institutional support, constituted easy targets for zealous Confucians seeking to provide examples of ideological correctness and thereby rectify their lax, backsliding colleagues. That is, the Way's opponents, simply due to their existence, threatened the health and even the survival of orthodox heritage. As culture became a zero-sum game, previous courtesies came to be abandoned. The essays proposed in effect that Ru rethink their own identity and make the Daoist heritage into the "other"; that they adopt an approach radically different from that taken by Wang Yucheng and other irrefragable Confucians over centuries.

This perspective was an extreme one, and it did not survive the Mongol conquest. After the empire's reunification, southern literati suffered large-scale political disenfranchisement, and Daoism became less a cultural threat than an aspect of the learned Han heritage. Yuan-era occasional works for Daoists rarely reflect on the tradition, usually cast abbeys as local monuments, and characterize clergy as virtuous community leaders.<sup>127</sup> The Mongol and Ming courts generously supported the Daoist church.<sup>128</sup> The rhetoric examined here, with its sense of crisis, pugnacity, and literary license embodies how the Song Confucian revival sought to transform, often in blunt fashion, Chinese religious practice and tradition.

#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- DZ Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, eds., *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang*  
 QSW Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊, ed., *Quan Song wen* 全宋文

<sup>127</sup> The many prefaces and commemorations for Daoists composed by Wu Cheng 吳澄 (1249–1333), the age's greatest Neo-Confucian, exemplify this approach.

<sup>128</sup> See Sun Kekuan 孫克寬, *Yuandai Daojiao zhi fazhan* 元代道教之發展 (Taizhong: Sili Donghai daxue 1968); Richard G. Wang, *The Ming Prince and Daoism: Institutional Patronage of an Elite* (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2012).