TERRESTRIAL REWARD AS DIVINE RECOMPENSE:
THE SELF-FASHIONED PIETY
OF THE PENG LINEAGE OF SUZhou, 1650s-1870s

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A DISSERTATION
PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY
OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

RECOMMENDED FOR ACCEPTANCE
BY THE DEPARTMENT OF
EAST ASIAN STUDIES

Advisor: Susan Naquin

May 2016
This dissertation focuses on the religious commitments of the Peng clan of Suzhou. From the early to mid-Qing dynasty (1644-1911) the Pengs were arguably the most successful corporate lineage in the entire empire in terms of civil examination performance. They were also pioneers of a charitable style of status justification in which the Pengs explained their worldly success as divine reward for their good works. By the early eighteenth century, many of the Pengs’ peers and social inferiors promulgated their claims as well. In the thriving genre of morality books (shanshu) particularly successful Peng patriarchs served as iconic shorthand for the terrestrial reward of civil examination success for philanthropic acts. Examination hopefuls and morality book consumers throughout the empire sought to obtain a portion of the prosperity of the Pengs by emulating their charitable commitments.

Drawing on source materials ranging from autobiographies and genealogies to the transcripts of spirit-writing sessions, I focus my study on the pivotal figure of Peng Dingqiu (1645-1719). Dingqiu’s 1676 optimus distinction and self-presentational strategy were critical in the consolidation of the concrete and symbolic power of the Peng lineage. Exploring the role of spirit-writing altars in intra-elite relations, I argue that Dingqiu’s claim of a prophecy of his civil examination success had wide ranging consequences for his descendants and his own posthumous persona. In documenting the collective devotional commitments of the Peng lineage in realms such as a tower complex devoted to the deity Wenchang and local Daoist institutions, I provide a nuanced portrait of elite religiosity and its impact on the late imperial cityscape. Simultaneously, I use attention to
the familial lineage in order to explain the centrality of religious modes of discourse in elite self-organization.

A descriptive catalog of works by Peng lineage members from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries illustrates the scope of members’ cultural impact and provides a basis for understanding how successive generations represented their ancestors through editorial and publishing endeavors.
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Acknowledgments

The first debt of gratitude I would like to acknowledge in this dissertation is to Vincent Goossaert, who suggested the topic of the religious commitments of Peng Dingqiu. In a consultation following the 2010 Conference on Buddhism and Daoism at Princeton University, I explained to Professor Goossaert that I knew the period (late Ming, early Qing), region (Yangzi Delta), and subject matter (social networks of literati Daoism) upon which I wished to focus, but did not have an individual on whom to focus in order to bring a circumscribed milieu into relief. Professor Goossaert’s suggestion gave me a thread to pull on. I hope I have been able to unravel certain conundrums and weave a coherent narrative. In addition to providing the subject of this dissertation, Professor Goossaert has been generous in providing detailed comments on successive draft chapters, as well as in sharing idea and materials. I remain in his debt.

Susan Naquin has been an exemplary advisor and dissertation committee chair. She has rigorously engaged with this dissertation since I first presented her with the proposal. Professor Naquin’s willingness to review “personal best” chapters enabled me to adhere to an ambitious schedule of drafting the entire work before re-visiting primary sources in more obsessive detail, thus permitting a broader scope for the project as a whole. A dictum-declaring avatar has taken up permanent residence in my editorial consciousness.

My three other committee members also deserve special thanks. Benjamin Elman took the brunt of my coursework in hand in a series of four seminars from the fall of 2009 to the spring of 2011. While his “more is always better” approach to scholarly
composition was hardly comfortable, working with him was akin to training with leg weights: once the grueling initial stage is completed, one can go further and faster than would otherwise have been possible. Indicative of Professor Elman’s great commitment to pedagogy is his continual willingness to review students’ work until it is good, rather than just passable. The more I teach the more I realize how much he has influenced me in the classroom as well as in scholarly writing.

I have known Liu Xun for years longer than any other committee member; indeed, he was instrumental in my returning to academia after nearly a decade of journalistic pursuits. His wide-ranging intellect, collegiality, and attentiveness to practical matters is an inspiration, as is his apparently effortless command of myriad primary sources.

My interactions with Stephen Teiser and his students have been invaluable in thinking through the broader questions raised by my primary sources and insuring that I kept a foot in Religious Studies while building a foundation in Qing Studies.

Princeton acknowledgments would be complete without thanking Martin Heijdra, who has been an invaluable resource for any topic I could formulate. He is the most comprehensively erudite librarian one could wish for; I am delighted to see him assume the helm of Gest Library. Soren Edgren has also been an esteemed interlocutor in Princeton and in a memorable bibliophilic day spent together in Shanghai.

I am grateful to Princeton’s East Asian Studies Program and the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies. Together they provided supplementary support for two summers of dissertation research: that of 2012, fruitfully spent gathering materials in Shanghai and Suzhou, and of 2013, which provided me the first extended
opportunity to sit down and concentrate on the reading of said materials while a Visiting Scholar at the Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica in Nangang, Taiwan.

Richard Chafey, Manager of the EAS Program, consistently made himself available to work through complex logistical matters and has been a paragon of professionalism. First Hue Su, and subsequently Amber Lee, provided wonderful support as graduate secretaries for the East Asian Studies Department.

I also wish to express my gratitude to Terry Kleeman. As my M.A. advisor at the University of Colorado, Boulder, he introduced me to Wenchang. In January of 2010 we were able to make a pilgrimage to Zitong in Eastern Sichuan. Professor Kleeman has generously commented on several chapters of this dissertation, protecting me from errors and oversights.

Beginning in 2010 Paul Katz, Lu Miaw-fen, and Wu Jen-shu of the Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica acted as guides to the complex and erudite world of Taiwanese Sinology. I hope to be able to spend more time there in the future in order to continue my development as a scholar.

As for debts acquired in the People’s Republic, first and foremost my gratitude is to Wu Jianhua 吴建华 of Soochow University’s Institute on Society. Professor Wu agreed to take me on as an advisee sight unseen, and subsequently welcomed me to the scholarly community in Suzhou and the Jiangnan region more broadly. In our one on one meetings throughout my year in Suzhou he shared generously of his knowledge on Ming-Qing Jiangnan and the Peng clan. Professor Wu’s former M.A. student Wang Ningxuan 王凝萱, now at Soochow University’s Archives, shared her enthusiasm for local history and expertise in Ming popular religion in the Wu region. My friend Mick (杨明德), a
Daoist priest at Suzhou’s Abbey of Primordial Mystery, kept me abreast of events on the ritual calendar, and reminded me that performing in a Daoist musical troupe is not mutually exclusive with liking Slayer and the Backstreet Boys.

A Fulbright Fellowship enabled me to conduct research in Suzhou and environs from September 2013 to July 2014. My thanks to Janet Upton, Acting Director of the Institute of International Education (IIE), and her colleague Han Bing (Serena), Nathan Keltner of the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, and Jonathan Akeley of the IIE office in New York City. Combined with Fulbright staff, the personnel at the Institute of Overseas Education (海外教育学院) of Soochow University made my transition to Suzhou a smooth one. I am particularly indebted to Zhu Sujing 朱苏静, who responded knowledgably to all questions I put to her on visa matters for my wife and me.

Xu Gangcheng 徐刚城 of the Suzhou Museum’s Archival Division (苏州博物馆资料部) provided liberal access to the rare book collection of the Suzhou Museum and drew my attention to invaluable treasures not listed in any public catalog. A scholar in his own right of Suzhou Daoism and many other aspects of local history, Mr. Xu was always ready to help me puzzle out any difficulties I encountered in reading primary sources. He oversees the most collegial rare book reading room in Suzhou. I miss our frequent discussions.

Before his retirement in 2013, Chen Lemin 陈乐民 of the Shanghai Public Library Genealogy Reading Room shared his wide-ranging knowledge on the genealogy genre and brought my attention to relevant secondary literature and reference works. It is not the same without his energetic presence.
The Blakemore Freeman Foundation provided support for study at the Inter-University Program (IUC) for Japanese Language in Yokohama from June 2011 to June 2012, thereby granting me the opportunity to acquire proficiency in a language that had long eluded me. I am indebted to all the instructors at IUC; particularly so to Ōhashi Makiko 大橋真貴子 for her incredible patience and Ōtake Hiroko 大竹弘子 for her counterbalancing lack thereof.

During my year in Japan Professor Mori Yuria of Waseda University consistently took time out from his demanding schedule to discuss various aspects of literati devotion in the Qing. He also provided invaluable orientation in the Japanese secondary literature, in which his own contribution to the field figures prominently.

I had the opportunity to present portions of this dissertation as works in progress at a number of conferences and symposia. My thanks to fellow panelists Elena Valussi and Clarke Hudson, as well as chair David Mozina and discussant Chao Shin-yi, for the Daoist Studies Group panel “The Transmission and Dissemination of Daoist Scriptures in Late Imperial and Republican China.” It was held at the American Academy of Religion National Conference in Chicago on November 17, 2012.

The February 13, 2013 meeting of the Princeton East Asian Studies Department’s weekly Lunch Colloquium was a valuable opportunity to present new material to teachers, friends, and colleagues.

I am grateful to Wu Jianhua and Xu Maoming for the opportunity to present to a learned body of specialists at the Seventh Annual International Academic Conference on the Social History of the Yangzi Delta in the Ming and Qing Dynasties (第 7 届江南社会
史国际学术论坛), held in the Wujiang District of Suzhou Municipality from November 8-11, 2013.

My thanks to Liu Xun for inviting me to participate in the “Daoism and Local Society in Modern China” symposium held by the Center for Chinese Studies at Rutgers University from November 15-16, 2014. Jessey Choo provided insightful remarks as discussant.

Professor Lai Chi-tim considerately included me in the wonderful gathering of experts of the International Conference on Lay Groups and Religious Innovations in Qing Daoism: Lüzu and Other Cults, held at Chinese University of Hong Kong on December 12, 2014. My thanks as well to Zhu Yiwen for seeing to the logistics. A revised version of my contribution appeared in the special issue of the journal *Daoism: Religion, History and Society* on Qing spirit-writing altars. It is a slightly earlier version of Chapter 8.

I wish to thank my fellow presenters Jennifer Eichmann, Lu Miao-fen, and Thomas Wilson, as well as our commentator Ann Waltner and the questioners in the audience for the panel “The Religious Aspect of Confucian Practice in Late Imperial China” at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association in New York City on January 4, 2015.

I would like to thank my senpai, dōkyūsei, and kōhai at Princeton for generously sharing research materials and insights from their own work. Such personages include: Seiji Shirane, Daniel Trombiaolo, Christopher Mayo, Jim Bonk, Evan Young, and Sare Aricanli; Cameron Moore, Mårten Soderblom Saarela, Reut Harari, Wu Wei, and Kaoru Hayashi; and Kay Duffy, Luo Yiyi, Dan Barish, Su Yangyang, Zheng Xinxian, and
Zheng Bingyu. Outside of Princeton I had the good fortune to meet a number of fellow graduate students in other universities through fellowships, conferences, and workshops: Jason Protass (Stanford), Katherine Alexander (University of Chicago), Devin Fitzgerald (Harvard), William Ma, David Bratt, Paulina Hartino, and Paulina Yu of UC Berkeley, Hu Jiechen 胡劼辰 (Chinese University of Hong Kong), and Emily Mokros (Johns Hopkins). Skype reading sessions with Jiechen during the final months of dissertation revision have been invaluable for both big picture insights and close readings of relevant primary sources.

Cynthia Brokaw, Rebecca Nedostup, and Mary Beth Bryson made for a welcoming environment at the History Department at Brown University as I completed this dissertation.

My partner Meghan Fidler was been with me since before this dissertation was conceived; here’s to sharing more life stages together! Our cat Inari, a garbage find in Suzhou, adapted remarkably well to First World entitlement. Fortunately, his selfishness dovetails nicely with much needed writing breaks.
Conventions

Nearly all the primary sources employed in this dissertation are only available in unpunctuated editions. Unless otherwise noted, all punctuation is my own. In addition to the standard marks of period and comma, for additional clarity I also employ quotation marks, colons, and semi-colons.

For titles of written works I offer the Pinyin transliteration first, followed by the characters and a translation in parenthesis. For the name of physical structures, however, I offer the translation first, then the transliteration and characters parenthetically.

I provide the characters for names followed by their dates on the first occurrence in the chapter, regardless of whether or not they have appeared in a previous chapter. The exception is for the primary subjects of the dissertation: Peng Long, Peng Dingqiu, Peng Qifeng, and Peng Shaosheng. For these individuals I only provide their characters and dates in Chapter 1.

I have attempted to use only one English word for each Chinese term, even in cases of arguable synonyms: e.g., bian 編 (“compile”) and ji 輯 (“edit”), which could be interchangeable in subsequent editions of the same work.

I provide the characters for publishers in pre-1911 works.

I provide Pinyin (Chinese) or Hepburn (Japanese) romanization for words and phrases but not sentence and paragraph length quotations.

I provide Chinese characters for counties but not provinces.
“Reproduction” ("rpd.") means a facsimile reproduction of the original work;
“reprint” ("rpt.") means the cited edition may have typset the original woodblock or manuscript.
Abbreviations

CMCS  Siku Quanshu cunmu congshu 四庫全書存目叢書 (Collectanea of Books Itemized in the Complete Works of the Four Treasuries), ed. Siku Quanshu Cunmu Congshu Bianzuan Weiyuanhui 四庫全書存目叢書編纂委員會. Jinan: Qi lu shushe, 1994-.


PSZP  Peng shi zong pu 彭氏宗譜 (Genealogy of the Peng Clan). 1829, Shanghai Library exemplar (unless otherwise noted).


XXSK  Xuxiu Siku Quanshu 續修四庫全書 (Continued Complete Works of the Four Treasuries). Jinan: Qi lu shushe, 1994-.


Part I

Preliminaries
Chapter 1
A Continuum of Devotion

Suzhou in the early Qing dynasty was a city of short-term instability on a long-term trajectory of remarkable continuity. In terms of physical location, the prefectural seat had been a site of uninterrupted urban concentration since 514 BCE.\(^1\) Despite continuous repairs, the city walls through which victorious Qing troops were granted entry in 1645 traced an outline nearly identical to that of the *Pingjiang tu* (Map of Placid River [Prefecture]) of 1229.\(^2\) Regarding economic organization and land use patterns, since the Southern Song (1127-1279) Suzhou and its environs directly east of Lake Tai (Taihu 太湖) experienced a move from rice farming to sericulture and secondary commodity production focused on the silk industry.\(^3\) The wealth generated by such high-end specialization fueled the development of what was arguably the most

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Peter Carroll has drawn attention to the way in which Mote’s observation on the continuity of the shape of Suzhou’s city walls has become an important point of debate regarding the dynamism of the city in Chinese culture more broadly. In regards to the early twentieth century, Carroll contested Mote’s observation as misleading, asserting that: “In their attention to the endurance of Suzhou’s historic morphology, Mote and many other commentators have slighted ‘actual land use changes’ as epiphenomenal. However, certain land use changes, such as the creation of modern improved streets, revolutionized the function and meaning of space without fundamentally altering the city’s basic plan.” *Between Heaven and Modernity: Reconstructing Suzhou* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006): 11.

\(^3\) For a more detailed discussion of rural-urban dynamics, see: Chin Shih, “Peasant Economy and Rural Society in the Lake Tai Area, 1368-1840” (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1981).
Chapter 1

ostentatious culture of conspicuous consumption in the world. By the mid-Ming (1368-1644) Suzhou was a cosmopolitan city with an international port and a global hinterland.⁴

The disruptions of the dynastic transition between the Ming and Qing (1644-1911) were legion. Threats to physical security included peasant uprisings, armed aspirants to the throne, and Qing troops. Punitive taxes increased the economic insecurity of the wealthy while increasing the misery of the commoners to whom the wealthy passed on such burdens. Officials from other locales challenged regional customs that they perceived as southern excesses. Despite these obstacles to Suzhou denizens the broader trends of intensified cultural and economic differentiation, cosmopolitan display, and complex transnational connections continued until the occupation of the city by the Taiping 太平 army from 1860-63. The occupation precipitated an abrupt shift to Shanghai as the cultural and economic center of the southeast coast; a loss in status from which Suzhou has never recovered.⁵

Corporate familial lineages channeled their money into scholarly pursuits designed to produce success in the civil examinations. They thereby obtained official posts for sons, brothers, and cousins who could protect and further consolidate lineal wealth. Corporate lineages from Suzhou and the province in which it was located⁶ were so successful in this strategy that dynasty after dynasty imposed a quota system on the


⁶ Variously called the Southern Direct Administration district (Nanzhili 南直隸), Jiangnan 江南, and Jiangsu 江蘇.
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dependent geographical origins of successful examination candidates. The quota was intended to
restrain the influence of men from the Yangzi Delta region over which Suzhou reigned.⁷
Despite the defensive suspicion with which successive rulers viewed them, sons of the
Yangzi Delta continued to gain high posts, have a strong voice in the governance of the
realm, and provide avenues of advancement for successors from their own locale.

With so much at stake, competition among the power holders in local society in
Suzhou was fierce. Yet here again there was remarkable stability within dynamic change.
In the first decades after founding the Ming dynasty, emperor Zhu Yuanzhang (reign 1368-98) directly confronted the aristocratic backbone of local society by
launching an intensive campaign to relocate the ruling families out of the region. The
progenitors of these great families had been the “four great clans of the Wu region,”
regional hegemons who came to power in the Three Kingdom (184-280) and Six
Dynasties periods (220-589).⁸ A millennium later an insecure and ambitious monarch still
justly regarded them as a presence with which to contend.

Due in part to the draconian policies of the Ming founder, new clans entered the
ranks of Suzhounese elites in the Ming and the Qing dynasties. Money was a solvent that
made social boundaries permeable, but it was not the only factor in the rise of new
familial lineages. Cultural attainment, intellectual vitality, and moral stature also
mattered: all were currencies of power marshaled by established clans and arrivists.

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⁷ On the distribution of presented scholars in the Qing dynasty, see: Hans Bielenstein, “The Regional
⁸ The “Four Surnames of Wu” were Gu 顧, Lu 陸, Zhu 朱, and Zhang 張. See: Ōkawa Fujio 大川富士夫,
“Go no shi sei ni tsuite”呉の四性について, in Rekishi ni okeru minshū to bunka: Sakai Tadao Sensei koki
shukuga kinen ronsha 歴史における民衆と文化: 酒井忠夫先生古稀祝賀記念論集, ed. Sakai Tadao
Sensei koki shukuga kinen no kai 酒井忠夫先生古稀祝賀記念の会 (Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1982):
117-132.
Chapter 1

That elites competed ceaselessly is no revelation. What is new in this dissertation, however, is the systematic analysis of the role of claims to divine contact in local elite competition and control. The subject of this dissertation is the role of piety in elite self-organization in the late imperial period. The other realm was highly integrated into terrestrial forms of attaining and maintaining power relations between elites in nested fields local, regional, and empire-wide. I am, in effect, integrating a religious register with recognized forms in which local elites exercised power previously explored by scholars. I contend that elite religiosity is a valuable subject in its own right, as well as a crucial mode of exercising power in local society.

This dissertation focuses on the Peng 彭 clan of Changzhou 長洲 county. The Changzhou county Pengs produced two two-fold optimi (er yuan 二元), one tertius (tanhua 探花), and six other presented scholar (jinshi 進士) degree holders from the Shunzhi (1644-61) through the Qianlong (1736-95) reigns. In terms of civil examination performance, the Pengs\textsuperscript{10} were arguably the most successful corporate lineage in the entire empire from the early to mid-Qing.\textsuperscript{11} They were also pioneers in the development of a charitable style of status justification. In a strategy first evident in the tumultuous years of the late Ming and firmly in place by the Qianlong reign, the Pengs explained their worldly success as divine “action and response” (ganying 感應) rewarding their good works. By the early eighteenth century, there is strong evidence that their social

\textsuperscript{9} Changzhou county constituted roughly the eastern half of urban Suzhou, combined with a sizable portion of land ranging from the northwest to southeast of the city walls. In 1725, Yuanhe 元和 county was created from the northern half of Changzhou county.

\textsuperscript{10} In order to minimize unnecessary repetition, when I write of the Pengs I am writing of the Changzhou county Pengs unless I specify otherwise.

\textsuperscript{11} The matter up for debate is how much weight to assign top ranking within a class of presented scholars in relation to the number unadorned presented scholars. This is to say, there were other familial lineages that obtained more presented scholars than the Pengs in this period, such as the Zhuangs 莊 of Changzhou prefecture, but they did not have two two-fold optimi.
peers and inferiors both accepted and promulgated this claim.\textsuperscript{12} By the 1730s the Pengs had became synonymous with good works in the thriving genre of morality books (\textit{shanshu} 善書), which circulated inexpensively among a broad readership. In this charitable milieu particularly successful patriarchs became iconic shorthand for terrestrial reward as divine recompense for good works through civil examination success. Examination hopefuls and morality book consumers throughout the empire sought to obtain a portion of the success of the Pengs by emulating their charitable commitments. I am not contending that the Pengs were the first to employ this strategy, only that they were among the most successful to do so in the early to mid-Qing.

I focus my study of the Peng corporate lineage on one pivotal figure: Peng Dingqiu 定求 (1645-1719). Dingqiu’s civil examination success and self-presentation strategy was critical in the consolidation of the concrete and symbolic power of the Peng lineage. Crucial to his importance was his attainment in 1676 of the two-fold \textit{optimus} degree. Yet for understanding the devotional layer of local elite status maintenance we cannot ignore Dingqiu’s claim to have received a prophecy of his success two years before it actually occurred. In Dingqiu the Peng lineage had an energetic organizer and successful official upon whom the Kangxi emperor (reign 1662-1722) personally bestowed favor on multiple occasions. Through the mechanism of prophecies received at

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\textsuperscript{12} The distinctiveness of this mode of status justification is evident in comparing the Pengs to another leading corporate lineage of mid-Qing Suzhou, the Pans 潘. The Pans were of Huizhou merchant origin; their progeny were sufficiently ample that those residing in Suzhou in the Qing dynasty were divided into two groups, the “wealthy” (\textit{fu} 富) Pans and the “office-holding” (\textit{gui} 貴) Pans. The choice of language in bifurcating conventional desires is an allusion to \textit{Lunyu} 5.4: “Wealth and office; that is what everyone desires.” 富與貴, 是人之所欲也。 By the time the Pans achieved their highest official success with Pan Shi’en 潘世恩 (1769-1864), the \textit{optimus} of 1793, the Pans too would be emulating the charitable style pioneered by local predecessors, first by Fan Zhongyan in the Northern Song, but more immediately and recently by the Changzhou county Pengs in the early Qing. Pan Shi’en would appear in much of the mid-to late Qing morality book anecdotal literature in which the Pengs would be so prominently featured. On the Pans, see: Yongtao Du, \textit{The Order of Places: Translocal Practices of the Huizhou Merchants in Late Imperial China} (Leiden: Brill, 2015): Chapter 4.
his spirit-writing altar, it also had a personage whom many of Dingqiu’s contemporaries accepted as favored by apotheosized Classicists and the high gods Wenchang 文昌 and the Dipper Mother (Doumu 斗母/姆). A number of Dingqiu’s descendants would obtain higher rank than the modest 6a at which his official career began and ended, but none would crystallize the factors of lineal, peer, official, and divine favor that Dingqiu commanded.

In examining someone so profoundly embedded in a complex familial context, it is advisable to explore Dingqiu’s sense of his ancestors and his descendants’ portrayal of him in turn. Obtaining peer status among the city’s best and brightest only in the mid-Ming, the Pengs were relative latecomers in the crowded field of Suzhou elites. Fully contextualizing their corporate lineage entails spanning the entirety of the Ming and Qing dynasties. I hone in on a valley of instability between the two peaks of good order of the mid-Ming and so-called “High Qing.” The 1670s were a pivotal moment, as it was in this decade that Peng Dingqiu and the rest of the post-conquest generation of Suzhou elites came of age. They formulated their local power maintenance strategy in reaction to the legacy of the highly polarized factional disputes of the late Ming. Ritual—as a tool for not explicitly articulating common political concerns—played a key role in the new consensus-creation. Memorialization of late Ming and cross-transition figures through shrines (extra-familial) and ancestral worship (intra-familial) was a particularly important realm of such communal ritual, as were the Daoist offering ceremonies (jiao 醮) that propitiated both collective unknown dead and intimate deceased relatives.

Liturgical memorialization practices allowed early Qing elites to control a store of cultural capital that validated and perpetuated their own terrestrial success. The
innovation of this dissertation is to bring into focus the range of reinforcing methods by which late Ming paragons could be claimed. These methods included: propitiation of spirits at shrines erected and local sites of elite congregation; reverencing of the worthies in one’s own lineage by means of familial rites and the propounding of recognition of their good names through genealogy compilation and solicitation of posthumous imperial rewards; and reception of promulgations from the spirits themselves received through the otherworldly communication technology of spirit-writing.

In this mutually reinforcing system, deceased Ming officials were granted a place in overlapping pantheons worshipped by the same people at the same physical sites. These pantheons included: those of local worthies worshipped at official complexes such as the prefectural and county schools, as well as independent shrines; those of philosophical innovators in the Transmission of the Way (daotong 道統); and those granted a place in the celestial bureaucracy ruled over by the high gods of Daoism.

A prophecy of success on the examinations was both divine recognition of the virtue of one’s deceased ancestors and the acknowledgement of the living candidates filiality in serving those ancestors. Subsequent success on the examinations provided the candidate with the material means and enhanced social standing to propagate hagiographies of his ancestors, while simultaneously laying the foundation for his own posthumous reverencing by his descendants. The bulk of this dissertation is dedicated to identifying the many facets of this complex system and explaining their interrelation.
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Walking the City: Adjacency and the Cityscape

My sense of textual homologies has been enhanced by a physical intimacy with the present day remnants of the Qing city of Suzhou and the area between the walled city at Lake Tai. Although by no means exempt from the daily bulldozer assaults that characterize life in the People’s Republic, more of late Qing (post-Taiping occupation) Suzhou survives than in any other city in the region of comparable historical import (i.e., Nanjing and Hangzhou). While “ancient” sites are periodically damaged in order to bring them into accord with the Photoshop imaginary of domestic tourists and the bureaucrats who seek to woo them, that the renovated sites still occupy the same place on the map that they did in the Pingjiang tu is a remarkable stimulus for the historical imagination. Since my first visit to Suzhou in 2005 I have witnessed entire neighborhoods of densely populated vernacular southern architecture converted into fly-infested rubble; I will not easily forget the dazed faces of seniors who experience the entire framework of their existence demolished overnight. Despite the continual stripping away of the social ecology in which cultural practices were perpetuated and historical sites imbued with coherent meaning, Suzhou and its environs continue to reward the time-tested historiographical technique of tromping around with primary sources in hand.

13 In addition to the overall organization of the walled city, important sites discussed in this dissertation which appear on the Pingjiang tu include the Cultural Temple (in which the gargantuan stele itself is housed) and Abbey of Profound Mystery.

14 In terms of indigenous precedent for an enthusiasm for site visits, Lynn Struve documented the peripatetic turn among early Qing historians in her “Ambivalence and Action: Some Frustrated Scholars of the K’ang-hsi Period,” in From Ming to Ch’ing: Conquest, Region, and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century China, eds. Jonathan D. Spence and John E. Wills, Jr. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979): 321-65. Susan Naquin was able to explore pre-2008 Olympics Beijing on bicycle before the destruction of the underlying cosmological coherency of the capital. See her Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400-1900 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000): 2. Ming dynasty literature specialist Ōki Yasushi discussed walking the same stretch of Suzhou between the Feng Gate at the Cultural Temple so crucial to the Pengs. See Huang Xiaofeng 黄晓峰, “Ōki Yasushi tan Ming-Qing Jiangnan wenren shenghuo” 大木康谈明清江南文人生活, Shanghai shuping 上海书评 221 (3 Feb 2013): 2.
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This ambulatory inclination can help undermine the classificatory conventions of many primary sources, gazetteers foremost among them. These official sources reflected the blinkered views administrator-editors propagated and perpetuated among their readers, including the editors of future gazetteers who succeeded them. Present day scholars must exert ourselves to see past such imposed limits. For example, what does it take for us to place physical proximity over asserted creedal affinity? To see, in this dissertation, that the Cultural Star Pavilion complex (discussed in Chapter 6) included territory that migrated from the control of a Buddhist temple to an official county school and back? By classifying the Cultural Star Pavilion under official schools, the gazetteer record obscures the crucial distinction that it was not under the administrative control of the official school, and was thus a less regulated platform for local elite self-organization. Finally, the gazetteer record provided no category under which to understand the residences of the great families. It is only through other maps that one can understand the proximity of the Peng clan mansion to the Cultural Star Pavilion; a proximity that enable their domination of the site for some two hundred years (Illustration 1.1).15

The Qing magistrates or literati and gentry who compiled gazetteers, regardless of the conceptual divisions imposed on proximate sites, were themselves aware of the physical proximity: they knew because they visited the sites themselves. Present day scholars can avail ourselves of this experiential antidote to classificatory conventions by becoming familiar with the physical layout of such sites when we are fortunate enough to

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15 The Cultural Star Pavilion still stands on what is now the main campus of Soochow University. I visited the site repeatedly from 2011-14. I am grateful to caretaker Su Tianming for allowing me inside the structure, which is not open to the public, and for granting permission to take rubbings of the two extant late Ming stelae still in the complex.
have surviving relics of the Qing city, as we do with the Changzhou county school, Cultural Star Pavilion complex, and the Peng clan compound.

I assert that there were many continuities that our Qing subjects perceive but that it is difficult for us to discern. One of the causes of this difficulty of perception is the category of commonalities so evident that they did not merit comment. Fundraising practices are one such example. It would not have been a profound insight to a Kangxi era literatus that all Three Teachings institutions and local shrines required periodic fundraising campaigns for reconstruction or expansion (often under the guise of reconstruction) and that the solicitation (muyin 募引), regardless of object, shared formal characteristics. Yet our habits of thought rarely cross disciplinary divides such as Buddhist, Daoist, or Confucian Studies to examine the shared manner of perpetuating and developing the crucial sites for ritual performance and, as was often the case, the fact that the same individuals often wrote such solicitations for the institutions of two or more of the Three Teachings. I term these sorts of commonalities a continuum of devotion in order to stress that parallel activities took place across creedal boundaries.

Illustration 1.1  
The Cultural Star Pavilion on the present day campus of Soochow University. Photo by author.

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16 In discussing his work on commercial guilds and philanthropic organizations in nineteenth century Hankou, William Rowe suggested that a continuum rather than a dichotomy is the best way to understand the relationship between state power and local organizational autonomy. See his “The Problem of ‘Civil Society’ in Late Imperial China,” Modern China 19.2 (1993): 147.

A related example of using the concept of continuum to elucidate commonalities among distinct entities conventionally assigned to quite different conceptual categories occurs in the introduction by
Devotional Lives of Qing Dynasty Literati-Officials

*Animating the Imperial Apparatus*

There are four questions I would like to consider before addressing personal profiles of devotional practices among Qing literati-officials. They are: 1) Who comprised the imperial apparatus? 2) How did the personal commitments of the component human parts affect the whole? 3) What overlap was there between officials (regardless of their rank) and local elites, both in terms of personal and kinship overlaps and devotional commitments? And finally: 4) What was the role of the great corporate familial lineages in local governance, and what place did temple patronage and the conducting of rituals among local elites play in that role?

On the first question, our understanding of the nuts and bolts of Qing imperium has been clarified dramatically by the opening of the Number One archives to foreign scholars in the 1970s; indeed, the opening of the archives prompted the advent of the field of Qing Studies. Scholars such as Beatrice Bartlett, Evelyn Rawski, and Lai Hui-min 賴惠敏 have addressed the inner workings of the Qing administrative organs such as the Grand Council (Junjichu 軍機處) and Imperial Household organization (Neiwufu 內

Vincent Goossaert and David Ownby to the 2008 special issue of *Nova Religio* on charisma in Chinese Religions. The editors suggested: “Overlaps between local representations of good political leadership (such as the Maoist evocation of self-sacrifice and ascetic lifestyles for the realization of the common good) and of good temple leadership (devoting all of one’s resources to restoring village honor and welfare through the temple) represent particularly fruitful venues for exploring the religious-political continuum where charisma is deployed. Goossaert and Ownby, “Mapping Charisma in Chinese Religion: Introduction,” *Nova Religion* 12.2 (2008): 5.

17 For an early English language report from the Number One Archives, see: Beatrice Bartlett, “An Archival Revival: The Qing Central Government Archives in Peking Today,” *Ch’ing-shih wen-t’i* 4.6 (1981): 81-110. The archives in the PRC have never been fully open to researchers foreign or domestic.
In rendering an amorphous “Qing court” into finely interlocking organizations staffed by researchable human beings, the collective implication of this body of work is: to what extent was there a Qing Imperium beyond the emperor, imperial kinsmen, civil and military officials and their staffs, as well as bannermen and other soldiers?19

In resisting a reification of the state, Pamela Crossley declared: “States don’t believe.”20 Her purpose in doing so was to analyze the policy motivations behind rhetorical choices. In continuing to focus on who constituted the state, we have the materials available to analyses the devotional commitments of many of the people who formed the human basis of the Qing imperial apparatus. At the level of the emperor, hand-copied Buddhist (and, less often, Daoist) scriptures exist, presented to beloved matriarchs on their birthdays.21 Studies of Manchu shamanism shed light on conceptions of ethnicity and difference, and imperial anxieties over maintaining them.22 Susan Naquin has brought unprecedented clarity to the religious commitments of the eunuchs who staffed the Imperial Household and palace women.23 Building on the pioneering studies of Romeyn Taylor, Chen Hsi-yuan 陳熙遠 has recently provided a finer-grained picture

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22 On Qing court shamanism, see: Rawski, The Last Emperors, Chapter 7, and Elliott, The Manchu Way.
23 See Naquin, Peking.
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of the ceremonial commitments of the magistrate. Pierre-Étienne Will’s catalog of manuals by late imperial magistrates provides a roadmap to devotional commitments both positive (participating in rites at official schools and city god temples) and negative (persecuting “lascivious cults” and banning women from attending temples).

The involvement of literati-officials in cults has played a role in some of the most central questions in the history of late imperial China, such as that of the degree of cultural integration across temporal, class, educational, and gender divisions. James Watson’s 1995 article on the Tianhou 天后 (or in Taiwan, Mazu 媽祖) cult proposed an approach he characterizes as complementary towards, rather than conflicting with, the structural functionalist Durkheimian reading of Chinese Religion most closely associated with C.K. Yang (1910-99). In Yang’s reading, devotional activities serve the function of integrating society. His treatment of Classicist officials acknowledged the diversity of the practices in which they engaged and the overlap of many of these practices with those lower down the class ladder, but he also stated apologetically that these men had made such lapses in rationality because they were deluged in a sea of superstition, and would not have made such concessions if left to their own devices.

27 For example, Yang wrote: “In the traditional days, the common people also believed that those who passed the higher examinations were incarnations of the star gods. Confucian scholars were perhaps not a party to this superstition, but its currency among the common people had the effect of sanctioning the high social and political status of the literati.” C. K. Yang, Religion in Chinese Society: A Study of Contemporary Social Functions of Religion and some of their Historical Factors (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961): 296.
In contrast to an integrative function served by cultic activities Watson argued that the multivalency of symbols allowed participants of differing class and gender positions to persist in differing worldviews while only ostensibly participating in the same system. Watson’s study focused on the southeast coast, beginning in effect with the repopulation of the area after the 1670 recession of the 1662 evacuation edict issued in order to fight the Ming loyalists army of Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624-62), who was then based in southwestern Taiwan. For his purpose he divided elites into two categories: “national-level authorities”—i.e., officials—and “local elites,” whom he defined as “literate men with interests in land and commerce.”

Watson engaged with the variability of perspective in a manner more sophisticated than C.K. Yang: “One’s perception of cultural uniformity in late imperial Chinese society depends entirely upon perspective,” Watson asserted. But Watson was just as unwilling as Yang to grant a modicum of significance to the personal convictions of officials. “Those at the top of the regional and national hierarchies (i.e., local elites and government officials) were only concerned with actions, not beliefs,” Watson asserted. Watson also wrote: “Government functionaries may have had private beliefs regarding T’ien Hou but these did not find public expression.” Thus he posited a clear public-private divide in which the former carried weight and the latter did not.

Watson conceded that “A surprisingly high degree of uniformity was attained through the promotion of deities that had been sanctioned by the Imperial Board of Rites

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Thomas Wilson makes a useful distinction between rationality and secularism, arguing that Classicist ritual is rational within a religious framework (personal communication). I concur to the extent that we need to be attentive to the internal logic of the system as understood by its perpetuators, as we simultaneously attempt to understand its coherence—or lack thereof—from outside.

and recognized by the emperor himself,” but presented a clear recognition of its own
self-interest rather than the exigencies of individually inspired religious testaments by
officials as the propulsive force of the empire.

Watson’s argument was an inversion of common representations of the Chinese
state and its functionaries since the Jesuits’ first enthusiastic missives home in the late
sixteenth century. In the Sinophilic ideal of the Enlightenment, for example, the
Classicist state constituted such a desirable model for Western European states precisely
because the personal values of the emperor and his officials were focused on the public
good. Such enthusiasm has found more recent resonance in the over-enthusiastic attempt
of the massively influential William de Bary to find analogs to the Western liberal
tradition in late imperial Chinese (and Japanese) scholar-officials. Where in the four
hundred-plus years of Western language writing on Classicist statecraft can one find the
assertion that the ideals of self-cultivation bear no significance in the governance of the
realm? Any such assertion would have been clearly contradicted by the classical ideal,
with its locus classicus in the Zhongyong 中庸 (Doctrine of the Mean), of the cultivated
virtue of the emperor radiating out, in hierarchical descent, through all-under-Heaven.

Classifying self-cultivation and participation in collective rituals separately relies
on a sleight of hand in which morality and ethics can be purged of religious connotation
through the concept of secularism. The public-private dyad (as posited by Watson) is
dependent on that of secular-religious. And the latter is not tenable in light of the recent
scholarship on both Japan (via which the Western concept of religion was imported to the

32 See, for example, William de Bary’s The Liberal Tradition in China (Hong Kong: Chinese University
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Qing populace in the 1890s)\(^{33}\) and China that shows clearly that there was no indigenous correlate of the term. Indeed, the attempt by Nationalist officials (and, in ceded areas of the Qing empire under Japanese control, such as Taiwan, Japanese colonial administrators) to make the theory fit the practice was responsible for much of the immense violence done to the fabric of devotional life in the twentieth century.\(^{34}\)

In contrast to the religious customs of the ruling house or the role of imperial legitimization of cults, contemporary scholars of Qing officialdom have granted little attention to devotional elements in the lives of their subjects. Yet, as Paul Katz warned: “Research on local elites that overlooks their beliefs and practices is doomed to miss many of the realities of local life.”\(^{35}\) Religion is a central “arena” in which local elites both competed and co-operated,\(^{36}\) but it was not simply a realm of power contestation: piety was also a real factor.\(^{37}\) My intention in this dissertation is to describe the scope of one prominent clan’s devotional activities, with an eye toward its real world consequences and the intangibilities of faith.

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\(^{36}\) “An arena is the environment, the stage, the surrounding social space, often the locale in which elites and other societal actors are involved. Arenas may be either geographical (village, county, nation) or functional (military, educational, political); and the concept of an arena includes the repertory of values, meanings, and resources of its constituent actors.” Joseph W. Esherick and Mary Backus Rankin, “Introduction,” in *Chinese Local Elites and Patterns of Dominance*, eds. Esherick and Rankin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990): 11.

\(^{37}\) As Katz wrote in a case study of the role of temple organizations in twentieth-century Hsin-chuang 新莊: “Members of the Hsin-chuang elite joined the temple committee or the Chûn-hsien T’ang in order to establish or solidify connections with other members of the elite, while also taking advantage of the public nature of the temple and its festival to display their leadership roles in community affairs as well as increase their holdings of symbolic capital. However, these men were motivated by more than mere self-interest, and many supported temples in order to improve the conditions of their locality or satisfy their own religious needs.” Katz, “Local Elites and Sacred Sites in Hsin-chuang,” 216-17.
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One of the reasons for scholars’ relative lack of interest in the devotional lives of scholar-officials is the difficulty of proving that matters of faith have consequences in the realm of governance. For example, even when Cynthia Brokaw discussed a magistrate who clearly subscribed to the ethical system laid out in ledgers of merit and demerit, she conceded that there was no conclusive evidence connecting his fervency to judicial decisions. Such lack of conclusive evidence can permit the impression that matters of belief occupied a private sphere distinct from the “vocational religion of the literati,” as Romeyn Taylor classified “the cult of Confucius” in a 1998 article on “official religion” in the Ming. The implication is that the religious inclination of officials do not matter either in the course of or outside the performance of their duties: in the case of the former, they are only going through ritual motions; in the latter, where such practices are performed at all, they do not have clear real world consequences.

Personal Profiles

One area in which contemporary scholars are able to prove a direct connection between religio-ethical convictions of officials and their conduct in office is in the realm of prosecution of practices the officials deemed heterodox and in degree of fervor for the Classicist mission civilisatrice (jiaohua 敎化; literally “teaching and transformation”;

This constitutes the now sizable body of scholarship on the persecution of unofficial cults. The greatest level of biographical and intellectual detailed available to date on a single figure in William Rowe’s magisterial portrait of Chen Hongmou 陳宏謀 (1696-1771). In framing Chen as a Classicist fundamentalist, Rowe was able to document the discretion Qing imperium provided to a zealous implementer of a particular worldview. Conversely, Vincent Goossaeart has provided us with a profile of the religious worldview of a Qing dynasty scholar-official whom he characterized as “not an activist.” Considering the spectrum from Confucian fundamentalist to relatively detached observer gives us a range of personal discretion with which scholar-officials could seek to implement their ethico-religious visions with the weight of the state behind them.

Monica Esposito, Vincent Goossaeart, Liu Xun, and Mori Yuria 森由利亜 have devoted considerable attention to the self-cultivation networks of Qing literati-officials, particular in relation to these individuals’ Daoist commitments. As Liu Xun argued in his

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40 For example, in a 2002 article Donald Sutton sought to identify the distinctive quality of the animus of Ming-Qing officials towards wu 巫 (shamans). In contrast to the ambivalence of Tang (608-960) and Song (960-1279) dynasty Classicists, their Ming and Qing counterparts despaired and frequently persecuted wu. Sutton argued that the persecutions occurred not only because the ecstatic performances of the wu offended Classicists due to the potential disruption they posed to social hierarchies, but because the vilified wu themselves served as a necessary foil: in the formal and informal writings in which literati disseminated their views the wu served as “an inversion of the Confucian paragon.” See his: “From Credulity to Scorn: Confucians Confront the Spirit Mediums in Late Imperial China,” *Late Imperial China* 21.2 (2000): 37.

41 Chen is enshrined with the seven members of the Peng clan at the Shrine to Five Hundred Famous Worthies. He was also a posthumous City God in Suzhou; see Cai Limin 蔡利民 and Yuan Xinchang 費信常, *Suzhou Chenghuang miao* (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2011): 48-59.

2004 study of the patronage of Complete Perfection (Quanzhen 全真) abbeys in nineteenth century Peking and Nanyang 鄭州, Henan, by the Manchu bannermen Wanyan 完顏 clan: “while macro-histories of Buddhist and Daoist clergy and monasteries sketch out the larger institutional framework for understanding elite religious experience, we still need to study the histories of personal and family practices so as to gain a more intimate understanding of how the Qing elite experienced and lived out their religious faith.”

Studies along these lines of figures who bear mention in the body of this dissertation include the work of Esposito and Mori on Jiang Yupu 蔣予蒲 (zi Zhi Yuanting 元庭; 1756-1819), a Siku quanshu 四庫全書 (Complete Books of the Four Treasuries) compiler who went on to edit the most important lay Daoist canon of the Qing, the Daozang jiyao 道藏輯要 (Essentials of the Daoist Canon). As I explain more fully in Chapter 8, in 1906 an editor in Sichuan asserted that Peng Dingqiu had been the original editor of a Kangxi period Daozang jiyao, causing much subsequent confusion. Another relevant study is Goossaert’s biographical forays on Zhu Gui 朱桂 (1737-1807), the Qianlong and Jiaqing era official who successfully petitioned for the canonization granted to Wenchang in 1801 and who published numerous works related to the devotional lives of the Pengs.

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45 On Zhu Gui see Vincent Goossaert, “Daoist Eschatology” (forthcoming) and “Zhu Gui” in the Daozang Jiyao Project (forthcoming). Zhu was crucial to the young Jiaqing’s emperor’s campaign to vanquish his father’s favorite Heshen. As the granting of Zhu’s petition to canonize Wenchang followed shortly after the
This trend towards considering the religious worldviews of Qing dynasty scholar-officials can refine our sense of the religiosity of an age and enhance our capacity to evaluate the purported progress—or even conceivability—of secularism. In his 1957 biography of Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716-96), Arthur Waley made a drastic modernist claim about eighteenth century society as a whole when he asserted that Yuan “lived in an age when belief was crumbling.”

If the consideration of the Pengs’ commitment to the mid-Ming philosopher Wang Yangming show that present day chronological of the decline of that movement merits revising, does consideration of the collective religious commitments of the Pengs sounds a similar warning for chronologies of devotional compartmentalization? In documenting a spectrum of piety from outward fulfillment of propriety to curiosity to fervent zeal against the changes of the age, I hope to embed the contemporary perception

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46 The majority of English language Qing biographical material has evinced a disregard for the religious aspect of the world occupied by their subjects. Among these works I include ECCP, which remains the English language starting point for biographical studies of Qing figures, and Jonathan Spence’s biography of Peng Dingqu’s acquaintance Cao Yin 曹寅, Ts’ao Yin and the K’ang-hsi Emperor: Bondservant and Master (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988 [1966]). Betty Peh-T’i Wei’s portrait of the immensely influential mid-Qing official and patron Ruan Yuan 阮元 is mostly disinterested in religion, with a few minor exceptions. See her Ruan Yuan, 1764-1849: The Life and Work of a Major Scholar-official in Nineteenth-century China before the Opium War (London: Eurospan, 2006): 109-134 (suppressing cults) and 223-30 (lineage rituals).


In its cool confidence and dramatic overreach Waley’s comment was redolent of Abel Lefranc’s anachronous 1922 reading of Rabelais’s (b. 1483-1494, d. 1553) Gargantua and Pantagruel as an attack on Christianity. Lefranc’s interpretation prompted Lucien Febvre’s (1878-1956) magisterial rebuttal Le problème de l’incroyance au xvie siècle: la religion de Rabelais (1947). On the background dispute, see: Beatrice Gottlieb, “Translator’s Introduction,” in Lucien Febvre, The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century: The Religion of Rabelais, translated by Beatrice Gottlieb (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982): esp. xi-xii. Organized as a trial with a wide-spectrum of witnesses called to testify, Febvre’s work demonstrated that, far from being an atheist, the concept of atheism itself was unthinkable in Western Europe in the 1500s.
of divine reward within the broader socio-economic and ideological system that made the great lineages of the Yangzi Delta possible.

Peng Dingqiu’s struggles with fellow gentry over the credibility of his spirit-altar revelations in the 1670s demonstrate that “faith” (xin 信) was a matter of great importance. If Waley’s observation about the crumbling of belief in the eighteenth century were true, the virulence of Peng Shaosheng’s Pure Land proselytization could be interpreted as compensation for the abrupt disintegration of a shared framework of belief into a matter of individual choice. In Peng Dingqiu’s day in the Kangxi reign devotional activism was within the spectrum of accepted behavior in polite society; by the mid-Qianlong period it now stood out as exceptional. In this dissertation I employ not a Weberian desacralization narrative, but rather track the religious commitments of the Pengs against the broader dissolution of scholar-official rule in Suzhou and Suzhou’s mid-nineteenth century loss of stature in the empire as a whole.

Sources

My effort to provide a diachronic reading of the Peng lineage as a whole entails engaging with a broad range of primary and secondary sources. I dedicate Chapter 2 to a discussion of my approach to secondary sources and the scholarly fields imbricated in the study of the Peng clan. In this section I concentrate on primary sources.

In selecting primary sources I have prioritized materials dealing directly with Peng clan members and read out in concentric circles as much as possible. As detailed in the descriptive catalog of works by Peng clan members that follows this dissertation, this is a vast corpus and one to which I am often only able to provide a cursory introduction. There is also a significant body of work on the Pengs by their peers and other contemporaries, as well as by later admirers. I have sought to incorporate this work, but I have by no means exhausted it as a source.

I deliberately picked a dissertation topic in which overabundance rather than paucity of sources would present a challenge. One of the secrets of managing the sheer volume of Qing primary sources lies in comprehending their intense redundancy. Such redundancy is important in demonstrating the extent to which works under discussion circulated and in checking for significant textual variants. Providing such details means that I often cite the same source in two or three locations, in addition to reprint editions. This bibliographic exuberance is an effort to hack off and tar the hydra’s heads of promiscuous editorial cut-and-paste culture in the Qing dynasty; it is also an effort to show that I have done the legwork to track down sometimes quite significant variants in what from titles alone would appear identical material (Illustration 1.2).
Illustration 1.2
Chapter 1

There are six forms of printed or manuscript books that I have found invaluable in reconstructing the religious lives of the Pengs.\(^{49}\) In the descriptive catalog that follows this dissertation I offer a detailed bibliography of works by Peng patriarchs. Here I provide a more general overview of the respective utility of the following sources:

1) Prose anthologies (*wenji* 文集/*wengao* 文稿)

2) Poetry anthologies (*shiji* 詩集/*shigao* 詩稿)

3) Gazetteers (*zhi* 志/誌)

4) Chronological Autobiographies (*nianpu* 年譜)

5) Séance transcripts

6) Genealogies (*zongpu* 宗譜)

To briefly summarize the utility of the six genres under discussion:

1) Peng Dingqiu’s literary anthology *Nanyun wen gao* 南昀文槀 (Preliminary Draft of Nanyun’s Essays, 12 *juan*) contains: a) prefaces to morality books printed by him and acquaintances, providing detailed information on the provenance of the work being disseminated and the motive for doing so; b) fundraising appeals (*mu* 募) for the rebuilding or restoration of numerous local shrines and temples; and c) pilgrimage records (*youji* 遊記).

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\(^{49}\) I use the word “forms” rather than “genres” because many conventional formats for presenting texts incorporated numerous genres. For example, Qing dynasty prose anthologies regularly had section for the two distinct genres of prefaces and grave epitaphs. For a definition of “genre,” see the entry by M. Cavich in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, eds. Roland Greene *et al*., 4th ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012): 551-54. I am grateful to Tom Mazanec for this reference.
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2) Peng Dingqiu’s poetry anthology *Nanyun shi gao* 南昀詩藳 (Preliminary Draft of Nanyun’s Essays, 17 juan), chronologically arranged and spanning nearly two decades, provides a detailed mapping of encounters with friends, travels, and meditation experiences. The poems often reveal the scriptures which Dingqiu found most aesthetically pleasing, such as the Eastern Jin guided tour of body gods *Huangting neijing jing* 黃庭內景經. Dingqiu provides his own annotations to allusions to people and literary sources in many of these poems.

3) The gazetteers I have employed can be divided into two categories: locality (provincial [fu 府] or county [xian 縣] and those on particular sites (sometimes called zhuanzhi 專志 by present-day bibliographers). The gazetteers of the Wu 吳 region are among the richest in all of the area presently known as “China.”

Beginning in the mid-Ming, ancestors of the Changzhou county Pengs began appearing as local notables, and continued through the Qing to have their biographies included in the literary (yiwen 藝文), painting, virtuous wives, and other such categories. They abbeys and shrines I examine in this dissertation are often extensively documented in the gazetteer record. In several cases I have consulted gazetteers beyond the Suzhou region; for example, included those of Yangzhou, where Dingqiu edited the *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 (Complete Poetry of the Tang, 1706) at the celebrated Monastery of Celestial Calm (Tianning si 天寧寺).

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50 On gazetteers on the Suzhou region, see: Lu Zhenyue 陸振岳, *Suzhou shi, zhi yanjiu* 苏州史志研究 (Gu wu xuan chubanshe, 2004).
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Gazetteers of particular sites include stelae inscriptions, fundraising appeals, and gazetteer extracts. Gazetteers on Daoist abbeys provide material related to prominent abbots, including records by Peng patriarchs of social and ritual congress. As far as I have been able to ascertain no gazetteers for Buddhist temples in early Qing Suzhou survive, but there are two rich sources on Daoist ones: the *Qionglong shan zhi* 穹窿山志 (Celestial Vault Mountain Gazetteer) of 1673 and the *Yuanmiao guan zhi* 元妙觀志 (Abbey of Profound Mystery Gazetteer), compiled by Gu Yuan 顧沅 (1799-1851) but not printed until 1927.51 Writings by Peng clan members appear in both, testifying to the close and continued relationship between Peng clan patriarchs and prominent Daoist abbots (on which see Chapter 7).

The record regarding the Peng clan’s Daoist commitments brings to light a lack of coordination between Daoist institutional sources, literati anthologies, and official gazetteers. Peng Long did not have a literary anthology, while Peng Dingqiu’s piece on the 1673 Central Prime ritual was not included in his literary anthology *Nanyun wengao*. Conversely, Dingqiu’s funerary inscription for the high Daoist abbot Shi Daoyuan, contained more detailed information on Shi than the biography contained in the *Yuanmiao guan zhi*.52 For most purposes, the *Yuanmiao guan zhi* is the best source on the history of the Abbey, especially in the Qing; and Peng clan patriarchs are represented in it for that period more than

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52 See the biography of Shi Daoyuan in *Yuanmiao guan zhi*, ed. Gu Yuan, j. 4: 2b-3b; rpd. 68-70. Dingqiu also wrote a lengthy tomb inscription for the Maoshan Sect Complete Perfection Master Zhan Tailin 詹太林 (zi Jinbo 晉柏, hao Weiyangzi 維陽子): “Zhan Weiyang lüshi taming” 詹維陽律師塔銘 (Pagoda [grave marker] inscription for Vinaya Master Zhan Weiyang), NYWG, j. 10: 16a-17b; rpd.: 414.
any other of Suzhou’s great lineages. Comparing the different sources available in different genres of compendia demonstrates the way in which literary collections by Qing scholar-officials can complement our knowledge of Daoist institutions and personages, despite representing lines of transmission so distinct that cross-referencing them remains an unconventional practice.

4) Peng Dingqiu left a major autobiography which has gone unnoticed by scholars until now. It is titled *Shijiang gong nianpu*侍講公年譜 (Chronological Autobiography of the [Hanlin Academy] Sub-Expositor, last entry 1718) and exists in a single manuscript copy held by the Suzhou Museum (Illustration 1.3). The common biographical source on Dingqiu is a dramatically abbreviated and reorganized version of *Shijiang gong nianpu* titled “Nanyun laoren ziding nianpu” 南畇老人自訂年譜 (Self-Corrected Chronological Autobiography of the Old Man Nanyun). The abbreviated biography is included in the massive 45 *juan* collectanea *Peng shi suo zhu shu* 彭氏所著書 (Books Written by Peng Clan [Patriarchs], 1881), produced by Dingqiu’s sixth generation (inclusive)
descendant Peng Zuxian 彭祖賢 (1819-85). *Shiji gang* is significantly longer than *Nanyun laoren*, at ninety-five pages versus eighteen.\(^{53}\)

*Shiji gang* covers up to 1718, the year before Dingqiu’s death at 75 sui, and closes with Dingqiu’s testimony that he reviewed the text.\(^{54}\) *Nanyun laoren*, in contrast, despite the claim in its title to have been corrected by Dingqiu himself, goes up to his death in the *hai* 亥 double-hour of the ninth day of the fourth month of 1719, rendering it impossible that Dingqiu himself could have corrected it in its entirety. Peng Zuxian arranged excerpts of Dingqiu’s *Shiji gang nianpu* in four horizontal registers: each year of Dingqiu’s life (*jinian* 紀年); events (*shishi* 時事); civil examination placement and status in officialdom (*chuchu* 出處); and compositions (*shi wen zhushu* 詩文著述). Zuxian signed “*Nanyun laoren ziding nianpu*” as “meticulous editor” (*jinbian* 謹編); a redundancy, given his compilation of the entire collectanea, but one which underscores his editorial involvement with his venerable ancestor’s autobiography in particular. Due to its convenience and accessibility to other scholars, I cite Zuxian’s chronological “autobiography” of Dingqiu for the cases in which the text is identical to that of Dingqiu’s manuscript autobiography, and only cite the *Shiji gang nianpu* for material unique to it. A significant portion of this unique material is relevant to Dingqiu’s devotional commitments. While I have far from exhausted this source,

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\(^{53}\) In the Suzhou Museum manuscript the chronological autobiography is followed by Dingqiu’s own “living eulogy” (*sheng kuang zhi* 生壙誌) and Yang Xuan’s 楊瑄 tomb inscription (*mu biao*).

\(^{54}\) The manuscript contains frequent corrections, but I have not determined whether or not these are in Dingqiu’s own hand.
it has enabled critical insights, such as Dingqiu’s description of his 1674 two-fold *optimus* prophecy around which Chapter 3 is constructed.

The original and redacted versions of Dingqiu’s autobiography provide a case study allowing us to examine to what extent the devotional elements in the life of an early Qing literatus were edited out by a nineteenth-century descendant. Peng Zuxian’s redaction of Dingqiu’s autobiography omits entirely mention of practices such as quiet-sitting and spirit-writing that Dingqiu saw fit to discuss in tandem with his study regimen, sitting for the examinations, writing and editing activities, and illnesses, births, and deaths within the family; all of this latter information being that which Zuxian thought worthy to preserve. As I will discuss at greater length in subsequent chapters, *Shijiang gong* is valuable not simply for presenting material on devotional activities, but for juxtaposing to other personal events in such a way as to provide an integral emotional and experiential portrait. For example, in it Dingqiu presents sessions with deities in dreams or at the spirit-writing altar with critical moments in his professional and emotional life, such as sitting for the civil service examinations and losing a parent.

5) Peng Dingqiu’s great-grandson Shaosheng compiled the surviving transcripts of séances form his clan’s spirit-writing circle and had them printed in 1773 as *Zhishen lu* 質神錄 (Record of Interrogating the Spirits). The transcripts begin in 1678 when Dingqiu and others present such as Dingqiu’s cousin Ningqiu 宁/寗求 (*jinshi* [*tanhua*] 1682) and Peng Sunyu 彭孫遹 (1631-1700) (of Zhejiang but considered a relative by Changzhou country Pengs) were in the capital for examination preparation. They continued on after Dingqiu’s death; indeed, the
last session recorded is of Dingqiu himself coming back as a spirit to exhort his descendants.

6) The first reported *Pengshi zongpu* (Genealogy of the Peng Clan) of the Changzhou county Pengs was edited by seventh generation patriarch Peng Ruxie 彭汝諧 (*jinshi* 1616) in 1595. The four extant editions are those of 1829, 1867, 1883, and 1922.\(^{55}\) Unlike many Jiangsu genealogies contemporary to the *Peng shi zongpu*, the Peng clan genealogies do not contain significant information on lineage rituals and other aspects of ancestor worship.\(^{56}\) There is no way to determine whether such information was included in editions prior to that of 1829, including the one Peng Dingqiu edited.

The *medium* (as opposed to genre) of stelae also deserves comment. There are for major anthologies of Ming-Qing Suzhou stelae. The first three, published in 1959, 1981 and 1998, respectively, are framed in terms of economic and social history; the fourth, published in 2012, provides photographs and transcriptions of the stelae held by the Suzhou Museum.\(^{57}\) Although only one contains a composition by a Peng patriarch—an

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55 For further details see Appendix 4.2.

56 That looking for information on lineage rituals in late Ming and Qing Jiangsu genealogies is not an unreasonable expectation can be seen from the detailed comparison of 75 genealogies each from Fujian and Jiangsu in this period examined by Zhong Zhaohong 仲兆宏. See his “Ming-Qing Su-Min zupu neirong bijiao yanjiu” 明清苏闽族谱内容比较研究, *Suzhou daxue xuebao: Zhexue shehui kexue ban* 苏州大学学报：哲学社会科学研究版 34.4 (2013): 183-190.

57 *Jiangsu sheng Ming Qing yilai beike ziliao xuanji* 江苏省明清以来碑刻资料选集, ed. Jiangsu Sheng Bowuguan 江苏省博物馆 (Beijing: Shanghao, dushu, xinzhi sanlian shudian, 1959); *Ming-Qing Suzhou gong shang ye beike ji* 明清苏州工商业碑刻集, eds. Suzhou Lishi Bowuguan 苏州历史博物馆, Jiangsu Shifan Xueyuan Lishixi 江苏师范学院历史系, and Nanjing Daxue Ming-Qing Shi Yanjiushi 南京大学明清史研究室 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1981); *Ming-Qing yilai Suzhou shehui shi beike ji* 明清以来苏州社会史碑刻集, eds. Wang Guoping 王国平 and Tang Lixing 唐力行 (Suzhou: Suzhou daxue chubanshe, 1998); and *Suzhou Bowuguan cang lidai bei zhi* 苏州博物馆藏历代代碑志, ed. Suzhou Bowuguan 苏州博物馆 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2012).
inscription by Peng Shaosheng on a pool for releasing life—all contain source material relevant to a broad range of concerns, such as Gender Studies, relations between gentry and officials, education, family lineages, charitable associations, guilds, and uprisings.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into five parts. The first, consisting of chapters 1 and 2, dispenses with the scholarly preliminaries, such as sources and methodology (Chapter 1) and the states of the fields imbricated in the subject matter of the dissertation (Chapter 2). I have sought to make the literature review in Chapter 2 more dynamic than the standard obligatory exercise by imagining into existence fields based on the questions raised by my primary sources and mutually relating the existing literature based on that criteria.

Part II, consisting of only one chapter, is an *in media res* immersion into the anxious years of the early 1670s. In it I unpack the events of 1674, the first year in which Peng Dingqiu received direct communications from the spirits in the form of the momentous communication from an emissary of Wenchang regarding the two-fold *optimus* prophecy. The negotiations with his father Peng Long, Peng Long’s peer group of fellow elite spirit-writing enthusiasts, and Dingqiu’s peer group of students at the official school, show Dingqiu coming into his own as a local gentry leader with divinely-bolstered confidence.

1674 was a pivotal year in the life of Peng Dingqiu and the fortunes of the Peng lineage as whole. In Part III I explore the deep context needed to understand Dingqiu’s prophecy and his further revelations. Chapter 4 describes the trajectory of the Changzhou
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county Peng clan against the major developments of the Yangzi Delta region in general and the city of Suzhou in particular. I cover from the founding of the Ming dynasty in 1368, when the first Peng patriarch moved to Suzhou, through the dispersion of the lineage in the early Republican period (1912-49). Of particular importance is the two and a half century span period from rise of the financial and social fortunes of the lineage in the mid-sixteenth century to the Qianlong and Jiaqing (1796-1820) reigns, in which the zenith of the Peng clan’s wealth and status coincided with that of the Qing empire as a whole. I demonstrate that the Pengs were one of the most prominent lineages in Qing dynasty Suzhou—itself the cultural and economic jewel of the empire—and were recognized as such by their peers. From this basis I assert that the religious practices in which Peng clan members engaged were recognized by the mainstream of Qing society.

In Chapter 5 I explore the conventions of what I call combinatory discourse: the sometimes passive-aggressive and always polemical assertions of the commonalities of two or all three of the “teachings” (jiao 教) of Buddhism, Classicism, and Daoism. I do so by examining the differing stance on these debates by four major Peng lineage patriarchs over five generations: Peng Long 瓏 (1613-89); his son Dingqiu; Dingqiu’s grandson Qifeng 啟豐 (1701-84); and Qifeng’s son Shaosheng 紹升 (1740-96). I thus complexify the received picture of Three Teachings discourse and provide an important case study of its diversity and importance in the early to mid-Qing dynasty.

While Chapter 5 focuses mainly on rhetorical constructions, Chapters 6 and 7 explore the spatial dimensions the Peng lineage’s collective creedal commitments over the span of several centuries. Peng Long and Dingqiu again play a prominent role in these chapters, but I also attempt to depict how the early patriarchs’ interests were continued
under changing circumstances by subsequent lineal generations up to and through the rupture of the Taiping Civil War (1850-64).

In Chapter 6 I move from a critical examination of the discursive construction of Three Teachings polemics to focusing on one distinct physical site in which combinations of Classicism, Buddhism, and Daoism were enacted: the Cultural Star Pavilion (Wenxing ge 文星閣). Subsumed under the Changzhou county school, the Cultural Star Pavilion was initially erected in the mid-Ming dynasty in order to improve the chances of students in the civil examinations through geomantic intervention. In the early Qing the pavilion became a site for learning-through-teaching (jiangxue 讲学) gatherings, including those presented by Peng Long. After his passing, Peng Long was enshrined at the pavilion by his students. In addition to seasonal sacrifices to local worthies of the sort received by the spirit of Peng Long, the Cultural Star Pavilion hosted spirit-writing rituals to Wenchang, patron deity of the civil examination system, and a Daoist pantheon of whom Wenchang was a high-ranking member. Peng Dingqiu also led local scholars in performing a penance liturgy at the pavilion that he had received on the spirit-altar.

Dingqiu also oversaw periodic meetings for charitable societies for releasing life and cherishing the written word. Some hundred years after Dingqiu’s passing his great-grandson Shaosheng performed a rainmaking ritual at the pavilion and used the complex as a site for Buddhist meditational seclusion. In sum, by showing the vibrancy of elite devotional practices at the Cultural Star Pavilion in the early to mid-Qing dynasty, I demonstrate the diversity of uses to which one ostensibly state-controlled orthodox site was put.
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In Chapter 7 I turn to the Peng lineage members’ relationship with the two most important Daoist institutions in Qing Suzhou: Celestial Vault Mountain on the shores of Lake Tai and the Abbey of Primordial Mystery in the city center. In order to provide a profile of a multi-generational gentry-cleric collaboration, I combine accounts of ritual performances with fundraising appeals for rebuilding and personal accounts of Peng patriarchs’ interactions with high Daoist priests.

Part IV, consisting of Chapter 8, addresses posthumous representations of Peng Dingqiu in light of the trajectory of the Peng lineage as a whole explored in Part III. Specifically, I look at works Dingqiu authored via planchette after his death or in which others claimed the name of the historical Dingqiu for works not easily traced to him. Beginning in 1720, the year after his death, Dingqiu descended to spirit altars in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces to proclaim morality books whose printing networks spanned as far afield as Sichuan and Beijing. Bringing together the historical and posthumous aspects of Dingqiu’s oeuvre, I argue that Dingqiu’s own examination success was amplified by that of his grandson Peng Qifeng, who also obtained the two-fold optimus distinction. Combined with Dingqiu’s vocal advocacy of spirit-writing, the immense “grandfather-grandson optimi” (zusun zhuangyuan 祖孫狀元) prestige obtained by Dingqiu and Qifeng caused the Suzhou Pengs in general and Peng Dingqiu in particular to be revered in spirit-writing milieus through the late nineteenth century as an emblem of this-worldly benefits of good works in general and Wenchang devotion in particular.

Finally, in Part V (Chapter 9), I synthesize the way in which each of the distinct aspects of the religious lives of the Changzhou county Pengs laid out in the dissertation fit together and reinforced one another.
Chapter 2

Desire Lines:
States of the Imbricated Fields

Breakthroughs in historical inquiry come through the discovery of new materials or the posing of new question to already familiar materials. In the previous chapter I indicated the recognized and previously neglected materials that I employ. In this chapter I identify the constellations of existing scholarship from which I draw in order to formulate the questions I ask. It is in relation to the following body of scholarship that I seek to place my own findings.

My ambition in this dissertation is to perceive continuities that would have been evident to my subjects but which are obscured by present day disciplinary divisions. This aspiration necessitates engaging with a range of scholarship commensurate in scope with the breadth of my subjects’ interests. I this chapter I read back from present day disciplines to the late imperial period and forward from the late imperial period to imagined disciplines. These imagined disciplines would be capable of reflecting the organic whole that once was. I am not calling for the founding of new disciplines, but rather working to develop a mode of inquiry that takes advantages of the strengths of existing disciplines without donning the blinders of complete disciplinary conformity.

“Multiplicities, lines, strata and segmentations, lines of flight and intensities...”;¹ these are among the terms the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari

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used to invoke the textual and qualitative differences between interconnected subjects. In his translator’s introduction to *Mille Plateaux*, Brian Massumi observed that “lines of flight” could extend to the disappearing point; a trajectory distinct from the concept of continuum I set out in the previous chapter. The “lines of flight” are useful for considering material relevant up to a point but no further. I employ the concept of “line” in this chapter to get at the messiness of the world-as-it-is without abandoning the endeavor of analyzing distinct units in order to construct a bigger picture.²

Among the lines I trace out in this chapter are what James Robson has characterized as “desire lines.” Robson appropriated the term from Architecture Studies; it originally referred to paths made not by planners but by the inhabitants of built environments.³ Connections that were common sense at ground level either could not be seen by those with a bird’s eye view or we simply not valued by them. The term is an apt one for scholars opening new areas of inquiry by prefiguring the interdisciplinarity that we wish to exist.

My disciplinary orientation is that of a social and cultural historian of late imperial China addressing the topic of religious diversity. Rather than a helter-skelter approach to interdisciplinarity, I employ the methodology of the historian to address subjects that concern religion thematically and East Asian Studies geographically. As I see it, historical methodology is primarily about attention to chronology and the concrete means of diffusion: I cast a wide net in terms of subject matter, but seek to maintain clarity regarding what happened where and who had access to what.

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I acknowledge that the following lines are not a comprehensive overview of the realms of knowledge touched upon in this dissertation. The Yangzi Delta region and Suzhou itself are among the topics that merit being situated in relation to previous scholarship. However, the following lines are sufficient to indicate my understanding of the bodies of scholarly literature to which I am indebted and to which I would like to contribute.

Line 1 The Changzhou County Peng Clan

As I hope to demonstrate in this dissertation, the scope of materials related to the Changzhou county Peng clan are so immense that proper use of them could practically constitute a field in and of itself. Here I survey existing scholarship on first individual patriarchs, then the lineage as a whole.

Individuals

In Western-language scholarship the entries devoted to Peng Dingqiu (tenth generation), Peng Shaosheng (thirteenth generation), and Peng Yunzhang 蘊章 (1792-1862; fifteenth generation) in Eminent Chinese of the Ch’ing Period (1943-1944; hereafter ECCP) form a solid baseline, but one we can now move far beyond, especially in regard to devotional concerns. Together with the ECCP entries, the articles on Peng Shaosheng by Richard Shek and Colin Jeffcott in 1993 and 2002, respectively, are the only English language studies devoted to individuals in the Peng lineage.

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4 For a critique of the systemic slighting of religious figures in the ECCP, and of the lack of attention to the religious lives of the figures included, see: Jennifer Eichman, “Humanizing the Study of Late Ming Buddhism,” Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal 26 (2013): 153-185.

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In European languages the Sinological fields and subfields that have found Pengs useful individually or in aggregate include Qing Studies, Art History, Chinese Religions (both Buddhist Studies and Daoist Studies), Gender Studies, Population Studies, and Kinship Studies. The topical range of this work is an implicit endorsement of my endeavor to survey the clan and its social commitments holistically. Most of this usage has taken the form of cameos in biographical and prosopographical studies on the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. I will treat these briefly in chronological order of the Peng patriarch addressed.

The painter and calligrapher Peng Nian 年 (sixth generation) was the first of the clan to achieve significant fame; Craig Clunas mentioned Nian throughout his 2004 study of social obligations evident in the oeuvre of Nian’s teacher Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470-1559). In his 1981 study of the suicidal Ming loyalists of Jiading, at the time a county seat within Suzhou prefecture, Jerry Dennerline used Peng Long (ninth generation) and the successful lineage he built as a foil to the decline in the eighteenth century of the Xus 徐 who were prominent in Jiading in the seventeenth century. Regarding Peng Dingqiu, in his 1966 study of Yangzhou Salt Commissioner Cao Yin 曹寅, Jonathan Spence described Dingqiu as one of the most notable figures in the Suzhou poetry circle of You Tong 尤侗 (1618-1704). In her 2009 study of late Ming philanthropy, Joanna Handlin Smith noted Dingqiu’s comments on Gao Panlong’s 高攀龍 (1562-1626)


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Chapter 2

charitable activities (but not Dingqiu’s own resuscitation of them). More recently, Huang Aming has critically examined the official biographies of Dingqiu, correcting the common error that Dingqiu only served briefly in officialdom by documenting that Dingqiu served some eleven years in total. Huang was not, however, aware of Dingqiu’s manuscript autobiography. Xu Jianxun has begun the task of surveying the inner alchemical motifs in Dingqiu’s poetry anthology.

William Rowe credited Dingqiu’s grandson Qifeng, a high official in the mid-Qing, with being one of the only of Chen Hongmou’s contemporaries to appreciate Chen’s talents in his own lifetime. In a discussion of dream divination and fate manipulation techniques as they related to the civil service examination system, Benjamin Elman related a “strange tale” describing how the Yongzheng emperor came to place Qifeng’s name first among the palace examination candidates of his class.

Qifeng has been considered in work on his disciples Wang Qisun and Yuan Mei. Sui Jun’s studies of Wang Qisun and Yuan Mei have been influential.

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shed light on the disciples of Peng Qifeng at the Purple Yang Academy, Peng Shaosheng’s scholarly sociality, and Peng Yunzhang’s discipleship to Wang.¹⁴

Peng Qifeng’s son Shaosheng was one of the most prolific lay Buddhists of his age, a status that accounts for the focused studies by Shek and Jeffcott mentioned above. In a 1997 article Judith A. Berling treated Shaosheng as a rare exception to the mid-Qing trend of compartmentalizing and thereby rending the unitary whole of Chinese devotional thought.¹⁵ In her 1981 biography of the prominent monk Zhuhong 蕙宏 (1535-1615), Yü Chun-fang utilized Shaosheng’s Jushi zhuan 居士傳 (Biographies of Classicist Recluses/Buddhist Laymen), as did Jennifer Eichmann for her 2005 dissertation on the epistolary networks Zhuhong built with his lay literati disciples.¹⁶ Shaosheng also compiled the only late imperial biographical collection on female Buddhist devotees, the Shan nüren zhuan 善女人傳 (Biographies of Lay Buddhist Women). This work has received significant scholarly attention. In a welcome attempt to bridge the divide


¹⁶ Yü remarked on the utility of Peng Shaosheng’s Jushi zhuan for studying the followers of Zhuhong, and on Zhuhong’s influence on Shaosheng; see: Yü Chün-fang, The Renewal of Buddhism in China: Chun-hung and the Late Ming Synthesis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981): 90-91, 228. See also: Jennifer L. Eichman, “Spiritual Seekers in a Fluid Landscape: A Chinese Buddhist Network in the Wanli Period” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2005); a book based on this dissertation is forthcoming from Brill. On late Ming monk-laymen relations, see: Chen Yunü 陳玉女, Mingdai fomen neiwai sengsu jiaoshe de changyu 明代佛門内外僧俗交涉的場域 (Taipei: Daoxiang chubanshe, 2010) and Wang Qiyuan 王启元, “Wan Ming seng-lù de zhengzhi shenghuo, shisu jiaoyou, ji qí wenxue biaoxian” 晚明僧侣的政治生活、世俗交游及其文学表现 (PhD diss., Fudan University, Ancient Chinese Literature Research Center, 2012). In relation to the present study, of particular interest in Wang’s dissertation is the section on the monk Cang Xue’s 蒼雪 relations with the descendants of Donglin Academy founders Gu Xiancheng and Gao Panlong (pp. 226-28).
between the Inner and Outer Quarters, Susan Mann mined Shaosheng’s autobiographical and hagiographical writings in order to shed light on proselytizing in the women’s quarters of elite Yangzi Delta families. More recently, Yuet Keung Lo dedicated a 2014 article to the *Shan nüren zhuan* that highlighted the way in which Shaosheng’s Classicist value system manifest in his editorial interventions of ostensibly Buddhist-focused material, while Shaosheng and the *Shan nüren zhuan* were the focus of a 2015 dissertation by Wu Hongyu. In her study of the presented scholar class of 1761 Iona D. Man-Cheong described Shaosheng as one who rejected official service on his own terms.

Peng Shaosheng is the only Peng clan member on whom there is a sizable scholarly literature. The primary reasons for this are three-fold: 1) Peng Shaosheng’s epistolary exchange with Dai Zhen 戴震 (1724-77) is conventionally taken as the last gasp of Song dynasty Learning of the Principles (*lixue* 理學) against Evidential Learning (*kaozheng xue* 考證學); 2) Shaosheng put his own imprint on much Buddhist biography

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20 Iona D. Man-Cheong, *The Class of 1761: Examinations, State, and Elites in Eighteenth-century China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004): 198. As I indicate in Chapter 4, I believe presenting Shaosheng’s rejection of officialdom as entirely an act of his own volition misses his father Qifeng’s designation of Shaosheng from among his four brothers as the one to remain in Suzhou to manage the—by then quite extensive—clan affairs. I speculate that this choice was a discriminatory one on the part of Qifeng based on Shaosheng’s childhood loss of one eye: i.e., the perception that Shaosheng was less physically capable of serving as an official.
21 The correspondence between Peng Shaosheng and Dai Zhen is anthologized in numerous Chinese language collections. The one-sided, teleological rendering of the exchange in the English language literature is reflected in the translation of Dai’s response to Shaosheng appearing independently in the most important post-war survey textbook of Chinese civilization: see trans. John Ewell, “Letter in Reply to Advanced Scholar Peng Yunchu” in *Sources of Chinese Tradition: Volume II; From 1600 Through the*
before him, so that present day scholars of the major late Ming Buddhist figures, as well of mid-Qing elite laymen, must take his work into account; 3) Shaosheng’s biographic corpus on people he classified as Buddhist laymen included a rare work on women, which has made him an invaluable source (if a distinctively filtered one) on elite female devotion in the Yangzi Delta. All three of these elements are tied to the strength of two disciplines in the twentieth century: Intellectual History and Buddhist Studies. In some cases these two fields overlapped, as in Liang Qichao’s 矛啟超 (1873-1929) crediting of Shaosheng as one of only a handful important Buddhist intellectual figures in the Qing.22

Indeed, the scholarly literature on Shaosheng is so sizable that one can begin an overview with a review of literature reviews. These two literature reviews both occur in impressive M.A.s on Shaosheng produced in Taiwan in 2009: that of Hsieh Cheng-hao’s 謝成豪 on Shaosheng’s family background and his Classicist, Buddhist, and Classico-Buddhist thought;23 and that of Lin I Luan 林一鑾 (Shi Huidou 釋慧鐸) on the place of spirit-writing in Shaosheng’s devotional practice and worldview.24

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22 In Liang Qichao’s telling Peng Shaosheng did not have any inherent value, but merited comment only in as much as he influenced later New Text (i.e., orthodox Classicist) thinkers such as Gong Zizhen 龔自珍 (1792-1842), Wei Yuan 魏源 (1794-1857), and Yu Yue. See: Qingdai xueshu gailun, 儒家哲学 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2003 [1921]), as well as the English translation by Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, Intellectual Trends in the Ch’ing Period (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959): 116-117.

As Sin-Wai Chan has noted, the transmission was less direct than Liang related, with Shaosheng’s disciple Jiang Yuan 江沅, rather than Shaosheng himself, having been the teacher of Gong Zizhen: see Buddhism in Late Ch’ing Political Thought (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press; Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1985), 29 n. 1; see also p. 47.

23 Hsieh Cheng-hao 謝成豪, “Peng Shaosheng ji qi sixiang yanju” (M.A. Thesis, National Kaohsiung Normal University, Taiwan, 2009). I am grateful to Professor Lu Miaw-fen for bringing Hsieh’s impressive work to my attention.

Lin pointed out that Shaosheng participated in spirit-writing séances well before his subsequent introduction to and embrace of Pure Land doctrines. As Shaosheng’s involvement in the practice was not interrupted by his “conversion,” the major role spirit-writing occupied in Shaosheng’s consciousness is not reflected in the disproportionate scholarly focus on his biographies of Buddhist devotees or Classico-Buddhist propagandizing.

Lin’s thesis was an attempt to shift the grounds of discussion from a central focus on Three Teachings categories to one on divine revelation. Honing in on the employment by Shaosheng and his contemporaries of the phrase “the divine way establishes the teachings” (shen dao she jiao 神道設教), Lin asserted an analytical category that, in addition to spirit-writing, consists of prayer (qitao 祈祷), sacrifice to or propitiation of a divine object (jisi 祭祀), and milfoil divination (bu wu 卜筮): all methods by which humans could communicate with the spirits (shenming 神明).

In regards to the strength of Japanese scholarship on Shaosheng it is significant that Shaosheng’s Jushi zhuan (J. Kojiden) appeared in Ishimura Teichi’s 石村貞一 kunten edition in 1882, the fifteenth year of the Meiji reign, and can thus be considered a

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25 Lin, “Peng Shaosheng (1740-1796) yu shendao shejiao zhi jiaoshe,” 15. In contrast to the utility of Lin’s deployment of shen dao she jiao as an analytical category, I cannot endorse his use of the neologism “spirit-writing belief” (fuluan xinyang 扶鸞信仰). My reasons are two-fold. Firstly, since the liberalizing in the 1980s of political restraints on researching religion in the PRC, tacking the suffix “belief” on nearly any deity imaginable has become a standard move in investigating a wide-array of local to empire-wide phenomena. While certainly preferable to the Republican period holdovers “superstition” (mixin 迷信) and “heterodox cult” (xie jiao 邪教), the use of the formulate “[fill-in-the-blank] belief” is a deferral of analysis that asserts nothing about the context or implications of the given practice. For this reason I see little reason for those outside of the constraints of the mainland intellectual discourse to indulge in it. Regarding spirit-writing in particular, there was a spectrum of credence granted to this means of divine communication, from scorning the method altogether to contesting a particular revelation: the catch-all “belief” does not convey the existence of this spectrum.

Secondly, spirit-writing is not an object of devotion in an of itself, as is, for example, Wenchang belief/devotion (Wenchang xinyang 文昌信仰). For this reason, I reject the term on grammatical as well as conceptual grounds.
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part of Japanese religious tradition from that point on. Among the studies dedicated to Shaosheng in Japanese, one of the most important is Miura Shūichi’s 三浦秀一 careful 1988 contextualization of Shaosheng against the distinctive elements of imperial sponsorship of Buddhism in the Qianlong reign. Miura’s article also does greater justice to Shaosheng’s correspondence and debate with fellow Buddhist laymen and literati than I attempt in this dissertation.26

As evident in the M.A. thesis by Lin I Luan mentioned above, Peng Shaosheng’s spirit-writing praxis is a new area of scholarly attention that promises to reveal much in terms of elite sociality and the distinctive elements of common religious practices at the top of the class ladder in late imperial China. A 2013 article by Wang Ch’ien-chuan 王見川 made novel use of works by Peng Shaosheng received on the spirit-writing as view through the skeptical polemics of Yinguang 印光 (1862-1940). Yinguang, the thirteenth generation patriarch of the Pure Land school and an influential figure among Buddhists in Taiwan in the present day, was once the abbot of Numinous Cliff Temple (Lingyan si 靈巖寺) in Mudu 木瀆, just to the southwest of urban Suzhou.27

In his landmark 1966 monograph arguing that the civil examination system was a significant means of social mobility, Ho Ping-ti invoked Grand Secretary Peng Yunzhang’s recollections of his impeccunious childhood in order to demonstrate the

deleterious effects over time of the Chinese system of property division and the erosion of the hereditary yin 蔭 privileges. In a 1975 study of changes within the local elite of Suzhou and of local elite-metropolitan relations during the period immediately preceding, during, and following the Taiping civil war, James Polachek characterized Yunzhang as a figure reluctant “to acknowledge the decline of literocratic influence.” In Polachek’s narrative, Yunzhang stood for the old literati elite of Suzhou whose influence was on the wane, while Pan Zuyin 潘祖蔭 (1830-90), scion of the Huizhou merchant clan that took up residence in Suzhou, embodied the political power of rising commercial interests.

Corporate

There is a modest Chinese language literature on the Changzhou Pengs as one of the major venerable clans (mingmen wangzu 名門望族) of Qing Suzhou. The significant works are: a section in Wu Jianhua’s 吳建華 2003 survey of the history of the surname Peng throughout Chinese history; the 2006 Soochow University M.A. Thesis by Hu Yanjie 胡艳杰; and the chapter by Peng Wangci 彭望慈, Gan Lanjing 甘兰经, and Zhang Xuequn 张学群 in a 2006 volume on the great families of Suzhou from the Song dynasties to the Republican period (1912-49).

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28 Ho Ping-Ti, The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962): 151, 163-164, and 335 n. 43. Scholars have significantly curtailed Ho’s claims by broadening their analytic lens beyond immediate kinsman to the clan more broadly.
30 On Pan Zuyin, see: ECCP 2: 608-609.
31 Wu Jianhua 吳建華, Peng xing shi hua 彭姓史話 (Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 2003), which supersedes Wu Jianhua and Li Xueqin 李学勤, Zhonghua xingshi pu: Peng 中华姓氏谱：彭, (Beijing: Xiandai chubanshe; Huayi chubanshe 2002); Hu Yanjie 胡艳杰, “Qingdai Suzhou keju shijia yanjiu: Yi Changzhou Peng shi jiazu wei li” 清代苏州科举世家研究——以长洲彭氏家族为例 (M.A. Thesis: Soochow University, 2006); and Peng Wangci 彭望慈, Gan Lanjing 甘兰经, and Zhang Xuequn 张学群,
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Hu’s work is the most ambitious of the three. In addition to the section on the contours of the lineage,32 Hu also engaged with: the intellectual production of Peng Dingqiu and Shaosheng as Peng “Family Learning” (on which see the section on “Intellectual History” below); Shaosheng’s Buddhist praxis; the clan’s role in the local social order;33 and the clan’s continuation from the late Qing on. On this last subject, Hu devoted considerable attention to Peng Zhongyi 彭仲翼 (nineteenth generation), known for his involvement as a newspaper pioneer and reforming patriotic thinker in the May 4th Movement in Beijing in the Republican period.34

The studies by Wu Jianhua, Hu Yanjie, and Peng Wangci et al. drew on the 1922 edition of the Peng shi zong pu 彭氏宗譜 and Qing biographical compendia to stress the protracted examination success of the Pengs and summarize the official and cultural achievements of its most prominent patriarchs. These works provided useful tabulations of examination successes, but, as with much locally produced Suzhou history, analytically these studies do little beyond celebrating their subject.

**Intellectual History**

In this section I will review the place of the Pengs in conventional intellectual history and suggest some ways to make the narrative more reflective of “facts on the ground.” The conventions of Peng Dingqiu’s place in intellectual history were set by the

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34 Hu Yanjie, “Qingdai Suzhou keju shijia yanjiu,” 37-41. Items 3-8 on pages 3-4 of Hu’s literature review summarize useful sources on Peng Zhongyi which I do not reproduce in my annotated bibliography of works by Peng clan members.
Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao 四庫全書總目提要 (Annotated Catalog of the Four Treasuries), prepared under the supervision of Ji Yun 紀昀 (1724-1805) from 1773 to 1798, the year the final draft was printed. The entry on Dingqiu’s Rumen fayu 儒門法語 (Model Words of the Classicist School, 1697) asserted a straightforward genealogy going back to Wang Shouren 王守仁 (1472-1529): “Dingqiu’s learning came from Tang Bin. Bin’s learning came from Sun Qifeng. Qifeng’s learning came from Lu Shanji. Shanji’s learning came from the founder Wang Shouren, [author of] Chuanxi lu.”35 The mechanisms and nuances of this supposed transmission deserve investigation and complexifying. For example, the family learning tradition that Dingqiu initiated also included reverence for the Song dynasty morality book Taishang ganying pian taught to him by his father but widely commented upon, reprinted, and distributed among the elites of the day.36

The standard approach of intellectual historians to Peng family learning is to describe common elements of the oeuvres of Peng Dingqiu and his great-grandson Shaosheng and pretty much leave it at that. The immense productivity of Dingqiu and

35 彭定求之學出於湯斌。湯斌之學出於孫奇逢。孫奇逢之學出於鹿善繼。鹿善繼之學出於王守仁。Zhang Weiping in Siku zongmu tiyao. This passage was often quoted in official or quasi-official works in placing Dingqiu, as in Guochao qixian leizheng chubian 國朝耆獻類徵初編, ed. Li Huan 李桓, j. 117: 13a, rpd. in QZC, and Peng Zuxian’s massive collectanea of the works of Peng clan patriarchs, in which Zuxian quoted it in his postface to the 1881 edition of Dingqiu’s Nanyun wengao: Peng Zuxian, “Nanyun wengao ba,” 1b.

Shaosheng makes such an approach convenient. Both patriarchs were also undeniably influential among their descendants. But these two men did not have such a monopoly on ideas within the lineage that they charted its course for the remainder of the dynasty, nor could they have implemented their ideas on their own.

In this section I propose shifting from a narrow great men conception of intellectual history to an analysis of collective praxis informed by social history theory. Such an approach widens the scope of people considered to: patriarchs of the lineage who—like Dingqiu himself but without such incomparable examination success—did the grunt work of instruction in the clan school and revising genealogies; the women who married in to and out of the Peng clan; recognized disciples with or without direct kinship relations with the Peng clan. This approach also expands our purview from philosophical debates recorded on paper to quotidian practices (including the deployment of written works). In so doing I will discuss and modify elements of Peng lineage thought laid out by previous scholars from an intellectual history perspective. Further, I will drop previous scholars’ claim of “distinctiveness,” with its implication that other Yangzi lineages did not engage in similar ideas (and their attendant practices).

In his *Qing ru xue’an* 清儒學案 (Scholarly Cases of Qing Classicists), Xu Shichang 徐世昌 (1858-1939) granted Dingqiu his own intellectual lineage, which Xu termed the “Nanyun xuepai” 南昀學派 after Dingqiu’s late life moniker “Old Man Nanyun” (Nanyun laoren 南昀老人). Aside from consideration of Dingqiu’s great-

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37 Dingqiu’s intra-lineal influence was more enduring than that of Shaosheng, due to his higher examination status (double *optimus* compared to plain *jinshi*), official service (over four years altogether, compared to Shaosheng’s none), prolific biological propagation (six sons surviving past infancy, while Shaosheng adopted one of his brother’s sons in order to continue his own line), role as a clan- and county-level educator, and service to the lineage evident in such tasks as compiling an updated genealogy. That said, Shaosheng’s influence among the generation immediately junior to his own (fifteenth generation) is evident in the near universal embrace of Pure Land Buddhism among both men and women.
grandson Shaosheng, however, in Xu’s account Dingqiu’s intellectual lineage peters out in the first generation. It did not include a handful of figures who identified themselves as Dingqiu’s disciples (*menren* 門人) in eulogies such as Wang Zhesheng 王喆生, nor contemporaries of Shaosheng who also found Dingqiu a compelling influence.

Hu Yanjie divided his analysis of Peng Family Learning into: 1) formation and transmission, and 2) content. Hu dated the beginning of a distinctive Peng Family Learning to Peng Long’s enthusiastic embrace at 60 sui of Gao Panlong and Gu Xiancheng and fervent discussions with Tang Bin 湯斌 (1627-87; *jinshi* 1652) during Tang’s tenure in Suzhou as Governor (xunfu 巡撫) of Jiangsu from 1684-86. Dingqiu, for his part, embraced Gao and Gu in 1679. Thereupon he devoted himself to Learning of the Principles and *belles-lettres*. In the former, he highlighted the commonalities rather than differences between Zhu Xi and Lu Jiuyuan, and took it upon himself to confront critics of Wang Shouren such as Lu Longqi 陸隴其, a popular Cheng-Zhu proponent in the Kangxi court. To his credit, Hu also broke out of the confines of intellectual history

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38 Peng Long and Peng Dingqiu were both personally close to Tang Bin, and Dingqiu and his descendants were instrumental in the enduring veneration of Tang Bin as a righteous official in the Suzhou region. Although I have not been able to do justice to this subject in the present dissertation, it is of interest to the significant literature on Tang Bin’s prohibition of the Wutong cult and Classicist officials’ prohibition of licentious cults more broadly.


39 Dingqiu’s *yaojiang shihui lu* 姚江釋毀錄 (Record Clarifying Attacks upon [the Yangming School]) was written to refute essays by Lu Longqi 陸隴其 (1630-93) published in *San yu tang wenji* 三魚堂文集
to remark upon the centrality of sponsoring printing to Dingqiu’s Learning of the Principles interventions, a point specialists in Jiangnan private printing have yet to acknowledge.\textsuperscript{40}

From Dingqiu, Hu Yanjie skipped directly to Peng Shaosheng whom, Hu claimed, was influenced by and expanded upon the Learning of the Principles thought of his great-grandfather Dingqiu. Hu noted the major difference between Dingqiu and Shaosheng: in contrast to the defensive hostility to Buddhism of his great-grandfather, at 30 sui Shaosheng explicitly abandoned the exclusive Classicist identity in to which he was born in favor of one of a Pure Land devotee. Shaosheng’s dramatic taking of the laymen vows did not however eliminate his Classicist learning or involvement in clan affairs. In his Buddhist writings, Hu continued accurately, Shaosheng devoted much effort to using Buddhist concepts to elucidate Classicist ones.

The reason for this truncated sense of Dingqiu’s influence is due to Xu’s cramped conception of \textit{ru}, too hampered by the inherent exclusion of definition to perceive the extent to which a distinctive element of Dingqiu’s Classicism was contesting the borders of Classicism.\textsuperscript{41} Dingqiu’s descendants such as Qifeng (twelfth generation), Shaosheng

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(Three Fish Hall Literary Anthology) and \textit{Mi zheng lu} 密證錄 (Record of Secret Proof). See Hu, “Qingdai Suzhou keju shijia yanjiu,” 15.
\textsuperscript{40} For example, in his bibliography of printing by book collectors in the Yangzi Delta in the Qing dynasty, Wang Guiping 王桂平 only lists one entry for Dingqiu, the 1709 \textit{Nanyun shigao} exemplar in 26juan held by the Nanjing Library (\textit{Qing dai Jiangnan congshu jia keshu yanjiu} 清代江南藏书家刻书研究 [Nanjing: Fenghuang chubanshe, 2008], 255.) As I make clear in the descriptive catalog that follows this dissertation, this is not only a dramatic undercounting of Dingqiu’s activities as a printer, but of a number of his descendants whom Wang omits entirely.
\textsuperscript{41} While partisan in ways both subtle and overt, Huang Zongxi’s \textit{Ming ru xue’an} is more capable of accurately depicting conjunctions of Classicism, Buddhism, and Daoism in late Ming Yangmingist milieus, particularly in relation to the “Taizhou school,” which, as an ostensibly coherent sociological grouping, was Huang’s own creation.

(thirteenth generation), and Xilian (fourteenth generation) expanded Dingqiu’s Classicist-Immortalism (Ru Xian 儒仙) to Classicist-Buddhism (Ru Shi 儒釋), but the intellectual mandate to assert the acceptability of finding resonances with Classicism outside the Classicist tradition proper was Dingqiu’s influence, transmitted in turn from his father Long. The Peng lineage’s “family learning” is best understood as an early and mid-Qing permutation of late Ming Yangmingist Learning of the Principle, amenable to Three Teachings Ideology and its various subsets.

The limits of narrow intellectual history are obvious: a myopic view of social context and lines of influence and a focus on “thought” to the exclusion of the occupied world. In regards to this dissertation, the intellectual history framework is ill-equipped to address distinctive aspects of the Peng clan tradition beginning with Peng Long, such as transmitting the *Taishang ganying pian* and other scriptures (see the section “The Philanthropic Complex” below). Scholars such as Lu Miaw-fen 呂妙芬 have given us a much clearer picture of late Ming intellectual qua social movement precipitated by Wang Shouren, but for the most part have not crossed the Qing divide. A notable exception to the slighting of Dingqiu in Intellectual History is the chapter devoted to Dingqiu’s *Rumen fayu* by Peng Guoxiang 彭國翔 in his 2013 study of early modern Classicism. Peng Guoxiang was particularly attentive to the way in which the contents of Dingqiu’s reader made an implicit claim for the compatibility of the thinking of Zhu Xi and Lu Jiuyuan under a broadly Yangmingist rubric.⁴²

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Thomas Wilson did not explicitly consider Dingqiu’s *Rumen fayu* in his *Genealogy of the Way: The Construction and Uses of the Confucian Tradition in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford
Further, as Kent Guy has observed, “Modern intellectual historians have not been kind to Sung learning,” the school that emerged in the 1780s and 1790s in reaction to Han Learning evidential scholarship;\(^3\) this “unkindness” has meant that even within the narrow field of intellectual history Dingqiu’s work is rarely revisited. Although scholars of Evidential Learning such as Elman have not lost sight of the fact that in terms of absolute numbers proponents of Evidential Studies were always a minority movement, these scholars’ success in documenting the indigenous emergence of text critical scholarship has resulted in diminished attention to developments in other, ostensibly more familiar, late seventeenth and eighteenth century currents of praxis.

One exciting direction in which the field of Intellectual History is moving is a greater concern with practices and the material world of knowledge exchange. Throughout the dissertation I attempt to be sensitive to the latter by documenting the means by which information was exchanged. Regarding the former I seek to broaden discourse on combinations of two or more of the Three Teachings to the level of ritual practice and funding commitments as well. A brief note on the literature on the Three Teachings in late imperial China is thus in order. Despite the pioneering work of Liu Ts’un-yan 柳存仁 and Judith Berling,\(^4\) and Kenneth Dean’s more recent work on the cult of Lin Zhao’en 林兆恩 (1517-1598),\(^5\) the scholarship on Three Teachings ideology

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largely stops at the late Ming, implying that there were no significant developments in the Qing or, conversely, that this symptom of an imagined Ming decadence dissipated in a more intellectually orthodox Qing.

**Line 2 A Nodal Non-Discipline: The Philanthropic Complex**

The Pengs participated in a complex of philanthropic activities in which they were both inheritors and innovators. Specific activities within this complex inspired individual members to varying degrees: there were charities sponsored by the clan as a whole that spanned generations, and ones that descendants participated in in the name of ancestors who may or may not have actually played the role retroactively attributed to them.

The philanthropic activities engaged in by the Pengs and described in this dissertation include the printing and dissemination of morality books, societies for releasing life and cherishing the written word, homes for chaste widows, and the at least attributed practice of distributing money to impoverished mothers to inhibit them from killing their female infants. Such activities were part of a complex involving overlapping figures and many shared ideals evident since the mid-Ming and with roots visible in the Song dynasties. I call this complex a “nodal non-discipline” because of its tightly connected nature and the inability of any single present day discipline to pull it apart and render it legible.

In this section I will briefly review the scholarly literature on morality books (*shanshu* 善書) and charitable organizations. In the following “line” I address the body of work on spirit-writing, which was implicated in the philanthropic complex as a source of moral exhortation and ritual means of group solidarity.
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Morality Books

The landmark study of morality books is Sakai Tadao’s survey of 1960, which was published in dramatically expanded form from 1999-2000. Sakai surveyed and classified the immense holdings in Japanese collections and rigorously historicized the works in the prevailing intellectual climates in which they were produced.

The scholars writing in English who have taken the greatest advantage of Sakai’s corpus include Catherine Bell, and Cynthia Brokaw. Bell’s work consisted of two close studies of a major expansion of the Ganying pian. Brokaw’s 1991 monograph tackled an entire subgenre of morality books, the ledgers of merit and demerit (gongguo ge 功過格) of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. (In Chapter 8 I extend Brokaw’s inquiry into the nineteenth century in examining a ledger attributed to a divinized Peng Dingqiu). Enhancing Sakai’s insights on the intellectual milieu that produced morality books, Brokaw drew on the rich Japanese Sinological literature on the social history of the Ming and Qing dynasties, Brokaw examined the way in which Gao Panlong and his Donglin colleagues attempted to purge Yuan Huang’s 袁黃 concept of baoying 報應 of its Buddhist and Daoist flavor and expand its import beyond individual status advancement

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47 Judith Berling also engaged extensively with Sakai’s work. As her reading of Sakai focused on his contributions to the understanding of Three Teachings ideology in the late Ming and Qing, rather than morality books in particular, I address her work in Chapter 5, which is devoted to the promise and pitfalls of Three Teachings historiography.

Further elaboration of Ono’s scholarship on the Donglin Faction is available in her Minki tōsha kō: Tōrintō to Fukusha 明季党社考: 東林党と復社 (Kyoto: Dōhōsha shuppan, 1996).
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into an impetus for elite social activism. She concluded that Donglin thinkers’ formulation of the social uses of retribution “came to dominate the production of ledgers of merit and demerit in the seventeenth and eighteenth century.” In the seventeenth century in particular ledgers became a way of acknowledging a fractured polity then reconstructing it with social elite voluntarism filling the void of state power characteristic of the dynastic transition. Brokaw’s findings are immediately relevant to the subject of this dissertation because of Peng Long and his son Dingqiu’s explicit embrace of Gao Panlong’s philosophy and charitable praxis. The social history considerations also provide a late Ming baseline for the relation between how class position expressed itself in an advocated charitable program.

Studies of morality books in the Qing dynasty by the Hong Kongese scholar Yau Chi-on greatly increased the clarity of this subject. A 2015 anthology edited by Philip Clart and Gregory Scott Adam continued to fill out the picture for the late Qing and to consider the changes and continuities in the Republican period.

A major component of this dissertation is historicizing which practices individual Peng patriarchs engaged in when. As I discuss at further length in Chapter 8, the connections between practices was so intimate that by the nineteenth century writers in the morality book milieu could take a past figure’s participation in one as sufficient evidence to assert that figure’s participation in another. Some present day scholars,

49 Brokaw, The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit, 151.
50 Brokaw, The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit, 156.
51 Brokaw, The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit, 173-174.
52 Yau Chi-on, Quanhua jinzhen: Qingdai shanshu yanjiu劝化金箴: 清代善书研究 (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 1999), and Shan yu ren tong: Ming Qing yilai de cishan yu jiaohua善與人同: 明清以来的慈善與教化 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005).
especially in the PRC, have accepted this “more or less” (*cha bu duo* 差不多) associative approach, the signature of which is inattention to the dating and provenance of the editions containing their primary sources.

In Chapter 4 I deal most directly with the individual and corporate philanthropic commitments of the Pengs. There I endeavor to obtain historical clarity by delineating (where possible) three chronological layers of a given philanthropic practice: 1) when the critique upon which the practice rested first became thinkable; 2) when *ad hoc* interventions were first made; and 3) when institutions were established to addressed the perceived social problem. Gaps of centuries or even millennia often separated these stages.

To take the example of female infanticide, retroactively associated with Peng Dingqiu in the mid-nineteenth century, the practice was: 1) prohibited in Han dynasty legal code; 2) combatted in a local manner by magistrates such as Su Shi when he oversaw Hangzhou in the Song dynasty. Yet widespread *institutionalization* of foundling homes for abandoned children did not occur until the mid-nineteenth century (and these were largely implemented by European and American Christian missionaries). An example closer to the Peng clan is that of homes for chaste widows. The chronology is: 1) Widow remarriage was a debated issue in the Song, and assumed new importance in the Yuan (1271-1368); 2) Peng Dingqiu wrote an essay in support of widow chastity, which

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54 See, for example, Ann Waltner, “Infanticide and Dowery in Ming and Early Qing China,” and Angela Ki Che Leung, “Relief Institutions for Children in Nineteenth-Century China,” both in *Chinese Views of Childhood*, ed. Anne Behnke Kinney (Honolulu, University of Hawai’i Press: 1995), 193-218 and 251-78, respectively.

is included in his posthumous literary anthology (preface 1726);\(^5\) Dingqiu’s great-grandson Shaosheng, who wrote several essays on chaste widows, established a home for the impoverished widows of local elites in the early 1770s.\(^5\) The Peng-funded home was then widely imitated and quickly spread throughout the Yangzi Delta and beyond.

The momentous studies of Fuma Susumu and Angela Leung on charities in the Ming and Qing dynasties, both published in 1997, have made possible a high degree of clarity regarding the chronology of late imperial philanthropy. Both scholars employ material related to the Peng clan which I revisit in the following chapters.

Although rarely framed under the rubric of raising money, a significant portion of the literature on local elite philanthropic activity from the late Ming through the end of the Qing pivots on the question of who solicited money, from whom, for what, and what the answers to these questions tell us about the involved parties’ sense of themselves and role in society. These remarks hold true for Timothy Brook’s 2009 book on Buddhist monasteries in Zhejiang province in the late Ming, William Rowe’s 1984 and 1989 studies of nineteenth century Hankou, and Susan Naquin’s 2000 study of eunuchs and palace ladies in Ming and Qing Beijing.\(^5\)

As for the Yangzi Delta, in the course of his work on the social history of religious institutions in the late imperial period Goossaert touches on several aspects of


\(^{57}\) On Peng Shaosheng’s writings on chaste widows, see: Wu Hongyu discussed Dingqiu’s essay: see Wu, “Leading the Good Life,” 88-94.

temple fundraising. Concentrating on cases in Suzhou, Shanghai, and Hangzhou, a 2002 article described the performative ascetic self-caging among practiced by Buddhist monks and Daoist priests in order to raise funds for temple building or renovation. Goossaert pointed to the Taiping armies’ simultaneous destruction of myriad Yangzi Delta religious sites, prompting the fierce competition for funds for rebuilding, as well as for individualized initiative among clerics, in the 1870s. He also contrasted Classicists’ practices towards that of the clerics, observing that to some extent Classicists’ condemnation of clerics’ macabre spectacles was that they felt it to be a crude parody of the displays of sincerity upon which Classicists relied in their own frequent fundraising endeavors. Such an observation reminds us to view the extreme body techniques of filial exemplars and chaste widows on a continuum with those of Buddhist and Daoist ascetics.

In his 2006 article on religious specialists who permanently resided in a particular temple, Goossaert stressed the centrality of fundraising to the job description of the relevant cleric. He also explained that the success of a campaign and source of donations could determine whether or not the specialist was an employee of a temple committee or could make a valid claim of establishing their own religious lineage (fa pai). He further noted that, due to their recognized expertise in fundraising, clerics were also employed to garner funds for projects beyond the temple grounds, such as lineage halls, bridges, and roads.

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Ethnography as Inspiration: Spirit-Writing and the Clan System

Many morality books were produced by spirit-writing, a form of dictation from the gods first attested in the Wenchang cult in eastern Sichuan in the Song dynasty. Spirit-writing altars were an integral part of the philanthropic complex described above. I have chosen to consider them separately here for the issues raised by the scholarly literature on them. The primary question raised by this body of literature is: How can historians offer a “thick description” of a past time and place?

In this section I consider the only methodology other than historical inquiry that plays a part in this dissertation (albeit as an interlocutor rather than primary agent). This “Other” methodology is ethnography, the fine-grained portraiture of a closely delimited collectivity in a distinct locale. As a focused study of a self-conscious group of individuals in one portion of one city, my topic is well suited to ethnographic method. As discussed in Chapter 1, I spent a year in Suzhou and was able to consider architectural, calendric, and spatial continuities (and lament the corresponding lack thereof). Yet, historians are obviously limited in how we can observe and “interview” our informants. Here, too, however, the abundance of the written record produced by denizens of and sojourners in Suzhou makes the posing of a wide variety of questions possible.

Historians and anthropologists have been in fruitful dialogue since the seminars held in Princeton’s History Department co-taught by Clifford Geertz (1926-2006) with French cultural historians Robert Darnton and Natale Zemon Davis in the 1970s, and with English social historian Lawrence Stone (1919-99) in the 1980s. As the mutual

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61 With the diffusion of digital technologies, “locale” can now include digitally mediated sites as well.

62 On the seminar see: Clifford Geertz by his Colleagues, eds. Richard A. Shweder and Byron Good (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 121-122, as well as Mark Silk, “The Hot History
benefits of History and Anthropology were most thoroughly explored in Sinology in regards to corporate lineages and their associated rituals, I trace the present “line” as a spiral that circles out to consider once more the clan system discussed minutely above in relation to the Pengs only.

The first self-consciously modern survey of spirit-writing in the Chinese cultural realm was Republican Period intellectual Xu Dishan’s 許地山 (1893-1941) Fuji mixin de yanjiu 扶箕迷信底研究, first published in 1941. Culling 130 anecdotes depicting spirit-writing from Song to Qing biji 筆記 (jottings), Xu was eager to demonstrate that what occurred were psychic phenomena observable in other societies both primitive (e.g., Australian aborigines) and advanced (e.g., Germany) rather than a divine manifestation: “I hope the reader can understood that the planchette is most definitely not a manifestation of some spirits, but rather nothing more than the disturbance of an individual’s psyche,” he insisted.63 That one of Xu’s explicit motivations was to dissuade his intellectual peers from devotion to the planchette speaks to the enduring popularity of spirit-writing in the southeast in the Republican period.

Xu prefaced his work with a taxonomy of eleven forms of divination ranging from oneromancy (zhan meng 占夢) to prophecy (yu gao 預告) and mediumism (jiang tong 降童), asserting, for example, the equivalency between the Chinese practice of spirit-writing and what was called the “planchette” in the early modern West.64 Although framed in the anti-superstition discourse prevalent in his day, Xu did not claim any

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63 希望讀過的人能夠明白扶箕並不是什麼神靈的降示，只是自己心靈的作怪而已。Xu Dishan 許地山, Fuji mixin de yanjiu 扶箕迷信底研究, in Xu Dishan xueshu lunzhu 许地山学术论著 (Shanghai: Shanghai shiji chuban jitian, 2011 [1941]): 216.
64 Xu Dishan, Fuji mixin di yanjiu, 131-134.
special medical qualifications for his psychologizing reading, asserting modestly that he was just a general reader. Consistent with Xu’s claim, present day scholars tend to use Fuji mixin de yanjiu as an index to spirit-writing anecdotes, while side-stepping its scientismist framing.

Too often present day scholars read back onto the early Qing the process of spirit-writing documented by the press in late Qing and Republican period Shanghai. Likewise, present day ethnographies of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and elsewhere in the Chinese cultural realm where such practices continue can impede the historical imagination as much as they stimulate it. While valuable sources on dynamic religious practices, as far as the early Qing goes, such ethnographic accounts cannot substitute for rigorously historicist investigations of the actual period under study.

Textual studies of the products of twentieth century altars are increasingly common. In the last decade historical studies of spirit-writing circles have become a major growth area within the fields of Chinese Religions and Daoist Studies. Graeme Lang and Lars Ragvald make the same point: “Fuji-groups have been well-studied in Taiwan, both ethnographically and through their published volumes of revelations… Groups which developed in China have remained largely unstudied, except for those few which migrated to Hong Kong.” Lang and Ragvald, “Spirit-Writing and the Development of Chinese Cults,” Sociology of Religion, 59.4 (1998): 315. Graeme Lang’s own The Rise of a Refugee God (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) is an example of the latter.

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65 Xu stated in the postface: “This book was written by just a general reader.” 這書只為一般讀者寫的。

66 On Republican period scientism, see: D.W.K. Kwok, Scientism in Chinese Thought 1900-1950 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965). I am fully aware of the awkwardness of the neologism “scientismist,” but feel it is necessary to designate one who subscribed to scientism as an ideology, as distinct from practitioners of science (“scientists”).


68 Graeme Lang and Lars Ragvald make the same point: “Fuji-groups have been well-studied in Taiwan, both ethnographically and through their published volumes of revelations… Groups which developed in China have remained largely unstudied, except for those few which migrated to Hong Kong.” Lang and Ragvald, “Spirit-Writing and the Development of Chinese Cults,” Sociology of Religion, 59.4 (1998): 315. Graeme Lang’s own The Rise of a Refugee God (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) is an example of the latter.
the widest ranging study of the practice since Xu Dishan’s monograph.  

Ann Waltner, Judith Zeitlin, and Anne Gerritsen have read mid-Ming to early Qing spirit-writing in light of the dynamic literature on guixiu poets in the Yangzi Delta, producing nuanced accounts that make careful distinctions between what we can no about the historical figures represented by men and what were the layers of male fantasy. Focused studies addressing spirit-writing in late Ming and early Qing Suzhou are: Ann Waltner’s 1987 study of the female immortal Tanyangzi’s 曾陽子 and her adoration by the circle that gathered around the prolific Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-1590); Judith Zeitlin’s 1998 article on You Tong’s ideas of performativity as reflected by his patronage of a spirit-writing altar; Judith Boltz’s as yet unpublished analysis Yuquan, an anthology of Kangxi reign Suzhou spirit-altar transcripts; and Monica Esposito’s study of the edition history of the Daozang jiyao and its editor Jiang Yupu 蒋予蒲 (on which and on whom see Chapter 7). Together the subjects of these articles span more than two centuries, from the 1570s to the 1790s; the period whose legacy Peng Dingqiu inherited, his own lifespan, and the time that his immediate legacy was most strongly felt.

Line 4 Ritual Underpinnings of Local Society

The connections between late imperial Wenchang devotion, the civil examination system, and local elites inhabits a disciplinary DMZ between Daoist Studies and Popular Religion on one side and Confucian Studies and Institutional History on the other: it is too classicist and civil service examination-oriented for most scholars of Chinese

religions, and too Daoistic and “irrational” for enthusiasts of Confucians of the European Enlightenment ideal.\(^{71}\) An early manifestation of this modernist discomfort was the purging of Wenchang devotion from Confucian devotional practice by early twentieth century modernizers in order to fashion Confucianism into a religion on the model of Christianity.\(^{72}\) Such newfound discomfort contrasts sharply with elite’s championing of ritual as a means of social transformation; the cultural default mode of confronting crisis through the post-Taiping civil war reconstruction in the mid-1860s and ‘70s and beyond. In a transnational register, it also conflicts with the enthusiasm shown by Christian missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, for the “God of Literature” from the late sixteenth to late twentieth centuries.

This section is based on my reading of Peng Dingqiu’s Wenchang devotion and the ritual context upon which the formal conventions through which he expressed this devotion were predicated. Combining work in Daoist Studies, Confucian Studies, and that on the state cult and injecting it with some inspiration from ethnography in Taiwan, I trace a desire line stringing together the late imperial Wenchang cult, devotional practices at academies, and shrines to local worthies.

In Chapter 6 I summarize Terry Kleeman’s meticulous research on the origins of the Wenchang cult through the Song dynasties. Here I will address the more problematic literature on the Wenchang cult after the Song. Kleeman provided an outline of


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developments from the Yuan to the present in his introduction to *A God's Own Tale*. Of particular interest for the subject of this dissertation is Chen Zhaoying’s 陈昭瑛 2004 article on the Song Classicist lineal consciousness among Wenchang devotees in Taiwan. Liu Haiyan’s 刘海燕 2006 book on the Thearch Guan (Guan di 關帝) and Wenchang cults addressed such important topics as: the Song, Yuan, and Qing imperial enfeoffments of Wenchang and offering of official sacrifices; Kangxi and Yongzheng reign attempts by fundamentalist Classicists to prohibit Wenchang devotion as a “licentious cult”; the link to societies for cherishing the written word; the key texts of Wenchang devotion *Yinzhi wen*, *Wenchang Xiaojing*, and *Wenchang Gongguoge*; as well as the Wenchang cult and civil examination service hopefuls and Wenchang temples. Yet despite the broad range covered by Liu, his account is episodic and poorly historicized, so that it can be difficult to discern in which century or even dynasty a certain practice or phenomena is first attested. Gao Wu’s 高梧 2008 book on Wenchang “customs” and the chapter on Wenchang devotion in the 2011 book on Daoism and Popular Religion by Li Yuanguo 李远国, Liu Zhongyu, and Xu Shangshu 许尚枢 cover much of the same ground as Liu Haiyan.

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73 Kleeman provided an outline of developments from the Yuan to the present in *A God's Own Tale*, 72-83.
The scholarly lacuna is evident when studies of Wenchang are compared to those on the two other deities who fill out the late imperial morality book worship triumvirate: Lü Yan 呂巖 (zi Dongbin 洞賓) and Guan Yu 關羽. As the most beloved of the wildly popular Eight Immortals and a central patriarch in the Complete Perfection Order, Lü is the subject of a large body of Religious Studies and, to a lesser extent, Art History literature. The apotheosized Three Kingdoms period military hero Thearch Guan, for his part, is central to a lively debate on the imperial state’s ability to impose ideological hegemony through what contemporary scholars call “Confucianization” (Rujiao hua 儒教化). I will attempt to show that further study of the late imperial Wenchang cult can

The most dynamic area of research on the Wenchang cult lies beyond my focus on late imperial literati-officials. It is the seemingly paradoxical embrace of “the God of Literature” in the frontier regions of the southwest, particularly Yunnan. Popular research topics include the Dongjing hui 洞經會 (Cavern Scripture Associations) in ethnic Han, Naxi 納西, and Bai 白 areas, which have received ethnographic attention since the 1940s. These associations stage recitations of scriptures devoted to Wenchang and other deities to musical accompaniment.

As for the Chinese Literature field, Lü’s role in late imperial vernacular novels has received some attention, but his voluminous poetic output remains largely unexamined as literature or historical source material. This disinterest is significant in regards to Peng Dingqiu as Quan Tang Shi editor: Dingqiu included numerous selections from Lü Yan, treating him as an historical personage, which he demonstrably is not. This raises the question: How does what we know about Lü Yan the ostensible historical Tang jinshi, and Ancestor Lü devotion from the Song on influence our understanding of the myriad other apotheosized recluses in the Quan Tang Shi? I contend that we will not be able to answer until Chinese Literature scholars take spirit-written poetry seriously as poetry.


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problematize the elite-popular dichotomy in scholars’ conception of Popular Religion and shed light on the elite strata of cross-class divinization practices.

*Devotional Practices at Academies and the Spiritual Lives of Examination Candidates*

The term *shuyuan* 書院, conventionally translated as “academy,” first appeared in a Tang dynasty title of office in 725. The first so-called “academy” was a scholarly library; in his 1982 monograph on Ming dynasty academies John Meskill speculated that the pioneering role of Buddhist institutions in printing might have influenced use of the term in officialdom. The modeling of the first Classicist academies in the Northern Song on Buddhist institutions is uncontested by contemporary scholars. Specifically, in a 1993 study Linda Walton traced the way in which the educators overseeing Southern Song academies modeled liturgical, regulatory, and architectural aspects of the institutions under their control on Buddhist monasteries. The homology between Buddhist monasteries and academies occasionally erupted into practice in the late imperial period, as in the case recorded in a stele dated 1758 of the Lianfeng Academy in Foshan, Liangguang, employing a Buddhist as a manager on contractual terms nearly

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80 E.g.: “As a practical matter, monastic schools showed the way to Confucian schools.” Meskill, *Academies in Ming China*, x; “That the Confucianists’ ideas about organizing schools, especially academies, owed something to Buddhist models can hardly be doubted, even though the evidence is circumstantial and problematical.” Meskill, *Academies in Ming China*, 9.

identical to those of Buddhist, Daoist, or popular temple managers. In terms of dynamics among the Three Teachings, it is also significant that the prototypical Northern Song academies were all associated with sacred mountains, from the Yuelu 岳麓 academy in contemporary Changsha, Hunan, to Maoshan in Jiangsu province and Zhu Xi’s White Deer Grotto (Bailudong 白鹿洞) on Lushan 廈山 in Jiangxi province.

The private academy pioneered by Northern Song educators provided the model for the state school system established in 1044. For the remainder of imperial China, reflecting prevailing political currents, academies shifted between control local and central, private and state. Despite the need to be attentive to a particular academy’s status as private or official at any given time, exclusive attention to administrative status obscures the fact that to succeed an academy needed the active involvement of both private donors and official patrons.

Developments in academies from the mid- to late Ming provide crucial background to the philosophical, political, and cultivational (to coin a neologism) inclinations of Peng Long and his son Peng Dingqiu. First and foremost was the self-cultivation ideal of quiet-sitting (jingzuo 靜坐). The practice of quiet-sitting, the polemics it prompted and nuances of attitudes towards it have received significant scholarly attention. In a 2012 article Mabuchi Masaya 馬淵昌也 surveyed a range of attitudes towards quiet-sitting in Learning of the Principles patriarchs from the Song to the Ming.

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83 Meskill, Academies in Ming China, 5-6.
84 Meskill, Academies in Ming China, 8.
85 For example, the income of early Ming academies derived largely from donations and land rents organized by official and private (including merchant) supporters: Meskill, Academies in Ming China, 62. On financial and patronage of academies, see also pp. 65 and 124-125.
including Zhu Xi, Wang Shouren, and Gao Panlong. Mabuchi contended that *lixue* teachers found quiet-sitting an effective technique for accessing one’s innate nature (*xing* 性), thereby attaining sagehood. Yet, to their collective consternation, the same figures found an inherent risk in the technique: that those who practiced it could feel that they accessed an amorphous cosmic core in relation to which such key Classicist concepts as benevolence (*ren* 仁) and righteousness (*yi* 義) were superfluous. Quiet-sitting, if not properly monitored by an enforcer of orthodoxy, could corrode the social order. To add insult to injury, some of these educators found their students telling them that Buddhist and Daoist scriptures explained the profound states achieved in meditation better than anything in the Classicist canon. For these reasons, Mabuchi explained, there was a discernable hardening of Classicist attitudes towards quiet-sitting in the Qing;\(^86\) yet another manifestation of the post-conquest “Big Chill.”\(^87\)

Gao Panlong is the Learning of the Principles thinker whose ideas on quiet-sitting have received the most scholarly attention; a prominence convenient for the sake of this dissertation in that Gao was a central figure in Peng Long’s intellectual biography and the subsequent formation of a distinct Peng Clan Learning. The attention Gao has received is due to both the unprecedented biographical and autobiographical detailed available on his engagement with quiet-sitting, and his prominent place in the Donglin Faction, with that movement’s larger important to debates continuing consistently since the late Ming over

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\(^87\) This phrase indicates an abrupt conservative shift in cultural, political, and social mores. It was popularized by Lawrence Kasdan’s 1983 film of that name. While there is much incommensurable between the complex of changes undergone in the United States in the late 1970s and early 1980s and those of the first three decades of the Qing dynasty, I also consider that the rapid implementation of conservatism after a period of permissiveness makes the two case studies fruitful to contrast.
moral righteousness versus political pragmatism (and, since the 1970s, the presence or absence of forerunners of civil society in late Ming associational activity). In a series of works published between 1978-79 Rodney Taylor examined Gao’s quiet-sitting practice at length, as well as translating Gao’s *Kunxue ji* 困學紀 (Record of Learning Painfully Acquired) and *Jingzuo shuo* 靜坐說 (Discourse on Quiet-Sitting, 1613).

Returning to the level of daily practice at mid- and late Ming academies, it is evident that quiet-sitting meditational regimes formed an integral aspect. Further, the quiet-sitting element of the program was polemicized with, for example, opponents of Zhan Ruoshui’s pedagogy protesting that introspective practices betrayed Buddhist influence.

Even when practiced carefully, as among students at an academy, the goal of quiet-sitting was conceived of in terms of individual terms. In contrast to quiet-sitting, the collective rituals at academies have received only sparse attention; a considerable scholarly oversight in light of how integral such activities were to the academic regime.

An exhibit of the material culture of Taiwan’s Qing academies held at Taiwan Historica (Guoshiguan Taiwan Wenxianguan 國史館臺灣文獻館) was exemplary in its

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attention to collective veneration activities.\textsuperscript{90} The exhibit effectively captured the complex of veneration of scholarly ancestors, Wenchang devotion, cherishing the written word, and optimi reification that characterize the devotional side of Qing academy life in southeast China.\textsuperscript{91}

The Taiwan Historica exhibit included small braziers for properly disposing of written-on paper, as well as photographs of the cylindrical brick ovens used for the purpose on a larger scale evident at many Taiwanese academies. The placement of these structures is analogous to the towers for burning spirit money at popular temples. While such burners undoubtedly existed in the Yangzi Delta, scholarship on existing (and still in use) examples in Taiwan far exceeds that on mainland counterparts.

\textsuperscript{90} Taiwan Shuyuan: Shiliao Wenwu Tezhan 臺灣書院: 史料文物特展. The exhibit was held from 22 Nov. 2012 to 28 Feb. 2013. I am grateful to the organizers of the winter graduate student workshop collaboration between Academia Sinica and the University of California, Berkeley on Popular Religion and Taiwanese History in January of 2012 for the opportunity to visit Taiwan Historica, as well as to the East Asian Studies Program at Princeton for making my participation possible.

\textsuperscript{91} The exhibit guide’s section on “devotional customs” (\textit{xinyang xisu} 信仰習俗) merits translating in full:

Among the official academies of Taiwan, many offered their primary sacrifices to the Song Classicist Literary Lord Zhu (Xi), and their correlative sacrifices to Thearch Lord Wenchang. Those academies which were popular in nature (including tuition-free private academies and community schools), for their part offered their primary sacrifices to Lord Thearch Wenchang and their correlative sacrifices to Literary Lord Zhu (or Literary Lord Han). Because of this, tuition-free private academies, community schools, and Wenchang shrines, almost all were called “academies,” so that it is difficult to differentiate them.

As for the frequently evident gods receiving complimentary sacrifices, there were also Kuixing, Holy Man Cang, and—of course—veneration of the Five Wenchangs. Academies placed great weight on moral education, and thus advocated venerating written on paper and its important associated activities—in particular, the holding of “respectfully seeing off the holy traces (the ashes of written on paper)” received the most attention. In scholars’ pursuit of auspicious omens, there was the customs of Casting the Four Reds and eating Optimi cakes. Academies also participated enthusiastically in the printing and gratis dissemination of morality books, as can be seen from the examples of Initiating Enlightenment and Gazing Up at the Mountain.

臺灣的官方書院,多以宋儒朱文公（熹）為主祀,以文昌帝君為配祀,屬於民間性質（含義學,社學）的書院,則主祀文昌帝君,以朱文公（或韓文公）為配祀。因此義學,社學,文昌祠,常都有書院名稱,不易區隔。

書院常見的配祀神,尚有魁星,倉聖人,甚至供奉五文昌。書院注重品格教育,推動敬惜字紙乃其重要活動,尤以所舉行的「恭送聖蹟（字紙灰）」,最受矚目。讀書人為求得掄元吉兆,每年中秋例有擲四紅吃狀元餅習俗。書院亦熱衷善書印送,所見有文開、仰山二例。

Pamphlet in author’s possession.
In the nineteenth century, in tandem with the dissemination of morality books, the custom of cherishing the written word spread widely by tribute emissaries, immigrants, and traders, with records of the practice as far afield as Nagasaki, the Ryūkyūs, and Chosŏn Korea. Today there are more Pavilions for Cherishing the Written Word extant in Taiwan than in the PRC, South Korea, or Japan. Yet in a 2010 article on Cherishing the Written Word practices in Taiwan, Li Jihua 李季樺 stressed that the practice presently evidenced throughout the island is most definitely not a direct transmission of practices from the Yangzi Delta in the Ming and Qing dynasties. As recently as the eighteenth century the practice was only recorded as an aspect of charitable works of a few wealthy families on the southwestern portion of the island. The custom was decisively not a practice brought to the island by ethnic Han immigrants, but rather one northern gentry instituted to maintain social hierarchy. Only when cherishing characters pavilions were subsequently built did the practice enter deeply into Taiwanese life, and only under Japanese occupation (1895-1945) did xizi practices become officially recognized as aspect of ethnic Han culture to be preserved as such.

Further ethnographic and historical documentation of the practice in Taiwan is provided in studies by Lin Wenlong 林文龍 through the 1980s and a 2010 dissertation by Li Jihua 李季樺. For an international perspective, see Sakai Tadao 酒井忠夫, Zōho Chiugoku zensho no kenkyū, vol. 2: 325-402 (Edo Japan); 403-415 (Ryūkyūs); and Chosŏn and southern Vietnam (416-19). For Taiwan’s Cherishing the Written Pavilions see the photograph-laden Zhang Zhiyuan 張志遠, Taiwan de jingzi ting 台灣的敬字亭 (Taipei: Yuanzu wenhua, 2006). Zhang’s book was produced for recreational walkers rather than scholars. While other deities are involved in the cherishing the written word custom, Wenchang appears to be most closely associated with the practice in contemporary Taiwan: e.g. 27, 64-65, 135-136, and 151-153. For structures titled “Cultural Star Pavilions” see page 17 and 149-150.

Wu Yang-ho 吳煬和 on the practice in Liudui 六堆, an ethnically Hakka town in Pingtung county 屏東縣 on the southern portion of the island first founded in 1721.95

Shrines to Local Worthies

In a 2008 article Wang Fan-sen 王汎森 used the establishment of a shrine to Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 by a group of officials in Beijing’s Ciren Temple 慈仁寺 as a framing device for a study of the mechanisms by which Gu was elevated to the apex of the Classicist pantheon during the Daoguang reign (1821-50).96 Wang’s tour de force variorum- and edition history-driven intellectual history did not focus on the practices of venerating Gu as such—i.e., liturgies employed—but did identify valuable material with which such a study could be undertaken.97 More broadly, Wang’s article reminds us that there is a significant body of specialized gazetteers dedicated to shrines to both sages of antiquity and figures as recent as the late Ming.98

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95 Lin Wenlong 林文龍, “Ji Taiwan de jingxi xizhi mìnsu” 記臺灣的敬惜字紙民俗 in Taiwan Shiji Conglun 臺灣史蹟叢論 (Taizhong: Guozhang chubanshe, 1987), v. 1: 103-155. See also Wu Yang-ho 吳煬和, Wenjiao, xinyang, yu wenhuai jiangou: Taiwan Liudui jingzi fengsu yanjiu 文教、信仰與文化建構─台灣六堆敬字風俗研究 (PhD diss., National Dong Hwa University, 2010).
97 Wang identified He Shaoji 何紹基 (1799-1873) as the primary mover in the establishment of the shrine, and examined the depiction of Gu in several versions of a memorial poem by He (see Wang, “Qingdai ruzhe de quanshentang,” esp. pp. 566-67 and 585-86). A work worth examining for prayers to Gu Yanwu is Gu Xiansheng cilui ji timing di yi juanzi 顧先生祠會祭題名第一卷子 (The first juan of the list of names of those propitiating Master Gu in his shrine gathering), an edition of which is held by the Fu Ssu-nien Memorial Library. Fu Ssu-nien’s electronic catalog identifies this as an Republican Era edition, but Wang dates it—correctly, in my opinion—to the Guangxu reign (1875-1908). See: Wang, “Qingdai ruzhe de quanshentang,” 595 n. 75.
98 On the Gu Yanwu Shrine Association see also: James M. Polachek, The Inner Opium War (Cambridge: Council on East Asian Studies, 1992), Chapter 6. For the purposes of this dissertation this gazetteer on the shrine to Gao Panlong in Wuxi is of particular interest, although there are no direct ties to the Peng clan (beyond the gazetteer mentioning Gao’s inclusion in the Canglang ting shrine in which seven Peng patriarchs were also installed) and no liturgies or prayer texts are included.
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**Daoist Studies**

In Chapter 7 I examine Peng Long and his son Dingqiu’s interactions with Shi Daoyuan 施道淵 (1617-78), one of the most important Daoist ritual masters in the realm. Evidence from the liturgical manual that Dingqiu received via the spirit-altar reveals the prominence of Daoist ritual in his devotional program; for that reason a brief overview of the scholarly literature on Daoism in Suzhou and the Yangzi Delta more broadly is in order. Daoism in Ming-Qing Suzhou is covered in the 1996 survey of Daoism in Suzhou by Zhao Liang 赵亮, Zhang Fenglin 张凤林, and Yuan Xinchang 贾信常.99 Shi Daoyuan and the Celestial Vault Mountain (Qionglong shan 穹窿山) complex whose renovation he oversaw in the early years of the Shunzhi reign is the subject of a 2011 article by Goossaert; this piece is but a portion of an in process book-length project by Goossaert on religion and local society in the Yangzi Delta in the late imperial and Republican periods.100

Suzhou Daoism is properly analyzed in light of regional studies of Daoism in the lower Yangzi Delta, such as Wu Yakui 吳亞魁’s 2012 monograph on the Complete Perfect Order101 and specialized studies of Daoism in other cities.102 Studies of Daoist institutions and clerics in Beijing or on a national scale are also relevant, as with Zhuang

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Hongyi’s 1986 study of the Orthodox Unity branch of Daoism under the Ming.¹⁰³

Goossaert’s 2007 social history of Daoist clerics in the capital falls outside the geographical and temporal focus of this dissertation, but still provides relevant information on the organization of Daoism in the Qing.¹⁰⁴

Line 5 Nested Temporalities: On Oscillating Units of Analysis

Periodization is a crucial element of the historical endeavor, and debates over periodization of the temporal unit upon which I focus in this dissertation have been particularly lively. The most important discussion in this regard over the last two decades has been the distinctiveness of the Qing dynasty in contrast to the underlying cultural and economic coherence of society from the mid-sixteenth through mid-nineteenth centuries.¹⁰⁵

Building on Jonathan Hay’s observation on the utility of multiple periodization paradigms,¹⁰⁶ I employ a range of calibrations in my choice of analytical lenses. The widest lens I employ is from the 1370s (consolidation of the Ming dynasty) to the 1870s. Focusing in, I consider the mid-sixteenth century (cultural and economic flourishing of society under the Ming) to the mid-nineteenth century (the Taiping Civil War and its aftermath as a fundamental reorganization of power in the Yangzi Delta). Finer still is the concentration on the years during which Peng Dingqiu lived, 1645 to 1719; born only

¹⁰³ Zhuang Hongyi 莊宏誼, Mingdai daojiao Zhengyi pai 明代道教正一派 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1986).
days before the Qing armies reached his hometown, coming of age under the first Qing emperor to assume the throne in Beijing (Shunzhi; r. 1644-1661), and living the entirety of his adult under the Kangxi emperor (r. 1662-1722), one of the most diligent and charismatic rulers anywhere at that world-historical moment. Finally, completing the curve from wide-angle to microscopic, there are several places in this dissertation in which I attend to one discrete event in detail. The most extended occurrence of this fine temporal grain is Chapter 3, in which I examine the events of one year (1674) through several temporal lenses: dynastic time, the triennial examination cycle, and the life stages of a young man finding it increasingly difficult to defer to his elders.

Conclusion

The above discussion sets for the scope of the issues addressed in this dissertation and the means with which I approach the mutual imbrications of these subjects. One of the methodological issues addressed in this dissertation is how to analyze densely packed nodes of material without doing violence to it. To use a biological metaphor, study of an organism demands different tools than that of an ecosystem. In this study I analyze both: the individual and the social context in which he or she was embedded, both synchronically and diachronically. Oscillating between these two objects of analysis through different temporal lenses is an integral aspect of my methodology.

Preliminaries dispensed with, we can now proceed to a thick description of the Peng corporate lineage and the place and time in which it was embedded.
Part II

The Historical Peng Dingqiu
Chapter 3

Jade Bureau Year One:

Establishing a Literati Spirit-Writing Altar in Early Qing Suzhou

At the close of 1673 a 29 sui Peng Dingqiu (1645-1719) was shattered by the emotional roller coaster inherent to sitting for the civil examinations. The previous year he passed the provincial examination after three successive failures. Since 1662, Dingqiu had been an annual tribute student (sui gong 岁貢), one of a handful of categories of licentiate (shengyuan 生員). Licentiate was the baseline status for receiving official exemptions as a member of the gentry. Then, in a vertiginous leap, within a matter of months he had not only obtained his long sought-after elevated scholar (juren 舉人) degree, but was heading to the capital to sit for the top-tier metropolitan examination.

Obtaining an elevated scholar degree was not a minor accomplishment: Dingqiu was already more successful than the legion of county students (xiangsheng 庠生) whose rank he had so recently departed, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of hopefuls who had never even gotten that far. But Dingqiu was born into the upper echelons of Suzhou, a flourishing city that regularly boasted the top candidates on the examinations. In this social milieu, an elevated scholar degree was a modest achievement.

Had he succeeded in his first sitting for the metropolitan examination, Dingqiu would have obtained the coveted presented scholar (jinshi 進士) degree, as had his father

1 Dingqiu sat for the provincial examination in Nanjing unsuccessfully in 1663, 1666, and 1669. See: “Nanyun laoren ziding nianpu,” 3b-4b. Rd. of 1881 Peng Zuxian collectanea excerpt in Qingchu mingru nianpu 清初名儒年譜, ed. Chen Zuwu 陳祖武 (Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2006), v. 15: 596-98. Because Peng Zuxian’s distillation of Dingqiu’s autobiography is readily available to other scholars, I use it as a reference for landmark events in Dingqiu’s familial and professional life. I only cite Dingqiu’s manuscript autobiography Shijiang gong nianpu for passages unique to it.

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Peng Long (1613-89) in 1659 and his great-grandfather Peng Ruxie 汝諧 in 1616. Success in the capital would also have effaced the blot of disgrace on the family honor after Peng Long was cashiered from his post as a magistrate in 1671. Upon hearing news of his father’s misfortune, Dingqiu hastened down to Guangdong to intervene on Long’s behalf. After the two men returned to Suzhou, Peng Long’s fellow elites rallied around him. They cast him in the time-tested mold of a righteous official punished by a corrupt higher up due to his staunch defense of the common people. However valuable later depictions of Peng Long as a “local worthy” (xiangxian 鄉賢) would be to his descendants, the event of his censure had been both harrowing and humiliating.

In the 1673 metropolitan examination Dingqiu’s name did not appear among the 166 successful candidates. Another Suzhounese was, however, atop the list. Han Tan 韓菼 (1637-1704) placed number one in both the metropolitan and subsequent palace examination. Like Dingqiu, Han had been born into one of the prominent clans of Changzhou county, the eastern and less-old family-heavy half of urban Suzhou. The previous Suzhounese optimus (zhuangyuan 状元), Miao Tong 繆彤 (1627-97), of the class of 1667, was a friend of the Peng clan of Dingqiu’s father’s generation. Dingqiu had had no reason to do anything but celebrate Miao’s accomplishment for bringing glory to their corner of the Wu 吳 region.

Han Tan was another story. Only eight years senior to Dingqiu, the two men were peers. They had climbed the same examination ladder from the Changzhou county school through Nanjing and on to the capital. Han Tan had reached the very top, receiving the personal praise of the Kangxi emperor, while Dingqiu floundered halfway up. The demographic proximity of Han and Dingqiu stripped Dingqiu of even the perennial
recourse of examination failures: second-guessing the examiners’ choices. Dingqiu not only had to return from Beijing empty handed; he had to return to an entire city fêting a rival.

Thus the end of 1673 found Dingqiu back in the family compound in Suzhou, despondent. Dingqiu had married at 19 sui in 1663, the year of his first failure on the provincial examination. A decade later he was the father of one son and two daughters, and his wife, née Li 李, was pregnant with a fourth child. On the eve of the landmark age when Confucius had established (li 立) himself, Dingqiu had no career prospects other than continuing to try for the presented scholar degree.

Dingqiu would sit for the next metropolitan examination in 1676. On that occasion he not only would pass, but, like Han Tan in the previous triennial cycle, would obtain first place on both the metropolitan and the palace examinations, a rare distinction known as “two-fold optimus” (er yuan 二元). Dingqiu’s eventual achievement of this coveted status has caused present day scholars to overlook the fact that—as with nearly everyone who sat for the examinations in imperial China—Dingqiu experienced his fair share of disappointment and self-doubt. Yet his interval of despair is crucial in comprehending what Dingqiu counted as among the most momentous events in his life: his direct communication with several high gods, their apotheosized emissaries, and the spirits of a range of other deceased cultural and intellectual luminaries. Although a sense of crisis provoked Dingqiu’s first contact with the supernatural realm, once established

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2 “Nanyun laoren ziding nianpu,” 3b; rp. 596.
3 “At thirty I established myself” 三十而立. Lunyu 2.4.
4 See Benjamin A. Elman’s remarks on what he translates as “two firsts” (er yuan) and “three firsts” (san yuan 三元; i.e., first place in the provincial examination as well) in his A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000): 385-88.
the contact continued for at least forty more years, becoming one of the most consistent elements of his spiritual and social life. In this chapter I describe the pivotal year in which Dingqiu fought to establish the credibility of his first revelations. The most momentous of these revelations—and the one which would make him a celebrated figure in spirit-writing circles for centuries to come—was his receipt via divine transmission of the prophecy of his own two-fold *optimus* distinction.

The Organization of Spirit-Writing Altars

Before describing Peng Dingqiu’s congress with deities, an account of the spirit-writing process is in order. Spirit-writing, or the reception of divine communications through the planchette, first became an integral part of the literati lifestyle in the Song dynasties (960-1279). Numerous accounts of poetry exchanges between deceased poets and their mortal admirers are preserved in literary anthologies. The connection between spirit-writing and with the cult of Wenchang 文昌 in his natal land of eastern Sichuan province was particularly close. In 1181 Wenchang’s autobiography in seventy-three “transformations” (*hua* 化) was revealed via the planchette. Devotees continued to receive new chapters throughout the late imperial period (see the discussion in Chapter 6).

In a 1994 article Kiwamu Goyama described a general late imperial spirit-writing session. It proceeded as follows: sand was placed atop a long table, either directly or in a platter; a prayer (or “vow”; *yuan* 頌) was uttered to invite the spirit to descend; incense

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5 The widest selection of spirit-writing accounts from Song through Qing literary writings remains Xu Dishan’s 許地山 (1893-1941) *Fuji mixin de yanjiu* 扶箕迷信底研究, first published in 1941.

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was lit; a talisman (fu 符) was composed, then incinerated in order to submit it to the
gods; a spell (zhouwen 咒文) was recited; and purifying water was sprinkled. Such were
the preliminaries for creating a physical and social space into which deities were likely to
enter. At that point one or two devotees grasped a forked stylus cut from peachwood or
willow. The spirit then descended. He or she manifest by controlling the stylus to make
marks that an interpreter read aloud. The interpreter’s oral declaration was then recorded
by another party.

In the well-documented iteration described above, setting up a spirit-writing altar
and conducting a session required a minimum of three participants: one to hold the stylus,
another to interpret the characters, and a third to record the results. Yet Goyama stressed
that this idealized session was subject to numerous local and individual variations.7 In the
episode in which Dingqiu established himself as a spirit-altar supervisor, he demonstrated
that he was aware of many of the conventions laid out by Goyama. Some he consciously
chose to reject, while others he simply did not practice.

In Chapter 2 I pointed to the danger of using materials from a later period to
understand an earlier one. An example of this practice is Goyama’s use of illustrations
from the Shanghai newspaper Dianshizhai huabao 點石齋畫報 (1884-98) for his article
on spirit-writing in the Ming and early to mid-Qing. The misleading nature of the
conflation of practices hundred of years apart is revealed by contrasting an illustration
from the autobiography of You Tong 尤侗 (1618-1704) to those used by Goyama. You
was a Suzhou literatus with an empire-wide reputation, a close friend of Peng Long, and

7 Goyama Kiwamu 合山究, “Minshin no bunjin to okaruto shumi” 明清の文人とオカルト趣味, in Chūka
presence of “Ming-Qing” in the title of his article, the primary exemplars Goyama examined were from the
late Ming and the early Qing.
an early patron of Dingqiu’s spirit-writing altar. In the series of illustrations that preceded his chronological autobiography, You commissioned one panel depicting interaction with emissaries of the Jade Bureau (Yuju 玉局), as the celestial office with which Dingqiu facilitated communication was known (Illustration 3.1).

You’s illustration depicted an emissary of the Jade Bureau descending on a cloud with an attendant in Indic garb. In the background is the Changzhou county Cultural Star Pavilion (Wenxing ge 文星閣) as seen from the northeast. Effacing the urban location of the pavilion, You is depicted on a mountain path accompanied by a deer and other symbols of good fortune, despite the absence of any high topographic features in the direction in which he is represented. In contrast to You’s mystifying depiction, the Dianshizhai huabao illustrations from several centuries later depict the altar, the implements of writing, and people performing the functions corresponding to the idealized format of a spirit-writing session Goyama related.8

In You’s illustration there is an absolute effacement of any information on the material means of communication with deities. In her study of You Tong’s spirit-writing experience, Judith Zeitlin described a “virtual erasure of the human medium” in Yangzi delta elite spirit-writing. In her reading, the relative absence of concrete information on

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8 The undated Dianshizhai huabao illustrations appear in Goyama, “Minshin no bunjin to okaruto shumi,” 471, 474, and 475.
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this aspect of the spirit-altar in You Tong’s account was entirely deliberate, and was systematic of his romanticization of otherworldly communication. We will see below, however, Zeitlin’s conclusions in this regard may best be limited to her particular subject.

In Dingqiu’s case, the obscuring of material means of transmission is due to an assumption of knowledge on the part of the reader as much as it is a deliberate effacement.

A Fecund Otherworldly Archive

The written record on Dingqiu’s spirit altar is the richest yet explored by scholars for the early Qing period. The most remarkable source is Dingqiu’s manuscript autobiography Shijiang gong nianpu 侍講公年譜 (Chronological Autobiography of Master Sub-Expositor, 1718). It survives in a single exemplar and has not previously been examined by scholars. In contrast to the biographical accounts of Dingqiu preserved in the standard collections, in his autobiography Dingqiu’s spirit-writing activities are presented in conjunction with the other major events of his life. Filling out the record, other officials and literati who participated in Dingqiu’s altar left detailed records in poetry, prose, and, as noted above, even an illustration. In 1773 Dingqiu’s great-

9 “The absence of the medium in the literary record correspondingly enhances the impression of the spirit’s independent presence, much as the absence of the playwright and director from the stage contributes to the illusion that the characters in a play are real.” Judith Zeitlin, “Spirit Writing and Performance in the Work of You Tong 尤侗 (1618-1704),” T’oung Pao 84 (1998): 108-109. Zeitlin also noted: “Late Ming popular encyclopedias supply model charms for burning before a planchette session but do not prescribe how a session should be conducted.” (109 n. 21)

10 By “standard” I mean the seven on Dingqiu contained in Sanshisan zhong Qing dai zhuang yi yin 三十三種清代傳記綜合引得, eds. Du Lianzhe 杜連喆 and Fang Zhaoying 房兆楹 (Tokyo: Japan Council for East Asian Studies, 1960). See the Descriptive Catalog.

11 Such works include: You Tong, Hui’an nianpu 悔菴年譜 (Chronological [Auto]biography of Hui’an) and You Hui’an Taishi nianpu tuyong 尤悔菴太史年譜圖詠 (Chronological [Auto]biography of the Local Notable You Hui’an, Illustrated and with Verses), in You Xitang quanji 尤西堂全集 (Shanghai: Wenrui lou, 1900), ce 1, j. shang xia 上下, and j. 1: 1a-17a, respectively.
grandson Peng Shaosheng (1740-96) compiled and printed transcripts of séances overseen by Dingqiu and his descendants. Shaosheng may also have had a hand in the assemblage of a massive collection of other Kangxi era (1662-1722) Suzhou spirit-writing altar transcripts that contained further material received by and discussing Dingqiu. Finally, revelations received by Dingqiu figured prominently in mid- and late Qing compendia devoted to Wenchang, patron deity of the civil examination system.

In this chapter I focus in on the critical first year in which he established his authority as a receiver of divine revelations. I shed light on the contestation of credibility claims inherent to such an endeavor, and detail the ways in which familial and social networks bolstered such claims.

A Confucian Medium

In the winter of 1673, mulling over his recent failure on the metropolitan examination and brooding over his future prospects, Dingqiu quite literally made himself

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12 Zhishen lu 質神錄, ed. Peng Shaosheng, Gest East Asian Library exemplar.
13 This collection is the Yuquan 玉詮 (Jade Expositions), contained in the Daozang jiyao 道藏輯要 (Essential of the Daoist Canon) of Peng family friend Jiang Yupu 蔣予蒲 (1755-1819). On Yuquan, see the entry by Judith Boltz in the Daozang jiyao Project’s forthcoming catalog of the Daozang jiyao. Boltz related an episode in which the Eastern Jin dynasty official and mystic Ge Hong 葛洪 (283-343) chastised Dingqiu for his haste and his insufficiently orthodox interest in astrology. I am grateful to project coordinator Lai Chi-tim for making Boltz’s entry available to me.

In addition, Shaosheng authored three narrative accounts of the Jade Altar (Yu ju 玉壇), the title by which the referred to a group of Suzhou spirit altars reaching back to at least the 1660s. “Yu tan ji” 玉壇記 (Record of the Jade Altar), “Yu tan Huaxige ji” 玉壇懷西閣記 (Record of the Jade Altar of the Cherishing the West Pavilion), and “Yu tan qijiu zhuan” 玉壇耆舊傳 (Biographies of Jade Altar Venerables), in Peng Shaosheng 彭紹升, Yixing juji 一行居集, originally published 1825, 5: 23b-25b, 5: 28a-29b, and 7: 1a-11b, respectively. Unpaginated rpd. Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1973.

On Shaosheng and spirit-writing, see: Lin I Luan 林一鑾 (Shi Huidou 釋慧鐸), “Peng Shaosheng (1740-1796) yu Shendao shejiao zhi jiaoshe” 彭紹升 (1740-1796) 與神道設教之交涉 (PhD diss., Huafan Daxue [Taiwan], 2009).

14 Among these works are Liu Tishu’s 體恕 anthology Wendi quanshu 文帝全書 (preface 1743) and Zhu Gui’s 朱珪 (1731-1807) overlapping Wendi shuchao 文帝書鈔, recarved by Li Yongheng 李永恆, 1882, Waseda University exemplar. On the portion most clearly tied to Dingqiu, see below. On Zhu Gui and Wenchang devotion, see Vincent Goossaert’s biographical contribution to the Daozang jiyao Project (forthcoming).
sick. To alleviate the chronic condition he appealed for divine assistance. The relationship that resulted between Dingqiu and his patron deities would last the remainder of his life and produce material still regarded as scripture by believers throughout the remainder of the Qing dynasty and down to the present day.

Peng Dingqiu’s independent spirit-writing activities began in earnest in the spring of 1674 when he was thirty sui. Dingqiu related in Shijiang gong nianpu that, at the time, talk of the rebellion of Wu Sangui 吳三桂 (1612-78) was widespread. Wu was a former Ming brigade-general whose family hailed from Dingqiu’s own Jiangsu province. Wu had sided with the Manchus in 1644 after Beijing fell to the rebel Li Zicheng 李自成 and Li had Wu’s father executed. After nearly three decades of faithful service to the new Qing dynasty, Wu broke rank and founded his own kingdom of Zhou 周 (1673-81). Allied with two other ethnic Han generals, the Revolt of the Three Feudatories would prove the most significant challenge to the Qing since they had seized control of the former Ming empire.

Violent chaos was all too familiar to Dingqiu: born in the summer of 1645 three days before Suzhou surrendered to the Qing armies, to some extent it was all he had ever known. On the order of his grandfather Dexian 德先 (1590-1665), Dingqiu’s parents had fled with their infant son to the clan tombs west of the city walls.¹⁵ In 1659, the year Peng Long received his presented scholar degree, the Yangzi Delta region had again been disrupted when Ming loyalist Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (Coxinga) brought his navy up

¹⁵ As Wu Jen-shu 巫仁恕 has shown, flight to the area on the borders of Lake Tai, dense with elite tombs, was a common strategy of Suzhou elites during the transition of the city from vestigial Ming to Qing martial law. See: “Taoli chengshi: Ming-Qing zhi ji Jiangnan chengju shiren de taonan jingli” 逃離城市：明清之際江南城居士人的逃難經歷, Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan 中央研究院近代史研究所集刊 83 (2014), esp. 9-13, 17-19, 28-29, 31, and 35-36; on the immediate post-conquest state of the southeast Feng Gate 蘇門 in which the Peng clan residence was located, see p. 29.
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the Yangzi river to lay siege to Nanjing. In 1674, three decades into the Qing conquest, an unpredictable fighting force was again approaching Suzhou. Dingqiu was not confident that things would turn out well.\(^\text{16}\)

In response to the tumult Suzhou’s city walls were closed. Dingqiu further intensified the siege mentality by locking himself away (jianguan 鍵閘) in the clan compound. In this extreme state of isolation, he applied himself to examination preparation. Such were the dual anxieties of Dingqiu’s life: political instability combined with the pressure of performance in the civil examinations.

Though Suzhou was under martial law, the isolated regimen such circumstances imposed upon Dingqiu was not all that exceptional. Examination candidates often devoted themselves to preparation with single-minded purpose. And Dingqiu was not preparing to sit for just any exam: he had an imminent appointment for his second shot at the metropolitan examination in Beijing. The political instability made Dingqiu’s examination preparation more difficult in that he could not predict the manner in which shifts in the political climate might be reflected in literary trends favored by examiners. Dingqiu lamented the mercuriality of literary fashions (dang wenfeng bian 當文風變): an unpredictable faddishness that added yet another unknown to his near future. In his

\(^{16}\) You Tong, a prominent literatus, close personal friend of Peng Dingqiu’s father Peng Long, and fellow Changzhou county resident, also described the unsettled atmosphere in Suzhou in the spring of 1674 in his autobiography:

The previous year Wu Sangui rebelled in Sichuan. This year Geng Jingzhong returned to take responsibility of Fujian, leaving Jiangnan to revert to tumult. The eighth day of the fourth month gentleman and ladies fled fallen cities; though doing so was forbidden they did not cease. The Imperial Troops proceeded south, cavalry coming and going endlessly, relentlessly requisitioning provisions.

You Tong, “Hui’an nianpu,” \(j.\ shang\) 上: 12b.
autobiography Dingqiu did not state the worst-case scenario: that a successful rebellion could result in a halt to the examinations, as was the case directly following the Qing conquest.

Dingqiu recalled clearly that he cracked under the pressure: an illness manifest in his physical form, reflecting his disturbed emotional state. “I was at a loss,” he related. “I was not able to be decisive. My illness erupted periodically, and I suffered from blockages of drink and food [i.e., indigestion and constipation].”

Dingqiu addressed his malady in a manner common to Yangzi Delta elites: “I sat quiescently and practiced nourishing life techniques.” Classicist scholars since the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1276) had often addressed illnesses by stilling their minds in a sitting posture. Classicist educators, however, frequently evinced ambivalence about the technique, a clear borrowing, as it was, from Buddhist meditational practice (chan 禪), and a possible container for the immortality-seeking alchemical techniques about which their students frequently inquired. The compromise Classicists hit upon was to refuse to elaborate what they did while sitting: in contrast to the ever-more elaborate visualizations of Buddhists and alchemists, upright scholars offered only terse advice such as “reside in reverence.” Gao Panlong 高攀龍 (1562-1626), a martyr of the late Ming factional battles whom Dingqiu’s father Peng Long had embraced as a great spiritual teacher, frequently passed half of every day in seated repose. In a famous autobiographical passage, Gao Panlong narrated how he had once experienced a sudden enlightenment while practicing the technique.

17 定求徬徨未决。疾亦间发，饮食否塞。 Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 14a-b.
18 靜坐習養生法。 Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 14a-b.
“Nourishing life” (yangsheng 養生) techniques could not claim the same orthodoxy genealogy. Yet they were widely popular among late Ming and early Qing elites in the Yangzi Delta; Dingqiu was not alone in exhibiting no self-consciousness about practicing them despite his social standing. As Su Hengan showed in his 2004 monograph on a late Ming culinary treatise, the practice of nourishing life techniques was not predicated on a flight from social obligations. Conversely, it was a respite from the dietary and sexual prolixity demanded by elite Yangzi Delta feasting culture.19

It is evident from the rest of Dingqiu’s entry for 1674 that these self-care measures did not relieve his condition: six months later it persisted. The cathartic breakthrough came on the night of the Mid-Autumn festival (Zhongqiu jie 中秋節), the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month. As with all major festivals, Mid-Autumn was an occasion for intra-familial and more broadly communal solidarity. Many of the Suzhou customs centered on the resplendent full moon in the chill of the evening sky. Most centrally, each family offered a fast ritual (zhai 齋) to the Lunar Palace (Yue gong 月宮)

19 Hengan Su, Culinary Arts in Late Ming China: Refinement, Secularization and Nourishment: A Study on Gao Lian’s Discourse on Food and Drink (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 2004). Su focused on Hangzhou scholar Gao Lian’s 高濂 (fl. 1591) Yinzhuan fushi jian 飲饌服食牋 (Discourses on Food and Drink), which was first published 1591 and frequently reprinted thereafter (including in the Siku quanshu). Su characterized the Yinzhuan fushi jian as part of a Jiangnan subgenre on “literati’s regret for their hedonistic life when they were young” (Su, Culinary Arts, 19).

Regarding nourishing life techniques, Su commented that while it was a “dietary philosophy in accord with the conventional propaganda of sumptuary legislation, it also provided a channel for the wealthy or the hedonistic to smooth away their subconscious anxieties caused by the extravagant consumption of foods.” (Su, Culinary Arts, 29-30.) Nourishing life techniques were thus an aspect of the rapid fluctuation between both literal and ethical binge and purge practices that characterized late Ming elite life in the Yangzi Delta.

An essential guide to the leisure consumer culture in which Dingqiu was both imbricated and railed against is Wu Jen-shu 巫仁恕, You you fang xiang: Ming Qing Jiangnan chengshi de xiuxian xiao fei yu kongqian bianqian 優游坊廂: 明清江南城市的休閒消費與空間變遷 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, 2013).
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by erecting a table in the compound courtyard and filling it was moon cakes and other comestibles.20

The Peng residence was just inside the city’s southeastern Feng 蕉 Gate. It was at the opposite corner of the city from the most commercially vibrant area that surrounded the northwestern Chang 園 Gate. In contrast to the northwest corner of the city, in which many of the older families resided, the neighborhood in which the Peng compound was located was relatively undeveloped. A fair amount of land still devoted to agriculture, and other areas not yet rebuilt from the destruction attending the Qing conquest. If the sky was clear on the night of the 1674 Mid-Autumn Festival, the area around the Feng Gate would have been among the best illuminated in the city. And the Pengs were in a good position to take advantage of lunar radiance: they had both their own garden and a private gate to the neighboring Southern Garden (Nanyuan 南園), one of Suzhou’s more celebrated Song dynasty-era creations.

At least three generations were present at the 1674 Mid-Autumn Festival: Peng Long; Dingqiu; and Dingqiu’s infant son Shiqian 始乾. Although Dingqiu’s grandfather Dexian had died nearly a decade earlier, his granduncle Xingxian 行先 lived on for decades more as a celebrated local venerable. It is possible that he was there that night, representing a fourth generation in attendance. With such a sizable clan on a major festival, it is likely that it was deep into the night before Dingqiu ascended to the highest point (loutou 樓頭) in the family compound. When Dingqiu did get away, he specified that, contrary to a reader’s expectations for a festival evening, he was “alone” (du 獨).

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Next Dingqiu prostrated himself before the Dipper (li Dou 礼斗). While it is possible that Dingqiu actually faced the Northern Dipper constellation, which may have been resplendently visible from a window, he certainly prostrated himself before an image of the Dipper Mother (Doumu 斗母/姆); it is possible a statue was permanently installed on the premises. Dipper Mother worship originated with devotion to the Brahmantic goddess Marici (Chinese: Molizhi 摩利支), who was first brought to the Chinese court in the early eighth century.\(^{21}\) Popular with literati in the early Qing Yangzi Delta, Dipper Mother devotion was closely tied to worship of Wenchang, the deity with whom Dingqiu would become most closely associated.\(^ {22}\)

After his initial prostration was complete, “on the spur of the moment” Dingqiu “set up a stylus” (ou she yi ji 偶設一乩). These three quick steps were all it took to establish a ritual space into which a deity could descend. In contrast to the three-person minimum spirit-writing session set forth by Goyama, the form practiced by Dingqiu on the night of the Mid-Autumn Festival represents literati spirit-writing at its barest essentials.

With little time elapsing, a spirit exerted pressure against the stylus (you shen ping 有神憑). Dingqiu did not mention a sand tray (shapan 沙盤) or other medium on which he was writing, but the use of the word stylus (ji) implies that it was not a brush (bi 筆)

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More work remains to be done on the relationship between the Dipper Mother and Wenchang in the Qing dynasty. My exploration in this chapter of the proximity of Dingqiu’s transmissions from the two high gods is intended as a contribution in this regard.
dipped in ink on paper. Dingqiu’s subsequent remarks about this session also indicated that it left no material record of the communication.

In a revealing qualification, Dingqiu specified that he did “not use talismans or incantations” (bu yong fu zhou 不用符咒). Clearly he recognized that use of such devices was standard practice, and that a reader would assume he had employed them unless he specified otherwise. Given the Daoist origins of talismans and Dao-Buddhist associations of incantations, it is likely that Dingqiu’s avoidance of them was a Confucian ideological stance: perhaps he judged such methods to be the provenance of ritual masters of lower social status. Yet however barebones his set up, it was good enough for the god: the stylus in Dingqiu’s hand “stirred in flight, producing written characters, many auspicious words.”

Dingqiu was vague about the content of the actual message, but from later events it is clear that they were a prophecy of his future examination success. The next day—mere hours after Dingqiu’s late night session—Dingqiu presented the news to his father. The verb Dingqiu used—“make known” or “announce” (zhi gao 告知)—is one of bureaucratic communication; a fitting choice for a matter of great import to the prospects of the clan as a corporate entity.

It is evident from the above passage that Dingqiu was already familiar with the mechanisms of establishing an altar. As his father was the first one to whom he turned with news of his success in contacting the spirits, we can speculate that Dingqiu had

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23 Yet incantations occupied a prominent place in the penance ritual Dingqiu received in 1680 and which was subsequently performed at the Cultural Star Pavilion.
24 飛動成字，多吉祥語。 Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 14b.
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participated in such activities alongside Peng Long. The new development of 1674 was Dingqiu’s apparently successful independent communication with the spirits.

Peng Long took his son’s report with great seriousness. In order to concentrate on the development without the distracting requirements of urban sociality, father and son “moved the stylus” (yi ji 移乩) to the clan’s Solitary Cypress Mountain Retreat (Yi bo shanfang 一柏山房) in the hills on the shore of Lake Tai, approximately a day’s ride from Suzhou by horse, palanquin, or boat. Once there they “set up an altar” (she tan 設壇). The shift in terminology from “stylus” (ji) to “altar” (tan) is significant: together father and son progressed from a stripped down, nearly impromptu form of divine communication to one that resembled the setup of various established spirit-writing altars around the city. Such altars had served since at least the late Ming as social clubs, as well as engines of doctrinal innovation.

The father and son pair set up the altar properly, but for nearly a week, the spirits did not descend. Mortal devotees created a ritual space amenable to spirits, but the spirits arrived at their own behest. In contrast to the relatively rapid and prolific communication Dingqiu received on the night of the Mid-Autumn Festival, in the mountain retreat they were initially silent. Why?

The reasons for the lapse go to the heart of the social organization of literati spirit-writing altars in early Qing Suzhou. The first element to consider is that Dingqiu’s

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25 For an example of Dingqiu attending a ritual along with his father Peng Long, see the discussion of the Mid-Prime (Zhongyuan 中元) ritual conducted by the Daoist priest Shi Daoyuan 施道淵 (1617-78) in Chapter 7.
26 Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 14b.
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state of nervous exhaustion clearly facilitated his initial successful communication.28 Such a condition is most certainly not acknowledged in conventional sources on spirit-writing. Sickness preceding prophecy would have brought to mind the possession of mediums, against whom righteous Classicists had been warring practically since the advent of the scholar-bureaucrat (ru 儒) as a distinct sociological grouping in the Han dynasties (206 BCE-220 CE). The proper image literati practitioners of spirit-writing sought to project, in contrast, was of clear communication between celestial officials and their this-worldly subalterns.

The social aspect of the delay at the mountain retreat is also inescapable. Alone and perturbed, a deity came to Dingqiu quickly. Once his father was involved, however, the matter was more formal and deliberate. This was intentional. Peng Long wished to put a brake on any emergent mysticism in his son. Instead, father demonstrated to son the proper way of handling divine communication: deliberate and clear-headed while well-rested. Such modifications of the technique of divine communication allow us to discern the process of verification in which elite practitioners engaged. The veracity of independent transmissions to a neophyte were not dismissed out of hand, but divine communications were only accepted by a group when a collectivity participated in the reception of such messages.

This insight on the collective nature of prophetic verification brings us to the second social element in the Solitary Cyprus Mountain Retreat delay. The weeklong interval gave time for other Peng clan acquaintances to get their affairs in order and travel from their urban residences to be present at the planned sessions. Dingqiu did not go from

28 Although he made no mention in Shijiang gong nianpu of previous unsuccessful attempts to contact spirits on his own, I consider it likely that Dingqiu had experimented with the communication technology.
solitary practice to a father-son duo: when Peng Long and Dingqiu tried to communicate the spirits on their own, the spirits did not accommodate them. Rather than acknowledging an intra-familial intermediate step, the next audience Dingqiu recorded with the spirits was before a group of non-clan spirit-writing practitioners (*zhong* 衆). These men were presumably Peng Long’s peers, *not* those of Dingqiu: they were the young man’s elders and social superiors. A sympathetic audience who likely wished Dingqiu well, they would not, however, uncritically accept any claim that he made. Such, indeed, was the purpose of their presence: to remove the appearance of blatant self-interest in clan members receiving auspicious commentaries regarding themselves (Dingqiu) or other immediate family members (Peng Long).

Who were the other attendees at the Solitary Cypress Mountain Retreat session? Other than his father, Dingqiu did not record the name of any one individual. As we will see below, this is not because they were anonymous *hoi polloi*, but because Dingqiu would soon view them as adversaries. Suzhou in the 1660s boasted a crowded field of literati spirit-writing altars.\(^2^9\) In a piece authored in the early 1790s, Dingqiu’s great-grandson Peng Shaosheng related that in 1674 three distinct spirit-writing altars—some of which had been active for more than a decade—were brought under single management.\(^3^0\) The three altars had been dedicated to the Dark Warrior (*Xuanwu* 玄武), the Dipper Mother, and Wenchang. Thus, at the time of Dingqiu’s first revelations, two

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\(^2^9\) Little of the scholarship on late Ming and early to mid-Qing spirit-writing can avoid discussing Suzhou prefecture. For example, the bulk of Goyama Kiwamu’s 1994 study of “occult interests” among late imperial literati focused on events in Wujiang 吳江 county directly south of the prefectural seat of Suzhou, and the Pengs’ own Changzhou county in the eastern portion of the walled city of Suzhou. Goyama’s primary case studies were the late Ming literati Ye Shaoyuan 葉紹袁 (1589-1648) of Wujiang county and You Tong of Changzhou county. See: Goyama, “Minshin no bunjin to okaruto shumi,” esp. 482-500.

\(^3^0\) The resulting “Jade Altar” endured for at least another one hundred and twenty year. Shaosheng stated that he first participated in one of the altar’s séances in his 30s (mid-1770s through mid-1780s). See: Peng Shaosheng, “Yu tan ji” in YXJJ, *j.*, 5: 24b.
of the deities with whom he claimed to have direct communication were already making regular visits to other literati altars in Suzhou. 1674 was the year in which Dingqiu emerged from behind his father’s shadow and insisted on being regarded as a peer by the elite gentleman who administered the altars and, through their altars, maintained a monopoly on divine sanction. 1674 was also the year of a major organizational shake-up among Suzhou’s altars. Such a shake-up was a window of opportunity for an ambitious young man convinced that he had a direct line to the gods. Though Dingqiu declined to name the altar members who came to verify his revelation, that he was known to them is revealed by the periodic occurrence of his name in the transcripts of spirit-altars not administered by Dingqiu.

When the gentlemen had assembled the spirits obliged. The divine message was momentous. It read: “In the bingchen year [1676] the register of examination results will state: ‘Palace and metropolitan: on both examinations it has already been noted that Dingqiu is the top ranked.’”

The audacity of the Dingqiu’s declaration deserves highlighting: although it had taken him over a decade to emerge from county student status, and despite having failed to even place on the last metropolitan examination, he was now claiming that in the next triennial cycle he would achieve the exact two-fold optimus distinction won by his neighbor Han Tan in the previous cycle. It is not difficult to understand why Peng Long’s peers chose to regard Dingqiu’s “prophecy” as the delusion of a troubled young man rather than as a divine revelation.

31 「丙辰榜信曰：『殿會兩試已注定求第一名』。 Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 14b.
Dingqiu stated of the prophecy: “[I] made this known to the general attendees” 
(*dui zhong xuan ming* 對衆宣明). The exact logistics of the transmission remain obscure. Dingqiu’s phrasing indicates that, despite the presence of others, Dingqiu was exclusively in charge of receiving the revelation. Perhaps the assembled practitioners had said to Dingqiu, in effect, “Show us what you did on the night of the Mid-Autumn Festival,” and Dingqiu had complied. Regardless, despite the presence of so many participants, there is not evidence in Dingqiu’s account of the three-person minimum altar organization described as normative by Goyama.

Response to Dingqiu’s announcement ranged from undisguised incredulity to polite disbelief. Dingqiu recorded in his autobiography: “There were none who were not breathless” (*wu bu za she* 無不咋舌). Perhaps some assembled spirit-altar veterans ribbed him good-naturedly, but a still-harried Dingqiu took offense. It is clear from his subsequent communication from Wenchang, however, that the young man was seriously offended.

Members of the group proposed a common means of saving face for the communication recipient without collectively validating the revelation. In Dingqiu’s words: “Surprised and doubtful, they said I had come into contact with a ghost.” There were a lot of spirits floating around, and spirit-writing technology could be manipulated by lower beings who assumed the guise of higher gods. A communication from one such “ghost” would explain why Dingqiu had been provided with erroneous information.

A little over a week after Dingqiu’s initial elation of the night of the Mid-Autumn, Dingqiu’s psychological state had plummeted in to self-doubt. Conceding to group

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opinion, Dingqiu recorded: “I too speculated that it was not the intention of [the spirit] that had been conveyed. What was I to make of this absurd prediction?”

Persistent Communications

The exchange that took place between Dingqiu and his familial and social elders at the Peng clan’s mountain retreat provides a window into the process of claiming the authority to receive divine revelations on a spirit-altar in early Qing Suzhou. In 1674 Dingqiu was young and as yet unproven. Since the mid-Ming dynasty the Changzhou county Peng clan had been considered peers by the top familial lineages in Suzhou; among those who vouched for the clan’s arrival in the Pengshi zongpu (Genealogy of the Peng Clan) were numerous presented scholars and one optimus (see Chapter 4). But the lineage was hardly the examination powerhouse that it would become after Dingqiu’s momentous achievement in 1676. The 1674 session was Dingqiu’s first solo venture and he unambiguously failed in establishing his authority as a receiver of divine revelations among the who’s who of Suzhou spirit altar. Yet he did not give up. He carried his claim to a younger generation: the lowly county student.

Despite or perhaps because of the self-doubt sown by the reaction of his father’s peers to his revelation, Dingqiu returned to the planchette for further instruction. He related in his autobiography that he subsequently obtained “The Dipper Mother’s Exhortation to the World” in one folio (Doumu quan shi wen yi pian 《斗姥勸世文》一

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33 余亦自猜非意所至。何以感此妄緣。 Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 14b.
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篇) and “The Thearch Lord Wenchang’s Instructions to Scholars in three folios” (Wenchang dijun xun shi wen san pian ming 文昌帝君訓士文三篇命). Rather than taking this material back to his father’s acquaintances as further proof of his suitability as a divine messenger, Dingqiu took the audacious step of having them carved in stone and displayed at the Cultural Star Pavilion.\textsuperscript{34} That Dingqiu was apparently able to erect one or more stelae at the site of his original revelation testifies to the close relationship of the Pungs with the Cultural Star Pavilion compound.

There are no extant printings of either the Dipper Mother or the Wenchang compositions dating from Dingqiu’s own day, nor did he quote from either in Shijiang gong nianpu. Yet texts claiming to be each of these revelations are preserved in eighteenth and nineteenth century devotional compilations. For the sake of caution I will refer to these texts as the “received version” of Dingqiu’s two early revelations. Caution is warranted because a posthumous Dingqiu-as-celestial-official was widely claimed as author and editor of spirit-written texts from 1720 through the Republican period (1912-49).\textsuperscript{35}

Yet I consider it likely that the transmitted Dipper Mother and Wenchang proclamations are what they claim to be. Versions of both of these compositions may have appeared in printed anthologies as early as the 1740s, within thirty years of Dingqiu’s passing.\textsuperscript{36} This is not a greater temporal gap than many posthumous literary

\textsuperscript{34}即刻示於文星閣下。Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 14b.

While Dingqiu also used the verb “to carve” (刻) in Shijiang gong nianpu to indicate the cutting of woodblocks for printing, the combination with “display” (示) in this passage makes it clear that he ordered a stelae carved and erected.

\textsuperscript{35} On works posthumously attributed to Dingqiu, see Chapter 8.

\textsuperscript{36} I cannot state with certainly that the compositions bearing Peng Dingqiu’s name appeared in the 1740s because I have so far only had the opportunity to examine nineteenth century expanded editions of these collections.
collections whose authenticity is not questioned by present day scholars. We cannot
absolutely rule out the possibility that devotees after Dingqiu’s time, having heard tell of
his 1674 test of faith, may have filled in lost revelations with newly received texts. But
Dingqiu’s account of publicizing his revelations makes it quite plausible that the printed
ditions are what they claim to be. Erecting a stelae in a quasi-public place not only
provided access to interested readers in close proximity to visit the site: a sort of pre-
modern lithograph, through rubbings stelae provided an inexpensive and practically
unlimited means of distribution.

The received versions of both revelations mention Dingqiu by name. Further,
both are dated in a manner consistent with Dingqiu’s autobiography: the Dipper Mother
text is dated the fifteenth day of the eighth month of 1674, while the Wenchang text declared that it was delivered “a day in autumn” of the same year. The content of both revelations also meshes with what Dingqiu recorded about the contestation of his authority as a receiver of divine revelations and the anxiety he felt in preparing for the metropolitan examinations.

In the text the Dipper Mother vouches for Dingqiu’s sincerity as a devotee: a vote of confidence he clearly needed to remedy his own self-doubt and counter his detractors. Towards its close the Dipper Mother composition declared:

Peng Dingqiu is a person who truly worships the Dipper. He worships at the [prescribed] times, and he also worships when it is not the [prescribed] time. Just as there is a Dipper [constellation] in the heavens, so too is there a Dipper in [Dingqiu’s] heart. For this reason I descended via the stylus in his home, and composed this in order to universally exhort the Dipper worshipers of the world.

彭定求真拜斗者也。拜時拜，不拜時亦拜。天上有斗，心上亦有斗也。吾故降乩其家，而書此以普勸世之拜斗者也。

The Wenchang text, for its part, contains a passage sufficiently petulant and vengeful to ring true as the response of a harried 30 sui examination candidate to detractors who failed to believe divine premonition of his attainment of the universally coveted two-fold optimus distinction. The concluding passage of the third article reads: “Yet people do not know [the preceding moral prescriptions] and say: ‘It is Dingqiu writing in my place; it is Peng Long polishing it up.’” In Qing usage the phrase “to polish up” (runse 潤色) was leveled by non-lineage members as a charge of textual

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39 甲寅八月二十五 (Goossaert, Livres, 76).
40 康熙甲寅秋日: i.e., the seventh through the ninth months of the lunar year (“Ming Peng Dingqiu xuanshi,” j. 11: 19a).
41 My translation is based upon that of Goossaert into French.
42 但人不知者。謂彭定求之代筆也。謂彭瓏之潤色也。 “Ming Peng Dingqiu xuanshi,” j. 11: 22b-23a.
interference by lineage members.\textsuperscript{43} Those not in the know were clearly the “general audience” (zhong) whose muster Dingqiu had not passed at the mountain retreat. In refuting his detractors’ claim that Dingqiu produced nothing authentic of his own, Wenchang was helping Dingqiu fight his way out from under the shadow of his father.

The so-called “God of Literature” did not stop at attesting to the authenticity of Dingqiu’s revelation: he leveled a devastating curse on such detractors. “As a result for those who speak like this,” the revelation continued, “I will cause them to end their days in penury; degrade their allotted life-span; excise their longevity; bring calamity upon their male progeny; squander their material wealth; inter their corpse;\textsuperscript{44} and intensify their sickness.”\textsuperscript{45} It is plausible that those acquaintances of Peng Long who rearranged busy schedules to hear out his physically and emotional exhausted son had had Dingqiu’s best interests at heart. Dingqiu, however, clearly did not regard their acts as benign. If Wenchang’s words reflect Dingqiu’s own feelings at the time, Dingqiu could not have despised the other altar participants more.

\textsuperscript{43} As such, it sheds light on editorial practices among lineage members, the perception of such practices by non-lineage members, and the concept of authorship itself. For example, when Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764-1849) was considering Zang Lin 臧琳 for inclusion in the Rulin zhuan 儒林傳 (Biographies of Classicist scholars), he received letters from fellow scholars protesting that Zang’s descendants had “polished up” his Jingyi zaji 經義雜記 (Miscellaneous jottings on the meanings of the Classics). Zang Yong庸, a descendant of Zang Lin’s, vigorously protested what he termed the “polishing up by descendants theory” (zisun runse zhi shuo 子孫潤色之說) as slander. In the end, Ruan included Zang Lin in the collection. See: Wang Fan-sen 王汎森, “Qingdai ruuzhe de quanshentang: Guoshi rulinzhuan yu Daoguang nianjian Gu ciji de chengli” 清代儒者的全神堂—《國史儒林傳》與道光年間顧祠祭的成立, in Quanli de maoxi guan zuoyong: Qingdai de shixiang, xueshu yu xintai 權力的毛細管作用: 清代的思想、學術與心態 (Taipei: Lianjing, 2013): 569.

\textsuperscript{44} As the proper burial of one’s corpse was a crucial element of both worldly propriety and a peaceful afterlife, the inclusion of this item in the curse is confusing. Bearing in mind that Wenchang’s celestial duties included administration of the register of the lifespan (Siming 司命) of mortals, it is best understood as a threat to inflict early death.

\textsuperscript{45} 果有如此言者。吾使其貧賤終身。斥其祿秩。削其壽。禍其子孫。耗其財物。喪其骨肉。加其疾病也。 “Ming Peng Dingqiu xuanshi,” j. 11: 23a.
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Should Dingqiu have been discouraged by the underwhelming reaction to his first revelation, Wenchang prescribed that the young examination candidate ignore the profane world and focus on rewards in the hereafter: “Master Peng is not to show compassion for the words of men, nor is he to follow vulgar sentiments. His reward will come in heaven.”46 Beginning in 1720, the year after his death, Dingqiu would return on the spirit and announce his posthumous appointment as a celestial official (tianguan 天官). Yet he would not have to wait until after he died for a reward for his principled defense of Wenchang’s divine authority: he was able to vindicate himself in the examination hall a year and a half later, proving the veracity of the prediction of Wenchang’s emissary. Dingqiu himself credited his success to divine intervention. He concluded the entry describing his examination success in his autobiography with the pithy maxim: “I believe it was ‘the will of Heaven rather than the effort of man’.”47 In this ostensibly modest remark, Dingqiu traded a claim of his own suitability as the greatest literary talent in the empire in exchange for a greater one: he was in his person an implement of divine will.

A Different Picture of Early Qing Spirit-Writing

Both the Dipper Mother and the Wenchang revelations explicitly identified themselves as spirit-written.48 Moreover, in addressing the process of its own composition, the Dipper Mother text provides needed information on the nuts and bolts of the early Qing spirit-writing process.

47 信天意，非人力也。 Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 15b.
48 The Dipper Mother text characterized itself as a “descending-through-the-planchette composition” (jiang ji shu 降乩書; Goossaert, Livres, 76). In the first item (tiao) of the Wenchang text, after holding forth on the need for scholars to obey his proscriptions, Wenchang stated: “Peng Dingqiu is immensely capable of knowing these principles. Therefore I descended-through-the-planchette at his residence.” 彭定求頗能知此道理。我故降乩其家。（“Ming Peng Dingqiu xuanshi,” j. 11: 20b).
Dingqiu’s autobiography provides only a modicum of information on the logistics of establishing an altar. He clearly expected his readers to have a grasp of the general process. Nor does the collection of Dingqiu’s spirit-altar transcripts edited and published by his great-grandson Peng Shaosheng in 1773 provide further information about the organization of the writing process itself.

I contend that when Dingqiu was just a neophyte his process was furthest from the standard described by Goyama. Specifically, I believe Dingqiu was essentially a one man show in his communication on the night of the Mid-Autumn Festival, that at the Solitary Cyprus Mountain Retreat for which there were numerous witness, and his subsequent communications with both the Dipper Mother and Wenchang later that autumn. Once he broke into spirit-writing milieu, however, and established his authority as an altar supervisor, his techniques became more orthodox, both by the criteria of his own peers and that of present day scholars.

What made the planchette acceptable to orthodox Classicists (and it was not acceptable to all of them) was precisely the erasure of the human spirit-medium. As early as the third century Classicists, Celestial Master Daoists, and Buddhists formed a united front against popular religious practices of the southeast characterized by bloody sacrifices and mediumism.49 Upright officials periodically launched campaigns against popular practices, be it Di Renjie 狄仁杰 (630-700) or friend of the Peng clan Tang Bin 湯斌 (1627-87) in 1680s Suzhou. Dingqiu’s account of his first session included the mention of a stylus (ji), so he was within the boundaries of literati conduct. As a solitary

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(du) personage, though, he was flirting with heterodoxy. Vincent Goossaert rendered the passage from the received Dipper Mother text that I translated above as “I descended via the stylus in his home” as “j’ai possédé un medium dans sa maison” (emphasis mine), critically inserting a person other than Dingqiu in the situation. Given the massive onus against mediums in the Classicist tradition, it would be quite remarkable if the scion of an upwardly mobile lineage of literati-officials had invited one into the clan compound.

If not an outside medium, who else could have served the function of transmitting a divine communication within the Peng clan compound? A household slave? This was a documented possibility among Yangzi Delta elites. For example, Hong Mai’s 洪邁 (1123-1202) Yijian zhi 夷堅志 recorded a tale in which the recently deceased child of an official in Changzhou 常州 descended through the family’s maid. Yet scorn for the words of slaves is among the hallmarks of early to mid-Qing elite spirit-writing. For example, one of the communications from Wenchang which Dingqiu is said to have received in the fall of 1674 contained the injunction: “Do not lightly give credence to slaves.” It would be a rich irony indeed if some six months earlier Wenchang himself was communicating through one such household servant.

In contesting the authenticity of a posthumous manifestation Dingqiu’s great-grandson also invoked the perfidy of the help. In a piece originally appended to Wang Shizhen’s 王世貞 (1526-90) account of the young female mystic Tanyangzi 曙陽子, Shaosheng reiterated Wang’s refutation of some of Tanyangzi’s followers that she had

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50 For a survey of hostile attitudes against wu 巫, see: Donald Sutton, “From Credulity to Scorn: Confucians Confront the Spirit Mediums in Late Imperial China,” *Late Imperial China* 21.2 (2000): 1-39.
52 毋輕信奴僕。 “Ming Peng Dingqiu xuanshi,” j. 11: 21b.
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returned as a posthumous persona (*houshen* 後身). Shaosheng did so by claiming that the handwritten compositions some of Tanyangzi’s disciples had received after her death did nothing more than “record from start to finish the slanders created by household slaves.”⁵³

While the present generation of scholars of Chinese religions are increasingly reluctant to posit a class-based difference on the level of *practices*,⁵⁴ such blatant class prejudices were certainly a constitutive element of elite praxis.

The search for a medium is misguided: the planchette did not require possession of an entire human medium; just a hand would suffice. The deity seized control of the stylus in the hand of the supplicant. In his account of the critical Mid-Autumn Festival session Dingqiu insisted quite clearly that he was alone at the time of the revelation. A social history perspective on Yangzi Delta elites reminds us that, should servants be included in the picture, men of Dingqiu’s stature were hardly ever alone.⁵⁵ Yet Dingqiu’s choice of the wee hours of a major festival is precisely one of the few times when such a condition is conceivable: exhausted by the preparations for the feasting, the servants were most likely asleep along with the householders.

Such instances of claiming to have been alone were not confined to Dingqiu’s first venture of 1674. For example, describing a session at the beginning of the second

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⁵⁴ The following remarks by ter Haar can be taken as representative of the present consensus: “In terms of actual religious life at all social and educational levels, the pyramids of Buddhist, Daoist and popular religious culture simply do not exist (in the way that was suggested by Patricia Ebrey and Peter Gregory, using a metaphor first proposed by Erik Zürcher). Only when we confine our gaze to the normative religious culture(s) of written doctrine and codified ritual (i.e., the liturgical manuals) may the so-called “tops” of the pyramids seem separate to us. Even at this level, in fact, mutual influence and close interaction were the order of the day.” See: ter Haar, “Buddhist-Inspired Options,” 151.

month of 1680, Dingqiu stated: “The Jade Bureau through me descended-in-return.”

Far from having an onus attached to personal communication with the deities, Dingqiu’s status in a group of spirit-altar participants was predicated on the credibility of his claim to have direct access to the high gods Dipper Mother and Wenchang—along with Wenchang’s emissaries—outside the group spirit-altar setting.

Establishing the Jade Bureau

Dingqiu further bolstered the authority of his new altar by providing concrete details on the messenger: Du Xiaolin 杜喬林 (zi Meiliang 梅梁), a deceased Ming dynasty presented scholar from the neighboring prefecture of Songjiang 松江. Dingqiu claimed that Du was posthumously appointed as an emissary for Wenchang’s Jade Bureau. Nearly all of the gods and apotheosized spirits who would appear on Dingqiu’s altar were common to other altars in Suzhou and beyond, but as far as I have been able to determine Du was unique to Dingqiu’s altar. I thus deem Dingqiu as uniquely responsible for Du apotheosis.

Dingqiu identified the emissary thusly:

The one who swept away the profane selfish prayers and protected the planchette named himself: “Celestial official Du of Wenchang’s Jade Bureau, taboo name Qiaolin, style name Meiliang. Previously I was a presented scholar of the Wanli reign bingchen year. I served in successive posts up to the office of lieutenant governor of Zhejiang Province. I passed away and ascended to the heavens as a spirit. In extraordinary service to the command of the Thearch Lord, [I] have

56 玉局以余降歸。Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 20b.

“Descended-in-return” is my clunky way of translating jianggui 降歸, which I interpret as a compound verb. In religious and broader cultural discourse the verb “return” (gui 歸) often indicates that restoration of the perfected state of antiquity which has sense been corrupted: restoring is thus a “return.” In this particular passage, even if the deity is descending on the spirit altar for the first time, perhaps she was already with Dingqiu and his family, in the sense that in the above passage Dingqiu was continually worshiping the Dipper in his heart.
come to aid Dingqiu, prophesy the repayment of his karmic fruits, illustrate the clarity of harmonious response, and cause Dingqiu to shut his gates and sit quiescently for an entire month, and prepare herbals and foodstuffs so as to bolster his emaciated body.”

The historicity of Du Qiaolin is vouched for in the gazetteer record of both Zhejiang province, where he is listed in the “famous officials” (minghuan 名宦) section of the comprehensive gazetteer of 1683, and in his home prefecture of Songjiang. The gazetteer record filled out Dingqiu’s account with the information that Du was a presented scholar of 1616, and that he was of Huating county. The 1616 date is most significant: it is the previous interval on the sexagenary calendar for the date on which Dingqiu was predicted to receive the double-optimus distinction. Such is one clue to Dingqiu’s choice of a relatively obscure official from the former dynasty as his personally apotheosized local worthy.

One other reason Du may have been an attractive candidate for apotheosis for Dingqiu is that as an official in Huzhou in northern Zhejiang, at the south of Lake Tai, Du oversaw the suppression of a rebellion. As Kai-wing Chow has argued, in the early Qing the stress on equality of mid- and late Ming philosophical currents had been

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57 Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 14b-15a.
undermined by decades of bondservant rebellion. As a continuer of the Yangmingist legacy in the early Qing environment, Dingqiu may have found that Du’s military intervention in support of the existing class structure made the philosophical content of the spirit-altar discussions more palatable to the men he wished to attract to his altar.

Du would be the most consistent presence on Dingqiu’s altar: his last recorded visit to Dingqiu is on Establishing Spring (lichun 立春) in 1713, exactly forty years after their first meeting (for a full listing of the deities and dates of descent to Dingqiu’s altar, see Appendix 3.1). In 1716 Dingqiu would solidified his special relationship with the Du by assuming responsibility from Du’s descendants of caring for Du’s grave. Further, Du descended both to Dingqiu’s second son Zhengqian 正乾 (1679-1745) and his grandson Qifeng. Thanks to the status he received from Dingqiu, Du’s biography would appear alongside that of Dingqiu’s in at least one mid-Qing compendium of Wenchang scriptures.

Though Dingqiu did not provide many details on the historical personage Du Qiaolin in any of his writings, he did precisely identify Du’s posthumous affiliation as a celestial official of the Jade Bureau. The Jade Bureau, in turn, was overseen by Wenchang. The term yuju 玉局 is testified at the earliest phases of the Daoist movement. It was the “jade throne” (yu ju) on which the deified Laozi appeared to Zhang Ling 張陵, traditionally considered the founder of Celestial Master Daoism (Tianshi dao 天師道) in

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61 See the transcript of this meeting in ZSL, 70a-71a.
62 On Dingqiu’s rebuilding of Du Qiaolin’s tomb, see *Shijiang gong nianpu*.
63 ZSL, 71b-73a.
64 For details see the discussion in Chapter 6.
110 in Chengdu in the state of Shu (present day Sichuan). It was subsequently the name of one of the twenty-four dioceses (zhì 治) into which the Daoist Church was organized.65 The jurisdiction of the “Jade Throne Diocese” corresponded to present day Chengdu. While the layer of early Daoist resonance was undoubtedly present in the late imperial usage of the phrase, in the usage of Dingqiu and subsequent Wenchang devotees, consonant with official terminology since the Song dynasty, the ju was clearly a bureaucratic subdivision.

Dingqiu did not relate his contact with Emissary Du in as forceful a manner as he had with the autumn Dipper Mother and Wenchang communications he had had carved for public display. But the news of Dingqiu’s contact with Du clearly spread through the Pengs’ social network. An early responder to the air of numinosity beginning to congeal around Dingqiu was You Tong, the poet, playwright, fellow Changzhou county native, and all-around social butterfly discussed above. In the winter of 1674 You heard that Dingqiu was receiving visits. You recorded in his chronological autobiography:

The Perfected Du (Qiaolin), Gentleman Officer-of-the-Right of Wenchang, previously a presented scholar of the bingchen year [1616], a personage of Songjiang, hereupon descended to the home of Peng Ningzhi (Dingqiu), bequeathing aphorisms to instruct the generations. Just as I called upon him [Du], he granted me profound approval, and ordered me to worship the Dipper [Mother] in order to extend my allotted lifespan.

Upon receiving his order I immediately set-up an altar to the Dipper Mother in my studio, refused to receive visitors, and my entire household observed a vegetarian diet.

文昌右局大夫杜真人喬林者，前丙辰進士，松江人，至是降彭凝祉定求家，多垂格言訓世。予方往訪之，深相許可。命予禮斗以延壽命。予乃就書室結斗母壇，闔門持齋。66

66 You Tong, “Hui’an nianpu,” juan shang 上: 12b.
You Tong’s account provided further evidence of the intimate link between Wenchang and the Dipper Mother devotion. Here we have an emissary of Wenchang ordering a supplicant to perform a ritual devoted to the Dipper Mother in order to obtain succor precisely in the realm over which Wenchang himself has jurisdiction: life-extension.

Such was the process of accumulating authority: a family friend, experienced in such matters, heard of Dingqiu’s visitation, paid a respectful visit in order to investigate the authenticity of the revelation, and was sufficiently convinced of the veracity of the divine communication that he promptly acted on it. A prolific writer and staple of numerous social events, presumably You Tong attested to the authenticity of Dingqiu’s revelations to fellow literati in informal communication just as he did in print.

Conclusion

Questions regarding the examination were among the most common questions literati asked the spirits via the spirit-altar. Dingqiu’s case is significant because of the audacious level of success the spirit promised him, and the remarkable fact that he subsequently obtained the prophesied two-fold *optimus* distinction.

One important question is the extent to which the status of the Changzhou Peng clan aided Dingqiu’s establishment of his claims of divine contact. Dingqiu’s father Peng Long was a known quantity among the local gentry. A presented scholar and former county magistrate regarded by his peers as having been unjustly cashiered by a superior for his ethical stand, Peng Long held well-attended bi-monthly lectures to the same

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67 On literati prognostication as it related to the examination system, see Chapter 6 of Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China.*
county students to whom Dingqiu had turned in order to circumvent the authority of the established spirit altar managers. But an illustrious father can be as much of an obstacle as an aide—as seen in the proclamation of Wenchang to Dingqiu, Dingqiu also felt the need to assert his independence from his father. Despite whatever intergenerational conflict may have been present, without the power Dingqiu was born into it is unimaginable that he would have had the financial resources to have the proclamation from Wenchang carved on stone, let alone the social sanction to have it displayed at a building complex associated with the official county school.

In this chapter I have sought to provide an integral portrait of the process of establishing a spirit-altar in the early Qing. Reading a range of disparate sources against one another, I pieced together an account that considers personal and familial concerns against the background of broader social phenomena such as the stress of the civil examination system and the charismatic authority of spirit-altar supervisors. I have found that family support in the form of his father was initially crucial to Dingqiu’s induction into spirit altar circles. In time, however, because of his own deferred adulthood due to examination failure, Dingqiu chaffed under the subordinate position inherent in a social situation in which he and his father both participated. Dingqiu insisted on forging his own path. His choice had tremendous consequences for the future perception of the Changzhou county Peng clan locally, regionally, and empire-wide.
Part III

The Corporate Lineage
Chapter 4

*Primus Inter Pares:*

The Changzhou County Peng Lineage in the early to mid-Qing Dynasty

“If one amasses wealth to bestow on one’s descendants, one’s descendants will not necessarily be able to preserve it; if one accumulates books to bestow on one’s descendants, one’s descendants will not necessarily be able to read them; neither is on par with amassing hidden virtue in the other realm, so that one’s descendants can draw on it for a long time.”

- Sima Guang 司馬光, “Family Instructions” (*Jiaxun* 家訓)

“A family’s long-term survival is less a matter of fortuitous circumstances than of its virtue.”

- Chen Hongmou 陳弘謀, *Sourcebook on Reforming Social Practice* (*Xunsu yigui* 訓俗遺規), 1742

Suzhou in the beginning of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) was a city in flux, and deliberately so. The Ming founder Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (reign 1368-98) attempted to break the power of Suzhou’s great families who had maintained a steady regional presence in the area for more than a millennia. He confiscated the holdings of the wealthiest households and forcibly had their members moved to his capital cities. He offset the compelled outflux with a mandated influx of his own military men. Many of these men came from Jiangxi province, southwest of the Southern Administrative District (Nanzhili 南直隸) in which Suzhou was located during the Ming dynasty. An immediate motivation of Zhu’s harsh policies towards Suzhou was that Suzhou’s local elites had

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1 Quoted in Yau Chi-on, *Shan yu ren tong: Ming Qing yilai de cishan yu jiaohua* 善與人同：明清以 来的慈善與教化 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005): 231. Yau stated that this quotation was often used by compilers of morality books.

2 家之可久也，不以勢而以德。Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, rpd. of Sibu beiyao 四部備要 ed., j. 2; 3 b. For a discussion of this passage, see William Rowe, “Ancestral Rites and Political Authority in Late Imperial China,” *Modern China* 24.4 (1998): 379.

3 In the Qing Suzhou would be administered first under Jiangnan, then Jiangsu, province.
backed the wrong house in the decades-long multisided civil war that marked the end of the Mongol Yuan dynasty (1271-1368) and eventually brought Zhu to power.\(^4\) Yet Zhu’s policies in relation to Suzhou were not purely vindictive: they also reflected the ruler’s ideas of the proper distribution of power in the realm, and the commercial city’s ability to bear the highest tax burden of the empire.

The Pengs of Changzhou county were one such military household shifted from Jiangxi province as an implement of Zhu Yuanzhang’s policy. Yet their story is an entirely Suzhounese one. The Jiangxi immigrant founder of the lineage only became important in the self-presentation of his descendants after the clan accumulated economic, social, and cultural capital in the mid-Ming. By the late Ming the clan was also accumulating a very specific subset of cultural capital: a moral quality in certain patriarchs recognized by social peers and the state in the form of local administrators and, occasionally, the emperor himself.

In this chapter I outline the rise and zenith of the Changzhou county Peng lineage in terms of wealth and social prestige. Beginning in the early Ming dynasty, with increasingly detailed sources on mid- and late Ming patriarchs, I place the Pengs in their cultural, economic, and socio-political context in order to lay a foundation from which to examine in subsequent chapters they ways in which these factors interfaced with a broad range of devotional activities. Although their Feng Gate compound was incinerated in 1860 when the Taipings seized Suzhou, the Pengs maintained a presence in regional, empire-wide, and even international affairs through the late Qing and Republican periods.

as well as into the period following the communist revolution in 1949. Here I limit my account to the period preceding the Taiping Civil War (1850-64). I only treat the late nineteenth century when it is necessary to explain the role of post-civil war Peng patriarchs in our ability to evaluate their pre-civil war ancestors.

In its broad contours the trajectory of the Changzhou Pengs conforms to the pattern of many Yangzi Delta familial lineages that arose in the Ming dynasty and assumed prominence in the Qing. Rather than challenge the conclusions of scholarly assessments of the great families of the Yangzi Delta in the Ming and Qing dynasties, my intention in this chapter is to present a detailed portrait of a major lineage that has yet to receive sustained attention in the Western language scholarship.

The Genealogy as Source Material

In laying down the biographical particulars of the conventional degrees obtained and offices held, I hope to convey some sense of individual personalities and the challenges faced in their day, thereby leavening the inherent tediousness of the

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5 In a 2006 article Wang Guangcheng and Hu Yanjie discussed eighteen Peng patriarchs from generations 18 through 20 (roughly the Guangxu through Xuantong reigns) whom the 1922 lineage genealogy recorded as having graduated from advanced institutions of so-called “Western Learning” (xixue 西學). These Pengs studied in fields ranging from English language pedagogy to pharmacology, in schools from Shanghai and Beijing to Osaka and Tokyo; indeed, seven out of the eighteen studied in Japan. The authors stressed that success in the new fields did not reflect an abandonment of conventional civil examination preparation, citing the Peng lineage’s last two jinshi before the abolition of the examination system in 1905: Peng Taishi (jinshi 1898) and Peng Shixiang (jinshi 1903). Those who returned from Japan also continued to serve the Qing dynasty, with four of them obtaining juren degrees in specialized fields in the post-1905, pre-Republican re-orientation of the examinations. Wang and Hu argued that the Peng lineage’s adaptability in the face of the new educational trends of the late Qing reflect the lineage’s flexibility going back to fifth generation patriarch Peng Chun’s deliberate redirection of his sons from military to civil pursuits in the mid-Ming. See: Wang Guangcheng 王广成 and Hu Yanjie 胡艳洁, “Ming-Qing Jiangnan wangzu zai jiaoyu shang de zhuankan: Yi Changzhou Peng shi wei li” 明清江南望族在教育上的转型——以长洲彭氏为例, Chengdu jiaoyu xueyuan xuebao 成都教育学院学报 20.12 (2006): 19-21.

Self-conscious descendants of the Changzhou county Pengs lived on in Suzhou until at least 1999, the year Suzhouese writer Yu Ming 俞明 published his highly nostalgic novel Shangshu di jiujiao 尚书第旧梦 (Suzhou: Gu wu xuan chubanshe, 1999). The novel was inspired by several female descendants of Peng Qifeng. For the non-fictional background, see especially the postface (“Houji” 后记): 113-122.
unavoidable “Abraham begat Isaac” genealogical cataloging. In the framework of “action and response” (ganying 感應) of which Peng patriarchs were vocal advocates, those who would be claimed as lineal ancestors accumulated the “hidden virtue” (yinde 隱德) of unacknowledged good works in their own day. Later generations collected the interest on these good works in the form of worldly success.

The Pengs operated in a culture of ancestor reverence, by which I mean the complex of practices and attitudes beyond spring and autumn sacrifices and periodic grave cleaning indicated by the conventional term “ancestor worship.” The personal anecdotes on the conduct of ancestors preserved in the genealogies were invaluable in honing the reverent attitude of lineal descendants, enabling as they did the visualization of a full personality in a way a portrait and spirit-tablet could not. The records of difficult situations faced and ethical solutions formulated provided concrete case studies by which one could measure one’s own conduct as one sought in life to be a worthy ancestor in death. The degree to which these anecdotes conform to ideals types such as “filial paragon,” “reclusive scholar,” “honest official” for men and “chaste window” for women may make us skeptical of their veracity. Such doubts miss the point that adherence to an ideal type was the goal for both those living and those who portrayed them after they died; accordance with idealized types made ancestors all the more compelling to their descendants.

In distinction from the present day Chinese scholars who have written on the Changzhou county Pengs, I base this outline of lineal development on the earliest rather than the latest available edition of the Peng shi zongpu 彭氏宗譜 (Genealogy of the Peng Clan): that is to say, that of 1829 rather than that of 1922 (for the table of contents of the
Chapter 4

former, see Appendix 4.1; for a detailed catalog of the biographical materials contained therein, see Appendix 4.2). My rationale for doing so is consonant with the historiographical principle that earlier sources are preferable to later ones. As the 1922 genealogy reproduces the contents of the 1829 edition in nearly its entirety, my choice is one of mental conditioning rather than unsuitability of source material. The genealogy of 1922 and that of 1883 whose woodblocks it incorporated reflected post-Taiping civil war realities. As far as the great lineages of the Yangzi Delta were concerned, one of the most important elements of the postbellum order was the diffusion of the institution of charitable estates (yizhuang 義/誼莊). As the adaptation of this institution drew inspiration from the practices set forth by the influential Southern Song statesman and Suzhou native Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989-1052), it is easy to lose sight of the extent to which the popularization of the institution of charitable estates was a reaction to the demographic blow dealt to elite lineages by the civil war.7

6 Fan Zhongyan, a scion of Suzhou elite lineage, launched one of the most significant aristocratic challenges to the meritocratic reforms of the Southern Song. One aspect of this challenge was his innovations in lineage organization; innovations widely implemented in the late imperial period. See the classic article by Denis Twitchett, “The Fan Clan’s Charitable Estate, 1050-1760,” in Confucianism in Action, eds. David Nivison and Arthur F. Wright (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959): 97-133, as well as his “Documents on Clan Administration: I, The Rules of Administration of the Charitable Estate of the Fan Clan,” Asia Major 8 (1960-61): 1-35. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, another aspect of Fan’s reforms was the implementation of county-level government schools throughout the empire.


Curiously, given the centrality of Suzhou in late imperial culture and society, the development of charitable estates in the neighboring prefecture of Wuxi appears to be better studied than in Suzhou. See the two classic studies by Jerry Dennerline, “The New Hua Charitable Estate and Local Leadership in Wuxi County at the End of the Ch’ing,” Select Papers from the Center for Far Eastern Studies 4 (1979-80): 19-70, and “Marriage, Adoption, and Charity in the Development of Lineages in Wu-hsi from Sung to Ch’ing,” in Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China, 1000-1940, eds. Patricia Ebrey and James Watson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986): 170-209, as well as the more recent survey by Tang Keke 汤可可, “Jindai Wuxi yizhuang de zhuanxing bianqian” 近代无锡义庄的转型变迁, in Jiangnan shehui lishi pinglun 江南社会历史评论, ed. Tang Lixing 唐力行 (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2013): 188-201.
In adopting the institution of the charitable estate, the Peng lineage was consistent with most of their peers: the pre-Taiping genealogy makes no mention of the institution, while the post-Taiping genealogies of 1883 and 1922 offer a detailed map of the physical structure—which they report had been destroyed in the civil war—and guidelines for its management. In ostensibly continuing such practices, post-civil war Peng patriarchs invoked lineal predecessors. One of the questions I seek to clarify in this chapter and the dissertation more broadly is the extent to which practices instituted by Dingqiu actually prefigured those implemented after the Taiping rupture or if they the two were only retroactively conflated.

Compiled and printed by lineage members themselves, the genealogy is one of the most patently self-interested genres of the late imperial period. With due skepticism I have consulted laterally in the literary anthologies of the authors of obituaries, in gazetteers, and in mid- to late Qing autobiographical compendia. In the material that I draw upon in this chapter I have not found significant acts of editorial censorship of untoward incidents, such as the potentially unflattering reasons for a particular patriarch’s dismissal from a particular post. The import of this finding lies in my contention that both

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8 In the late eighteenth century Peng Qifeng made a modest donation of 10 mu 畝 of land, the rents from which could be used to look after unfortunate members of the lineage. He exhorted others in the lineage to do the same. In 1876 lineage patriarchs formally created the Peng’s first charitable estate. The consolidated holdings amount to over 1300 mu. See the discussion in: Hu Yanjie 胡艳杰, “Qingdai Suzhou keju shijia yanjiu: Yi Changzhou Peng shi jiazu wei li” 清代苏州科举世家研究——以长洲彭氏家族为例 (M.A. Thesis, Soochow University, 2006): 62-64. In present day Suzhou a narrow alley near the Peng’s reconstructed residence marks the former site of their charitable estate.

9 In order to contain the profusion of encyclopedic footnotes, I have consigned biographical material from which I do not draw directly to the descriptive catalog on Peng lineage members which follows the body of this dissertation. Although I do not belabor the point in this chapter, I do feel that the range of biographical compendia in which a certain patriarch is included is an important measure of their important to later generations. Different compendia also represent different—if potentially overlapping—constituencies claiming the subject of the biography as a predecessor, whether it be as a Learning of the Principles thinker, an official, or a painter or calligrapher: all mid- to late Qing compendia in which Peng patriarchs were included. Consideration of these compendia also reminds us that the lineal genealogy was only one lineal practice among many. I explore the intersection of lineal claims among familial, intellectual, and faith-based successors most fully in the penultimate chapter.
within the lineage and among fellow literati-officials the virtuous behavior of a critical mass of Peng patriarchs was recognized by consensus from the mid-Ming through the late Qing. The genealogies were curated by Peng patriarchs from compositions by their relatives and social peers—two groups that were not distinct, given the frequency of intermarriage and fictional kinship relationships. The important point is that, however laudatory the picture painted in the genealogies, it was painted by a group larger than the clan itself.\(^{10}\)

The Ming Dynasty Background: Accumulating Capital, Cultural and Financial

The surname Peng is first documented in Qingjiang 清江 county, Linjiang 臨江 prefecture, Jiangxi province, in the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1279).\(^{11}\) Qingjiang was the birthplace of Peng Xueyi 學一, who by the mid-Ming would be claimed as the apical ancestor (literally, “initial progenitor” [shizu 始祖]) of the Changzhou county Peng lineage. There is little evidence in Xueyi’s terse biographical remains to indicate that the historical personage would have had any grounds to expect such exalted posthumous prospects. In the disorder of the late Yuan dynasty (1279-1367) Xueyi formed a regional self-defense group that came to affiliate with rebel leader Zhu Yuanzhang. In the early

\(^{10}\) If one were to exempt non-Peng obituary authors with ties of marriage with the Engs from the authors of obituaries contained in the Peng shi zongpu one would be left with a significantly smaller pool of accounts of the importance of Peng patriarchs in their own day. Yet to do so would be to miss the import of inter-marriage among ruling elites. The process of obituary composition generally went like this: a social peer is called upon to vouch for the merit of the deceased patriarch of another clan, often by the progeny of that deceased patriarch with whom the local notable being solicited has an objective social tie, such as a teacher-student relationship. As in the case of Wen Zhengming discussed below, the notable being solicited can make no more convincing proof of his own testimony of another clan’s worthiness than offering one of his own descendants to join the two clans in perpetuity. In this way literary ties were made physically manifest.

\(^{11}\) For a comprehensive of the surname Peng from origins to the present, see: Wu Jianhua 吳建華, Peng xing shi hua 彭姓史話 (Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 2003).
years of the new Ming dynasty founded by Zhu in 1368, Xueyi was ordered to Suzhou under military register (bing ji 兵籍). There, he resided in the Left Thousand Households Division of the Commandery (Suzhou wei zuo qianhusuo 蘇州衛左千戶所).

The movement of troops to Suzhou was a critical element of the new emperor’s harsh treatment of Yangzi Delta elites in general and Suzhou elites in particular. In a region in which a number of wealthy lineages could plausibly trace their presence back to the Six Dynasties period (222-589), local elites were not easily intimidated by new rulers.

Ironically for the putative founder of what would become a major lineage, Peng Xueyi died without progeny. Peng Zhongying 仲英 was the first of two sons borne to Peng Xueyi’s elder sister and her husband Yang Haizhong 楊海中; a local magistrate mandated that Zhongying be designated the posthumous adopted heir of Xueyi in order to fill Xueyi’s place on the military register. Third generation patriarch Peng Yanhong 彥洪 (zi Bin 斓) was Zhongying’s only son.

Peng Yanhong’s third son Peng Chun 淳 (zi Zhipu 至朴, hao Dan’an 澹庵) was the first patriarch in the emerging lineage to accumulate significant wealth through commerce. Yanhong allotted a portion of his wealth for the education of his sons so that they might obtain positions in officialdom. This new direction set the course for the lineage for the ensuing four centuries. In an early formulation of the new presentational

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12 On the Ming military household system, see: Yue Chih-chia 于志嘉, Mingdai junhu shixi zhida 明代軍戶世襲制度 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1987). On the system in Jiangxi in particular, see the same author’s Weisuo, junhu, yu junyi: Yi Ming-Qing Jiangxi diqu wei zhongxin de yanjiu 衛所、軍戶與軍役——以明清江西地區為中心的研究 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2010).

strategy, Wang Ting 王庭 (1434-93; jinshi 1462) testified of the Pengs: “From Dan’an [Peng Chun] on, all studied the classics and practiced the rites, being what could be called ‘virtuous and prosperous.’”¹⁴ Wang Ting’s portrayal of Peng Chun brings to mind Timothy Brooks’ observation on the new confidence evident in merchant biography in the mid-Ming: “expansive commercialization made righteous profit possible.” Put differently, it may not have only been that merchants were secure enough in their wealth to command “Confucianized biographies”; expanded commercial opportunities may have also opened the way for less blatant unethical consolidation of wealth than in preceding periods.¹⁵

The earliest biography preserved in the Peng shi zongpu is of Chun’s wife née Liu 劉, hui Suneng 素能 (Unadorned Competence). Validating Susan Mann’s work on the importance of women in a Yangzi Delta lineages’ “family learning” (jiaxue 家學) traditions, in the obituary two-fold optimus Wu Kuan 吳寬 (1435-1504; jinshi 1472) asserted that Suneng “taught all of her sons that they must accord with the rites and righteousness; for her middle son, the county student Fang, she planned out his program of study.”¹⁶

Chun passed away when his eldest son was only 24 sui, and his wife Suneng followed soon after. Yet the couple’s strategic investment in education bore fruit when his second son Peng Fang 昊 (zi Yinzhì 宕之, Sigan 斯干, hao Xizhi 西枝) obtained a

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¹⁴ 由澹庵而上，皆讀書習禮，稱「善富」。Wang Ting, “Ming gu yinshi Nanchuang Peng Gong ji ji Zhang Shuoren hezang zhiming” 明故隱士南窓彭公暨續張碩人合葬誌銘 (Combined Funerary Inscription of Local Peng Southern Window, the Recluse of the Southern Ming, and his consort née Zhang), PSZP, j. 3: 9b.
¹⁶ 教諸子必以禮義。仲昉為吳庠生，程其學業。Wu Kuan 吳寬, “Pengmu Liu shi muzhiming” 彭母劉氏墓誌銘 (Grave Inscription for the Peng Matriarch née Liu), PSZP, j. 3: 5a.
raised scholar degree, thereby securing the emerging lineage’s transition from military service to the higher social status of civil administration. In 1511 Fang was awarded the lineage’s first presented scholar degree.\textsuperscript{17} Through his examination success Peng Fang obtained a post as magistrate (zhixian 知縣) of first Gong’an 公安, then Xinhui 新會 counties, both in Hu-Guang.\textsuperscript{18} Yet Fang achieved little in terms of professional advancement or financial rewards. In his obituary of Fang’s son Peng Nian 年 (1505-66), the celebrated literatus Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526-90) described the situation of Fang’s family immediately after his cashiering:

“Master Nian’s father Fang, by virtue of being named presented scholar was put in charge of Xinhui [county]. Due to ineptitude he was cashiered. After being cashiered he could no longer support his family. [He] could no longer reside in the city and could not find contentment.”\textsuperscript{19} The man later celebrated by descendants as the first to bring them glory in the civil administration arena ended his days humiliated and impoverished.

\textsuperscript{17} Peng Fang ranked 181 on the third list. He was on the register for Suzhou, Zhili province.

\textsuperscript{18} On the lives and responsibilities of county magistrates in the Ming, see Thomas Nimick, \textit{Local Administration in Ming China} (Minneapolis: Society for Ming Studies, 2008) and, more broadly, John R. Watt, \textit{The District Magistrate in Late Imperial China} (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

\textsuperscript{19} 彭先生之父昉,嘗舉進士為新會令。以不能其官,輒去。去不能其家益旁落居邑。邑不自得。Wang Shizhen, “Ming zhengshi Peng xiansheng ji pei Zhu shuoren hezang muzhiming” 明徵士彭先生及配朱碩人合葬墓誌銘 (Combined Funerary Inscriptions of the Ming Unappointed Scholar Master Peng and his Consort Lady Zhu). The inscription itself (as opposed to the composition contextualizing it) is dated Ming Longqing 1.3 (9 April-8 May 1567). In \textit{PSZP}, j. 3: 20b. In this passage I read yi 邑 as an antonym of a major city; newly impoverished, Fang could not longer afford to support his family inside the city walls and moved to a more rustic abode.

In an entry on Peng Fang’s son Peng Nian 年 in his \textit{Gusu mingxian xiaoji} 姑蘇明賢小記 (Concise Records of Famous Worthies of Suzhou), Wen Zhenmeng 文震孟 (1574-1636; jinshi 1622) concisely digested Wang Shizhen’s more substantive narrative: “[Nian’s] father Fang, by virtue of being named presented scholar, was ordered to Xinhui [county], but he was inept at his office and immediately cashiered. After being cashiered he could no longer support his family, and his family progressively declined.” 父昉以名進士令新會。不能其官,輒罷。罷不能其家。家益落。Wen Zhenmeng, “Longchi Peng Weng zhuan” 隆池彭翁傳 (Biography of Sire Peng Flourishing Pool), reproduced in the \textit{PSZP}, j. 3: 24a.

Wen Zhenmeng signed his biography of Peng Nian “maternal grandson” (wai sun 外孫).
Chapter 4

The Pengs’ draping of themselves in the cultural accouterments of literati is also evident in the figure of Peng Chun’s eldest son Peng Shi (zi Zhongzhi 中之, hao Nanchuang jushi 南窗居士 [Retired Scholar of the Southern Window]). Shi is the first Peng patriarch for whom we have an account of his scholarly inclinations. In his obituary of Shi, Wang Ting stated that Shi “was widely read in biographies. As for the traces of sage and worthies, the loyal and filial, the flourishing and decline [of dynasties], and times of order and disorder, he compiled records of it all.” Shi’s works included a Wenjian lu 閲見錄 (Record of Things Seen and Heard) and poetry anthology. In 1543 the Suzhou prefect (zhifu 知府) Wang Nanchong 王南充 honored Shi as “this year’s exemplary Classicist of sixty years of age or older.”

The successes of Peng Shi (the eldest of the fifth generation) in the cultural realm and of his younger brother Peng Fang in the official realm did not prompt the emergent Peng lineage to rashly turn its back on commerce. The opposite appears to be true: the continued involvement of one brother in trade undergirded the shift to the cultural realm. Such prudence was necessary as the initial achievements of the lineage in office holding and the attendant Classicist posturing were immediately remunerative socially but not fiscally. Put differently, Peng Shi and Peng Fang were lineal pioneers in performing

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20 Not to be confused with the identically named Peng Shi 彭時 (1416-1475) of Anfu 安富, Jiangxi, on whom see the entry by Tildemann Grimm in DMB, v. 2: 1119-20.
21 博覽傳記。於聖賢，忠孝，興衰，治亂之跡，多所編錄。Wang Ting, “Ming gu yinshi Nanchuang Peng gong ji ji Zhang shuoren hezang zhiming” 明故隱士南窓彭公暨張碩人合葬誌銘 (Combined Funerary Inscription of Local Peng Southern Window, the Recluse of the Southern Ming, and his consort née Zhang), in PSZP, j. 3: 10a-b. This Wang Ting is not to be confused with the identically named person from Kunshan 昆山 who lived from 1434-1493.
Classicism before the lineage could muster the resources to support such a lifestyle by means consistent with the orthodox Classicist ideology.

Peng Chun’s third son Wei 昀 was the one who attended to the lineage’s financial health; as Wang Ting put it: “The younger brother Wei excelled at computation so as to manage financial affairs.”23 Peng Wei thereby solidified the lineage’s economic foundation from which to pursue examination success.

In an obituary for Peng Wei, Zhang Huan 張寰 (1486-1561; 1521 jinshi) spoke for the virtues of the little brother who got the short end of the cultural capital stick:

Orphaned as a youth, he mourned far beyond what was required by the rites. His elder brother [Shi] cultivated reclusion, refusing to enter the family shop in the marketplace. The middle brother Fang, due to his Classicist vocation, would not truck with mundane service [of clan affairs]. Thus the effort of practical matters fell on the Gentlemen [Wei]. He never let it show on his face.

Peng Wei’s branch achieved quite modest attainment in the examination realm and died out in the ninth lineal generation.25

We know little of lineage members’ involvement in commerce after the fifth generation Peng Wei due to the editorial policy of genealogy compilation. In the “Xiupu tiaoli” 修譜條例 (Principles of Compilation of the Revised Genealogy) with which tenth generation patriarch Peng Dingqiu prefaced his 1703 recension of the Peng shi zongpu,

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24 Zhang Huan 張寰, “Minggu chushi Donglou Peng jun muzhiming” 明故處士東樓彭君墓誌銘 (Grave Inscription of Lord Peng Eastern Tower, Untitled Scholar of the Former Ming), in PSZP, j. 3: 17a.
25 The examination successes were one sui gongsheng 岁貢生—Peng Lüdao 履道 in the seventh generation—and a county student (xiangsheng 庠生), Peng Lüdao’s second son Peng Zhengxian 正先 (PSZP, j. 2: 10b).
Dingqiu mandated the practical exclusion of merchants. Dingqiu suffered that merchant lineage members be recorded, but dictated ranking them just above criminals whose names were to be expunged. Dingqiu stated:

Of the means by which our clansman make their living studying and practicing the rites is supreme. Secondly is the tutoring of students, study of medicine, and engagement with agriculture. After comes commerce and engaging in trade. As for those who violate principle and turn their backs on the exhortations or enter into unsavory associations, remove them and do not record [their names].

宗人生業: 以讀書，習禮為上；次則訓徒，學醫，務農；次則商賈貨遷。若違理，背訓，入於匪類者，斥而不書。26

In this passage Dingqiu slightly modified propagation of the idealized “literati farmer artisan merchant” (shi nong gong shang 士農工商) social order of antiquity. We must keep in mind that it nearly two centuries after Dingqiu’s ancestor Peng Chun deliberately directed the lineage’s efforts towards civil pursuits that a Peng patriarch possessed the confidence to issue such a doctrinaire proclamation. Peng Wei was quite literally “grandfathered in” to the Peng shi zongpu; the preservation of his obituary in the genealogy is also due in no small part to its having been written by a celebrated literatus and presented scholar. In focusing in this dissertation on the most successful of the Peng lineage, I by no means intend to convey that that success did not entail the exclusion of relations poor not only in the pecuniary sense but also in terms of cultural capital. There may well have been Suzhou Pengs continuously involved in commerce from the mid-Ming through the end of the Qing, but if so I have not been able to identify them in the sources I have consulted. The Pengs carefully constructed themselves as a

26 Peng Dingqiu, “Xiu pu tiaoli” 修譜條例 (Principles of Compilation of the Revised Genealogy”), PSZP, Zongpu tiaoli 8a.
quintessentially literati lineage; in analyzing this construction, I am by no means asserting that this claim was a historical reality.

In the self-representation of the Pengs, official appointments and land rents are essentially the entirety of Peng lineage members’ income; the Chinese language secondary literature has not significantly destabilized this picture. Although biographies contained in the genealogy repeatedly claim that a patriarch had a particular reputation for integrity in office, at the very least we can add to the lineage’s sources of income the gift economy of officialdom that was so much more remunerative than legitimate salaries.

Peng Nian, eldest son of fifth generation patriarch Peng Fang, became the most prominent cultural figure among the Pengs in the late Ming. Due to his filial attentiveness to his father and observation of the proper funerary rituals, the Prefectural Governor of Suzhou offered to cover Peng Nian’s stipend at the prefectural school by making him a stipendiary student (linsheng 廩生) and to provide him with an opportunity to sit for the provincial examination. Upon reflection Nian turned down the offer, declaring, in essence, that the Emperor’s benevolence would be wasted on the likes of him. In response to Nian’s choice, provincial censor (yushi 御史) Feng Qi 馮祁 criticized: “As Master Peng refuses to done the robes of a scholar, he should adopt those of a recluse.”

27 Despite the prominence of Qing Suzhou in the medical field, the Changzhou Pengs did not produce any famous physicians, nor have I found mention of them as patients in the secondary literature on medicine in Qing Suzhou: i.e., Hua Runling 华润龄, Wumen yipai 吳門医派 (Suzhou: Suzhou daxue chubanshe, 2004); Yuan-ling Chao, Medicine and Society in Late Imperial China: A Study of Physicians in Suzhou, 1600-1850 (New York: Peter Lang, 2009); and Marta E. Hanson, Speaking of Epidemics in Chinese Medicine: Disease and the Geographic Imagination in Late Imperial China (New York: Routledge, 2011).


Rather than sitting for the provincial examination, Peng Nian studied with the acclaimed painter Wen Zhengming 文徵明 (1470-1559).\(^{30}\) Nian obtained fame for his poetry, literary compositions, and calligraphy; Nian, Gu Deyu 顧德育, and Lu Zhongxing 陸中興, were known as the “Three Esteemed Ones of Suzhou” (Wu zhong san gao 命中三高). Note that Gu and Lu were both among the surnames that had been present in the Suzhou region for well over a millennium; Peng Nian’s ranking among them was a mark of acceptance of the Pengs as a Suzhou lineage. In his funerary inscription for Peng Nian, Wang Shizhen painted a picture of a born talent with a romantic disposition, as fond of the region’s scenic hills and rivers as he was of alcohol. Wang asserted: “Though Master Peng cavorted with drunkards day in and day out, his inner conduct was unblemished; in ethical matters he was entirely earnest.”\(^{31}\) Just as Peng Fang’s presented scholar degree was not enough to guarantee financial stability, Peng Nian’s fame in his own day did not prevent him from dying indigent. Nian’s descendants continued for two more generations before dying out.

With the branches of fourth generation patriarch Peng Chun’s second and third sons extinguished, all future Suzhou Pengs were the (ostensibly) biological descendants of Chun’s first son Peng Shi. Peng Shi’s fourth son Tianzhi 天秩 (zi Jiyong 季庸, hao 梧山; juren 1561) would be particularly influential in the emerging lineage.


\(^{31}\) 彭先生，雖日游於酒人乎，其內行淳備，諄諄人倫。Wang Shizhen, “Ming zhengshi Peng Xiansheng ji pei Zhu shuoren hezang muzhiming,” in PSZP, j. 3: 22b.
Peng Tianzhi’s second son Ruxie 汝諧 (zi Yuanle 原樂, hao Weian 蔚庵, Liaowei 蓼蔚) obtained the second presented scholar degree for the emergent lineage in 1616.\textsuperscript{32} Participating in a major wave of genealogy compilation in late Ming Suzhou and consolidating lineage consciousness, Ruxie also edited the first edition of the Peng shi zongpu. Ruxie died two months after obtaining his presented scholar degree, before he received an official post. He did have two sons however: Dexian 德先 (1590-1666; zi Jingxing 敬興, Jingyu 敬輿, bie hao Jigong 集公) and Xingxian 行先 (zi Wumin 務敏, Yiling 貽令).\textsuperscript{33}

Both of the eighth generation patriarchs’ careers were disrupted by the disorder of the late Ming. Neither so much as sat for the provincial examination; Dexian abandoned the examination route after obtaining only a purchasable Imperial College (jiansheng 監生) degree; his younger brother Xingxian rose no further than Wu county student.\textsuperscript{34}

Dexian studied under Zhou Shunchang 周順昌 (1584-1626), who would shortly become one of the Donglin Faction’s most celebrated martyrs. In his obituary of Dexian, Peng Sunyu 彭孫遹 related:

Due to the eunuch calamity Master Zhou Loyal-and-Steadfast was arrested. The master [Dexian] was one of his disciples. He rushed after [Zhou and the arresting agents] shouting for him, wishing that they would suffer the ensuing ordeal together. As the time came for [Zhou] to be bound, [Dexian, who had been] watching and waiting, jumped to his feet. Looking back over his shoulder Master Loyal-and-Steadfast sighed: “Master Peng holds the course. He alone stood with me when I was removed from office.” It was quite affecting.

\textsuperscript{32} Registered in Wu 吳 county, Zhili province. Peng Ruxie ranked fifth in the third class of jinshi.
\textsuperscript{33} On Peng Dexian and his wife née Cai, see the piece by their son Peng Long 彭瓏: “Zeng wenlinlang Jingyu fujin ji Cai ruren xingshi” 赠文林郎敬興府君暨蔡孺人行實 (An Account of the Deeds of the Imperially-recognized Literatus Jingyu [Peng Dexian] and Lady Cai), in PSZP, j. 4: 5a-11b.
\textsuperscript{34} As the purchase of degrees was only reliably recorded in personnel files, we cannot determine to what extant the Peng lineage engaged in degree and promotion purchasing from their genealogies.
Instead of pursuing worldly gain under a deteriorating imperial house, Dexian became something of a hermit on the shores of Lake Tai (Taihu 太湖). Conforming closely as it does to the trope of the retired scholar (jushi 居士) dating back to at least the Southern Song, it is difficult to know how literally to take Peng Sunyu’s account of the circumstances of Dexian and his family in the turmoil of the late Ming. Sunyu was not yet born at the time so could not have been an eye-witness, but he did pay his respects to Dexian after himself obtaining his presented scholar degree. Peng Sunyu’s account can be considered definitive of how elites in Suzhou and beyond would have imagined the price Dexian paid for his virtue. Peng Sunyu wrote: “In the late Ming the Master [Dexian] hid out in the hills, weaving sedge grass to fence [off his residence], day in and day out, with only driers of fish for company, his family without so much as an earthen jar [in which to store provisions]; that is the condition in which they dined.”

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35 Peng Sunyu, “Feng wenlinlang xiang yinshi da bin Jingyu Peng gong muzhiming” 封文林郎鄉飲大賓敬輿彭公墓誌銘 (Grave Inscription of the Enfeoffed Literatus Jingyu [Peng Dexian]), PSZP, j. 4: 3a.

Peng Sunyu was of the Haiyan, Zhejiang Pengs. As they traced common ancestors to Jiangxi province, the Haiyan and Changzhou Pengs treated one another as clansman: “The Peng clanman who resides in Changzhou came from Linjiang; the [Pengs] who reside in Haiyan came from Ji’an: all came as infantrymen from Jiangxi [Province].” 彭氏居長洲者，由臨江；居海鹽者，由吉安；皆自江西來徒。 (PSZP, j. 4: 1a) Hence Peng Sunyu’s identifying himself at the close of the tomb inscription as Peng Dexian’s “nephew” (zhi 侄).

In a postface to the surviving works of his grandfather Zhou Shunchang, printed by Peng Dexian’s grandson Peng Dingqiu, Zhou Jing also stated that Dexian studied under Zhou Shunchang. See: Zhou Zhongjie jinyu ji, j. 14b-15a; in SKQS v. 1295: 437-38. The Changzhou Pengs consistently memorialized Zhou Shunchang from the early to mid-Qing; a topic I hope to explore elsewhere.

Dexian changed his intellectual focus to the more pragmatic subjects of regional coastal defenses and reform of the taxation system. After the establishment of the court of Ming Prince Fu 福 in Nanjing, some of his acquaintances urged Dexian to seek favors from Southern Court minister Ruan Dacheng 阮大鋮 (1587-1646) on the basis of Ruan and Dexian’s father Peng Ruxie both being presented scholars of the class of 1616. In the face of such advice, Dexian is reported to have only laughed. This derision earned him the respect of the 1640s inheritors of the Donglin Faction legacy, to whom Ruan was anathema.

After abandoning attempts at officialdom Xingxian gained a reputation as a voracious reader of books he could not himself afford to buy. He was judged by his peers to have excellent calligraphy, and laid the foundation for the lineage’s celebrated library by hand-coping many of the books he borrowed. He lived to an astounding 92 sui. When the Kangxi emperor asked Suzhou Provincial Governor Tang Bin 湯斌 (1627-87) about figures of moral worth from the region, Tang recommended Peng Xingxian and his nephew Peng Long.

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39 Peng Sunyu’s grandfather was a jinshi of the same Wanli 44 class as Peng Ruxie, as Peng Sunyu and Peng Long were juren of the same class; these are links between the Hanyan and the Changzhou Pengs Peng Sunyu invoked in his tomb inscription of Peng Dexian: “Feng wenlinlang xiang yinshi da bin Jingyu Peng gong muzhiming,” PSZP, j. 4: 1a.  
Surviving and Thriving in the Post-Conquest Environment

In the early years of the Shunzhi reign (1644-60) of the victorious Qing dynasty, Peng Dexian’s second son Peng Long 瓏 (zi Yunke 雲客, hao Yi’an 一菴; 1613-89) (Illustration 4.1) established the Caution-in-Choosing-Acquaintances Society (Shenjiao she 慎交社) with fellow scions of local elite lineages. The new ruling house soon banned literary associations. In 1659 Long obtained the first presented scholar degree for the Changzhou Pengs under the new dynasty. He was subsequently appointed county magistrate of Changning 長寧, Guangdong. The entry for Peng Long in the *Qingshi lie zhuan* 清史列傳 (Arrayed Biographies of the *Qing History*) explained what ensued:

The county was in the midst of desolate mountains, and moreover the preceding party responsible had extorted [from the population]. Long thus lifted the fee for smelting silver into taels [for the purpose of paying taxes], fretted over the village elder responsible for collecting that year’s grain tax, restrained the *yamen*

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41 The other primary members of the Shenjiao Society were: Song Shiying 宋實穎 (1621-1705; on whom see also Chapter 7), his brothers Song Deyi 德宜 and Song Dehong 徳宏, You Tong, Wang Wan 汪琬, and Wu Jingsheng 吳敬生, Wang Zhonghan 王鍾翰. See: *Qingshi lie zhuan* 清史列傳, rpt. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987): 5305-06.

Li Yushuan 李玉栓 stated that in 1649 Peng Long was one of the founding members of the Azure Waves Society (Canglang hui 滄浪會, named after the meeting place at the Canglang ting 滄浪亭). In the winter of the same year the Canglang hui split into the Shenjiao she. See Li Yushuan, *Mingdai wenren jieshe kao* 明末清初文人結社考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013): 502-03. On late Ming and early Qing poetry societies, see also: He Zongmei 何宗美, *Mingmo-Qingchu wenren jieshe yanjiu* 明末清初文人結社研究 (Nankai daxue chubanshe, 2003).

42 Peng Long was the first Peng lineage *jinshi* registered in Changzhou county. He placed sixty-sixth in the second class.

43 In the Ming tax system, carried on in the early Qing, 110 households (*hu* 戶) formed a *li* 里, the ten households that exceeded the population-based grain tax paid in kind (*ding liang* 丁糧) serving as *zhang* 張. The remaining hundred households were divided into ten *jia* 甲, with each *jia* consisting of ten people.
runners, brought about the cessation of legal suits, and the flourishing of civil education, so that the people gradually revived. Striving to be upright and honest he offended the prefect, and was thus dismissed and returned home.

As indicated in the previous chapter, Peng Long’s ordeal in Guangdong was more harrowing for him and his family than acknowledged in the above account. The important point for this initial introduction is that both official Qing biographical sources and those produced by Suzhou elites regarded Peng Long’s dismissal as due to his integrity rather than calling that integrity into question. For example, the biography of Peng Long in Gu Yuan’s 顾沅 Wujun mingxian tuzhuan zan 吳郡名賢圖傳贊 (Illustrated Biographies with Commemorative Poems of Celebrated Worthies from Suzhou), paraphrased the same ur-text used by the editors of the Qingshi lie zhuan, adding: “Within the year the gentry and commoners loved and esteemed [him, but Long] lost the support of the Prefectural [Governor], who set his mind to falsely impeaching [Long], thereby causing him to be dismissed from office.”44

Upon hearing news of his father’s plight, Peng Long’s only son Peng Dingqiu made the arduous journey south, his own version of the filial journey made famous by fellow Suzhou townsman Huang Xiangjian 黃向堅 (1609-73).46 Long was released and returned

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44 Qing shi liezhuan: 5306.
45 期月間士民翕然愛戴，失郡守意，誤劾去官。顾元 顾沅, ed., Wujun mingxian tuzhuan zan 吳郡名賢圖傳贊, j. 18: 1a. Suzhou Museum exemplar. The portion covering the Qing dynasty is reproduced in QDRZ, v. 6: 2.
46 On Huang Xiangjian, see: Elizabeth Kindall, “The Pilgrimage Paintings of Huang Xiangjian (1609-73) in the Ming-Qing Transition” (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2006) and the more abbreviated account in the same author’s “The Paintings of Huang Xiangjian’s Filial Journey to the Southwest,” Artibus Asiae 67.2 (2007): 297-357. Lynn Struve introduced and translated Huang Xiangjian’s account of his journey
to Suzhou, where he spent the rest of his days. Peng Long lectured publicly at the Cultural Star Academy (Wenxing shuyuan 文星書院, on which see Chapter 6) near the Peng clan’s mansion on the first and fifteenth day of each month. After his passing, Peng Long was enshrined at the Academy.47

Peng Long’s only son Dingqiu 定求 (zi Qin zhi 勤止, hao Fanglian 訪濂; Nanyun laoren 南昀老人; 1645-1719) (Illustration 4.2) was born days before Suzhou surrendered to the Qing forces. Dingqiu related the harrowing circumstances in his autobiography:

[I.,] Dingqiu, was born in the hai double hour [9-11] in the evening on the ninth day of the fifth month of the second year of the Shunzhi reign of the Great Qing [1645]. At the time the new dynasty had been established and Jinling [Nanjing] had been secured. The call to arms had reached Su[zhou] and the whole city was in an uproar. When I was only three days old my grandparents ordered my parents to flee with their infant to my great-grandparents’ graves in Mount Youli of Guangfu. While being subjected to a bombardment of arrows and stones, [my parents] found a small boat along the way. From the village fortifications at Wanzhuang Mountain [they saw] a fire tower emergency signal sent up repeatedly from the distant city. False rumors followed one upon another. My father feared that even that which he clutched to his breast [i.e., his newborn son Dingqiu] would not be saved from the disaster.48

大清順治二年五月初九日亥時定求始生。時當鼎革、金陵既定、傳檄至蘇、闔城震動。定求生甫三日、王父母以光福岰里山曾王父墓丙舍可棲，命我父母抱子出避。覔小舟間，道行矢石，礟擊危殆。萬狀山塢，寫遠城中，烽火頻起。訛言叠至。我父恐懷抱中物不免於難。49

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48 I follow the order of these two characters in the hand emendation in the Suzhou Museum exemplar.
49 Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 1a-b. I am grateful to Wu Jen-shu for helping me clarify a portion of this passage.
Due to its prompt surrender and securing as the provincial capital by officials and troops of the new dynasty, Suzhou was among the major Yangzi Delta cities least damaged in the dynastic transition. Yet this is not to say the city suffered no physical damage and the populace no physical and emotional wounds. The Suzhou in which Dingqiu grew up was a city in reconstruction.\(^{50}\)

Dramatically born in to the new Qing dynasty, Dingqiu was among those ethnic Han literati whose prospects of employment in the new dynasty were uncertain. Dingqiu nevertheless prepared with vigor for the civil service examination, first entering the clan school (\textit{shu} 塾) at 7 \textit{sui} in 1650; the teacher who taught him parsing of the initial curriculum was Peng Nian’s grandson, the degreeless, heirless Peng Shichang 世昌.\(^{51}\)

In 1661, the final year of the Shunzhi reign, when Dingqiu was 17 \textit{sui}, his teacher Wu Jingsheng 吳敬生 was implicated in the protest before Jiangsu Governor Zhu Guozhi 朱國治 demanding the removal of Wu county magistrate Ren Weichu 任維初. As the

\(^{50}\) On Suzhou in the Ming-Qing transition see: Wu Jen-shu 巫仁恕, “Taoli chengshi: Ming-Qing zhi ji Jiangnan chengji shiren de taonan jingli” 逃離城市：明清之際江南城居士人的逃難經歷, \textit{Zhongyang Yanjiuyuan Jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan} 中央研究院近代史研究所集刊 83 (2014), esp. pp. 9-13, 17-19, 28-29, 31, and 35-36; on the immediate post-conquest state of the Feng Gate area in which the Peng clan residence was located, see p. 29. Wu drew on the first person accounts in \textit{Qi-Zhen jiwen lu} 敦機聞錄 (Records of Things Seen and Heard in the Tianqi-Chongzhen [Reigns]), in \textit{Tong Shi} 痛史, ed. Sun Shuxiu 孫毓修 (Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1968), v. 5-6, and \textit{Sucheng ji bian} 蘇城記變, in \textit{Ming-Qing shiliao congshu xubian} 明清史料叢書續編, ed. Yu Hao 于浩 (Beijing: Guojia tushuguan chubanshe, 2009), v. 18. For an account of loyalist resistance and rural uprisings in the Suzhou region during the transition, see: \textit{Suzhou shi gang} 苏州史綱, ed. Wang Guoping 王國屏 (Gu wu xuan chubanshe, 2009), 331-34.

demonstration occurred at the prefectoral Cultural Temple and included loud cries demanding dismissal, it became known as the “Lament in the Temple Incident” (ku miao an 哭廟案), the name by which Dingqiu refers to it in his autobiography.\(^{52}\) The cause for Governor Zhu’s presence at the Literary Temple was mourning ceremonies for the Shunzhi emperor, and he took the protest as an act of lèse-majesté. Zhu ordered the purported leaders seized, Dingqiu’s teacher Wu among them.

To the great consternation of his students, Wu was taken to prison in Yangzhou. His student’s appeal for his release apparently bore fruit; by the following year he was once more leading classes. Other protesters deemed leaders were not so fortunate: in the trial investigators and Governor Zhu asserted a link between protestors and Ming loyalist Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功, who had besieged Nanjing two years earlier. The eighteen accused were executed.

The students’ grievance against Magistrate Ren was the coercive methods, including flogging, he used in collecting late taxes. As a tax protest, the demonstration backfired badly, prompting a severe crackdown on systemic tax evasion throughout the lower Yangzi Delta. Before the investigating was resolved, 11,346 individuals were removed from the rolls of county students in Suzhou and Songjiang prefectures.\(^{53}\)

\(^{52}\) Peng Dingqiu, *Shijiang gong nianpu*: 4b.

\(^{53}\) In a comparative analysis of late Ming and early Qing urban conflagration, Tsing Yuan observed: “In the k‘u-miao incident, there was little popular support for elite protest; commoners probably felt little sympathy for the sufferings of elite tax-evaders. Whereas during the late Ming there was considerable popular support for the local elite’s resistance to abuses by the eunuchs which affected all classes, such support seems rare during the Ch’ing. The k‘u-miao case further supports the impression that when an elite protest challenged the ruling power, it was much more thoroughly suppressed by the Ch’ing authorities than similar riots had been by their Ming counterparts.” See: Tsing Yuan, “Urban Riots and Disturbances,” in *From Ming to Ch’ing: Conquest, Region, and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century China*, eds. Jonathan D. Spence and John E. Wills, Jr. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979): 300. On the *ku miao an*, see also Peter Carroll, *Between Heaven and Modernity: Reconstructing Suzhou* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).
Despite such harrowing interruptions, Dingqiu achieved his raised scholar degree in 1672. Four years later, in 1676, at 32 sui, Dingqiu received first place in both the metropolitan and the palace examinations. He garnered not just the distinction of being an *optimus* (*zhuangyuan* 状元) but that of a two-fold *optimus*” (*eryuan* 二元).

Dingqiu related what would become an oft-told anecdote about the receipt of his degree.

An unprecedented event in the palace examinations occurred. The Chief Examiner drafted a memorial in which [I] Dingqiu, first place in the metropolitan examination, was ranked third [in the palace examination]. He submitted the memorial. Thereupon [the Emperor] saw Dingqiu’s essay and asked: “Peng Dingqiu, the candidate who placed first in the metropolitan examination; what about him?”

After a short interval the [Chief Examiner] replied: “Because his calligraphy did not match that of the top two ranked papers.”

The Throne stated: “The last few lines of the top ranking metropolitan examination essay remonstrated with me. In the past Zhou [Dunyi], Cheng [Yi], Zhang [Zai], and Zhu [Xi]; who among them excelled at calligraphy?” He then revised [the list] so that [I] became the first place holder in the first class.

Kangxi’s intercession would not be the last imperial intervention on behalf of a patriarch in the Peng clan; both the Pengs themselves and their peers would look to divine karma to explain such seemingly miraculous interventions. Yet the explanation for this incident likely lies in the emperor’s irritation at the dunning criticism of his own inferior calligraphy.55


55 In his biography of the Kangxi emperor, Lawrence Kessler wrote: “It is known that the emperor was not very good with the brush, and he could find no one among his palace attendants who was.” Kessler
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After obtaining his presented scholar degree Dingqiu entered the Hanlin Academy. In the subsequent four years, he served as Compiler of the First Class (xiuxuan 修選), Provincial Chief Examiner (Xiang shi zhu kaoguan 郷試主考官), Grader in the Metropolitan Examination (Hui shi zhang juan guan 會試掌卷官), 57 Tutor (Siye 司業) at the Imperial College (Guozijian 國子監), Hanlin Sub-expositor (Shijiang 侍講;), and Court Diarist. Dingqiu appears to have been put off by the opulence and indulgence in official circles. He requested release after four years. After a brief respite back in Suzhou, Dingqiu’s father ordered him to return to service in the capital. Dingqiu retired for good at 50 sui in 1694. Overall he served eleven years in officialdom: eight as a Hanlin academician and three in the Imperial College.

Dingqiu’s departure corresponded with two major losses in his fathers’ generation of Learning of the Principles figures: on his return home Dingqiu represented his family in offering condolences at the funeral of Tang Bin; shortly thereafter Dingqiu received news of his own father Peng Long’s passing.

Dingqiu’s final act of imperial service occurred when he was in his seventies. An imperial edict dated KX 44.7.1 (19 Aug. 1705) by Yangzhou Salt Commissioner Cao Yin ordered Dingqiu to compile what would become the Quan Tang shi 全唐詩 (Complete

continued that the problem was not solved until November 1677, the year after the emperor interceded on Dingqiu’s behalf. See his K’ang-Hsi and the Consolidation of Ch’ing Rule 1661-1684 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976): 143.
57 This office is not listed in H.S. Brunnert and V.V. Hagelstrom, Present Day Political Organization of China, revised by N. Th. Kolessoff; trans. A Beltchenko and E. E. Moran (Shanghai: Kelly and Walsh, Ltd., 1912).
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Poetry of the Tang Dynasty, 1706). Dingqiu was well qualified for the task; a prolific and acclaimed poet since early adolescence, he was already socially familiar with Cao Yin from You Tong’s poetry circles. The compilation required Dingqiu to be in Yangzhou for nearly a year and a half; a special Poetry Bureau (Shiju 詩局) was established at the Placid Heaven Temple (Ningtian si 寧天寺) for the purpose. The finished product, at 900 juan, was the largest imperial poetry collection ever assembled.

In 1682, six years after Dingqiu achieved his two-fold optimus distinction, Dingqiu’s cousin Peng Ningqiu 寧/霧求 (1649-1700; zi Wenzhi 文治, hao Zhanting 瞻庭) was granted the tertius (tanhua 探花) degree. Dingqiu and Ningqiu were considered “brothers” (xiong 兄) by virtue of being of the same generation and studying in the clan school together. The ranking of two “brothers” in the top three places of the palace examination within three examination cycles made Dingqiu’s singular achievement appear less unique; people of the day understood that the Changzhou Peng lineage was now a force to be reckoned with. A contemporary account described the scene at the Feng Gate mansion in the wake of Ningqiu’s achievement: “The family is rich in wealth and

59 On Cao Yin, see: Jonathan D. Spence, Ts’ao Yin and the K’ang-hsi Emperor: Bondservant and Master (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988 [1966]). For mentions of Peng Dingqiu, see pp. 67, 70, 158, and 161.
60 The Ningtian si was one of Kangxi’s favorite sites on his Southern Tours; see: Tobie S. Meyer-Fong, Building Culture in Early Qing Yangzhou (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003): 178-180. Qianlong would also favor the temple on his Southern Tours.
61 Peng Ningqiu was the grandson of Peng Dingqiu’s granduncle Peng Dexian, via Dexian’s second son, examination failure Peng Huang 璟. Ningqiu died at the relatively early age of 50 sui; his only extant work of which I am aware is a treatise on taxation. See the descriptive catalog that precedes the bibliography.
rank; their well-wishers filled the city.”\(^6^2\) The celebratory scene that had eluded Dingqiu in 1673 had now been realized for both himself and one of his closest male relatives.

Dingqiu’s wives and concubines bore seven sons, six of whom survived into adulthood, and three daughters.\(^6^3\) None of Dingqiu’s sons came close to achieving his father’s extraordinary success in the examinations; spirit-writing transcripts from Dingqiu’s altar reveal that his son’s poor performance bothered him very much late in life.\(^6^4\)

The lineage achieved its highest official yet with Dingqiu’s grandson Peng Qifeng 彭啟豐 (1701-1784; \(j\)inshi 1727; z\(i\) Hanwen 翰文, h\(a\)o Zhiting 芝庭)\(^6^5\) (Illustration 4.3). As evident in both Peng Dingqiu and Qifeng’s’ autobiographies, Dingqiu was a particularly attentive grandfather to Qifeng. For example, when Qifeng was 18 sui he was bedridden for two months. Dingqiu sat with him and recited a Dipper Mother scripture for Qifeng’s benefit at his bedside.\(^6^6\)

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\(^6^3\) The recording of these births in \(S\)hi\(j\)iang gong \(n\)ianpu is as follows: Shiqian 始乾 (born in the seventh month of Kangxi 10 [5 Aug.-2 Sept. 1671]) (11a); Zhengqian 正乾 (b. second month of Kangxi 12 [18 March-16 April 1673]) (18a); an unnamed son was born in the twelfth month of Kangxi 13 (27 Dec. 1674-25 Jan. 1675) and died of pox in the twelfth month of Kangxi 18 (2-30 Jan. 1680) (15a; 20b); a son born in Kangxi 15 (1677) who likely did not survive to adulthood; Riqian 日乾 (b. second month of Kangxi 26 [13 March-11 April 1687]) (15a; 20b); Yongqian 永乾 (born to a concubine twelfth month of Kangxi 26 [2 Jan.-1 Feb. 1688]) (33a); Jingze 景澤 (born to a concubine), and Shangqi 尚祁 (born to a concubine). Dingqiu divided his property among them in KX 54 (1715), at 66 sui (34b.)

\(^6^4\) Two of Dingqiu’s sons obtained raised scholar degrees: fourth son Jingze 景澤, in 1713, and his fifth son Shangqi 尚祁, in 1736, nearly two decades after Dingqiu’s passing. Jingze died at 44 sui, before receiving an official post; Shangqi served as County Magistrate in the counties Jianyang 建陽 and Songxi 松溪, both in Fujian province.

\(^6^5\) Peng Qifeng’s accumulation of style names (\(h\)ao) were as extensive as his office was high. For a fuller listing, see the Descriptive Catalog.

\(^6^6\) Peng Qifeng, \(S\)hangshu gong \(n\)ianpu, Suzhou Museum exemplar, n.p.: entry under KX 57.
Dingqiu himself passed away the fifth month of the following year, 1719. But the special bond between grandfather and grandson was cemented for posterity by Qifeng’s attainment of the coveted *optimus* distinction in 1727. A prodigy, Qifeng was only 27 sui at the time. As with his grandfather, Qifeng placed first on the metropolitan examination, and then was ranked third on the palace examination only to be personally raised up by imperial intervention. Those who lost out on the *optimus* distinction as a result—the Zhuang 庄 lineage of Changzhou prefecture—reportedly consoled themselves by pointing to the merit accumulated by the Peng lineage for their practice of cherishing the written word (*xizi* 惜字). A less otherworldly explanation is that the Yongzheng emperor, in only his fifth year of rule and made insecure by the path of corpses littering his ascension to the throne, deliberately emulated his revered father Kangxi’s treatment of Qifeng’s grandfather Dingqiu.

Qifeng went on to serve in office for over forty years, rising to Secretary of the Board of War (Bingbu shangshu 兵部尚書) in 1763. This was the highest position held by a Changzhou county Peng by a considerable margin. Qifeng served as an examiner in a dizzying geographical range. Upon retirement he headed the most prestigious

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67 See the discussion of this incident in Benjamin Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000): 318. The earliest recording of the cherishing the written word slant on the incident of which I am aware is Elman’s source: Lü Xiangfan 吕相燁, *Kechang yiwen lu* 科場異聞錄 (Shuncheng shuju 顺成書局, 1898), under the entry for Yongzheng 5.


69 He served as Assistant Examiner (*gu kaoguan* 副考官) in the provincial exams in Henan in 1729, Shuntian (1735), Shandong (1736) and Jiangxi (1741), as well as Chief Examiner (*zheng kaoguan* 正考官) for the provincial examinations in Yunnan (1732), Jiangxi (1735), Zhejiang (1762) and Shuntian (1765). In addition, in 1751 and 1763, Qifeng served as a reader in the palace examination (*dianshi dujuan guan* 殿試讀卷官).
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academy in Suzhou prefecture, the Purple Yang Academy (Ziyang shuyuan 紫陽書院), which was located directly north of the prefectural cultural temple. Such consistent high-level pedagogical service garnered Qifeng the allegiance of many of the best minds of the intellectually vibrant Qianlong-Jiaqing reigns. Such students included Suzhou optimi Qian Qi 錢棨 (jinshi 1781) and Shi Yunyu 石韞玉 (jinshi 1790), as well as Wang Qisun 王芑孫 (1755-1818) and the more controversial Yuan Mei. Despite the imposing stature of his rank, Qifeng offered a degree of informality to his preferred students. Wang Qisun, for his part, related in the preface to a posthumous poetry collection of Qifeng’s grandson Peng Xisu, that Wang, Qifeng, and his son Peng Shaosheng had a “covenant to ignore distinctions of age in their friendship” (you wangnian zhi qi 有忘年之契).

Understandably, the intensely scholastic environment over which Qifeng presided immensely enhanced the prospects of his own five sons on the examinations. This thirteenth generation cohort represents the Changzhou county Pengs at their lineal zenith, flush with financial and cultural capital. Qifeng’s sons performed exceedingly well in the civil examinations. In 1747 first and second sons Shaoqian 紹謙 and Shaoguan 紹觀 achieved their raised scholar degrees in the same cohort. Shaoqian embarked on an official career directly, serving in a series of posts as county magistrate in Shandong province. The third brother Shaoxian 紹咸 abandoned the examination path after failing the provincial examination. Instead, he dedicated himself to managing family affairs.

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70 On the Purple Yang Academy, see: Ziyang shuyuan zhi 紫阳书院志, ed. Yang Jingru 杨镜如 (Suzhou: Suzhou daxue chubanshe, 2006).
71 On Qifeng and Yuan Mei, see: Zheng Xing 鄭幸, Yuan Mei nianpu xinbian 袁枚年譜新編 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012): 6, 58, 271, 309, 337, 404, 405, 460, 488, and 505.
After Shaoxian’s premature death, eldest son Shaoqian retired his post, returning to Suzhou to assume Shaoxian’s role as lineage manager. He never resumed office.

Shaoguan and his fourth brother Shaosheng 紹升 (1740-96) (Illustration 4.4) passed the metropolitan examination together in 1757. Shaoguan proceeded directly to the Hanlin Academy, serving in the standard posts for newly minted presented scholar: Compiler of the Second Class (bianxiu), Compiler of the State Historiographer’s Office (Guozijian zuanxiu), Court Diarist (rijiang qi zhu guan 日講起注官), Reader of the Academy (shidu xueshi 侍讀學士), as well as participating in metropolitan and provincial examination administration. Altogether Shaoguan stayed on in the State Historiographer’s Office for over thirty years, drafting numerous works and obtaining a reputation for great competency.73

When Peng Shaosheng was 8 sui he lost sight in one of his eyes. When he and his elder brother Shaoguan passed the metropolitan examination together, their father Qifeng called Shaosheng home, while giving Shaoguan the green light to sit for the palace examination and enter the Hanlin Academy. While Qifeng’s choice may have simply reflected the seniority system among sons, it is also possible that a Disability Studies lens could shed new light on Shaosheng’s life experience, choices, and ideology.74 In

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73 Hu Yanjie, “Qingdai Suzhou keju shijia yanjiu,” 12.
74 On Disability Studies as a lens for historical analysis, see the introduction to The New Disability History: American Perspectives, eds. Paul K. Longmore and Lauri Umansky (New York: New York University Press, 2001). While the contributions to this volume are explicitly focused on the post-War American experience, as the field matures it is increasingly addressing a broader cultural and temporal range of experiences.
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particularly, it is not difficult to see why the promise of rebirth in a Pure Land with a
perfected body would appeal to one who had been made to feel of less use to the world
due to a physical impairment.

Shaosheng sat for the palace examination in the subsequent triennial cycle, yet
when offered a post as county magistrate he turned it down; by this time he was already
reconciled to serving lineage, locality, and the Buddha rather than the empire. Although
receiving less adulation from peers than he would have in successful civil administration,
he maintained a high civic profile in Suzhou due to his prominent role tending lineage
affairs and charitable works. The intellectual self-confidence of Shaosheng’s lineal
generation is also evident in his correspondence with Dai Zhen (1724-77), in which
Shaosheng attempted to hold the Cheng-Zhu line against the rising tide of evidential
scholarship.\(^75\)

The fourteenth generation of the lineage—that of Peng Qifeng’s grandsons—
performed better in the civil examinations than any other single generation in the
Changzhou Peng lineage. In a short burst between 1784 and 1789 four of Qifeng’s
grandsons achieved presented scholar degrees, including two brothers—Xilian (zi Suzhou
溯周; jinshi 1784; d. 1819) and Xisu 希涑 (1761-1793; hao Lantai 蘭臺), the first and
third sons of Peng Shaoxian—achieving presented scholar degrees in the same cohort, as
Peng Shaoqian and Shaosheng had done in their father’s generation.

One of the most notable officials in the fourteenth generation was Peng
Shaoqian’s son Peng Xihan 希韓 (1744-1806). After obtaining the raised scholar degree

\(^{75}\) The correspondence of Peng Shaosheng and Dai Zhen is anthologized in numerous Chinese language
collections. Dai’s response is translated by John Ewell as “Letter in Reply to Advanced Scholar Peng
in 1765, Xihan proceeded to Shimen 石門 county in Hunan to serve as county magistrate. When the Qianlong emperor initiated the *Complete Works of the Four Treasuries* project in 1773, Xihan served as a copyist. On Qianlong’s Southern Tours of 1780 and 1784, Xihan led the campaign for Suzhounese gentry to contribute funds towards the construction of three edifices to welcome the emperor. Qianlong lowered Suzhou’s tax burden soon thereafter.

Indicative of the dialectical tension between attending to lineage affairs and serving in distant posts, the sons of Peng Qifeng’s third son Shaoxian performed exceptionally well despite their father’s lack of achievement in the examinations. Among Shaoxian’s sons, his eldest Xilian was first to obtain a presented scholar degree. Xilian went on to serve both the Qianlong and Jiaqing emperors, in posts ranging from examiner to junior vice president (*You shilang* 右侍郎) of both the Board of Punishments (*Xing bu* 刑部) and Board of Personnel (*Li bu* 吏部). Shaoxian’s fifth son Xizheng 希鄭 served the Daoguang emperor in addition to Qianlong and Jiaqing, rising to the post of prefect of Changde 常德, Hunan. After retiring due to illness in 1822, Xizheng founded the Wafting Plum Blossoms Poetry Society (*Wen mei shishe* 問梅詩社) back in Suzhou. The earliest extant edition of the Peng genealogy dates from 1829.

**Peng Shaosheng and the Pure Land Turn**

Peng patriarchs of the mid-Ming to early Qing were hardly disinterested in Buddhism: a towering example of sixth generation patriarch Peng Nian’s calligraphy still stands in the Twin Pagodas Temple (*Shuangta si* 雙塔寺) in Suzhou on a stele dated...
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1560 (Illustration 4.5). Ninth generation patriarch Peng Long maintained a profound interest in Chan until, at 60 sui, urged on by gods who descended to his son Dingqiu’s spirit-altar, he claimed to reject both Buddhism and Daoism in favor of a more rigorously orthodox Classicism (see the discussion in Chapter 5).

By the time of Peng Qifeng there was no more need to conceal or otherwise apologize for Buddhist devotion within the Peng clan. In Lin I Luan’s explanation, the reason lay in part in the nuances of the respective stands of early to mid-Qing emperors vis à vis Three Teachings combinatory policies: the Shunzhi emperor embraced Three Teachings combinatory rhetoric, as would the Yongzheng emperor in 1733. The Kangxi emperor enforced a strict Classicist Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy. The Qianlong emperor, for his part, asserted the equality of Classicism and Buddhism, but deliberately omitted Daoism, the third leg of the Three Teachings tripod. Such policy shifts are not all-powerful causes, but they are important considerations in the shifting accents of doctrinal advocacy in the Changzhou county Peng lineage over time.

In Qifeng’s son Shaosheng the lineage gained what would become their most famous and enduring Pure Land proselytizer. Shaosheng turned towards Buddhism at 29 sui, and formally took the layman vows (lit. “bodhisattva vows”; *pusa jie* 菩薩戒) at 34 sui. His wife Fei Lanxiang 費蘭襄 followed soon after, and the couple abstained from conjugal relations for the rest of their lives.77

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77 On Fei, see: Peng Shaosheng, “Wangqi Fei ruren shu” 亾妻費孺人述 (A Statement on my Deceased Wife *née* Fei), in PSZP, j. 6: 63a-64a. Shaosheng also included a biography of Fei in his *Shannüren zhuan*. 
Illustration 4.5
Shaosheng won a lasting place in Chinese intellectual history not only by his exchange with Dai Zhen, but also by Liang Qichao’s decision to include him in his influential *Qingdai xueshu gailun* (清代學術概論, 1921). Yet for our purposes his influence in his own lineage is more immediate. Shaosheng’s nephew Xisu was the most fervent Pure Land advocate in the generation following Shaosheng, but his early death at 22 sui cut short Xisu’s literary and devotional efforts.

In the realm of lay Buddhist devotion the women of the Peng lineage exert a major presence. Hu Yanjie provided a provisional list of twenty wives who married into the lineage and daughters who married out from lineal generations ten through sixteen who were noted in the 1922 genealogy for their Buddhist devotion. Although this group would be ideal for a prosopography of elite Yangzi delta female devotion from the early to mid-Qing, they lay beyond the scope of this dissertation’s focus on Peng Dingqiu’s devotional legacy among his descendants.

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The women identified by Hu are as follows:

- **Tenth generation:** elder sister of Peng Dingqiu (no personal name given);
- **Twelfth generation:** née Gao (no personal name given; wife of Peng Zanhua 贊華);
- **Thirteenth generation:** Fei Lanhua (wife of Peng Shaosheng; discussed above); née Qian 錢 (wife of Peng Shaoxian);
- **Fourteenth generation:** Peng Abao 阿艸 and Peng Ayu 阿玉 (daughters of Peng Shaosheng and Fei Lanxiang); Gu Yunyu (wife of Peng Xisu); née Jiang (also wife of Peng Xisu); née Qian (wife of Peng Zhuahua); née Huo (wife of Peng Xizheng); daughter of Peng Shaoxian (no personal name given; Hu lists twice, but it is not clear to me whether or not they are different people); Tao Qingyu 陶慶餘 (i.e., Tao Shan 善, wife of Peng Xiluo); née Zhu (also wife of Peng Xiluo);
- **Fifteenth generation:** née Zhu (wife of Peng Yunzhang); eldest daughter of Peng Xisu (no personal name given); née Wang (no personal name given; wife of Peng Yungua 蘿栀);
- **Sixteenth generation:** née Wu (no personal name given; wife of Peng Weigao); Peng Shuying 淑英.
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The Taiping Rupture

In their 2006 study of the 1922 *Peng shi zongpu*, Peng Wangci et al. found that forty members of the lineage are recorded as dying during the Taiping government’s nearly four-year (1860-63) occupation of Suzhou. The grimmest example is fifteenth generation patriarch Peng Yunjia 蘊嘉: upon the Taiping breach of the city walls, he took his wife, three sons, and two daughters-in-law, to hang themselves in front of their residence. Further, Peng Wangci et al. estimated that the lineage population fell by 27% from their zenith in the fifteenth generation that spanned the late Qianlong and Jiaqing reigns to the nineteenth generation in the post-civil war period.79 While these figures are unsettling, if accurate they would indicate that the Pengs actually did rather well in comparison to other great families of the Yangzi Delta and the population as a whole. As the Protestant missionary A. P. Parker wrote in his first hand account of the city in the mid-1870s: “It is the common opinion among the natives that during the T’ai P’ing rebellion seven-tenths of the population were destroyed or driven away.”80

The lineage’s financial fortunes fell accordingly. For example, at the beginning of the Xianfeng reign Peng Fenggao 鳳高 possessed 80,000 silver ounces, the greatest

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79 Peng Wangci 彭望慈, Gan Lanjing 甘兰经, and Zhang Xuequn 张学群, “Yuan zi Ganjiang de Suzhou Peng shi” 源自赣江的苏州彭氏, in eds. Zhang Xuequn 张学群 et. al., *Suzhou mingmen wangzu* 苏州名门望族 (Venerable Clans of Suzhou), (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2006), 238. Though the authors specify the fifteenth generation as that of the Qianlong-Jiaqing zenith, I believe it is the fourteenth generation, that with the shared name character Xi.

The discrepancy between Peng Wangci et al.’s relatively low figures for the Taiping impact on the Peng clan registers and the more drastic statistics of Parker and Johnson is due to the former’s counting before and after the civil war, but not during. The wealthy obviously had the resources to flee to other areas, and to return and rebuild after the city was retaken.
single fortune in the lineage. After resigning from office and paying arrears, he was left with 40,000, which in turn disappeared by the end of the civil war. The Peng lineage mansion inside the Feng Gate was destroyed; the only illustration of their property I have found is in the immediate post-civil war Peng shi zongpu, after the property was destroyed. This 1867 genealogy reedited (xuxiu 續修) by sixteenth generation patriarch Peng Weigao 彭慰高 is the most exceptional of the four extant editions: the briefest at only four juan in two ce, it is clear the editors did not have access to pre-civil war editions of their own genealogy (for the illustration in the 1922 genealogy, see Illustration 4.7).

Illustration 4.6
Cocoon Garden in the Feng Gate Peng clan compound. Reproduced from Peng shi zongpu of 1922, juan 3: 2a-b (exemplar held by the Suzhou Library).

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81 Peng, Gan, and Zhang, “Yuan zi Ganjiang de Suzhou Peng shi,” 238.
Peng Wangci et. al cited Peng Dingqiu’s declaration on the ranks of vocation within the lineage quoted above in order to assert that the focus on study was one of the reasons the lineage had difficulty bridging the Taiping divide. As Ho Ping-ti pointed out over fifty years ago, although the Pengs produced Grand Secretary Peng Yunzhang (1792-1862; jinshi 1835; zi Teibao 鐵寶) among other officials after the civil war, Yunzhang’s recollections of his impecunious childhood demonstrate the deleterious effects over time of the Chinese system of property division and the erosion of the hereditary 植 privileges.  

Illustration 4.7
Charitable estate in the Feng Gate Peng clan compound. Reproduced from Peng shi zongpu of 1922, juan 3: 4a-b (exemplar held by the Suzhou Library).

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82 Ho Ping-Ti, The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368-1911 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962): 151, 163-164, 335 n. 43. On the household division system in the Qing, see: David Wakefield, Fenjia: Household Division and Inheritance in Qing and Republican China (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998).
In contrast, other major Qing Suzhou familial lineages, such as the late-rising Pans, balanced the examination investment with commerce.\textsuperscript{83}

Qing Dynasty Overview

The obituaries of mid-Ming Peng patriarchs contain the first testimonials by fellow gentry of the lineage’s arrival as a great clan. In addition to those quoted above, the following statement by Wen Zhengming is representative: “The Peng Clan have for generations been of the highest stock, ranking uppermost in the locality.”\textsuperscript{84} Yet it was in the early Qing that the Pengs obtained the rank of the foremost lineage in Suzhou and, by extension, in the empire.

In it is the period of Peng Qifeng’s prominence that the earliest surviving visual record of the Peng mansion survives. In the “Gusu cheng tu” (A Map of the City of Suzhou) of 1745, just inside the Feng Gate, appear the characters: “Before the official residence of the Pengs” (Peng ya qian 彭衙前).\textsuperscript{85} Roughly contemporaneously, a couplet (duilian 對聯) mounted on the Feng Gate mansion door declared immodestly:

\begin{center}
In all the world our literary fortune is peerless
First ranked in examination achievement in our glorious age
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{83} Peng, Gan, and Zhang, “Yuan zi Ganjiang de Suzhou Peng shi,” 238.
\textsuperscript{84} 彭氏，世以高貲，甲於里中。Wen Zhengming, “Ming Xinhui xian Peng Yinzhi muzhiming,” PSZP, j. 3: 15b.
\textsuperscript{85} The use of the noun ya—most common in the compound yamen 衙門 (government office)—to describe a private residence was due to Qifeng’s status as a standing high official at the time. The “Gusu cheng tu” is thought to have been drawn by the Qianlong era court painter Xu Yang, on whom see below. For more on this map see the article by Zhang Yinglin 張英霖 in Gusu fanhua tu 姑蘇繁華圖, ed. Yang Dongsheng 楊東勝 (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin meishu chubanshe, 2008): 19-20. The “Gusu cheng tu” is also reproduced in the compendium of Suzhou maps reproduced by the Gu Wu Xuan chubanshe. A stele bearing the map stele is in the inner office of the Suzhou Stele Museum office, in the southeast corner of the Suzhou Literary Temple complex, yet, despite its being in venerable company, I am unsure when the stele was inscribed, as the “Gusu cheng tu” was said to have been lost in Suzhou until a Japanese scholar presented a copy to the Suzhou Museum in the 1980s.
According to the overall tabulation from the 1922 genealogy of degrees obtained by Peng patriarchs in the Qing is: two-fold optimi (er yuan), one tertius (tanhua), fourteen other presented scholars (for a total of seventeen), 31 raised scholars, seven placed on the secondary list for raised scholar (fubang 副榜), and 130 plus Senior Licentiates of the Second Class (fu gongsheng 副貢生) (see Appendix 4.3 for a list of all the lineage presented scholars and a number of the more notable raised scholars, and Table 4.1 for the kinship relations of all the presented scholars).\(^{87}\) Although spikes in the Kangxi (two) and Qianlong (5) reigns are readily discernable, the lineage’s presented scholars were distributed relatively equally between reigns, with only the Tongzhi and final Xuantong reigns absent.\(^{88}\) I am not aware of another lineage in the empire with a similar record of achievement in the Qing. In terms of the Pengs’ Suzhou neighbors, the Pans boasted one optimus—Pan Shi’en 潘世恩 (1769-1854) in 1793—eight other presented scholars, 32 raised scholars, and 20 gongsheng.\(^{89}\)

An explanation of Peng Dingqiu and his grandson Qifeng’s’ optimi achievement deserves special attention. The provincial, metropolitan, and palace examinations each

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\(^{86}\) Quoted in Li Jiaqiu 李嘉球, Suzhou zhuangyuan 苏州状元 (Suzhou: Suzhou daxue chubanshe, 1997): 44.

\(^{87}\) Li, Suzhou zhuangyuan, 44.

\(^{88}\) For a chart mapping breakdown of Changzhou Peng jinshi and juren by reign period over the Qing dynasty, see: Hu Yanjie, “Qingdai Suzhou keju shijia yanjiu,” 10. Hu’s chart is reproduced in Suzhou shi gang, ed. Wang Guoping 王国平 395, with the calculations in the summary column of Hu’s chart corrected.

\(^{89}\) Suzhou shi gang, ed. Wang Guoping, 399, drawing the statistics from the “Deng jin lu” 登進錄 (Record of Examination Achievement) section of the Dafu Pan shi zhipu 大阜潘氏支譜 of (1908).

The Pans, like the Pengs, were major philanthropists, and their charitable acts won them a place as exemplars in the late Qing morality book literature.
had a first place distinction: *jieyuan* 解元, *huiyuan* 会元, and *zhuangyuan*, respectively. It was possible for all three distinctions to be bestowed upon one man, who was thus designated a triple *optimi* (*san yuan* 三元), but this did not happen in the Qing. As explained above, both Dingqiu and Qifeng were two-fold *optimi*.

To be one of the three hundred men awarded the presented scholars in the triennial metropolitan examinations was a distinction coveted by millions of men at any given time in the Qing dynasty. Yet in Suzhou, the heart of the Yangzi Delta region that invariably topped the empire in presented scholars, it could be argued that *optimi* were to presented scholars what presented scholars were to raised scholars in provinces less permeated in wealth and scholarship. To put the claim in terms of hard numbers, the metropolitan and palace examinations were held a total of 112 times in the 258 years from the resumption of the examinations in the third year of the Shunzhi reign (1646) to the last one in Guangxu 30 (1904), producing a total of 114 *optimi*. Of those 114, forty-nine were from Jiangsu province; of those forty-nine, twenty were from the seven counties that made up Suzhou prefecture. To put this concentration in perspective, Suzhou Prefecture boasted more *optimi* in the Qing than the entire province of Zhejiang, which was in turn the provincial runner up to Jiangsu with twenty *optimi*, less than half of Jiangsu’s forty-nine.⁹⁰

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⁹⁰ Wei Yunsheng 魏运生, “Qingdai Huizhou qian Suzhou Hong shi zhuangyuan jiazu yanjiu” 清代徽州迁苏州洪氏状元家族研究, in *Ming-Qing yilai Suzhou chengshi shehui yanjiu* 明清以来苏州城市社会研究, ed. Tang Lixing 唐力行, (Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2013), v. 2: 443.
Table 4.1
Presented Scholars in the Changzhou County Peng Lineage

Note: only individuals whose names are followed by a date achieved the presented scholar degree. Other names are presented to clarify lineal relations only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lineal Generation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Peng Chun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Shi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tianrui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tianzhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dexian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dingqiu (two-fold Optimus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Zhengqian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Qifeng (two-fold Optimus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Shaoguan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Shaoxian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Shuosheng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Xiluan 1764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Xiluo 1787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Xisun 1784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Xizhong 1789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Yunhui 1799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Yunzheng 1835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Taishi 1889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Shixiang 1903</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fang 1511
1676
1676
1682 (Tertius)
1727
1757
1757
1789
To pursue these nested boxes down to the smallest corporate unit, seventeen of Suzhou prefecture’s twenty *optimi* came from the three counties that constituted the city of Suzhou.\(^91\) And the Changzhou county Pengs alone produced fully a tenth of those twenty *optimi* from the scholarly jewel of the empire. In other words, in the Qing dynasty the Changzhou Peng lineage alone produced as many *optimi* as the entire provinces of Hunan and Guizhou, and more than Shuntian, Henan, Shaanxi, and Sichuan, which all produced only one each.\(^92\)

In the sixty one years of the Kangxi reign Suzhou claimed ten *optimi*: such pre-eminence resulted in what present day scholars have dubbed an “*optimi* culture” (*zhuangyuan wenhua* 状元文化). One manifestation of such a culture included the Taohuawu 桃花塢 New Year’s woodblock prints depicting the celebration of returning victorious *optimi*.\(^93\) Another was evident in the use of *optimi* as a marketing ploy, particular for items marketed to examination candidates. Such items as “*optimi* cakes” (*zhuangyuan gao* 状元糕) and “*optimi* test-taking writing implements” (*zhuangyuan kaoju* 状元考具) are being pitched to sitters for the lowly provincial examination (*xiangshi* 鄉試) in the Qianlong court painter and Suzhou native Xu Yang’s 徐揚 “Shengshi zisheng tu” 盛世滋生圖 (Picture of Propagation in a Flourishing Age; later also known as “Gusu fanhua tu” 姑蘇繁華圖 (Picture of the Splendor of Suzhou)) of

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\(^91\) See the table of Suzhou *optimi* with county of origin in Li Jiaqiu, *Suzhou zhuangyuan*, 232-33.
\(^92\) Wei Yunsheng, “Qingdai Huizhou qian Suzhou Hong shi zhuangyuan jiazu yanjiu,” 447.
\(^93\) For example, see: “Zhuangyuan jidi 状元及第 (The Optimus), depicting a victorious *optimus* mounted on horseback approaching the Optimi Arch (Zhuangyuan fang 状元坊) at the Suzhou Prefectural School-Literary Temple complex, reproduced as Illustration 129 in Zhou Xinyue 周新月, *Suzhou Taohuawu nianhua* 苏州桃花坞年画 (Suzhou renmin chubanshe, 2009): 96. Another examination related print mentioned is the “Wu zi dengke” 五子登科 (Five Sons Pass the Examinations). While these prints are notoriously difficult to date, “Taohuawu” as a brand name is first documented in the period in which Dingqiu lived: Zhou, *Suzhou Taohuawu nianhua*, 38-39.
Chapter 4

1759. As an eloquent testimony to the power of the examination legacy, over a hundred and ten years after its demise Suzhou students still pray for examination success to the optimi god (zhuangyuan shen 状元神) at the City God Temple. As I will argue in later chapters, this immense constituency of locals across class barriers who celebrated optimi was part of the wind at Peng Dingqiu’s back in his posthumous veneration as an emblem of the worldly rewards of Wenchang veneration.

The primary place of the Peng lineage among the elite clans of Qing Suzhou was evident in the phrase “Peng, Song, Pan, Han,” 彭宋潘韓 which ranked the four most powerful families in the popular imagination. The late Qing compendium Qingbai lei chao 清稗類鈔 contains an entry on the Changzhou Pengs under the “Menfa lei” 門閥類 (Powerful Clans) section. After noting that Dingqiu was particularly renowned for filiality and fraternal devotion (yi xiaoyou cheng 以孝友稱) the entry pointed to Dingqiu and Peng Qifeng’s paired optimi achievement with a phrase much used in relation to the Pengs—“zusun zhuangyuan” 祖孫狀元 (“grandfather-grandson optimi”). The editor commented that it was a feat “rarely seen in the world” (shi suo hanjian 世所罕見). The entry then lists the generations of presented scholars—three among Qifeng’s sons, three among his grandsons, and one in his great-grandsons’ generation, concluding: “in the flourishing of examination degree, [they] were the apex of their age.” Qingbai lei chao entry only listed jinshi in Dingqiu branch of the lineage; as shown in Table 4.1, this was

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94 For the depictions of the use of the characters for “zhuangyuan” in marketing, see: Gusu fanhua tu, 81 and 119. James Cahill has criticized the painting as presenting an overly idealized portrait of Suzhou life, but this observation does not challenge the painting’s documentary value in recording use of the term optimi in marketing campaigns. See Cahill, Pictures for Use and Pleasure: Vernacular Painting in High Qing China (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010): 139-140.
95 Suzhou shi gang, ed. Wang Guoping, 394.
96 科目之盛，為當代冠。 Quoted in Li, Suzhou zhuangyuan, 46.
not the sum total, but it was enough to earn the Changzhou Pengs significant superlatives from those in a position to know.

Scholars such as Robert Hymes and Benjamin Elman have put to rest Ho Ping-ti’s assertion of the civil examination system as a means of status advancement by demonstrating that a wider demographic lens renders claims of advancement meaningless. Yet within the nexus of clan wealth, scholarship, and connections scholars have not disputed that examination success and subsequent official advancement was the accomplishment of an individual. Lawrence Zhang’s 2010 dissertation on office purchase (juanna 捐納) in the Qing, however, demonstrated that examination success and office purchasing were complementary rather than mutually exclusive strategies engaged in by elite families.

Zhang’s findings have wide-reaching implications for our image of elite families, particular those of the Yangzi Delta, where—as is to be expected based on their massive wealth—office purchasing was most widespread. In his analysis of the data on sales in 1798, Zhang found that Jiangsu province ranked second in the empire in office buyers (at 1,463 out of 10,978, or 13.3%); the counties which housed the city of Suzhou ranked fourth (Wu), eleventh (Yuanhe), and thirteenth (Changzhou) in the empire. I have not attempted to calculate how many of the Pengs’ degree may have been purchased, but it was likely a significant number.

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In three of the four extant *Peng shi zongpu* pride of place in the first *juan* is given to honorary titles conferred upon ancestors. Given the close connection of Peng Dingqiu and Peng Qifeng with the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors, respectively, it is likely that a few of the earlier one were imperial gifts, but that the later ones were almost entirely purchased.\(^99\)

Conclusion

The above discussion set out the kinship relations between Peng patriarchs and hopefully provided the reader with a sense of individual personalities. Beyond this concern with nuts and bolts details, the purpose of this chapter is to drive home the point that, when I discuss the devotional practices of the Changzhou Pengs, I am discussing the devotional practices of what was one of the premiere lineages of the empire.

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\(^99\) Zhang referred to the purchase of posthumous titles for one’s ancestors as *rongshen* 聲身 (“making the person resplendent”) (8-9). While acknowledging that “Qing dynasty primary sources rarely make the distinction between the two types of purchase,” Zhang divided the term *juan* into two categories: “the sales of substantive offices” and “sales of honorary degrees, titles, and other types of honors that had no impact on office-holding” (34). Zhang further noted that, in contrast to the documentation on the former in personnel records and genealogies, “sales of honorary titles or degrees did not produce such historical records, often resulting only in a mention in family records, and are much more difficult to quantify and research” (35-36). Zhang, “Power for a Price.”

I would argue that the ostensibly non-substantive awards for ancestors were a concrete means by which living descendants could demonstrate their filial piety. This documented filiality was in turn a crucial aspect of the display and legitimization of the lineage’s flourishing, more central to the values of elite culture than office-holding itself.
Chapter 5

Three Teachings Ideology:

Case Studies of Combinatory Discourse from the Early to Mid-Qing Dynasty

“‘The Three Teachings return to One,’ but whence is the One to which it returns?”
-You Tong, “Elegy for Peng Long,” circa 1689

Present day scholars frequently state that the Changzhou county Pengs were representatives of Unity of the Three Teachings thinking in the Qing dynasty. The term in question—“the Three Teachings combine into One” (sanjiao heyi 三教合一)—gained popular currency in the mid-Ming dynasty. Although those who employed this term ostensibly asserted the equivalency of Classicism, Buddhism, and Daoism, I argue below that such true ecumenicalism was the exception rather than the rule. Much more common was a rhetorical gesture towards comprehensive knowledge of the Three Teachings in order to privilege one or two of them at the cost of the remainder. In order to stress the active nature of the assertions made in Three Teachings discourse, I will refer to it as an ideology (主義; C. zhuyi, J. shugi) rather than the more conventional—yet passive—category “thought” (思想; C. sixiang, J. shisō) used by present day scholars writing in Modern Chinese and Japanese.

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1 三教歸一，一歸何處？You Tong, “Ji Peng Yunke wen” 祭彭雲客文 (Elegy for Peng Yunke [Long]), PSZP, j. 7: 15b. The passage from which this epigraph is taken is quoted in full below.
2 Similar phrases include: “the Three Teachings return to One” (sanjiao gui yi 三教歸一), “the Three Teachings have one source” (sanjiao yi yuan 三教一源), “the Three Teachings have a common source” (sanjiao tong yuan 三教同源), and “the Three Teachings are One Teaching” (sanjiao yijiao 三教一教). According to Timothy Brook, none of these phrases predate the Yuan dynasty. See his: “Rethinking Syncretism: The Unity of the Three Teachings and Their Joint Worship in Late-Imperial China,” Journal of Chinese Religions 21.1 (1993): 15-16.
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In the 1999 expanded edition of his monumental work on morality books, Sakai Tadao wrote: “The distinctiveness of the Pengs’ family learning was the study of ‘Unity of the Three Teachings’ morality books.” In support of this statement Sakai reproduced the titles of prefaces to morality books from the tables of contents of Peng Dingqiu’s and his grandson Qifeng’s literary anthologies. Foremost among these works are the *Taishang ganying pian* 感應篇 (Treatise on Action and Recompense), *Yinzhi wen* 陰騭文 (Composition on Hidden Virtues), and *Wenchang Xiaojing* 文昌孝經 (Wenchang’s Scripture on Filial Piety). In their 2007 study of the Peng lineage’s charitable activities, present day Suzhounese scholars Ge Huiye and Wang Weiping echoed Sakai: “The Suzhou Peng clan esteemed Classicist learning, and also entered into Buddhism and

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The relevant prefaces in Peng Dingqiu’s literary anthology are: “Ganying pian shuyan xu” 感應篇疏衍序 (Preface to the Elaborated Subcommentaries of the Treatise of the Most High on Action and Recompense), NYWG, j. 2: 1a-2b; rpd.: 288; *Ganying pian hui zhuang ji xu* 感應篇彙傳集序 (Preface to the Collated Assembled Biographies of the Treatise on Action and Recompense), NYWG, j. 2: 3a-4b; rpd.: 289; *Ganying pian tushuo xu* 感應篇圖説序 (Preface to the Illustrated and Explicated Treatise of the Most High on Action and Recompense), NYWG, j. 2: 5a-6b; rpd.: 290; *Chongke Wenchang Huashu xu* 重刻文昌化書序 (Preface to the Recarving of Wenchang’s Book of Transformation), NYWG, j. 2: 71a-b; rpd.: 291; “Tong shan pian xu” 同善編序 (Preface to the Treatise on Shared Goodness), NYWG, j. 2: 31a-b; rpd.: 303; “Wenchang Xiaojing shuhou” 文昌孝經書後 (Postface to Wenchang’s Classic of Filial Piety), NYWG, j. 12: 1a-b; rpd.: 446; and “Shu Wenchang Yinzhi wen shi ke hou” 書文昌陰騭文石刻後 (Piece following the carving-in-stone of Wenchang’s Composition on Hidden Virtues), NYWG, j. 12: 12a; rpd.: 451.

Importantly, Qifeng’s prefaces to the Wenchang and Patriarch Lü canons do not appear in his literary anthology, though that for his son Shaosheng’s *Guandi quanshu* 閔神全書 preface does.

4 With a first printing in 1164, the *Ganying pian* can reliably be dated, but no scholarly consensus exists on a precise dating for other most widely circulated morality books important to Peng patriarchs. Estimates for the *Yinzhi wen* range from the Song dynasty (shortly after the *Ganying pian*) to the mid-Ming. While scholars have generally accepted the historicity of the prefaces by Wang Ao and Qiu Jun 邱濬 (1421-95) to the *Wenchang Xiaojing*, a close reading indicates little reason to do so. As far as I have been able to determine, there may not be an extant edition of the *Wenchang Xiaojing* prior to the mid-eighteenth century, making Peng Dingqiu’s testimony on it in the early eighteenth century quite important. The forthcoming dissertation by Hu Jiechen of the Chinese University of Hong Kong on late imperial Wenchang scriptures promises to shed light on these matters.
Daoism: the distinctiveness of Peng clan family learning laid in embodying the Unity of the Three Teachings."

The claims of Sakai and other present day scholars regarding a Peng clan proclivity for Three Teachings discourse are superficially true but need to be addressed more substantively. A basic question is: to what extent did intellectual currents asserting the equivalency of the Three Teachings ever exist? There is a danger of present day scholars taking Three Teachings combinatory rhetoric at face value, rather than examining it as a means to an end that was much less amicable than it initially appeared. It is my contention that Three Teachings discourse must be treated as a rhetorical strategy of dispute among partisans of one or two of the Three Teachings against one or two of the others. Further, in the conventions of Three Teachings discourse, Classicism was conventionally the privileged Teaching. Beyond the predilections of individual authors, the entire discourse was skewed towards the valorization of Classicism and, by extension, competition in the civil service examinations and the ideal of bureaucratic service. At issue is the role of the state, either as the object of Classicism or as the mediator above each of the Three Teachings.

By saying that the Peng clan subscribed to the Unity of the Three Teachings and leaving it at that, present day scholars obscure the diversity of Three Teachings discourse as well as the intellectual diversity within the Peng lineage. Attention to the actual uses of Three Teachings discourse, as opposed to taking the rhetoric at face value, brings us to another level at which I feel the “Peng clan equals Three Teachings” narrative must be

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addressed: How coherent was Peng clan support for “Three Teachings Unity” over time? Further, what an individual author imagined as a stand in for each of the Three Teachings respectively was not a given: for Peng Long and Dingqiu, the place of Buddhism in the “legs of the tripod,” was often Chan (禪), while for Shaosheng it could be Pure Land (净土). In this chapter I show that, in terms of attitudes towards the respective relations of each of the Three Teachings, there was very little common ground from one generation to the next, let alone over longer spans of time. This is in contradistinction to spirit-writing and involvement in the Cultural Star Pavilion complex (Chapter 6) and local Daoist institutions (Chapter 7).

The cultural landscape of Chinese Religions was much more diverse and complex than Buddhism, Classicism, and Daoism and their relative relations to one another. Indeed, one of the uses of Three Teachings discourse was to obfuscate the complexity of “facts of the ground”7 and contain religious discourse within familiar categories. For this reason I contend that one can only understand Three Teachings discourse by looking outside of it. Spirit-writing and the complex uses to which the Cultural Star Pavilion were put—examined in Chapters 3 and 6 respectively—are examples of what I mean by looking outside of Three Teachings discourse to see actual practices. My intention in this chapter is to portray the diversity of combinatory discourse within the Peng lineage over five generation, thereby providing the reader with the means to juxtapose the patriarchs’

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6 This was a metaphor frequently employed in the late imperial period. As Wang Zhe, the founder of the Complete Perfect Teachings in the late Jin dynasty, put it: “The Three Teachings are like the legs of a tripod.” 三教者，如鼎三足。Quoted in Fan Yuqiu 范玉秋, “Sanjiao he yi yu Quanzhen dao” 三教合一与全真道, Guanzi xuekan 管子学刊 3 (2007): 77.

7 Here I appropriate the calque from Hebrew that arose in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to describe the establishment of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory so as to re-draw the map of what could be claimed as Israeli territory in eventual treaty agreements. In as much as late imperial literati-officials made a consistent effort to shape the religious field to correspond to their idealized image, I find “facts of the ground” to be a valid analogy.
rhetorical positions with those they enacted where they had the power to do so. In so doing I am not positing a theory-practice divide, but rather exploring the way in which rhetorical conventions shaped and were constrained by lived circumstances.

In what follows I examine the attitude towards combinations of the Three Teachings exhibited in work by or about four Changzhou county Peng patriarchs over five lineal generations. These men are: Peng Long (ninth generation); Dingqiu (tenth generation); Qifeng (twelfth generation); and Shaosheng (thirteenth generation). I place these four individuals on a continuum of inclination, from what appeared to be genuinely egalitarian attitude towards each of the Three Teachings on the part of Peng Long, to Qifeng and Shaosheng’s employment of unity of the Three Teachings rhetoric to promote the superiority of one particular teaching: to wit, Buddhism (Chan for Qifeng, Pure Land for Shaosheng). In surveying the doctrinal affinities attributed to or claimed by these men, I also hope to clarify the terminology and rhetorical tropes in Qing dynasty Three Teaching polemics. I supplement present day scholars’ attention to the Pengs’ relationship with morality books by bringing in other sources as well. I thereby widen our perspective on the arena in which Three Teachings combinatory discourse was deployed.

Three Teachings Ideology

Before entering in to the discussion of Peng patriarchs a word on the scholarly study of Three Teachings combinatory discourse is in order. The mutual interaction and constitution of each of the Three Teachings is one of the most complex subjects in the field of Chinese Religion in particular and Sinology as a whole.\(^8\) Attempts to treat the

\(^8\) Robert Sharf put forth the bold assertion that Buddhism, Classicism, and Daoism mutually constituted one another in the Eastern Han, but did not specify the precise mechanism by which this occurred. See: *Coming*
Chapter 5

phenomena comprehensively are sparse. While there is no full historical survey of the interaction of the Three Teachings, there are loci that have attracted scholarly attention. Perhaps these focal points can lay the groundwork for a synthetic account in the future. In chronological order, the loci include: the arrival of Celestial Master Daoism in southwest China in the Eastern Jin nearly simultaneously with Buddhism; the initial acknowledgement of Buddhism elements in the Highest Purity (Shangqing 上清) revelations and creation of a “Dao-Buddhist synthesis” in the Numinous Treasure (Lingbao 靈寶) corpus; the doctrinal cock fighting of court debates between proponents of two or more Teachings, particularly in the Northern Wei (386-583) and Yuan dynasties (1271-1368); the Dunhuang 敦煌 corpus; the Complete Perfection (Quanzhen 全真) to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2002). On the initial creation of the “Daoist School” (daojia), see Kidder Smith’s insightful article “Sima Tan and the Invention of Daoism, ‘Legalism,’ ‘et cetera’,” Journal of Asian Studies 62.1 (2003): 129-156.


The Northern Wei debates are the subject of Livia Kohn, Laughing at the Tao: Debates Among Buddhists and Daoists in Medieval China (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). On the Yuan dynasty court
Order from its founding in the late Jin dynasty (1125-1234) on;\textsuperscript{12} the writings and policies implemented by the founding Ming emperor on the Three Teachings and the management of Daoist and Buddhist institutions and clerics;\textsuperscript{13} and Lin Zhao’en 林兆恩 (1517-98) as a historical personage and deified founder of the Three-in-One Teachings (Sanyi jiao 三一教).\textsuperscript{14}

A source of confusion regarding Three Teachings discourse and combinatory rhetoric more broadly in Western European language scholarship is a paucity of linguistic choices. In contrast, present day scholars writing in Chinese and Japanese draw upon a rich vocabulary in Classical Chinese for describing combinatory phenomena. Scholars writing in Western languages, in contrast, generally paraphrase or translate diverse phrase in the source language into one term in the receiving language. A handful of examples from mid-Qing “Classico-Buddhist” discourse illustrate the nuances available in Classical Chinese and the modern languages of the classical Sinophere. These terms include:

“Stitching together Classicism and Buddhism” (Ru Fo guantong 儒佛貫通): “Combining Classicism and Šākyaism” (jianrong Ru Shi 兼融儒釋); “Classicism and Buddhism share


the same origin” (Ru Fo tong yuan 儒佛同源); and “explicating Classicism by means of Buddhism” (yi Fo jie Ru 以佛解儒). As one of the purposes of translation is to enrich the possibilities of the receiving language, I advocate using terminology in English that is more complex. I acknowledge that such terminology can be clunky, but contend that the benefits of conveying the original more faithfully outweigh the stylistic drawbacks.

On the level of rhetorical analysis an important observation is employment of the conceptual form of combinatory grammatical constructions in a range of doctrinal discourses. To take the example of the phrase “combine into one” (he yi), it can be used for a range of doctrinal combinations: the early Jesuit covert Li Zhizao 李之藻 (1565-1630) used the rhetorical form to advocate “Catholicism and Classicism combine into one” (Tian Ru he yi 天儒合一). Beyond doctrinal discussion, the phrase was also applied to architectural layout: for example, the combination of Cultural Temples and prefectural or sub-prefectural schools since the Southern Song was referred to as “Temple and School combine into one” (miao xue he yi 廟學合一). If we only look at religion without attention to polemical conventions we risk missing the way in which rhetoric itself limited the conceptualization of diverse phenomena.

Peng Long: Orthodox Classicist or Three Teachings Paragon?: Questioning the Cheng-Zhu Conversion Narrative

For over a decade preceding Peng Long’s death, Peng Dingqiu contested devotional practices by his father that Dingqiu found unbecoming of a proper Classicist.

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In this section I examine this conflict from the late 1670s to the period immediately following Peng Long’s death in 1689. While Long was alive, Dingqiu could upbraid his father, but the extent to which his father modified his behavior is open to question. Once Peng Long died, however, Dingqiu had a freer hand in presenting his father as an orthodox thinker. In managing his father’s posthumous image, Dingqiu faced the enduring obstacle of peers of Peng Long who memorialized him in terms that differed from those desired by Dingqiu. In this section I will addresses the conflicts as they relate to creedal allegiances within Three Teachings configurations.

There is an incident preserved in the séance transcript anthology Zhishen lu (1773) that sheds light on the shifted balance of power between Peng Long and Dingqiu after Dingqiu achieved the two-fold *optimus* in 1676. In Chapter 3 I showed how in 1674 Dingqiu defied the authority of the spirit altar supervisors of his father Peng Long’s generation in order to assert the veracity of the prophecy of his 1676 examination success. Dingqiu did not, however, as far as I have been able to determine from Dingqiu’s own account of the events, directly defy his own father in the 1674 episode. In the following events Dingqiu registered a more direct conflict with his own father, though it was mediated first by the authority of a spirit-altar, and secondly by the legitimacy of a grieving first son.

In 1678 Dingqiu was joined in the capital by three close acquaintances from Suzhou: his father’s friend You Tong; his (fictional) “uncle” Peng Sunyu (of the Haiyan, Zhejiang Pengs); and his cousin Peng Ningqiu. You and Peng Sunyu were of Dingqiu’s father’s generation; Ningqiu, in contrast, was a close peer of Dingqiu, and the two had attended the clan school together. Dingqiu’s legitimacy deriving from the fulfillment of
the 1674 two-fold optimus prophecy provided him authority over all three men at the spirit-writing sessions the four held in the capital.

Of interest for the present discussion is that Peng Long also participated remotely from Suzhou. He did so by receiving a missive from the spirits on the Beijing altar that was then sent home to him via post. This letter to Peng Long shows that the mechanism of the spirit-altar permitted the inversion of conventional filial parent-child relations. The son, Dingqiu, voiced his criticism of his father’s behavior through the descending spirits. The words of those spirits were then depersonalized—i.e., not considered to have been Dingqiu’s own—and sanctioned by the presence of the other men related to Peng Long by ties of friendship and kinship. Peng Long was thus subjected to the dogmatic arrogance of youth in being chastised remotely on the spirit-altar for his unseemly alchemical and Chan inclinations. Peng Long apparently consented to the criteria by which his son and his divine proxy judged him, and resolved to comport himself in a more suitably orthodox Classicist manner. In short order—according to a later account by Dingqiu—Long had an awakening redolent of Gao Panlong’s sudden enlightenment. He embraced the key Donglin Faction figures Gu Xiancheng and Gao Panlong as his teachers.

The extent to which this conversion ever took place is up for debate. In his sacrificial composition memorializing Peng Long after his death, Long’s lifelong friend You Tong testified that there were not any discernable changes in Long’s interests. As with the Northern Song Learning of the Principles patriarch Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032-85), who also “wandered in Buddhism and Daoism” for a decade before embracing a more

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16 ZSL, 2b-3a.
Chapter 5

ostensibly exclusive Classicism,\(^\text{17}\) it could be argued that Peng Long’s Classicist conversion narrative *highlighted* rather than minimized the importance of the so-called “Two Creeds” (*er shi* 二氏) of Buddhism and Daoism in his life and thought. Peng Long’s claim of a late life Classicist conversion was, however, useful to his descendants. This utility is evident in the memorialization of Long begun by his son Dingqiu, who commissioned a portrait of his father sitting next to his desk, on which lay the posthumous works of Donglin organizers Gu and Gao.\(^\text{18}\) Testifying to the continuing utility of this orthodox Classicist casting of Peng Long, a slim volume centering on this image was compiled and printed by a Peng clan descendant in 1877 (Illustration 5.1).

\[\text{Illustration 5.1}\]

Portait of Peng Long in his study. The accompanying text specifies that the books on Long’s desk are those of Donglin Faction organizers Gu Xiancheng and Gao Panlong. This portrait and the commemorative book in which it was included were part of an effort by Peng Long beginning in his sixtieth year and carried on by Peng Dingqiu after his father’s death to stress Peng Long’s Classicist credentials and obscure his lifelong interest in Chan and Inner Alchemy. From *Zhiju zhai dushu tu ti yong, fu Nanyun xugao* 志矩齋讀書圖題詠附南畇續稿, 1877, Suzhou Library exemplar.

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\(^{17}\) Zhu Xi’s retroactive creation of a Learning of the Principles lineage obscured the original thinkers’ relation with Buddhism, Daoism, and popular practices such as divination. See the discussion in Daniel Burton-Rose, “Integrating Inner Alchemy into Late Ming Cultural History: A Contextualization and Annotated Translation of *Principles of the Innate Disposition* and the Lifespan (*Xingming guizhi* 性命圭旨) (1615)” (M.A. Thesis, University of Colorado, Boulder, 2009): 29-34.

\(^{18}\) The works are not labeled in the illustration, but are specified in the accompanying text.
The Cheng-Zhu conversion narrative advanced by some of Peng Long’s disciples after his death was a face-saving strategy for Long’s intellectual and familiar heirs, but Long’s lifetime friend You Tong revealed the narrative as a pious fiction. In You Tong’s telling, Peng Long was a Three Teachings paragon to the very end. Younger disciples and kinsmen occasionally criticized Long for his predilections, but for a peer who experienced the same pleasures of intellectual promiscuity, there was no need to dissemble. The crucial difference is in the differing attitude of You Tong and Peng Dingqiu towards the stricter orthodoxy of the early Qing: You Tong felt himself exempt from it, while Dingqiu perceived the need to conform to it.

In his elegy (jiwen 祭文) for Peng Long, You Tong wrote:

In his old age he loved study, spreading the classics before him on the table. Disciples approached day in and day out; his lectures were assiduous at the Cultural Star Resplendent Pavilion on the first and fifteenth of each month. He elegantly enjoyed the Daoist school; proffering up penance liturgies in worshipful prostration. Sometimes he clasped his hands reciting the name of the Buddha [Amithaba] in samadhi. ‘The Three Teachings return to One,’ but whence is the One to which it returns?

Several aspects of You Tong’s account are remarkable. Firstly, he dispensed entirely with the orthodox Classicist conversion narrative. In its place, You asserted that his friend had an “elegant affection” for Daoism. In You Tong’s usage “Daoism” (daojiao) was not a purely philosophical grouping traceable to the Laozi; rather, it included rituals performed by either Daoist priests or the penance liturgies (chanhui 懺悔) sometimes

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19 You Tong, “Ji Peng Yunke wen,” PSZP, j. 7: 15b.
performed by laymen. Further on in the elegy You also clearly pointed to Long’s performance of nourishing life (yangsheng 養生) and guiding and leading exercises (dao yin 導引), as well as ingesting pneumas to cure illness (fu qi he bing 服氣何病); all venerable physio-spiritual health maintenance techniques commonly practiced by southern literati in the late Ming (including by many Donglin partisans) which became increasingly popularized over the course of the Qing dynasty. From this episode we can see that Dingqiu had initiated a campaign to reform his father’s promiscuous self-cultivation activities and to sweep them under the rug once his father had passed away. Rather than a distinctive “family learning” passed from father to son, the son prodded the father to meet the new standards of the day for Classicist seemliness. The father may never have reformed, but the son had sufficient control of the posthumous legacy to make his desired vision of his father the standard account.

Peng Dingqiu: A Classico-Immortalist

Lin I Luan has convincingly demonstrated that Peng Dingqiu’s interests lay in Classicism supplemented by Inner Alchemy. A finer historicizing of Dingqiu’s interest in Inner Alchemy is needed: his protests of his father’s interests in the practice in 1678 after...

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20 In 1680 Dingqiu received one such ritual bestowed by an emissary of Wenchang. He subsequently performed it at the Cultural Star Pavilion. As his father was still alive, it is possible Peng Long was in attendance. I believe the received text of the Yuju xinchan 心懺 (Heart-Mind Penance Liturgy of the Jade Bureau) is close to what Dingqiu performed in 1680. It is contained in the wai han 外函, j. 38, of Guan Huai’s expanded fifty juan edition of the Wendi quanshu, which appeared in 1775 and was reprinted in 1876.

21 On the meditation regimens of Donglin partisans, see: Burton-Rose, “Integrating Inner Alchemy into Late Ming Cultural History,” Chapter 2.

22 The story of the popularization of self-care techniques over the Qing has yet to be written, but it is a crucial prequel to studies of the “qigong fever” of the 1980s and 1990s in the People’s Republic of China. On the latter, see: David Palmer, Qigong Fever: Body, Science, and Utopia in China (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

Dingqiu had just become an official in Beijing occurred in a quite different context than those discussed here from the end of Dingqiu’s life. For present purposes, I will characterize Dingqiu as a “Classico-Immortalist” (Ru Xian 儒仙) rather than genuine advocate of “the unity of the Three Teachings.” I have not found evidence of Dingqiu having engaged with Buddhist doctrine to anywhere near the degree that he did with Internal Alchemy. Similarly, his autobiography and prose and poetry anthologies do not reveal interactions with Buddhist monastics on par with those with Daoist abbots that I describe in Chapter 7.

Given his father’s lifelong interest in Chan and Dingqiu’s own enduring practice of seated meditation (“quiet-sitting”; jingzuo 靜坐), there is a highly defensive quality to Dingqiu’s anti-Buddhist polemic. Dingqiu’s most substantial composition in this regard was his Yaojiang shi hui lu 姚江釋毀錄 (Record of Explicating Attempts to Destroy the Yangming School), a reply contesting the two-part claim by Lu Longqi 陸隴其 (1630-92) that Yangmingism: 1) represented the penetration of Chan into Classicism; and 2) was responsible for the late Ming factional crisis. Present day scholars would find little to refute in Lu’s first claim; the second, however, clearly overstated the role of Yangming adherents in the multi-causal decline and collapse of the last ethnically Han ruling house

in imperial China. Lu Longqi’s denunciation of Yangmingism and Dingqiu’s retort, however, are indicative of the relative intellectual harshness of the post-Qing conquest environment: Dingqiu felt the need to respond to critics to a degree that his father (and his friend You Tong) had not. Dingqiu authored the *Yaojiang shi hui lu* in 1703, two years before being commanded by the Kangxi emperor to begin work on the *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 (Complete Poetry of the Tang). Yet, as Lin I Luan pointed out, the work did not circulate widely in Dingqiu’s day, and was not even readily available to Peng clan members for another hundred and forty years.\textsuperscript{25} For this reason we should not think of Dingqiu as a polemical defender of the Yangming School in his own day, but rather as one who keep the faith with discretion; discretion that entailed concessions to the prevailing political climate.

Dingqiu’s Classicist-Immortalist proclivities are evident in a séance transcript from 1713 (for a full translation, see Appendix 5.1). It records the visit by Wang Zhesheng 王喆生 of neighboring Kunshan county to Dingqiu’s altar, and the response of Emissary Du Qiaolin.\textsuperscript{26} On this occasion Wang “inquired as to the gist of the similarities and difference among the Three Teachings.”\textsuperscript{27} Wang’s question straightforwardly initiated a Three Teachings discourse, yet Emissary Du’s response brought in more subtle elements and

\textsuperscript{25} According to Peng Yunzhang, in 1846 Peng Weigao acquired a copy of the work from a gentleman surnamed You 尤 (likely a descendant of You Tong). The edition of *Yaojiang shi hui lu* most widely available in rare book rooms today is that of Peng Zuxian’s 1881 Peng clan compendium. See the discussion in Lin I Luan, “Peng Shaosheng (1740-1796) yu shendao shejiao zhi jiaoshe,” 108.

\textsuperscript{26} Six years later, after Dingqiu’s death, Wang would write one of the most widely circulated biographical accounts of Dingqiu, “Hanlinyuan shijiang Peng xiansheng xingzhuang” 翰林院侍講彭先生行狀 (Events in the Life of Hanlin Academy Compiler Master Peng), n.d. (circa 1719), PSZP, j. 5: 1a-9b. Wang signed this piece as Dingqiu’s “disciple” (men ren 門人). Testifying to his closeness to the Changzhou Pengs, Wang had previously performed the same service for Dingqiu’s cousin Ningqiu and his wife née Wu 吳. See: “Hanlinyuan shidu Zhanting Peng gong ji Wu ruren hezang muzhiming” 翰林院侍讀瞻庭彭公暨吳孺人合葬墓誌銘 (Combined Grave Inscription for the Hanlin Academy [Reader] Peng Zhanting [Ningqiu] and his wife née Wu), in PSZP, j. 5: 29a-33a.

\textsuperscript{27} 問三教異同之旨。 ZSL, 70b.
personal background that would have been known to those present at the altar but not to readers of the transcript alone. Firstly, in terms of terminology, to Wang’s “Three Teachings” Emissary Du replied regarding Classicism (\(ru\)), Daoism as (the Learning of) the Mysteries,\(^{28}\) and Chan—or “the Learning of Chan” (\(Chanxue\) 禪學)—for Buddhism.

In replying to Wang, Emissary Du was highly flattering. He praised Wang’s Classicist qualifications and stated how happy it made Dingqiu that Wang came. Here we can see a social tension common on the altar: although the spirits were much more exalted on a social hierarchy than those who visited them, those who visited needed to be encouraged to do so, lest, implicitly, humans and spirits lose touch. From Emissary Du’s eagerness to praise Wang’s Classicist credentials and welcome him enthusiastically one also gets the impression that Wang had long declined the invitation to participate in the séances Dingqiu supervised. Emissary Du apparently feared the reason may have been an unease on the part of Wang as to the Classicist orthodoxy of the practice. Even with a person who considered himself a disciple (\(men ren\) 門人) of Dingqiu, his participation in Dingqiu’s spirit-writing altar had not been a given.

Another notable discursive element of the 1713 exchange between Wang Zhesheng and Emissary Du is that, in addressing a Three Teachings topic, Emissary Du larded his response with more explicitly Buddhist vocabulary that he conventionally used.\(^{29}\) This is an element of Three Teachings combinatory discourse that I trace back to the Northern Wei court debates mentioned in the cursory historical account at the beginning of this chapter: to credibly respond to a Three Teachings question, one had to

\(^{28}\) The \textit{Zhishen lu} uses the character \textit{yuan} 元 for \textit{xuan} 玄, due to the Kangxi era prohibition on the latter, thereby abbreviating \textit{xuanxue} 玄學, or “Profound Learning.”

\(^{29}\) Specifically, “purified causation” \textit{jingyin} 淨因 and “mounting the Great Vehicle” (\textit{deng dacheng} 登大乘). ZSL, 70b.
be able to demonstrate his intimate knowledge of the creed being disputed. Most revealingly of the Classico-Immoralist ideological commitment of Peng Dingqiu’s spirit-altar, Emissary Du counseled Wang that if he concentrated on the “divine marrow” (shen sui 神隨) of Classicism and Daoism rather than their dregs (zhazi 渣滓), Wang would have no need of Chan. Emissary Du’s careful handling of this situation can only be understood by reference to elements beyond the Three Teachings framework. He did not have the power to simply forbid Wang to cease all involvement in Chan. Emissary Du (and Dingqiu) were clearly aware that Wang possessed such an interest. As an elder who wanted a younger counterpart to consult with him, Du (and Dingqiu) would have lost face by not being able to address Buddhist doctrines, even if only for the purpose of ultimately dismissing them. Additionally, Emissary Du may have felt that he would have been on shaky polemical ground as an insubstantial spirit addressing a living person should he have simply claimed that Chan was not a proper subject of interest for a good Classicist. Instead, Emissary Du attempted to flatter Wang out of his interest in Chan, by praising both Wang’s personal Classicist qualifications and his admirable family pedigree.

       The above examples of Dingqiu’s polemical defense of Yangmingism and Emissary Du’s spirit-altar dismissal of Chan are both of Classicists addressing one another. The environment of production, however, is quite different. The first was presumably the product of a scholar’s studio; the latter of a group séance. Both further the evidence provided in relation to Dingqiu’s chastisement of his father of a consistent rhetorical campaign against Chan meditation.
Peng Qifeng: The Three Teachings are Equal, but all Spring from Buddhism

Peng Qifeng composed prefaces to all three major mid-Qing canons of spirit-writing deities: *Guandi quanshu* 關帝全書 (Complete Works of Thearch Guan, 1772), *Lüzu quanshu* 呂祖全書 (The Complete Works of Patriarch Lü, 1775), *Wendi quanshu* 文帝全書 (Complete Works of the Literary Patriarch, 1775). As Vincent Goossaert has pointed out, the trinity of Lü Dongbin, Wenchang, and Thearch Guan has at least as much classificatory power in attempting to understand mid-Qing elite religiosity as does the Three Teachings framework. Qifeng’s endorsement of all three of these projects through providing prefaces makes him a unique figure in the mid-Qing spirit-writing milieu. In this section I will limit myself to exploring the concept of the Three Teachings evident in Qifeng’s preface to the second edition of the spirit-writing compendium *Lüzu quanshu*. In this section I use Peng Qifeng’s preface to the *Lüzu quanshu* as a case study of the conventions and utility of Three Teachings unity rhetoric. Further, by demonstrating that Qifeng’s text was altered in a later edition, I highlight the way in which the assertions of supremacy of a single Teaching among the three was disputed in communities of spirit-writing enthusiasts.

The first edition of the *Lüzu quanshu* was edited by Liu Tishu 劉體恕, Huang Chengshu 黃誠恕, and others and published in 32 *juan* in 1742. Qifeng’s preface appears in the subsequent edition, that edited by Cai Laihe 蔡來鶴 and his disciple Shao Zhilin 邵  

志琳 (1748-1810) and printed in 1775 at the Pavilion of Celestial Fragrance (Tianxiang ge 天香閣) in Hangzhou, Zhejiang. At 64 juan, it was double the length of 1742 edition by Liu and Huang. Following Lai Chi-tim, I shall call this the 1775 “Shao edition” of the Lüzu quanshu. Qifeng signed the undated preface with the title Secretary of the Board of War, the highest office he had obtained.

There is a significant difference in the text of Peng Qifeng’s preface as it appeared in the 1775 Shao edition and the subsequent major reworking of the Patriarch Lü canon, the Lüzu quanshu zongzheng 呂祖全書宗正 (Complete Works of Lineal Orthodoxy of Patriarch Lü). Lüzu quanshu zongzheng was produced in Suzhou in the late years of the Qianlong reign, not long after the 1775 Shao edition. As Lai has shown, it included original revelations from spirit-writing altars devoted to Patriarch Lü and, significantly for the following discussion, vigorously rejected the inclusion of Chan-friendly material in the 1742 Liu and 1775 Shao editions. Among the works excised by the compiled of the late Qianlong Lüzu quanshu zongzheng was the Chanzong zhengzhi 禪宗正指 (Orthodox Primer on the Chan School), to which Qifeng’s son Shaosheng had composed a preface. Thus in the late Qianlong reign Lüzu quanshu zongzheng we can see a contesting of the strong Buddhist inclination of the mid-Qing Peng clan patriarchs on a spirit altar in their own home town.

The first printing of the 1775 preface imitated the script of a stele and bore Qifeng’s seal.32 The second, for the Lüzu quanshu zongzheng,33 is identical to the first in

32 “Chongke Lüzu quanshu xu” 重刻呂祖全書序 (Preface to the Recarved Complete Works of Patriarch Lü), in Lüzu quanshu, Peng xu 彭序 (Peng preface), 1a-4b; rpd. in Lüzu Chunyang quanshu 呂祖純陽全書 (Taiwan: Huangji chubanshe, 1982), v. 1: 103-110.
content except for a major omission: it drops the last paragraph in which Qifeng subsumes Daoism and Classicism to Buddhism, replacing it only with the words, referring to the collection itself, “It can be said to be complete” (Appendix 5.2). Those who sponsored this edition clearly objected to one Peng patriarch’s espousal of a Three Teachings formulation with Buddhism as the source of the other Two Teachings.

The first issue in Qifeng’s preface: is how does he define the three groups he is comparing? His terminology is as follows: Daoists are *daojia* 道家, “the Daoist school”: which is to say the classification of Warring States thinkers initially posited by the Han dynasty historian Sima Qian. In Qifeng’s formulation, “the Daoist School” was equated to the text the *Daodejing*, to which Qifeng referred in two ways: “the book *Laozi*” and “*Laozi*’s Five Thousand word [scripture]” (*Laozi* wu qian yan 老子五千言). Notably, Qifeng distanced himself from the inherited terminology *daojia* by prefacing his usage of the term with the disclaimer “those whom the [people of the] world call.”34 In Qifeng’s usage, the *jia* in *daojia* is ambiguous in the sense that it can be read as individuals who embrace teachings articulated in certain texts such as the *Laozi*—i.e., a group corresponding to the problematic phrase in English “philosophical Daoists”—or the school composed by such people, “the Daoist school.” Somewhat redundantly in the case of the second reading, he characterizes *daojia* as *pai* 派, a “school” or “sect”; this usage highlights Qifeng’s characterization of this group as a sociological formation. *Daojia*, then, in its encompassing character is equivalent to *ru* as “scholar” or “Classicist.”

Under the rubric of *daojia* Qifeng introduced a second grouping in order to situate Ancestor Lü. In Qifeng’s rough historical schema, *dao* and *ru* came first; only then did
there arise “what later [generations] termed life-extenders.”35 These “life-extenders,” Qifeng explained, were a “school” (pai)36 within daojia, the “Daoist school.” The relevance of the life-extenders to the Lüzuo quanshu was as follows: Lü secured the enduring preservation of his physical body, thereby obtaining the Way.37 His corporeal form thus endured in the world. In post-attainment form Lü could conceal himself from or manifest before mortals at will; thus was his apotheosis from historical individual to deity accomplished.

Qifeng qualified the term “life-extender” with a disclaimer parallel in construction to that he put before Daoist School: “those the [people of the] world admire as…”38 Those who practice life-extending techniques are what we may term “Immortalists.”39 Among them, Qifeng explained, “there are none whom, as their ancestor, do not admiringly return to the words of this ancestor”—i.e., Ancestor Lü. In this passage Qifeng sacrificed a more complex historical narrative in order to stay focused on the topic at hand: which is to say, regarding Lü Yan as a historical personage of the Tang dynasty. The view of Lü as a presented scholar of the Tang dynasty was mostly likely held by Qifeng; Dingqiu most certainly held it, as evident in the biography given to Lü in the Quan Tang shi whose compilation Dingqiu oversaw.40

35 後之言長生者。
36 “Sect” without the derogatory connotation common in the English word.
37 以僊身而得道。
38 世之慕。。。。者。
39 Present day Daoist Studies scholars prefer “transcendent” as a translation for xianren 仙人. However, I find transcendent too difficult a noun from which to form an adjective (i.e., “transcendentist”).

Regarding the historicity of Lü Yan, Paul Katz asserted: “For the purposes of this study, which focuses on his cult, the question of Lu [sic]’s existence is irrelevant and attempts to provide a definitive answer, fruitless.” Paul Katz, Images of the Immortal: The Cult of Lü Dongbin at the Palace of Eternal Joy (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1999): 53. Katz conceded that there was possibly a historical Lü Yan who was a present scholar of the Tang, but, as with Seidel’s Zhang Sanfeng, whatever historical person might have once existed had been long obscured by hagiographic re-direction (p. 53).
Before addressing Qifeng’s presentation of Buddhism, I would like to discuss Qifeng’s terminology regarding Classicism. In the first sentence of the preface he employed the term Kong shi 孔氏; the shi can be read either as an honorific (“Sir Kong,” as I translate it here) or as a “surname”: i.e., “those surnamed Kong.” In late imperial Three Teachings discourse each of the teachings had a founder who was a historical personage and could be indicated by their surname and the suffix shi 氏: Kong shi for Confucius, Lao shi 老氏 for Laozi, and Shi shi 釋氏 for Śakyamuni. The conflation of the historical founder and the grouping that followed them can be seen in the Ming primer of the Chinese popular pantheon Sanjiao yuanliu shengdi foshuai Soushen ji daquan 三教源流聖帝佛帥搜神記大全 (Great Compendium of the Record of the Saints, Emperors, Buddhhas, and Divine Marshalls, and the Origins of the Three Teachings). The work consists of 120 biographies of deities, each preceded by a portrait. The first three are Confucius, Śakyamuni, and Laozi, each depicted flanked by his attendants. The exact phrasing shows the inconsistency as well as the interchangeability of Three Teachings terminology: in order, the biography of Confucius is titled the “origin of the scholars” (Ru shi yuanliu 儒氏源流); that of Śakyamuni “origin of the Śakyists” (Shi shi yuanliu 釋氏源流); and Laozi “origin of the Daoist Teachings” (Daojiao yuanliu 道教源流). The

41 Peng Qi-feng variation on the moniker of Śakyamuni was “Sir Great Hero” (Daxiong shi 大雄氏) after one of the names by which he was referred in the Lotus Sutra after the Sanskrit mahā-vīra (DDB).
42 The coverleaf of the Xiyue Tianzhuguo 西嶽天竺國 edition depicts the three sages together in the upper register, with Laozi to the left, Śakyamuni in the center, and Kongzi on the right. Exemplar of the Munich Library.
43 Sanjiao yuanliu shengdi foshuai Soushen ji daquan, verso of cover leaf to 2a (Confucius), 2b-4a (Śakyamuni), and 4b-6a (Laozi).
parallelism of the structure is clear, but two are referred to with *shi* (honorific for an individual or a clan name) and one a “teaching” (*jiao*), but the meaning is the same.

These three analogous terms were also used to refer to the purported followers of these men: i.e., “Confucians,” 44 Laoists (*Lao shi* 45), and Śākyaists (*Shi shi*). In Qifeng’s preface, the Daoist School was a category comparable to *Kong shi* (“Confucius” or “Confucians”), which, by extension, meant that in his sematic world any of the three “families” or “schools”—Buddhism, Classicism, and Daoism—were equivalent to any of the *shi* 氏 (Kong shi, Lao shi, and Shi shi).

In the type of analogical polemic in which Qifeng was engaged, each of the “families/schools” (*jia*) or “clans/schools” (*shi*) corresponded to a canonical text.

Regarding Classicism and Buddhism in the late imperial period, the canonical text associated with the historical figure varied more greatly from author to author than in the case of Daoism. In Qifeng’s case, his “Confucianism” was clearly represented by the *Da Yi* 大易 (Great Changes): i.e., *Zhouyi* 周易 (The Changes of Zhou). 46

Notably, in Qifeng’s preface Buddhism was not conflated with any one particular classical text. After introducing Ancestor Lü, Qifeng jumped temporally far beyond the three quasi-historical founders of the teachings by bringing in the Song dynasty figure

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44 I would argue that, as with the term “Kong men” 孔門 (literally, “School of Confucius”), “Kong shi” is one of the few terms for which the translation “Confucian” is appropriate.

45 Though sometimes conflated with Daoism as a whole, a follower of Laozi is generally a narrower category that daojia or daojiao; on analogy with the term “Confucianism,” the term “Laoism” deserves to be used more frequently in Western language scholarship in order to make primary texts in translation more transparent.

46 As with so many literati-officials, Qifeng authored an *Yijing* commentary in late life. See his *Yijing richao* 易經日抄 (Working Manuscript on the Classics of Changes), rpd. in *Wuqiu beizhai Yijing jicheng* 無求備齋易經集成, ed. Yan Lingfeng 嚴靈峯 (Taipei: Chengwen chuanshe youxian gongsi, 1976): 1-53.
Huang long Huinan 黃龍慧南 (1002-69).\textsuperscript{47} In Qifeng’s schema, Huinan was analogous to Ancestor Lü because they were both active in the same dynasty, albeit Lü as an immortal with a “lingering corporeal form” and Huinan as a historical personage. Regarding texts affiliated with one of the Three Teachings but not by one of the three founders, Ancestor Lü has “words” (yan 言)\textsuperscript{48} which came to be available throughout the empire, and which Qifeng himself once perused.\textsuperscript{49} Qifeng, sounding quite unimpressed, found Ancestor Lü’s composition to be largely derivative from the Daodejing; just as the “life-extenders” who admired Lü were a subset of the “Daoist school” (daojia), so too was Lü’s work classifiable under the quintessential text of the Daoist school, Laozi’s Daodejing.

After providing this rough chronology spanning some fifteen hundred years between the time of Confucius, Laozi, and Śākyamuni and the Song dynasty, Qifeng introduced the more immediate context of the early Qing dynasty. At that time Liu Tishu compiled a collection of scriptures (jing 經) and exhortations (xun 訓). The work was popular enough that the woodblocks were worn down to the point of uselessness. In Qifeng’s own day (the early 1770s), two enthusiasts from Renhe 仁和 county (Hangzhou), Wang Lüjie 王履階 and Shao Zhilin,\textsuperscript{50} continued Liu’s work.\textsuperscript{51} It was something of a rhetorical convention in closing a preface to identify the person who had solicited it, but

\textsuperscript{47} Qifeng called Huinan “the Chan Master Yellow Dragon” (Huang long Chanshi 黃龍禪師). The “Yellow Dragon” in Huinan’s name derived from the Yellow Dragon Temple 黃龍寺 in Jiangxi, in which Huinan began to reside in 1036. He was a disciple of Shishuang Chuyuan 石霜楚圓 (986–1039), the seventh patriarch in the lineage of the Linji 临濟 school (DDB).

\textsuperscript{48} As Lü was a prolific poet, yan likely referred to his poems, as in pentasyllabic verse (wu yan ci 五言詞), or septasyllabic verse (qi yan ci 七言詞).

\textsuperscript{49} 予嘗取而讀之。 The verb du 读 is for serious reading, as one would do for the classics, rather than casual perusing, and as such is somewhat dissonant with Qifeng’s “I once picked up and read them.”

\textsuperscript{50} Qifeng referred to Shao by his zi Ruzhen 儒珍.

\textsuperscript{51} On the title page of the Lüzu quanshu Wang is credited as the “reverent carver” (jing ke 敬刻) and identified as of Wulin. Shao, for his part, is the “editor of the expanded edition” (zeng ji 增輯) and identified as of Qiantang 钱塘 county, which with Renhe county constituted the city of Hangzhou.
Qifeng did not provide this information. (He was clear in his preface to the *Guandi quanshu* that the impetus for his involvement came from the role of his son Peng Shaosheng.) Although Qifeng did not mention the *Lüzu quanshu* in his manuscript autobiography, he did mention visiting Hangzhou at the time the collection would have been in preparation. His autobiography thus makes plausible the dating of the preface.

Qifeng was far from effusive regarding the present collection of Ancestor Lü’s writings; indeed, he was so deprecating that it is difficult to imagine that the editors would have wished to include it had Qifeng not recently been one of the highest ranked officials in the empire. In his consistent analogizing of each of the Three Teachings, after describing the origins of the *Lüzu quanshu*, Qifeng immediately brought up *Chanzong zhengzhi*. He then engaged in the quintessential trumping move of late imperial Three Teachings discourse. After having set up each of the Three Teachings as analogous by his use of parallel terminology and (however forced) parallel chronologies, Qifeng opined that this single anthology on Chan, “is the point of origin of the Daoist arts of All-under-Heaven.” If Qifeng had rigorously adhered to the initial historical and doctrinal schema he initially set out, the Chan lineage, as a development of the post-classical period, would have been to Śakyamuni as Ancestor Lü was to Laozi: a later iteration prefigured almost in its entirety by the founder of the original teaching. Instead, Qifeng advocated his own personal preference, in which Buddhism was superior not only to Daoism but—remarkably for an *optimus* and former Grand Secretary—to Classicism as well.

Qifeng’s preface to the *Lüzu quanshu* was like a recommendation letter insisted upon by a student from a teacher who was not particularly fond of her; although fulfilling

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52 Qifeng termed it “The Chan Lineage in a single work” (*Chan zong yi shu*).  
53 知天下道術之歸。
a formal requirement, for those who actually read it closely it was likely to have done as
much harm as good. For the editors Qifeng’s high official standing and immense cultural
capital as a two-fold *optimus* and Changzhou county Peng made his disparagement of the
contents of the anthology and its object of devotion an acceptable trade off.

As mentioned above, a vocal group of Patriarch Lü spirit-writing disciples in
Suzhou objected to the prominence of Chan in the 1775 Shao edition of the *Lüzu quanshu*
and undertook their own iteration of the canon. The editors of the new *Quanshu zongzheng*
thus included Qifeng’s “original preface” but excised the offending passage. In
its stead they inserted the terse phrase, in relation to the Shao edition of the *Lüzu quanshu*:
“It can be said that it is not complete.”54 Thus in place of a heretical notion, the *Quanshu zongzheng* editors retroactively inserted a sanction for their expanded editorial endeavors.

Also notable is that Qifeng’s preface to the *Lüzu quanshu* is not included in his
voluminous literary anthology *Zhiting xiansheng ji* 芝庭先生集 (Anthology of Master Courtyard Mushroom). While the title page of this work states clearly that the woodblocks
were stored at the Peng clan compound (Changzhou Peng *shi cang ban* 長洲彭氏藏版),
the omission of the preface cannot be plausibly attributed to lineage interference. The
Changzhou county Pengs in the mid-Qing were hardly the sort to censor devotional
writing; regardless, the first edition of Qifeng’s literary anthology was published during
his lifetime. Further, as noted in the passage by Sakai Tadao with which this chapter
opened, Qifeng’s literary anthology includes several other prefaces to morality books,

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54 可謂弗備矣。
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including those to Yinziwen xinbian (New Edition of the Composition on Hidden Virtue) and his son Shaosheng’s anthology Guandi quanshu.\textsuperscript{55}

Peng Shaosheng: Mengzian Classicism and Pure Land Buddhism are Equivalent, but

Pure Land is Superior

When considering individual members of the Peng clan, present day scholars have put forth more precise constellations of combinations of two or more of the Three Teachings. Liu Ts’un-yan characterized Peng Dingqiu as “a scholar more Neo-Confucianist than Taoist,”\textsuperscript{56} while Zhao Zongcheng 赵宗诚 described Dingqiu as a “dual cultivator of Classicism and Daoism” (Ru Dao shuangxiu zhi shi 儒道双修之士).\textsuperscript{57} As the Peng lineage member to have received the most scholarly attention (see the discussion in Chapter 2), Peng Shaosheng has also been the most subject to classifications. The dizzying array of accommodationist combinations attributed to Peng Shaosheng are a valuable entry point into the complex world of late imperial accommodationist thinking.\textsuperscript{58}

Shaosheng’s most widely circulated work of self-fashioning was the autohagiography that he included in Jushi zhuan (Biographies of Reclusive Scholars/Buddhist Laymen, 1776) titled “Biography of the Master who Knows [to

\textsuperscript{55} Peng Qifeng, Zhiting xiansheng ji, j. 9: 11b-12b and 20a-21a, respectively. I am grateful to Hu Jiechen for providing me with an electronic facsimile of the exemplar of Guandi quanshu held by the National Library of China.


\textsuperscript{57} Zhongguo daojiao shi 中国道教史, ed. Qing Xitai 卿希泰, revised ed. (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe: 1996), v. 4: 454.

\textsuperscript{58} The most common such label is as a representative of Qianlong reign layman Buddhism. See especially: Miura Shūichi 三浦秀一, “Hō Shōshō no shisō: Kenryū ki no shidaifu to bukkō kansuru ikkōcha” 彭紹升の思想: 乾隆期の士大夫と佛教に関する一考察, Tōhō gakuhō 東方學報 60 (1988): 437-79, and Hsieh Cheng-hao 謝成豪, “Peng Shaosheng ji qi sixiang yanjiu” 彭紹升及其思想研究 (M.A. Thesis, National Kaohsiung Normal University [Taiwan], 2009).
Whence the Way] Returns” (Zhiguizi zhuan 知歸子傳). I will analyze this composition for its rhetorical strategies rather than treating it as a literal rendering of the process by which Shaosheng came to enthusiastically embrace Pure Land teachings.

Shaosheng immodestly placed his own biography last, thereby making himself the culmination of the entire “reclusive scholar/Buddhist layman” lineage he had created.\(^{59}\) In what one imagines was a playful move, Shaosheng claimed anonymity for the Pure Land devotee subject of the hagiography: “As for the Master who Knows [to Whence the Way] Returns, his surname and personal name have not been passed on.”\(^{60}\) In the autohagiography Shaosheng foregrounded a Three Teachings schema in which he passed through each Teaching successively until he reached the true one. I am tempted to term this rhetorical device “the Goldilocks trope” because those who employed it claimed to have tried two “beds” before finding the one that was “just right.” Most famously in the late imperial Song Learning tradition, Cheng Hao’s Classicist conversion was narrated in this manner by Zhu Xi. As A.C. Graham has pointed out regarding Cheng Hao,\(^{61}\) and I have done regarding Peng Long, such a late life conversion can conversely highlight rather than explain way the influence of the supposedly abandoned creeds. In Shaosheng’s case, he clearly described himself as an admirer of Cheng Hao. As it is often not clear which of the Cheng brother wrote what, Shaosheng’s honoring of Cheng Hao in particular was an endorsement of the less rigorously orthodox of the two brothers.

While “the Goldilocks trope” may be accurate as an etic descriptor, it does not work as an emic one because those who employed it did not acknowledge that a particular

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Shaosheng’s autohagiography also opens his posthumous prose collection *Yixingji 一行居集* (Beijing: Beijing kejing chu, 1919), j. *shou* 首: 1a-b.

\(^{60}\) 知歸子者，不傳其姓名。

teaching was a particularly good fit for a certain individual. Instead, they insisted that the
creed upon which they finally settled was objectively the correct and superior one. The
person’s capacity for recognizing the correct teaching was predicated precisely on their
intimate knowledge of the false or inferior one. For this reason I will term this rhetorical
strategy the “sequential authority trope.”

In his autohagiography Shaosheng wrote:

By hereditary vocation the Master who Knows [to Whence the Way] Returns was a Classicist. His father and all his brothers served the dynasty by means of their literary abilities. The Master who Knows [to Whence the Way] Returns never donned the official’s cap. He did, however, use Classicist sayings to obtain a presented scholar degree and benefit governance through commentaries on the Classics. He spent day and night unstintingly on mundane literary works.

However, the Master felt a pervasive sense of dis-ease, an acute awareness that he
had not yet found his calling. He inquired of his imaginary friend Master Void-in-the-
Void (Kongkongzi 空空子). In a rhetorical move dating back to the *Vimalakirti sutra*,
Master Void-in-the-Void demonstrated his superior understanding by remaining silent.
Shaosheng, however, was not at the time able to recognize the insight being offered him.
For this reason, he related: “I inquired into the arts of Daoist cultivation of the elixir, and
practiced them for three years without effect.”

Only at this point did the breakthrough arrive.

Afterwards I read Buddhist works. My heart-mind opened as to the place to whence the Way returns. I heard that in the West there is the Buddha of Unlimited Longevity [Amitaba] who emits a great brightness and leads the myriad life-forms

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62 或告以道家修煉術。習之三年不效。
of the Five Turbidities to rebirth in the Pure Land. I [became discouraged] and longed for it. Each day I faced the West and prostrated myself. Master Void-in-the-Void observed: “Could this not be called the ‘knowledge of [the place to whence the Way] returns’?”

At the time Shaosheng was 30 sui. This was a resonate age for anyone who had received even an introductory Classicist education because, as I pointed out in Chapter 3, it is the age at which Kongzi declared he had established himself. Shaosheng received a summons to serve as an official of the seventh rank, but he declined this coveted opportunity. Instead, he manifest his newfound Buddhist commitment by ceasing to eat meat and refraining from sexual congress with his wife.

Shaosheng’s “Biography of the Master who Knows [to whence the Way] Returns” provides us with clear definitions of what each of the Three Teachings meant to the author, at least on an implicitly polemical rhetorical level. Being a Classicist meant serving as a civilian official through success in the civil examinations, commenting on the Classics, and devoting one’s self to literary pursuits more generally. Daoism was a meditational regimen aimed at longevity, while Pure Land Buddhism entailed reading scriptures, ceasing to harm living things, cutting off sexual desire, and setting one’s mind on rebirth in the Western Lands.63

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63 For a more specific account of Shaosheng’s Pure Land vows, see: “Zi shi wen” 自誓文 (My Oath), YZJJ, j. 1a-b, and “Shou pusa jie fayuan wen” 受菩薩戒發願文 (Vow upon taking the bodhisattva proscriptions), YZJJ, j. 1b-2a.

Although “Zhiguizi zhuan” was the most widely circulated piece in which Shaosheng used the sequential authority trope of self-narration, it was far from the only time he used it. For example, he began one preface:

When I was twenty-some years of age, I began to be cognizant of my emergent heart-mind turning towards the Way. Emerging from Classicism and Immortalism took another decade. Then I
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Hsieh Cheng-hao’s 2009 MA thesis is devoted to Peng Shaosheng’s Buddho-Classicist syntheses. Hsieh first considered Shaosheng Classist and Buddhist work independently, then analyzed its combination (jianrong 兼融). In analyzing combinations, Hsieh distinguished between synthesis internal to Buddhism (jiaonei 教内; lit. “internal to the teachings”) and those between Buddhism and Classicism. Internal synthesis included: Vinaya and Pure Land (jiejing ronghe 戒淨融合) and Chan and Pure Land (Chan Jing he yi 禪淨合一). In regard to a Buddho-Classicist merger, Hsieh employed the following categories: “removing the obstruction of a Classico-Buddhist [synthesis]” (che Ru Fo zhi he 撤儒佛之闔); “explicating Classicism by means of Buddhism” (yi Fo jie Ru 以佛解儒); “grasping Chan to enter into Classicism (Yuan Chan ru Ru 援禪入儒); “offering commentary on Classicism by means of the Flower Garland [School]” (yi Huayan shi Ru 以華嚴釋儒).

Simply contemplating the intellectual scope of the material over which Peng Shaosheng made a claim of mastery reminds us that Three Teachings ideology could serve as an organizational strategy for the ever-growing textual products within the Chinese cultural realm. A Three Teachings framework gave its advocates a place for everything, and the patina of knowing everything. Yet, in their assertion of equivalences, proponents conquered the unitary heart-mind and took refuge in the Buddha, profoundly contemplating the Mahayana scriptures and making a silent covenant with the dharma-source. Like a midge emerging from a jar, I danced in the bright light of the clear day.

子年二十餘。始知發心向道。出人於儒與僊者且十年。乃克一心歸佛。深觀大乘經典。默契法原。殆猶醯雞出甕。翔舞於青霄白日之中也。

“Zhendi si tongjie lu xu” 真諦寺同戒錄敘 (Preface to Record of Together Taking the Proscriptions at the Paramārtha Temple), in YXJJ, j. 3: 6a.

64 Hsieh, “Peng Shaosheng ji qi sixiang yanjiu,” 257-60.
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of Three Teachings ideologies often bulldozed over nuances between and within competing doctrinal traditions. Several examples of Shaosheng’s over-quick conflation of concepts were analyzed by Ge Huiye and Wang Weiping. Ge and Wang found that in Shaosheng’s Classico-Buddhist synthesis he sometimes unexpectedly refused to admit the influence of Buddhism. One such case was in regards to the “prohibition on killings” (jie sha 戒殺) which Shaosheng enacted both in his personal vegetarianism since 29 sui and his promulgation of “pools for releasing life” (fangshang chi 放生池).

In his “Preface to Record of Embodying Humanness” (Tirenlu xu 體仁錄敘), Shaosheng wrote: “My cessation of meat consumption was not due to fear of the Buddha’s doctrine of recompense for man and sheep, but because in my conduct I do what sets my heart at peace and nothing more.” In conflating Buddhist “equality of all living things” (zhongsheng pingdeng 罡生平等) with “embodying humanness,” Peng Shaosheng repudiated the Buddhist doctrine of karmic retribution, while embracing the Mengzian doctrine of “caring for everyone” (qinqin renmin 親親人民).

The Promise and Perils of Three Teachings Historiography

More so than any particular affinity for Three Teachings discourse, Peng lineage patriarchs from the early to mid-Qing exhibited a propensity for combinatory rhetorical approaches, be it towards Lu Jiuyuan and Wang Shouren and these thinkers’ asserted compatibility with the Cheng-Zhu orthodoxy of the early Qing dynasty, in the case of Peng Dingqiu, or the compatibility of Pure Land and Chan (with Pure Land as superior) in the polemics of Dingqiu’s great-grandson Shaosheng. The Three Teachings framework,

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however, elides the rhetorical tropes of combinatory discourse and puts an over-emphasis on particular ethico-religious teachings.

In addition to discouraging lateral rhetorical analysis into other indigenous polemics in the Chinese language, there are many devotional practices common between both creeds and social strata that a Three Teachings framework is poorly equipped to discuss. In a 2011 article Adam Yuet Chau characterized Buddhism, Classicism, and Daoism as “conceptual fetishes” and “conceptual aggregates.” In their place he suggested five “modalities of ‘doing religion’” that reflect religious action in Chinese society:

1. discursive/scriptural, involving mostly the composition and use of texts;
2. personal cultivational, involving a long-term interest in cultivating and transforming oneself;
3. liturgical, involving elaborate ritual procedures conducted by ritual specialists;
4. immediate-practical, aiming at quick results using simple ritual or magical techniques; and
5. relational, emphasizing the relationship between humans and deities (or ancestors) as well as among humans in religious practices.

All of these five modalities appear in this dissertation, and most fit better than a Three Teaching analytical lens. Yet understanding the Three Teachings as a discursive construction does not adequately grasp the significance the discourse held for late imperial figures; hence my focus on the rhetorical uses of combinatory discourse.

In this discussion of what many scholars have characterized as the quintessential Three Teachings lineage, I highlight shared aspects between Buddhism, Classicism, and Daoism not focused upon by those who asserted an underlying unity in the late imperial period. Such areas range from conceptions of the perfect death (Chapter 4) to fundraising

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67 I.e., “common religion” rather than “popular religion,” with its more Volkish connotation. In Chinese this would require the neologism *putong xinyang* 普通信仰, rather than the now prevalent catch-all *minjian xinyang* 民間信仰.

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(Chapters 6 and 7) and blood-writing. Most simply, such practices can be characterized as an aspect of Chinese Religion; yet using practices that were not polemicized in a Three Teachings framework (however much they may have been contested outside of such a framework) allows us to define more clearly the underlying cultural fabric and determine the motivations for assertions of doctrinal equivalency.

69 Another example, not explored in this dissertation, is the beef taboo.
Chapter 6
Late Imperial Wenchang Devotion and the Changzhou County Cultural Star Pavilion, 1550s-1870s

The Cultural Star Pavilion (Wenxing ge 文星閣) is a freestanding four-story tower devoted to the deity Wenchang. Still standing today, it was first erected in the 1550s and moved to its present location in 1612. I first introduced the Pavilion in Chapter 1. It assumed a more central role in the narrative in Chapter 3, as the site of Peng Long’s bi-monthly lectures and the place where his son Dingqiu posted the prophecy of his two-fold optimus success.

What was the Cultural Star Pavilion, and what was the nature of the relationship of the Peng clan with the site? Having considered the broad contours of the Peng Clan in Chapter 4, we are now prepared for a comprehensive consideration of clan relations with the site over a two hundred year period, from ninth generation clan patriarch Peng Long in the early Kangxi reign to sixteenth generation patriarch Peng Weigao 慰高 during the post-Taiping civil war Tongzhi Restoration. In order to capture the diversity of the devotional and charitable activities performed by Peng patriarchs at the site, in this chapter I also draw on the problematization of the Three Teachings as an analytical framework that I set out in Chapter 5.

Certainly many activities at the Pavilion could fit in to a conventional Three Teachings rubric. For example, philosophical lectures, shrines to local worthies, and organizational meetings for supporting the chaste widows of the local gentry would meet most definitions of Classicist, while the Buddhist framework of secluded meditation on
rebirth in the Pure Land would incite little controversy. But when pressure is applied to any of these categories crisp conceptual boundaries quickly collapse. The charitable milieu first documented at the Pavilion in the 1660s was the direct continuation of the social organization of Yangmingist philosophical currents that first arose in the mid-Ming. At its core this philosophical current involved ingesting Buddhist concepts and practices and attempting to circulate them within an orthodoxy Classicist framework. If this endeavor succeeded for a time in the mid- and late Ming, it was rigorously challenged and largely discredited in the early Qing. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 5, the Pengs public continued this legacy in their philosophical embrace of Gao Panlong and other Donglin Faction members. As Gao was a celebrated advocate of quiet-sitting, even the Buddhist meditation in which a Peng patriarch engaged at the Pavilion in the late eighteenth century was implicated in a long Classicist quiet-sitting practice among Peng lineage patriarchs. Similarly, the creedal status of, for example, a pool for the liberation of animals was by no means clear when first attested at the Pavilion in the 1660s or re-asserted in the 1770s: in the first case it could be a Classicist appropriation of a Buddhist practice, in the second an attempt to justify a Buddhist worldview with Classicist precedent. Such open-endedness does not make the creedal registers of certain practices irrelevant. Indeed, they are all the more revealing due to the extent and vigor with which they were contested.

Just as the use of the same Chinese characters often conceal a change in meaning overtime; the very consistency of the Cultural Star site and of the Pengs’ proximity to it can hide the dynamism in the relationship. The physical site was subjected to the vagaries of weather and war, of shifts in sponsorship from the Changzhou county magistrate’s
discretionary funds to local elite fundraising, and of changing dynamics within the local elite itself. The site also witnessed a myriad of religious activities: the earliest documented Society for Cherishing the Written Word (xizi hui 惜字會); spirit-writing séances; a penance ritual addressed to dual Daoist and Classicist pantheons; and reclusive Buddhist meditation. Each of these devotional activities reflected in turn the broader social trends of the times in which they were performed.

Before analyzing changes in the relations of Peng clan patriarchs with the Pavilion, it is necessary to provide a cursory introduction of Wenchang devotion in the late imperial period and the prominence of Peng patriarchs in such practices during the Qing dynasty. I also briefly discuss the convention of erecting towers devoted to Wenchang or his avatars as geomantic interventions in the urban landscape.

The Wenchang Cult in the Late Imperial Devotional Landscape

Before relating the history of the Changzhou county Cultural Star Pavilion, a broader account of Wenchang devotion is order. Such an account will provide the background for demonstrating the way in which, beginning with Peng Dingqiu's reception of the two-fold optimus prophecy in 1674, actions taken by Peng patriarchs at the Cultural Star Pavilion would have empire-wide implications for the Wenchang cult.

Terry Kleeman has traced the development of the Wenchang cult from the fourth century through the twelfth, detailing the process by which the eastern Sichuanese deity Zitong 梓潼 was gradually conflated with the Wenchang star first named in the
“Tianguan shu” 天官書 (Document of Celestial Offices) chapter of the Shiji 史記. The fourth century gazetteer of the Ba-Shu region, the Huayang guozhi 華陽國志, contained the first record of a snake spirit of the Seven-Fold Mountain (Qiqu shan 七曲山) of northeastern Sichuan. In the following centuries this snake spirit anthropomorphized into the deity Zitong. In the Qing, the serpentine origins of the Zitong spirit would prove an obstacle in Wenchang’s acceptance in the official register of sacrifices (sidian 祀典).

The earliest record of Zitong in the Yangzi delta is an inscription of the Zitong biography Qinghe neizhuan 清河內傳 (The Esoteric Biography of Pure River) in Lin’an 臨安 (present day Hangzhou) in 1177. The presence of Zitong in the Yangzi Delta evinced a newfound facility of communication with the upper reaches of the Yangzi river in Sichuan. Concomitant with the empire-wide spread of the Wenchang cult in the Song, eastern Sichuan maintained a role as a center of revelation. From its early days in northeastern Sichuan the Zitong cult was associated with the practice of spirit-writing.

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2 For more on the Huayang guozhi, especially as it relates to the early Celestial Masters movement, see: Terry Kleeman, Great Perfection: Religion and Ethnicity in a Chinese Millennial Kingdom (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998).

3 I visited this site with Professor Kleeman in January 2010.

4 For example, Stephan Feutchwang cited a piece by a magistrate in the 1718 Zhuluoxianzhi 諸羅縣志, a document that lists the presence of the “absurd god of Daoism” in close proximity to Confucius in official schools throughout the realm. Feutchwang erroneously stated that the Kangxi emperor entered Wenchang into the register of sacrifices. See his: “School-Temple and City God,” in The City in Late Imperial China, ed. G. William Skinner (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1977): 594.


6 The other deity to receive significant scholarly attention in relation to the earliest recorded instances of spirit-writing is the Purple Maiden (Zigu 紫姑); originally the Maiden of the Privy (Cegu 廁姑). See: Judith Boltz, “On the Legacy of Zigu and a Manual on Spirit-Writing in her Name,” in The People and the
crucial early production was Zitong’s autobiography the *Huashu* (Book of Transformation), seventy-three episodes of which were delivered via planchette near Chengdu in 1181.\(^7\) Another twenty-one chapters followed in 1194, and a final three in 1267.\(^8\) Zitong’s autobiography detailed his precipitous chutes and ladders path through the celestial bureaucracy. The divine autobiography served, in Kleeman’s words, as “the defining blueprint for the Wenchang cult” in the late imperial period.\(^9\) By the mid-Ming the *Huashu* would be ranked among the morality book (*shanshu* 善書) that were disseminated to increase a donor’s merit.

Beginning in the Song dynasty, literati turned Wenchang into the patron deity of civil examination candidates. From then on the spirit-writing that had been associated with the cult since its origins in eastern Sichuan province was often directed to prophesying examination questions and outcomes. As I mentioned above, the state was not enthusiastic about these practices because they were predicated on a lack of confidence in the judgment of imperially appointed examiners.\(^10\)

The post-Song period saw the reception through spirit-writing of key texts of Wenchang devotion such as *Yinzhi wen*, *Benyuan jing* 本願經 (Scripture on the Original Vow), *Wenchang Xiaojing* (mid-Ming), *Dadong jing* 大洞真經 (True Scripture of the Dao).

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\(^7\) Kleeman provided an elegant translation of the 73-chapter version as *A God’s Own Tale*. For the edition history of the *Huashu*, see: 293-95.

\(^8\) *The Taoist Canon*, v. 2: 1204.

\(^9\) Kleeman, *A God’s Own Tale*, xii.

Great Cavern), and *Wenchang gongguoge* 功過格 (Wenchang’s Ledger of Merits and Demerits). The authority of these scriptures—as well as commentaries upon them and variant editions—were consolidated beginning in the mid- and late eighteenth century with the advent of Wenchang devotion canons *Wendi quanshu* 文帝全書 (Complete Works of the Cultural Thearch) and *Wendi shuchao* 書抄 (Draft Works of the Cultural Thearch). As I discuss below, Peng clan patriarchs featured prominently in these compendia as both content-providers and patrons.

Quoting or invoking the *Shiji* passage naming the Wenchang star would become a clichéd component of inscriptions by late imperial literati on the Wenchang. In his

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11 On Wenchang, the *Dadong jing*, and a possible connection to one version of the scripture to Peng Dingqiu, see Jihyun Kim 金志玹, “Invention of Traditions: Focused on Innovation of the Perfected Scripture of Great Cavern in Qing Daoism,” *Daoism: Religion, History and Society* 7 (2015).

12 From the vista of the mid-1770s, Peng Qifeng opined that, after the *Huashu*, the most important scriptures of Wenchang devotion were the *Benyuan jing*, *Wenchang Xiaojing*, and *Yizhiwen*. 帝君立教之書，以本願經，孝經，陰騭文為最著。Peng Qifeng, “Xu,” in *Wendi quanshu*，Peng xu 3b.

13 Hu Jiechen 胡劫辰 has identified nine editions of the *Wendi quanshu* dating from 1745-1876. This figure does not include Zhu Gui’s *Wendi shuchao*. See Hu’s “Qingdai Wendi quanshu de banben yu neirong” 清代「文帝全書」的版本與內容, *Xianggong zhongwen daxue daojiao wenhua zhongxin tongxun* 40 (2016): 4-9.

I have examined both the 1775 edition and the 1876 reprint of Guan Huai’s expanded fifty *juan* edition of the *Wendi quanshu*, the first in the digital facsimile of the Waseda exemplar, the second in the Gest Library exemplar. Both include further material tied to Peng Dingqiu, such as: a subscript commentary attributing to him the *Dadong jing* 大洞涇 (Great Cavern Scripture; on which see Kim, “Invention of Traditions”); the biographical information on Dingqiu discussed above (as well as biographical information on You Tong which mentioned Dingqiu); and the *Yuju Xinchan* 玉局心懺 (Heart-Mind Penance Liturgy of the Jade Bureau).

A consideration of the distribution of the above material within the 50 *juan Wendi quanshu* demonstrates the way in which material related to Peng Dingqiu marbles the entire canon. The locations for the 1775 edition are as follows:

1) Biography of Peng Dingqiu in *Lingyan shi ji* 靈驗事蹟 (Records of Numinous Proofs), j. 1: 29b. Dingqiu is also mentioned in one of the three biographical anecdotes regarding You Tong: j. 1: 40b. The table of contents specified that the Dingqiu anecdotes was in the previous edition of 1743, while those of You Tong were 1775 additions.

2) Dingqiu’s preface to the *Wenchang Xiaojing*, j. 5a-6a.

3) *Yuju xinchan*, *wai han* 外函, j. 38; *Zhishen lu* (divided in two *juan* 上下 but identical in content to the single *juan* 1842 edition), *wai han*, j. 46-47. In the 1876 edition of the *Wendi quanshu* the *Xinchan* liturgy appeared in an appendix following the *wai han* in ce 17. (The *Wenchang xinchun* in the *Zangwai daoshu* is an 1859 hand copy of the core nine chapters *zhang* 章 of the liturgy signed a Han Yinglu 韓應陸: v. 4: 314-18. It corresponds to *ce* 17: 3a-33b in the 1876 *Wendi quanshu Yuju xinchun*. )
preface to Guan Huai’s *Wendi quanshu* of 1775, Peng Qifeng invoked an antiquity even greater than that of the *Shiji*, quoting a passage from the “Dazongbo” 大宗伯 chapter of the *Liji* 禮記 that described the bonfire offered to Sizhong 司中. Pointing out that Sizhong was listed alongside Siming 司命 in the “Tianguan shu” chapter (as the fourth and fifth Wenchang star, respectively), Qifeng asserted: “The origins of the sacrifice to Wenchang are ancient.”

Qing officials such as Peng Qifeng hastened to cite the *locus classicus* of the Wenchang star for good reason. Despite the widespread patronage of civil service examination hopefuls and the presence of towers dedicated to Wenchang at official schools throughout the empire, in the Ming and early Qing Wenchang was not in the imperial register of sacrifices. Zitong first received imperial recognition from two exiled Tang emperors: Xuanzong (r. 712-756) and Xizong (r. 873-888). He also received imperial titles in the Song; in 1316 the Yuan court ennobled Zitong as Wenchang. Yet the efforts of Ming dynasty Wenchang enthusiasts did not secure the patron deity of the civil service examination system any new titles. Opposition to such commendations was based in part on officials’ awareness of the derivation of an aspect of Wenchang’s origin lore from a Sichuanese snake spirit. Another factor is that the prophecy of examination questions and results with which Wenchang devotion was closely tied in the late imperial period undermined the legitimacy of the test results, presenting them as it did as a manipulable result of fate (*ming* 命), rather than the valid ranking of examiners.

Wenchang devotees secured an imperial commendation only in 1801, a gap of nearly five years.

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15 *The Taoist Canon*, v. 2: 1203.
16 *The Taoist Canon*, v. 2: 1204.
Chapter 6

hundred years in which, despite its widespread practice by men of social status and official rank throughout the empire, the Wenchang cult was classified by default as an “improper sacrifice” (yinsi 淫祀).

The official rationale for the 1801 canonization is that it was a reward for Wenchang’s divine assistance in the suppression of a White Lotus rebellion in Sichuan. Clearly more complex factors were at play, however, prompting a wide-ranging policy change in the granting of imperial titles to deities. Specifically, titles the other two members of the mid-Qing triumvirate of spirit-altar patrons, Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 and Thearch Guan (Guan di 關帝), followed shortly thereafter. Although demonstrating a causal connection would require further research, it is appears plausible to me that the 1801 of Wenchang canonization was a personal reward of sorts from the Jiaqing emperor to his high official Zhu Gui. As David Nivison noted in his study of the vanquishing of the clique of Heshen after the passing of the Qianlong emperor, Zhu played a major role in helping the young Jiaqing emperor assert himself against his late father’s favorite. Zhu was a long-term spirit-writing enthusiast and Wenchang devotee. In 1767 he edited the abridged 14 juan Wenchang canon Wendi shuchao. In as much as the group was

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18 Lü and Guan were entered into the registers of official sacrifices in 1804 and 1814, respectively. See the overview of the canonization process in Vincent Goossaert, “Spirit Writing, Canonization and the Rise of Divine Saviors: Wenchang, Lüzu, and Guandi, 1700-1858,” Late Imperial China 36.2 (2015): 82-125.
persecuted just after Zhu left office, Zhu also appears to have protected the Beijing spirit-writing circle in which Jiang Yupu 蔣予蒲 (zi Yuanting 元庭; jinshi 1781; 1756-1819) participated.

Prior to imperial recognition, Changzhou county Pengs played an important role in the production and dissemination of Wenchang scriptures in the early to mid-Qing dynasty. Peng Dingqiu’s literary anthology Nanyun wengao includes three compositions on Wenchang: a preface to the *Huashu*;\(^{20}\) another to the *Wenchang Xiaojing*;\(^{21}\) and a composition memorializing the carving of a stele bearing the *Yinzhi wen* 陰騭文 (Composition on Hidden Virtue).\(^{22}\)

A brief consideration of Dingqiu’s preface to the *Wenchang Xiaojing* provides a sense of his Wenchang devotion in the scriptural register. In addition to the *Nanyun wengao*, Dingqiu’s preface is included in later Wenchang compendia such as Guan Huai’s 1775 *Wendi quanshu*. Following the conventions of the prose anthology, the *Nanyun wengao* version does not include a date, but the 1775 *Wendi quanshu* gives us the eleventh month of 1706. In his preface Dingqiu explained that the present edition was a recutting (重刻) of the old text *Xiaojing* with accompanying commentary (*jiuben* 夏經旁注) by Dingqiu’s old friend (*laoyou* 老友) Cheng Zhonglong 程仲龍 (zi Ziyun 子雲) of Xiuning county, Huizhou prefecture.\(^{23}\) Although

\(^{20}\) Chongke *Wenchang Huashu xu* 重刻文昌化書序 (Preface to the Recarving of Wenchang’s Book of Transformation), NYWG, j. 2: 71a-b; rpt.: 291.

\(^{21}\) “*Wenchang Xiaojing shuhou*”文昌孝經書後 (Postface to Wenchang’s Classic of Filial Piety), NYWG, j. 12: 1a-b; rpt.: 446.

\(^{22}\) “*Shu Wenchang Yinzhi wen shi ke hou*”書文昌陰騭文石刻後 (Piece following the carving-in-stone of Wenchang’s Composition on the Yin Tallies), NYWG, j. 12: 12a; rpt.: 451.

\(^{23}\) “*Wenchang Xiaojing shuhou*”文昌孝經書後 (Postface to Wenchang’s Classic of Filial Piety), NYWG, j. 12: 1a-b; rpt.: 446. Dingqiu also mentioned Cheng in “Hankou mu bei shui huo er zai yin” 漢口幕備水火二災引 (Solicitation for Relief of Flood and Holocaust [Victims] in Hankou), NYWG, j. 12: 42.
Dingqiu did not mention writing the preface in his autobiography, he did record that in the eleventh month of the year he collaborated with Cheng in raising funds for renovating the Venerating Scriptures Pavilion (Zunjing ge 尊經閣) at the Changzhou county school. Given the prominence of the Cheng lineage among Huizhou merchants, the contact of the quintessentially literary Dingqiu with the wealthy merchants of his day deserves further investigation. For our present purposes, suffice it to note that Dingqiu’s autobiography supports the *Wendi quanshu* dating.

Dingqiu opened his preface by acknowledging the skepticism of “scholars of the day” (*shi ru* 世儒) toward the products of the spirit-writing altar. He dismissed their attitude, however, as attributable to an insufficient understanding of the affairs of the respective realms of the dead and the living and of reincarnation. Dingqiu drew on the *Zhongyong* 中庸 (Doctrine of the Mean) and a chapter of the *Huashu* to bolster his point.

As with most enthusiasts of the *Wenchang Xiaojing*, Dingqiu referred to the Han dynasty *Xiaojing* as the *Kongzi Xiaojing* 孔子孝經 (Master Kong’s *Scripture on Filial Piety*), thereby asserting an equivalence between the works. In a comment revealing his

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As far as I have been able to determine this edition is no longer extant; indeed, the earliest extant edition of the *Wenchang Xiaojing* may not be until the late eighteenth century; a discrepancy that should caution us against dating it by the purported prefaces of Wang Ao and Qiu Jun.


I deliberately translate *jing* as “scriptures” rather than as “classics” in order to highlight the way in which *jing* were sacred texts in “Confucian” as in any other context. On these library structures, see: Timothy Brook, “Edifying Knowledge: The Building of School Libraries in Ming China,” *Late Imperial China* 17.1 (1996): 93-119.

25 The Qianlong reign *Kongzi Wenchang Xiaojing heke* 孔子文昌孝經合刻 (Combined carving of the Kongzi and Wenchang Classic of Filial Piety; 2 juan; 1 juan appended) is in *Xiaojing wenxian jicheng* 孝經文獻集成, eds. Wu Ping 吳平, Li Shanqiang 李善強, and Huo Yanrong 霍艷蓉 (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2011), v. 16: 10013-32.

conventional ideas towards the proper social order, Dingqiu characterized the *Kongzi Xiaojing* as describing the power of filial piety moving from “emperors and kings down to gentlemen and commoners.” Although testifying to the importance of the *Wenchang Xiaojing*, Dingqiu acknowledged that he came to it relatively late in life. Once he encountered it, he wished to immediately broaden its distribution.\(^{26}\) Given the extent to which present day scholars associate the Changzhou county Pengs with morality books, it bears noting that in this preface Dingqiu did not identify a concrete means by which he aided in the dissemination of the scripture beyond providing a preface for it.

In 1680 Dingqiu received a penance liturgy via a spirit-altar descent of Wenchang emissary Du Qiaolin. Titled the *Wenchang dijun Yuju xinchan* (Heart-mind Penance of the Jade Bureau of the Thearch Lord Wenchang), Dingqiu performed the ritual at the Cultural Star Pavilion. The object of the ritual was two distinct pantheons: one explicitly Daoist, which was repeated several times, and one to the Learning of the Way patriarchs, which was appended at the end. This peculiar configuration of dual pantheons is a concrete example of Dingqiu’s Classico-Immortalist commitments.

Zhu Gui included the *Yuju xinchan* in his 1767 *Wendi shuchao*. I find it plausible that this text is close to that Dingqiu received and performed at the Cultural Star Pavilion. Following the liturgy itself, Zhu provided a biography of Dingqiu and another of emissary Du Qiaolin that related both his terrestrial and posthumous career. Finally, Zhu included an overview of the development of the Jade Bureau, as the celestial bureaucracy of Wenchang was termed in the spirit-writing communications received by Dingqiu. This

\(^{26}\) 正欲廣為流傳。
paratextual accumulation of Peng Dingqiu as a crucial terrestrial representative of Wenchang is consistent with the process of Dingqiu’s own deification that I describe in Chapter 8.

The two-fold optimi success of both Dingqiu and his grandson Qifeng prompted the Pengs to become something of an icon of the terrestrial rewards of Wenchang devotion. This status is strikingly evident in Huang Zhengyuan’s 黃正元 (fl. 1755) Yinzhiwen tushuo 隱騭文圖說 (The Composition on Hidden Virtue, Explicated and Illustrated), in which the opening portrait of Wenchang himself is followed by an illustration of Peng Qifeng approaching the Optimi Arch (Zhuangyuan fang 狀元坊) at the Suzhou prefectural Cultural Temple (Illustrations 6.1 and 6.2; for further discussion of the representation of the Pengs in Huang’s work, see Chapter 8).27

The iconization of Peng Dingqiu and Peng Qifeng in Wenchang devotional circles was concurrent with continued veneration within the Peng lineage. In 1773 Qifeng’s son Peng Shaosheng collected and published the transcripts of spirit-writing sessions produced via his great-grandfather Peng Dingqiu’s altar, titling them Zhishen lu 質神錄

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27 1880 edition, Gest Library exemplar. Yau Chi-on reproduced the illustration of Peng Qifeng as Illustration 16 in Shan yu ren tong, p. 331, using the exemplar held by the Tianjin Library.
(Record of the Interrogation of the Spirits). As Guan Huai was preparing his edition of the *Wendi quanshu* he wrote Peng Qifeng requesting a preface. Qifeng, who was serving as Secretary of the Board of War at the time, drew Guan’s attention to Shaosheng’s anthology of the early Qing Peng spirit-altar transcripts. Guan Huai promptly included *Zhishen lu* in the *Wendi quanshu*, thus almost immediately granting Shaosheng’s independently circulating work canonical status in Wenchang devotional circles. Given that the content of *Zhishen lu* was Peng Dingqiu’s spirit-altar transcripts, by having Guan
include his son’s compilation Qifeng was also promoting his grandfather as the terrestrial representative of Wenchang. Given Qifeng’s own concrete continuation of his grandfather’s legacy by his achievement of the two-fold *optimus* degree, his intervention was self-serving in both personal and lineage registers.

In his preface to Guan Huai’s Wenchang compendium Qifeng registered his pleasure at the inclusion of his son Shaosheng’s anthology. From this anecdote we can see that the veneration of the Changzhou county Pengs as exemplars of the terrestrial rewards of Wenchang veneration could be undertaken by lower-level officials with a desire to please their superiors.

In the mid-Qing the Pengs were associated with the Wenchang cult to such an extent that admirers exaggerated their involvement. Such hyperbole is evident in a case I examine more fully in Chapter 8, in the preface by the apotheosized Wenchang emissary Du Qiaolin to the spirit-altar transcript compendium *Xu Zhishen lu* (Continuation of Record of Interrogation of the Spirits, 1842). In his preface Emissary Du set out a genealogy of spirit-writing from the Song dynasty to the time of writing in which the Pengs played a major role in transmitting the Way in the Qing. In terms of the canonization of Wenchang, Du put the thirteenth generation patriarch Peng Shaosheng, who turned down his one offer of an official post, on par with the high official Zhu Gui. Though Du likely exaggerated the role played by Peng Shaosheng, it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the preface provided for the *Wendi quanshu* by Shaosheng’s

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29 *Xu Zhishen lu*, xu 序 1a. Gest Library exemplar of 1842.
father Qifeng. And as Qifeng explicitly tied his interest in the collection to the inclusion of his son’s work, Shaosheng certainly deserves some credit.

Freestanding Towers Devoted to Wenchang in Official Schools

Freestanding towers devoted to Wenchang went by a number of names related to Wenchang and his fierce avatar Kuixing: Wenchang, Cultural Star (Wenxing), and Kuixing. Nearly all were referred to a “pavilions” (ge 閣), a free-standing tower that was generally two stories high (less frequent were ting 亭, which could also be multi-level towers). At four stories, the Cultural Star Pavilion in Suzhou upon which I focus in this chapter is the highest Wenchang tower I have yet encountered. Its height and architectural design betray a competition with pagodas (ta 塔).

These towers have not been the subject of a specialized survey based on the abundant local gazetteer record. When they are, I believe the results would be similar to the empire-wide construction of Pavilions for Revering the Scriptures/Classics (Zunjing ge 尊經閣; the term for “scriptures” or “classics” is the same in Chinese): they first

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30 In an intriguing inversion of the conventions of filial piety, Qifeng implicitly praised his son but did not mention in his preface that Shaosheng’s Zhishen lu included transcripts related to Qifeng’s grandfather (Dingqiu), granduncle (Ningqiu), father (Zhengqian), and uncle (Shiquan).

31 In the course of fieldwork for this dissertation, I have visited Wenchang towers in Tainan (Taiwan), Jiading, Shanghai, and Hangzhou. Some were rebuilt as recently as the first decade of the twenty-first century: e.g., the Wenchang Palace (Wenchang dian 文昌殿) at the Suzhou Cultural Temple was rebuilt in 2002; the Wenchang Palace at the Hangzhou Cultural Temple in 2006. Yet others, such as the Kuixing Pavilion (Kuixing ge 魁星閣) at the Tainan Cultural Temple and the nearby Scarlet Cliff Tower (Chikan lou 赤崁樓) date back to the nineteenth century, contemporaneous with the Cultural Star Pavilion in Suzhou.

32 Revealingly, students at Soochow University, on the grounds of which the Pavilion stands today, refer to it as the “square-pagoda” (sifang ta 四方塔) rather than by the name Cultural Star Pavilion. The proper Classicist name still appears above the entrance gate, in seal-script calligraphy provided by the caretaker Su Tianming (interview with Su Tianming, spring 2014).

33 Brook, “Edifying Knowledge.”
obtained widespread diffusion in the Ming Jiajing reign (1522-66), and were present in nearly all prefectural and county schools by the Qing Yongzheng reign (1723-35).

In his 2009 monograph on the cultural temples (wenmiao 文廟) of the Yangzi Delta, Zhang Yaxiang asserted that these structures were first erected to improve the geomantic landscape of cultural temples (many of which were combined with prefectural and county schools). Only later did they become sites of Wenchang devotion. For reasons explained below, Zhang’s statement is consistent with my findings for the Changzhou county Cultural Star Pavilion.

The Changzhou County Cultural Star Pavilion

The Cultural Star Pavilion is a freestanding four-story tower devoted to the deity Wenchang. Beginning with its initial erection in the 1550s, the Cultural Star Pavilion was subsumed under the Changzhou county school; and, following the creation of Yuanhe 元和 county in 1725, the joint Yuanhe-Changzhou county school. Yet it was not physically situated within the complex of the official school. I argue that this spatial distancing provided additional autonomy for the ritual and devotional programs practiced at the Pavilion.

Vincent Goossaert has observed that Wenchang towers “developed into key places for the development of elite moral values and cultural production” in part because “unlike the Confucius temple-schools, [they] were not official, and thus under less scrutiny and legal constraints.” In a survey of household rituals created by late Ming

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34 Zhang Yaxiang 张亚祥, Jiangnan wenmiao 江南文庙 (Shanghai: Shanghai jiaotong daxue chubanshe, 2009): 65.
and early Qing literati, Lu Miaw-fen commented that one of the motives for the creation of such private rituals was individual scholars’ lack of control over the ritual program at official schools.\(^{36}\) Analysis of the Cultural Star Pavilion provides a case study with which to flesh out Goossaert’s insight, and in so doing describe an interstitial zone between the dichotomy of county school and the household set forth by Lu.\(^{37}\) Building on Wang Jian’s 2010 study of the involvement of Yangzi Delta elites in the development of supra-household shrines devoted to their ancestors in the Ming dynasty, I provide a case study that spans two-thirds of the Qing dynasty. The connection between the Cultural Star Pavilion complex and the county school highlights the importance of the civil examination success of Peng clan members in solidifying their standing among local and regional gentry and in spreading their fame throughout the empire. In considering the changing nature of Peng patriarchs’ relation with the Pavilion, I continue the work of scholars of Qing dynasty Yangzi gentry-state relations such as Jerry Dennerline and James Pollachek.

Located just inside the eastern wall of urban Suzhou between the Feng 蘆 and Lou 婆 gates, the Cultural Star Pavilion was a short distance from the Peng mansion on Shiquan jie 十泉街 (Illustration 6.3).\(^{38}\) The physical proximity of the Pavilion and the Peng compound was clearly a factor in the close relationship of the two. In considering the spatial dynamics of this relationship, I argue that the layout of urban Suzhou is

\(^{36}\) Lu Miaw-fen, “Household Worship of Confucian Sages and Worthies by Ming-Qing Confucians.” Paper presented at the 2015 Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association on the panel “The Religious Aspect of Confucian Practice in Late Imperial China.”

\(^{37}\) For the time being, I will defer speculation regarding the extent to which this interstitial zone constituted a Habermasian “civil society.” On this question more broadly, see, for example, the special issue of Modern China “‘Public Sphere’/ ‘Civil Society’ in China?” 19.2 (1993).

\(^{38}\) Both structures stand today in their original early Qing locations, though the Peng clan mansion is a curtailed post-Taiping Civil War reconstruction. It is approximately a ten minute walk from the Peng mansion to the Cultural Star Pavilion.
significant, both the cityscape as a whole and the dynamics between Wu county in the west and Changzhou county in the East. But the physical proximity of the Cultural Star complex and the Peng compound facilitated an intimacy beyond that of Changzhou county as a whole, whether it be Dingqiu being able to claim to have posted his 1674 revelation there or Shaosheng having presumably been able to receive food and other personal services from household servants during his extended periods of meditation at the site.
Illustration 6.3
Detail from *Gusu cheng tu* (A map of the city of Suzhou, 1745).
1. Peng clan compound
2. Wenchang Pavilion
3. Changzhou-Yuanhe county school
4. Twin Pagodas Monastery
In 1711 or shortly thereafter Peng Dingqiu edited an anthology on the complex titled *Wenxing ge xiao zhi* 文星閣小志 (Modest Gazetteer of the Cultural Star Pavilion) (Illustration 6.4). The *Wenxing ge xiao zhi* included Dingqiu’s own narration of the history of the institution, “Wenxing ge xiuzaojì” 修造記 (Record of Expanding and Renovating the Cultural Star Pavilion).  

Dingqiu related that in the Jiajing reign regional inspector (*Xun an yu shi* 巡按御史) Shu Ding 舒汀, finding the Changzhou county school to be in a dank and cramped location, ordered the Tranquil Blessings Temple (*Funing si* 福寧寺) demolished and the

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39 The Shanghai Library holds the only known copy of this work (線善 T368681). Dingqiu’s printed compilation is preceded by a handwritten, unpaginated composition by Peng Qifeng titled “Mu xiu Wenchang ge yin” 募修文昌閣引 dated 1752.  
40 NYWG, j. 4: 7a-8b.
grounds converted into a school.\footnote{On Jiajing reign persecution of Buddhism see: Dewei Zhang, “A Fragile Revival: Chinese Buddhism Under the Political Shadow, 1522–1620,” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2010), 51-72; on the situation in Jiangnan in particular, see pp. 116-120.} He named the highest pavilion in the new complex “Cultural Star” (Wenxing).

In 1612 the educational complex was moved slightly south. Dingqiu and the other literati authors he included in the \textit{Wenxing ge xiao zhi} were not clear on this point, but it appears that the monks may have succeed in having their property returned to them. All the expenses for the move in the late Ming were borne by the official treasury. The 1612 move was the last mention in the historical record on the Cultural Star Pavilion of state coverage of costs; beginning with the renovation campaign of 1634, all further efforts were gentry-borne.\footnote{Dingqiu cited the authority of Han Yuanshan’s 韓原善 (zi Guzhu 孤竹) “Guzhu Han Hou beiji” 孤竹韓侯碑記 (Stele Record of Marquis Han Guzhu). Dingqiu included Han’s composition in \textit{Wenxing ge xiao zhi} 文星閣小志, ed. Peng Dingqiu, \textit{j.} 1: 5a-7a. It appears under the title “Changzhou xian beixue chongjian Wenchang ge ji” 長洲縣備學重建文昌閣記 and is dated Wanli 40.10 (1612). Reproduction of Shanghai Library exemplar of \textit{Wenxing ge xiao zhi} in \textit{Zhongguo yuanlin mingsheng zhi congkan} 中國園林名勝志叢刊, eds. Zheng Xiaoxia 鄭曉霞 and Zhang Zhi 張智 (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2006): v. 31: 1-67. The original stele survives in the Cultural Star Pavilion; rubbing in author’s collection.}

The tower and the move to the southeastern corner of the city were geomantic interventions. According to the geomantic theory prevailing at the time, the southeast, represented by the \textit{xun} 畝 trigram ☴ and corresponding to the element wind, governed...
literary achievement, and a high structure in the *xun* corner could bring such achievement about.

As Dingqiu and others local scholars and officials whose accounts he collected in the *Wenxing ge xiao zhi* saw it, in response to the construction of the tower, Changzhou county immediately produced a host of famous worthies. Presented scholars were particularly notable. Regarding this phenomenon Dingqiu commented: “How could it be said that this was not evidence of the numinosity of the Cultural Star Bell Tower?”

In 1634 fundraising for a large-scale reconstruction was undertaken, but the facility suffered from neglect during the disturbances attending the dynastic transition. In 1663, the second year of the Kangxi reign, Dingqiu’s teacher Wu Yu 吳愉 (zi Jingsheng 敬生) undertook a fundraising campaign to restore the peak of the tower and convert the premises into a proper academy (*shuyuan* 書院). The several column-span structure was devoted to the Thearch Lord Wenchang and dubbed the Cassia Fragrance Palace (Guixiang dian 桂香殿) after Wenchang’s Celestial abode (Illustration 6.5). Meetings for cherishing the written word (*xi zi* 惜字) and “releasing life” (*fang sheng* 放生) occurred monthly.

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43 可不謂星文鍾靈之驗？
44 Dingqiu cited the stele inscription of Chen Renxi 陳仁錫 (zi or hao Wenzhuang 文莊). Chen inscription is included in the *Wenxing ge xiao zhi* as “Chongxiu Changzhou xue Wenchang ge ji” 重修長洲縣學文昌閣記, dated Chongzhen 6.10 (1633), j. 7b-10a.
45 數楹崇祀文昌帝君。
46 Although this illustration post-dates the original construction of the Cassica Fragrance Palace at the Cultural Star Pavilion, the illustration was carved while the Cultural Star Pavilion complex building still stood. Peng Qifeng—who, as discussed below, instigated a renovation campaign at the Cultural Star Pavilion—prefaced the collection in which this illustration appeared.
47 Documents claiming to be the regulations for these societies are included in *Deyi lu*, ed. Yu Zhi, Suzhou: Dejian zhai, 1869; reproduction Taipei: Zhongwen shuju, 1969. “Peng Nanyun xiansheng quanju fangsheng hui shuo” 彭南畇先生勸舉放生會說, j. 7: 1a-b (rdp. v. 1: 471-72) and “Peng Nanyun xiansheng xizi shuo” 彭南畇先生惜字說, j. 7.2: 1a-b (v. 2: 829-30). I am cautious of these two texts because they are not attested in sources from Dingqiu’s lifetime. Before being included in the *Deyi lu* the
In 1672 Peng Long returned to Suzhou after being cashiered as a magistrate in Guangdong (for more details on this ignominious and traumatic event, see Chapters 3 and 4). Shortly thereafter Peng Long began lecturing the first and fifteenth day of every month at the Cultural Star Pavilion. As detailed in Chapter 3, in 1674 the deceased late Ming magistrate Du Xiaolin first appeared to Dingqiu via the planchette as a specially appointed envoy from Wenchang’s Jade Bureau. With this exalted authority Emissary Du informed Dingqiu that, in two years time, Dingqiu would obtain the two-fold optimus distinction. The spirit-writing establishment in Suzhou, of whom Dingqiu’s father Peng Long was a part, did not initially accept the validity of this unlikely prophecy. Dingqiu circumvented their authority and had the prophecy carved on stone and displayed in front of the Cultural Star Pavilion where the local zhusheng, among whose ranks Dingqiu had counted for over a decade, could just the accuracy of the prophecy for themselves. When the prophecy came true two years later, Dingqiu’s place was secured in local society and among Wenchang devotees.

Illustration 6.5
Wenchang’s celestial abode, the Cassia Fragrance Palace. Prior to the publication of this edition of the Wendi quanshu, a building of the same name was constructed in front of the Changzhou county Cultural Star Pavilion.

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48 The significance of the first and the fifteenth days of the month is that, beginning in 1269, local officials were order to collectively burn incense on those days, and instructors at official schools were to lecture to their students and other young men who wished to learn. See the discussion in Reiko Shinno, “Medical Schools and the Temples of the Three Progenitors in Yuan China: A Case of Cross-Cultural Interactions,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 67.1 (2007): 105-106.

cherishing the written word composition was included in the Yuanzai bidu shu, an anthology that included material delivered via the spirit altar by a posthumous Peng Dingqiu. See: “Xizi shuo,” Yuanzai bidu shu, 36b-38a. I discuss this problem in Chapter 8.
empire-wide. No greater evidence of the efficacy of the tower could have been desired that the scion of a nearby family achieving the two-fold optimus distinction.

The importance of spirit-writing in Dingqiu’s life reveals much about the religiosity of Yangzi Delta literati in the period in which he lived. Most spirit-writing practitioners aspired to become celestial officials (tianguan 天官) after their deaths, receiving posthumous appointment in the bureaucracy under the primary deity whom they served in life. In a recent paper Vincent Goossaert noted the remarkable extent to which ostensible Confucians chose a quintessentially Daoism method of apotheosis.49

In 1680 Emissary Du bestowed a penance liturgy upon Dingqiu while he was still in Beijing. Titled Wenchang dijun Yuju xinchan 文昌帝君玉局心懺 (Heart-mind Penance of the Jade Bureau of the Thearch Lord Wenchang), the liturgy explicitly addressed a Daoist pantheon. Upon Dingqiu’s return to Suzhou shortly thereafter the liturgy was performed on the first and fifteenth day of each month at the Cultural Star Pavilion. This was a remarkable venue for its performance given that the Pavilion complex was under the aegis of the county school. In response to Emissary Du’s 1680 visit, Dingqiu related, a special site was established to pray to the Jade Bureau to the right of the Cassia Fragrance Palace.50

Attention to the Peng lineage, however, shows that the celestial official route, although undeniably important, was only one of a cluster of synergetic strategies of attaining deification. In addition to being worshiped in ancestral rites, at least seven Peng

49 “The State of the Field in Daoist Studies for the Past Two Decades,” keynote lecture on 15 November 2014 at the “Daoism and Local Society in Modern China” symposium sponsored by the Rutgers Center for Chinese Studies, Rutgers University.

50 You Tong, “Wenxìng ge Du Zhenjun congzi ji” 文星閣杜真君從祀碑記 (Record of the offering of the auxiliary sacrifices to the Perfected Lord Du at the Cultural Star Pavilion), in Wenxing ge xiaozhi, ed. Peng Dingqiu, j.1: 14a-16a.
Chapter 6

patriarchs received sacrifices at one time as local worthies. In the most prominent cases—as with Peng Long and his son Dingqiu—disciples of the Peng patriarchs built freestanding structures devoted to the propitiation of their deceased spirits. At the single site of the Cultural Star Pavilion, we can therefore observe two out of three distinct complementary methods for deification of teachers and ancestors: preparing to be appointed a celestial official through loyal service to a major deity; and shrines to local worthies. Shrines to local worthies further need to be divided into two categories: those at official schools for which imperial permission needed to be granted, and those that gentry could initiate on their own. To the best of my knowledge, Peng Dingqiu was the first member of the Peng lineage to receive the latter (for further discussions of the Peng Dingqiu shrine, see Chapter 9).

Due to the site’s growing reputation for harmonious response, a three column span pavilion was erected due east of the existing structure. It was originally named Audience with the Primordial Pavilion (Chaoyuan ge 朝元閣), but, according to Dingqiu, the Celestial Official Doukui 斗魁 instructed that it be called the Wenchang Palace (Wenchang gong 文昌宮). Dingqiu’s teacher Wu Yu took up a subscription to have a golden statue erected south of it, and to erect a further structure titled the Hall of In-time- Putting-It-Into-Practice (Shixi tang 時習堂).

In 1688 the top of the four-story tower crumbled again. Peng Long undertook the fundraising for the repair efforts and wrote a record of the campaign. Later in the same year Wu Yu passed away; his disciples (including, presumably, Dingqiu) erected a shrine to him at the Pavilion. The following year, 1689, Peng Long died as well.
Chapter 6

The Shrine to Peng Long

Immediately after his death the disciples of Peng Long erected a memorial shrine (citang 祠堂) at the western end of the complex in which Peng Long was enshrined with two other men. In his narration of this project Dingqiu did not include himself in this group of disciples; he was on the road home from the capital when he received word of his father’s passing, and upon his immediate return to Suzhou may not yet have had sufficient pull locally to undertake a shrine project that could have been construed as entirely self-interested.

In his 1693 record on the Shrine of the Three Worthies at the Cultural Star Pavilion, Miao Tong 繆彤 extoled the qualities of the Careful Association Society (Shenjiao she 慎交社), of which all three were co-founders. Miao cast the qualities that characterized Society members as an antidote to the late Ming factionalism in which local and regional elites were profoundly implicated. He wrote:

All encouraged one another to cultivate themselves, eschewing flattering remarks regarding one another’s fame in order to drive one another on. Additionally, each could stand on his own, without falsely crying for aid and without mutual flattery or being standoffish. [In this manner they] brought to a close the late Ming factional practice of like cutting down different. When one thinks back on [the prevailing] situation fifty years ago, the precipitous ascents and declines of official careers, shifts as stark as night and day, as if according with the world [?] and the boundary of life and death, it causes one to incur deep enmity.

皆砥礪自修，不誇名譽，以相勸勉。又各能自立，不假聲援，不相標榜，落落寡合，絕無明季黨同伐異之習。回思五十年來升沉顯晦，恍如融世，而死生之際，尤足令人致慨焉。  

51 Miao Tong, “Wenxing ge Sanxianci ji” 文星閣三賢祠記 (Record of the Shrine of the Three Worthies at the Cultural Star Pavilion), Wenxing ge xiaozhi, ed. Peng Dingqiu, j. 2: 2b-4b (rpd. 51-54). On the Shenjiao she, see: Chapter 4.

52 Miao Tong, “Wenxing ge Sanxianci ji,” j. 2: 3a (rpd. 51).
If we frame positively the qualities Miao framed negatively, we can discern Miao’s position on the personality traits necessary to a well-functioning local and regional elite. Miao presented Society members as mutually supportive from a base of independence; which is to say that they were all equals in terms of literary talent and, if one reads between the lines, likely social and economic status as well. They could both offer and accept constructive criticism, avoiding the faults of sycophancy on the one hand and easily taking offence on the other. Significantly, when Miao dates the period to which he contrasted the early Shunzhi reign, it was the immediately preceding 1640s, not the original Donglin movement of the 1620s. During the early years of the Shunzhi reign, under the first Manchu emperor to rule China, ethnic Han Yangzi Delta elites were painfully aware that they needed to stick together. Literary societies were one of their preferred means of doing so. Precisely because such societies were effective in achieving this goal, the Kangxi emperor outlawed them.

In the early 1690s, following directly upon the accommodation between the Manchu rulers and Yangzi delta elites of the 1680s, local elites in Suzhou honored the qualities they attributed to a prominent early Qing literary society by shrine construction; this was thus a circuitous route to elevate the qualities embodied by literati societies without violating the ban on such societies. Part of what local scions of familial lineages of empire-wide significance such as Miao and Peng Dingqiu were honoring in the early 1690s was the circumvention by member of Dingqiu’s father’s generation of metropolitan and Manchu constraints of elite prerogatives for local autonomy. As so often in Chinese culture, culturalist ideals were a means of expressing political ones that could not be directly articulated without unacceptable consequences. In including such
material in his gazetteer of the Cultural Star Pavilion, Dingqiu fine-tuned and propagated the ideological basis of local elite power enduring under Manchu rule.

Peng Long’s passing meant that the responsibility for fundraising and building campaigns at the Pavilion complex fell to Dingqiu. Dingqiu used these responsibilities to solidify the place among the local elite of the memory of a handful of men particularly important to him. In 1693 Dingqiu combined the shrines to his former teachers Wu Yu and Song Dehong 宋德宏 (zi Chousan 畇三), as well as his father Peng Long.

In 1710 a three column-span hall was completed to house the shrine. At pains to demonstrate that the Pavilion was not simply a Peng lineage affair, Dingqiu recorded that Wang Shengzhen 汪生震 of neighboring Songjiang prefecture (Yunjian 雲間) donated two hundred ounces of silver, facilitating superior craftsmanship in the new structure. The building was completed in 1711. Dingqiu estimated that from the initial fundraising by his teacher Wu Yu in 1663 down to the present approximately fifty years later, not less than three thousand silver ounces (liang 两) had been spent on maintenance and expansion of the Cultural Star complex.

The Cultural Star Pavilion and Descendants of Peng Dingqiu

The Cultural Star Pavilion remained important to Peng Dingqiu for the remainder of his life. Here I will briefly mention the ways in which his descendants continued Dingqiu’s caretaking of the complex. In 1729, a decade after Dingqiu’s death, his second son Zhengqian undertook a renovation campaign. The tower was damaged in a storm in the spring of 1751. The following year Dingqiu’s grandson Peng Qifeng undertook a

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53 Dingqiu cited the authority of a record by Wang Chunshu 王醇叔, which he did not include in Wenxing ge xiao zhi. I have not been able to locate this essay elsewhere.
fundraising campaign. In Qifeng’s exhortation to his fellow gentry he attempted to shame them for their generous support for Buddhist and Daoist temples while allowing the important Classicist site of the Cultural Star Pavilion to fall in to disrepair. Yet Qifeng’s plea was predicated on a similar standard of proof as that of his grandfather Dingqiu: that the site was a proven one of divine response to terrestrial deeds. Qifeng also specified that it was a place where deities descended: the historical link between the site and Dingqiu’s spirit-writing activities was Qifeng’s rhetorical trump card to his fellow Classicist elites.54

Such consistent fiduciary involvement by prominent Peng clan patriarchs in a structure thought to improve the prospects of all Changzhou county and Suzhou prefecture examination hopefuls, clearly entailed privileged access to the site. Reflecting a continuity of usage since the early Kangxi reign, Peng Qifeng’s son Shaosheng used the Cultural Star for meeting with like-minded scions of elite families for organizing local philanthropies. The Coffin Distribution Bureau (Shi guan ju 施棺局) initially erected the Continuing Goodness Hall (Jishan tang 繼善堂) in the Placid Longevity Cloister (Ningshou an 寧壽庵), then established a pool for releasing life at the Flowing Waters Chan Academy (Liushui chanyuan 流水禪院) in the Cultural Star Pavilion complex.55

The construction of a pool at the Pavilion complex at this late date demonstrates that, despite Peng Dingqiu’s report of Society for Releasing Life meetings at the complex in

54 Peng Qifeng, “Mu xiu Wenxing ge yin” 募修文星閣引 (Solicitation of Funds for Renovation of the Cultural Star Pavilion), 1752, handwritten, unpaginated (corresponding to 1a-2a), in Wenxing ge xiao zhi. Qifeng did not record a fundraising attempt at the Cultural Star Pavilion under the entry for 1752 in his manuscript autobiography, Shangshu gong nianpu, Suzhou Museum exemplar.
the 1660s, there had either never been a pool there or it had not survived. This is an important point because, as I discuss in Chapter 8, support for pools for releasing life was attributed to Peng Dingqiu after his death.

More significantly for the history of indigenous Chinese philanthropy, in 1773 at the Cultural Star Pavilion Qifeng and Shaosheng founded the first home for indigent widows. As Fuma Susumu has stressed, those behind this project were deliberately continuing the legacy of the late Ming Donglin Faction, a remarkable continuity of a local elite self-organizational program.

On one occasion Shaosheng performed a rainmaking ritual at the Cultural Star Pavilion. As praying for rain in times of drought was a responsibility of local and regional officials, Shaosheng’s divine intervention on behalf of the populace is a striking reminder of the way the Cultural Star Pavilion continued to be deployed for what was conceived as a broad-based good for the region. Shaosheng also employed the Cultural Star Pavilion complex for extended meditation retreats. He did so in 1765, 1767, and 56

The Pengs’ home for widows was quickly imitated through the Yangzi Delta and beyond. See: Fuma Susumu 夫馬進, Chūgoku zenkai zendōshi kenkyū 中国善会善堂史研究 (Kyoto: Dōhōsha shuppan, 1997): 382-84 and 525; and Angela Ki Che Leung, “To Chasten Society: The Development of Widow Homes in the Qing, 1773-1911,” Late Imperial China 14.2 (1993), esp. 11-12 and 17. The accounts of both Fuma and Leung are based upon material contained in the Deyi lu, which I consider a reliable source for Qifeng and Shaosheng’s day, if not for that of Dingqiu (on which see Chapter 8).

Fuma, Chūgoku zenkai zendōshi kenkyū, 383.


As Liu Xun’s article demonstrated, officials were not the only ones who prayed for rain in times of drought, but Shaosheng’s action cast him in the role of the magistrate or prefect (the former position being one he had once turned down).

1768. Thus as Wenchang devotion compendia were spreading the fame of the site as a metonym for Dingqiu’s two-fold *optimus* prophecy and continued contact with Jade Bureau emissary Du Qiaolin, Shaosheng was seeking to increase the fame of the complex in Buddhist circles. Shaosheng did not succeed, however, in linking his fame to the site to the extent Dingqiu did.

Peng Shaosheng had more consistent ties to the Cultural Star Pavilion complex and put it to a more diverse array of uses than anyone in the Peng lineage since his great grandfather Peng Dingqiu. Like Peng Dingqiu, Shaosheng used it as a site for the coordination of intra-elite collaboration. Regarding religious uses, Shaosheng resembled his great-grandfather in that he used the site for activities along a continuum of public to private. The content of the two men’s devotional activities at the site was, however, quite different: whereas Dingqiu focused on spirit-writing and rituals devoted to Daoist and Classicist pantheons, for Shaosheng his personal uses included solitary meditation and prolonged meditation with close friends. On the level of collective gentry self-organizational, under Shaosheng’s watch the Cultural Star Pavilion saw the creation of the first home for the widows of local elite men, as well as constructing a pool for releasing life which may have existed in Dingqiu’s day but, as with so many voluntarist gentry initiatives, had lapsed in the intervening years.

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60 In 1766 Shaosheng engaged in his second prolonged period of meditative reclusion, this time with Luo Yougao, the friend who had converted him to Pure Land Buddhism. The location is recorded as Shaosheng’s residence, which may also have included the Cultural Star Pavilion complex. Lin I Luan, “Peng Shaosheng (1740-1796) yu shendao shejiao zhi jiaoshe,” 341.

In 1768 Shaosheng spent half a year in meditation at the Cultural Star complex with Zhao Gongzhu (Mingyangzi 明陽子; 1716-69), who had first called upon him at the Cultural Star complex three years earlier. See: Peng Shaosheng, “Mingyangzi huaxiang xu” 明陽子畫像敘 (Preface to Master Yangming’s portrait) in YXJJ, j. 3: 24b-26a, and Lin I Luan, “Peng Shaosheng (1740-1796) yu shendao shejiao zhi jiaoshe,” 340.
Another similarity is that both great-grandfather and great-grandson used the site to honor their own fathers. Dingqiu attended his father’s lectures and, after Peng Long’s passing, participated in erecting a shrine to his father there and attending to the biannual sacrifices. Shaosheng, for his part, held an eightieth birthday ritual for his father Qifeng at the Cultural Star Pavilion. With both Peng Dingqiu and Shaosheng, the fecundity of textual relics of their intimate ties to the site indicates as even closer quotidian relationship than can be captured by the written record.

The Pengs were at the apex of their terrestrial power in the mid- to late eighteenth century. At this moment the fourteenth lineal generation—that of Peng Shaosheng’s nephews and nieces—was at the apex of the Changzhou county power structure. The work of Ma Ying-chen, however, cues us in to in the changing circumstances of intra-elite competition in mid-eighteenth century Suzhou. Her account of the construction of the 10,000 Year Bridge (Wannian qiao 萬年橋) in northwestern highlights the emerging power of merchants in changing the physical structure of the walled city and the visual depictions of it. If in Dingqiu’s time a purpose of the Cultural Star Pavilion was to rally the gentry of the eastern half of the city (Changzhou county) against the more prestigious western half (Wu county) the competition was entirely intra-scholar-official. In the mid-eighteenth century, literati and the state were no longer the only game in town. Merchants exhibited a new boldness in shaping the city to their needs. In contrast to the use of geomantic principles to enhance literati advantage, as evinced in the narratives of the initial construction of the Cultural Star Pavilion, the eighteenth century merchants were
able to overcome geomantic opposition to rupturing the city wall in order to construction a bridge to facilitate commerce.\textsuperscript{61}

When the Taiping army occupied Suzhou the Cultural Star Pavilion endured but the buildings in front of it—the Cassia Fragrance Palace and the Hall of In-time-Putting-It-Into-Practice—were incinerated. The destruction affected other complexes important to Suzhou gentry and the Pengs in particular. For example, the two largest structures in the Abbey of Primordial Mystery—the Palace of the Three Purities (Sanqing dian 三清殿) and the Miluo ge 彌羅閣—“were very much injured by the Tai P’ing rebels, who used many of the timbers with which to construct a look-out stand for use in watching the movements of the Imperial forces outside the city.”\textsuperscript{62}

The tower itself was one of the highest buildings in the eastern half of the city, significantly sturdier than the Twin Pagodas and closer to eastern city wall. Accordingly the Taipings used it as a lookout, the slit stone windows providing protective cover as they strained to discern enemy forces dispatched from Shanghai along the low-lying but perennially foggy banks of Suzhou Creek (Wusong xi 吳松溪).\textsuperscript{63}

After the reclaiming of Suzhou by loyalist forces in 1863 the Pengs lost little time reasserting their control over the property. The most powerful Peng patriarch at the time was Peng Zuxian 祖賢 (1819-85). Zuxian was the son of Peng Yunzhang 蘊章 (1792-1862; jinshi 1862) and grandson of the Qianlong-reign Pure Land enthusiast Peng Xisu 希涑 (1761-93; jushi 1784). By 1880 Zuxian would be governor of Hubei, a position


\textsuperscript{63} This account of the Taiping use of the pavilion is as-yet oral, from the present day caretaker Su Tianming.
from which he launched a research- and capital-intensive publishing campaign on the Pengs capped by the 45 juan luxury edition of writings by Peng patriarchs (1881) and a new edition of the clan genealogy (1883).

Concurrent with rebuilding two of the structures at the Cultural Star Pavilion, in the late 1860s a subscription was raised to forge a new bell, the previous one presumably having been melted down by the Taipings. An iron bell that remains in the fourth story of the tower today bears the date 1870. Among the numerous donors bearing surnames prominent in Changzhou county since the early Qing dynasty, a Peng patriarch is featured as a donor.

In 1872 Zuxian also raised the funds (jizi 集資) to rebuilt the two structures in front of the pavilion itself. The reconstruction was a priority in part because, as described above, the structure immediately to the west of the pavilion had housed the shrine to ninth generation Peng patriarch Long, the two other early Qing “worthies” with whom he formed a triad, and the three teachers’ nine disciples. Taken together, the shrine was something of a Qing dynasty-founding document for the gentry governing coalition of Changzhou county and the integral place of the Pengs in it. After the 1870s rebuilding, the 1883 genealogy reported with satisfaction: “We expediently served the Three Masters and their various disciples by installing them in the Hall of In-time-Putting-It-Into-Practice. The Pengs then saw to the [secondary ding ritual] in the spring and autumn sacrifices.”

Appropriate to the spirit of the Tongzhi Restoration, the surviving Pengs did
their utmost to restore the ritual underpinnings that had perpetuated the pre-Civil War status quo.\footnote{For broader context on the Tongzhi Restoration, see: Mary Clabaugh Wright, \textit{The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism: The T‘ung-chih Restoration, 1862-1874} (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962 [1957]).}

Writing in the mid-1870s, just a few years after the forging of the bell, the American Protestant missionary A. P. Parker wrote of the complex: “The whole property is now under the control of the Pêng (彭) family, who contribute rice and cash to the amount of some two dollars a month to keep a man there to look after it.”\footnote{A. P. Parker, “Notes on the History of Suzhou,” 13.3 (1882): 440. In Parker’s reckoning an ounce of silver equaled one and a half American dollars; hence, the monthly upkeep of the pavilion would have been little over one silver ounce.} Whatever perquisites Peng clan members may have retained in this arrangement, Parker made clear that public access through popular custom was integral to the site. Of Wenchang’s birthday, the third day of the second month in the lunar calendar, Parker wrote: “On that day the temple and pagoda are thrown open and hundreds of people go there to worship and to enjoy a holiday.” The opening of the “pagoda” on Wenchang’s birthday did not imply that it was closed to public access at other times: “Sometimes on other days, a mother will lead her little boy to this temple to worship, preparatory to his entering school.”\footnote{A. P. Parker, “Notes on the History of Suzhou,” 440.}

Conclusion

From the above summary the Pengs’ close ties to Cultural Star complex is evident. Peng Long lectured there—a Yangmingist “teaching-through-learning” (jiang xue 講學) more commonly associated with the late Ming than the early Qing—and was tied closely enough to the site that his disciples erected a shrine to him there. Four years
later Dingqiu consolidated his father’s position by putting him on equal footing with two non-Peng clan worthies and assisting in providing a more enduring structure for their worship. Dingqiu’s second son, Zhengqian, undertook a renovation campaign lasting decades. Zhengqian’s first son, Qifeng, subsequently undertook one as well. Qifeng’s fourth son, Shaosheng, used the site for purposes of personal cultivation and local elite cohesion: similar in function to the uses to which his great-grandfather Dingqiu had put it, if in a Pure Land rather than Classico-Immortalist register. The record of the Pengs and the Cultural Star Pavilion complex picks up again after the Taiping Civil War, with the still-extant iron bell funded by the Pengs and inscribed with the characters Precious Pavilion of the Cultural Star (Wenxing bao ge 文星寶閣). At this time a Protestant missionary corroborated the Pengs control of the complex, as was the way to which this “private” lineage site was quite public.

Parker’s account of the openness of the Cultural Star Pavilion site to commoners brings to mind Benjamin Elman’s insight that the early modern European concept of “public” often does not map onto gong 公 in Chinese, as contemporary translation in to Mandarin (gonggong 公共) would cause us to anticipate. Rather, it correlates to si 私, which is conventionally translated as “private.” The private interests of the great familial lineages such as the Pengs of Suzhou could align with those of fellow local elites and others further down the class ladder so that “public” and “private” could intersect at the local level. This conflation of the two concepts often did not translate to the empire-wide

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68 For an example of an eulogy to Peng Long at the Cultural Star Academy, see Zhang Xiaoshi 張小時, “Gong song Renjian xiansheng shenwei ru Wenxing shuyuan wen” 恭送仁簡彭先生神位入文星書原文 (Composition on Felicitously Installing the Spirit Tablet of Master Peng Renjian [Long] in the Cultural Star Academy), in PSZP, j. 8: 17a-18b.

69 Manbu canglang漫步沧浪, ed. Li Jifu 李紀福 (Suzhou: Gu wu xuan chubanshe, 2006): 78; v. 2 of Wenwu diancui 文物点翠.
level, as the example of tax relief makes clear: the taxes seen as excessive by Suzhounese subsidized many crucial state endeavors extra-regionally.

In a Religious Studies register I have been at pains in this chapter to document the diversity of devotional practices to which Peng patriarchs put the Cultural Star Pavilion complex. This case study shows the richness of the religious lives of the “vocational Confucian,” which is to say, of literati-officials who made a career out of examination preparation and official service. My findings accord with a structural-functionalist analysis in that there was clearly a local elite self-organizational function served by collective gatherings and sealed in the ritual mode. Beyond the structural-functionalist analysis I have also stressed individual piety and divine inspiration—elements more evident with Peng Dingqiu and his grandson Shaosheng than with other Pengs discussed in this chapter. The devotion itself is an irreducible element that scholars can accept while also probing for its social ramifications. Finally, the temporal frame of several hundred years covered in this chapter allows us to discern practices that remained constant at the complex and those what changed over time.

In terms of the relationship of the Peng lineage with the Cultural Star Pavilion site, the consistency is more important than the content. At least seven generations found the site to be integral to their role in local leadership. The flexibility of how each successive generation chose to employ the site helped ensure that they did preserve it.
Chapter 7

The Daoist Commitments of the Peng Clan of Suzhou, 1673-1830

In a commemorative record composed in 1685, Peng Long placed Celestial Vault Mountain (Qionglong shan 穹窿山) at the center of the ridge that threads between Lake Tai and the walled city of Suzhou. He traced human construction on the mountain to a palace built by the Song dynasty emperor Huizong (r. 1110-26), and in turn located the construction of the great imperial benefactor of Daoism in relation to a peak named after a purported Han dynasty immortal.¹ In a few short sentences Long thus covered a millennium and a half, invoking the region’s long association with famed immortals and splendid imperial architecture. Discussion of Huizong, the penultimate ruler of the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127), would likely have brought to mind among Long’s audience the splendor of the Ming dynasty into which Long himself was born and which, like the Northern Song, fell to a Northern non-Han adversary despite its cultural florescence.

From these august precedents Peng Long then shuttled forward to the period immediately following the Qing conquest. He praised the Daoist ritual master Shi Daoyuan 施道淵 (zi Liangsheng 亮生, faming Jinjing 金經, hao Tiezhu 鐵竹, 1617-78)

¹ The peak was named after the eldest of the three Mao brothers, Mao Ying 茅盈, Mao Gu 固, and Mao Zhong 衷. According to early hagiographies such as that found in Ge Hong’s 葛洪 Shenxian zhuan 神仙傳 (Biographies of Divine Transcendents), they are reputed to have lived in the Han dynasty. The brothers played an important role in the Maoshan revelations that produced the Highest Clarity corpus. On their hagiographies, see: Rostislav Berezkin and Vincent Goossaert, “The Three Mao Lords in Modern Jiangnan: Cult and Pilgrimage between Daoism and Baojuan Recitation,” Bulletin de l’École Française d’Extrême-Orient 99 (2012-2013): 296-97.
for “restoring the ancient endeavor” on Celestial Vault Mountain. Peng Long had only the flimsiest historical evidence by which to frame Shi’s massive construction project as a renovation, rather than an innovation. Yet in doing so he provided a valuable legitimization service. Long was far from the only local elite eager to do so. A decade earlier, a profusion of the greatest literary talents in the realm had offered up praises of Shi Daoyuan and his accomplishment on Celestial Vault Mountain that were then distributed in the lavish Qionglong shan zhi 穹窿山志 (Celestial Vault Mountain Gazetteer, 1674), itself a literary metonym for the physical complex (Illustration 7.1).

A brief consideration of Wu Weiye 吳偉業 (1609-72), the first of three credited literati-official editors of the Qionglong shan zhi, indicates the cultural prestige and complex political ramifications involved in its production. As the first place candidate in the metropolitan examinations (hui yuan 會元) and secundus (bangyan 榜眼) in the presented scholar class of 1631, Wu was a celebrated literary figure in the convulsive political climate of the late Ming. After the Qing conquest he was an early recruit to high office, and serving from 1653-57. His use of Daoist tropes in his literary works is one of the major sources scholars have plumbed for insights into Wu’s ambivalence towards the new regime.

The naming of Wu as the first editor of the Qionglong shan zhi reminds us that prominent literati-officials such as Wu who frequently deployed Daoist tropes in

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their literary works were not operating in a purely fictional wonderland, but rather frequently had concrete relationships with the Daoist clerics and nuns of their day. There are short pieces by both Peng Long and his (pre-optimus) son Dingqiu in the Qionglong shan zhi. Here, in contrast to their central role in the Cultural Star Pavilion in their own neighborhood in southeast urban Suzhou, Peng Long and Dingqiu appear as a practical rank-and-file of accomplished literati-officials rushing to heap praise on Shi Daoyuan and his temple complex.

As Vincent Goossaert has pointed out, the literati contributors to the Qionglong shan zhi included a number of self-identified disciples of the high Daoist ritual master Shi Daoyuan. Among these was Song Shiyiing 宋實穎 (1621-1705), with whom Peng Long had founded the Caution-in-Choosing-Acquaintances Society (Shenjiao she 慎交社) poetry association at the Azure Waves Pavilion in the early years of the Shunzhi reign (see Chapter 4). I have encountered no historical record indicating that Peng Long was a

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5 Goossaert, “Daoism and Local Cults in Modern Suzhou,” 207-08 n. 20.
disciple of Shi Daoyuan, but, as noted in Chapter 5, surviving materials on Long are rather scanty. We do know, however, that Peng Long was a patron of Shi’s who sponsored a ritual performance by Shi when Peng Long’s mother passed away.

In a eulogy Long’s son Dingqiu wrote for Shi well after his passing in 1678, Dingqiu characterized Shi as “my teacher” (wu shi 吾師); the implication of this statement was that Dingqiu was a disciple of Shi, but without further documentation I can not state with confidence that Dingqiu formally participated in a ritual of discipleship. Given that Peng Dingqiu’s name would later be associated with the first and largest lay Daoist canon of imperial China, the Daozang jiyao, and that the products of his spirit-writing altar would appear in so many other mid- to late Qing lay canons to deities such as Wenchang, it is worth remembering that formal master-disciple relationships between high Daoist clerics and literati were still a common feature of Dingqiu’s milieu.

Although there is not a written record testifying to it, it is conceivable that Peng Long too was a disciple of Shi’s. Yet the aspect of Peng Long’s relationship with Shi that I would like to explore in this chapter is subtler, as it has been better concealed by subsequent generations. Peng Long married a woman sharing the same surname as Shi, who was a Suzhou native, and one of Peng Long’s daughter apparently married a Shi as

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Song Shiyiing signed as “the disciple of the Wenchang Inner Court Superior Commander of the Purple Empyrean of Jade Florescence, who has received the Precious Register of Purple Yang from Supremely High Great Cavern of Wenchang” 受高上大洞文昌紫陽寶籙紫霄玉華上令司文昌內院事弟 子. Significantly, Song provided his title as a celestial official directly following that for his terrestrial attainment as a raised scholar (juren). See his “Zhu tianjun dianbei ji” 朱天君殿碑記 (Stele Record of the Palace of Celestial Lord Zhu), in Qionglongshan zhi, j. 1: 111-16; this same text is punctuated in Wu Yakui, Jiangnan daojiao bei ji ziliaoji, 281-83. It is significant that a literati served Wenchang as a disciple of Shi Daoyuan; i.e., a high Daoist ritualist facilitated a closer relationship with the so-called “God of Literature.” The history of literati registers, which were not identical to those received by Daoist clerics, is largely unwritten (Vincent Goossaert, personal communication).

6 “Qionglong Liangsheng Shi zunshi mubiao” 穹窿亮生施尊師墓表 (Grave inscription for the Esteemed Master Shi Liangsheng of Qionglong [Mountain]), in NYWG, j. 10: 1a-2b.
well. Additionally, many Peng clan tombs were located adjacent to Celestial Vault Mountain, giving Peng Long a concrete motivation to recognize at least a fictive kinship bond with the Daoist ritualist. As I will relate below, Peng Long and Dingqiu did not hesitate to invoke their familial bond with Shi Daoyuan—not one of discipleship or patron-client, as far as the sources reveal—when they needed Shi’s significant clout in the Qing officialdom.

The previous chapter focused on the Cultural Star Pavilion, a complex of physical structures with great symbolic and cultural significance for Changzhou county. The Pengs exerted primary control over the physical structure and its representation from approximately the 1680s through the 1870s (or tenth to sixteenth lineal generations). The present chapter addresses the relations of Peng patriarchs with two major Daoist institutions of the Suzhou region. It is similar to the preceding chapter in that it analyses multigenerational Peng support for complexes of physical structures of great local symbolic and cultural significant. The difference is in the geographical unit of significance and the degree of Peng patriarch involvement in relation to other local elites. Specifically, the Abbey of Primordial Mystery was of central concern to the public life of Suzhou residents, while the Celestial Vault Mountain loomed large in the local imaginary of the distinctive history of the Wu region and in the circuit of sacred Daoist mountains of the Yangzi Delta in the early Qing dynasty.

7 I have not yet been able to thoroughly examine the extant genealogies of the Shi clan from nearby locales such as Changzhou prefecture (Shi zongpu 施宗譜, 1911, 16 juan; the National Library of China exemplar of which is available in digital facsimile on the website Zhonghua xungen) and of Chongming. It is worth pointing out, however, that as an Orthodox Unity cleric Shi was not required to be celibate, and this familial status may have facilitated contact with his non-Daoist familial lineage. On Daoist clerics’ relationship with their natal families, see: Vincent Goossaert, The Taoists of Peking, 1800-1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007): 25-26.
Chapter 7

In this chapter I also address the relations of Peng patriarchs to local Daoist institutions and their charismatic abbots from the early to mid-Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Additionally, I consider the collation and publication of Inner Alchemical and ritual texts by Peng clan patriarchs and their incorporation into the major Qing lay Daoist canons. In considering the religious commitments of the lineage as a corporate entity, I examine the way in which filiality was invoked by Peng patriarchs as a motivation for their Daoist involvements. My findings indicate not literati dabbling in Daoist mysteries, but a profound involvement with ritual practice and the financial responsibilities of maintaining temple complexes. In the place of a clear division of labor in which ordained ritual specialists conducted rituals sponsored by laymen, literati received ritual texts in their own domestic altars, texts that in turn influenced local and regional practice by ordained ritual specialists.

Shi Daoyuan

Shi Daoyuan was the most important Daoist cleric in the Suzhou region in the immediate post-conquest period. Shi was a high official in the Orthodoxy Unity (Zhengyi 正一) bureaucracy centered on Dragon-Tiger Mountain (Longhu shan 龍虎山) in Jiangxi province. There he acquired mastery of the Five Thunder Rites (wuleifa 五雷)

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8 Vincent Goossaert described Shi as “without contest the leading Daoist in early Qing Suzhou.” See his “Daoism and Local Cults in Modern Suzhou,” 205.
He was patronized by the local elite for ritual and exorcistic services, oversaw the renovation of the two most important Daoist institutions in the Suzhou region, and served in Beijing among the small group of Orthodoxy Unity ritualist at the disposal of the court of the Shunzhi emperor (1644-61). Shi was thus a major presence in Suzhou society and the Yangzi Delta region more widely from approximately the mid-1640s until his death in 1678. The period of Shi’s prominence thus corresponded closely to that from Peng Dingqiu’s birth through his early adulthood.

Shi’s death immediately preceded the boxue hongci special examination held by the Kangxi emperor from 1678-79. Scholars often regard this examination as the closing date of the initial unstable period of the Qing conquest: that marred by such events as Zheng Chenggong’s siege of Nanjing in 1659; the Cries at the Temple incident in Suzhou in 1661; and the Wu Sangui Rebellion that affected the Suzhou region in 1674 (Chapter 3). Close acquaintances of Peng Long and Peng Dingqiu ranked among the fifty men who passed the special examination, and were thus immediately implicated in the Kangxi emperor’s effort to entice Yangzi Delta scholars into his fold. As I will discuss below, not only did the boxue hongci examination include two members of Peng Dingqiu’s spirit-writing circle, it also included one of Shi Daoyuan’s formal Daoist disciples.

The earliest mention of Shi in the Suzhou gazetteer record is the Audience with the Perfected Abbey (Chaozhen guan 朝真觀) in northeast Suzhou, just outside the

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highly commercialized Chang 閶 gate. At 19 岁, Shi followed the cleric Xu Yanzhen 徐演真 to Dragon-Tiger Mountain, where Shi began to study the Five Thunder Rites. Shi soon earned fame with his exorcistic abilities; as Goossaert has noted, Shi’s biography refutes an earlier dichotomy in the scholarly literature between high Daoist clerics and exorcists: as the figure of the Celestial Master himself demonstrated, high cleric and exorcist were often one and the same.10

In 1650, Shi Daoyuan visited Celestial Vault Mountain, the highest hill in the low-lying Suzhou region, with the fifty-second Celestial Master Zhang Yingjing 張應京 (?-1651; assumed position of Celestial Master in 1636) and Zhang’s son Hongren 洪任 (1631-67).11 There, the men vowed to rebuild the dilapidated complex of Daoist abbeys there in order to worship the Three Perfected Mao Brothers (San Mao zhenjun 三茅真君) the Highest Perfection Abbey (Shangzhen guan 上真觀) near the crest of the hill overlooking Lake Tai.12 Shi more than fulfilled his vow by expanding the scope of the complex far beyond what it had ever been. In 1658, in recognition of Shi’s accomplishment, Celestial Master Zhang Hongren, who had assumed the position of Celestial Master upon the death of his father Yingjing in 1651, brought a placard for the Highest Perfection Abbey inscribed by the Shunzhi emperor and an imperial title to bestow upon Shi.

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12 For background on the Three Mao Brothers and the place of Celestial Vault Mountain in the regional hierarchy of Daoist institutions, see: Berezkin and Goossaert, “The Three Mao Lords in Modern Jiangnan.” Berezkin and Goossaert’s’ characterization of Qionglongshan as a “little Maoshan” (p. 300 and map on p. 325) applies to their focus on the situation from the mid-nineteenth century on, and should not be read back on to Shi Daoyuan’s day.
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The area between the southeast corner of Suzhou and Lake Tai is one that was heavily used by the great families of Suzhou for tombs of their ancestors at the attendant mountain villas. In the case of the Pengs, the tombs of important late Ming ancestors lay just over the ridge of Celestial Vault Mountain. Indeed, this area was such an integral hinterland that Dingqiu had been taken there only days after his birth in an attempt by this father and grandfather to save him from the impending violence of the Qing seizure of Suzhou. A piece by Peng Long on the broken stelae of Celestial Vault Mountain drives home the extent to which the Pengs used this area as a metonym for the broader cultural richness of the region and their own place in imbibing from that tradition.

After completing the “renovation” effort at Celestial Vault Mountain, Shi commissioned a textual monument to match the physical ones he had erected: the Qionglong shan zhi. As Goossaert has noted, this extensive gazetteer itself sought to manifest the “the restoration of local order under the aegis of the new regime.”

The enthusiastic participation of Suzhou elites—including Peng Long—in the “rebuilding” of the Celestial Vault Mountain complex and the literati representation of the achievement in the form of the gazetteer demonstrates that they identified with the Lake Tai coastal region and were grateful to Shi for reinvigorating it. From this account it is evident that Shi Daoyuan would have already been an awe-inspiring figure as Peng Dingqiu entered his early adolescence.

In light of the array of combinatory discourses in which Peng patriarchs engaged (discussed in Chapter 5), it is worth noting that Shi Daoyuan is also portrayed in the

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13 On the Qionglong shan zhi, see: Goossaert, “Daoism and Local Cults in Modern Suzhou,” 208-10.
14 There is a long literati tradition of identifying with the coastal region of Lake Tai closest to the walled city of Suzhou. For a mid-Ming iteration of this identification, see: Olivia Milburn, “Image, Identity, and Cherishing Antiquity: Wang Ao and Mid-Ming Suzhou,” Ming Studies 60 (2009): 95-114.
historical record as bridging Celestial Master and Complete Perfection Daoism. However, the claims that Shi was knowledgeable in the practices of the Complete Perfection Order require further investigation. It is often recorded, for example, that Shi hosted seventh generation Complete Perfection Order patriarch Wang Changyue 王常月 (traditional 1522-1680) on a visit Wang is said to have made to Celestial Vault Mountain in 1668.\(^\text{15}\) Shi was also said to have received several scriptures from Wang, but, as Goossaert has pointed out, this transmission is not recorded in the gazetteer record of Suzhou.\(^\text{16}\) The later Complete Perfect patriarch and formulator of the Dragon Gate Sect (Longmen pai 龍門派) Min Yide 閔一德 (1758-1836) explicitly excluded Shi from the Complete Perfection lineage in his Jin’gai xindeng 金蓋心燈 (Heart-mind Lamp [Transmission] of [Mount] Jin’gai) on the grounds that Shi had “returned to the Celestial Masters.” As with many retroactive lineage creators, Min may have been attempting to impose more distinct boundaries on a complex situation that the original events merited. Yet regardless of the veracity of Shi Daoyuan’s contacts with Complete Perfection clerics in his lifetime, what is notable for purposes is that he was a figure whom later writers in the Complete Perfection tradition felt compelled to address, be it to claim or reject him.

\(^{15}\) Wu Yakui 吳亞魁, Jiangnan Quanzhen daojiao 江南全真道教 (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 2006): 345. However, Wang inspired many anecdotes and few are verifiable in contemporary sources, meriting extreme caution (Mori Yuria, personal communication).

Illustration 7.2

This image shows the proximity to Celestial Vault Mountain (lower right hand corner) of the graves of Peng Dingqiu’s grandfather Dexian and grandmother, née Cai, as well as of his father Long, birthmother née Shi, and stepmother née Yuan (center). Dingqiu’s mother shared a surname and kinship relations with the high Daoist Shi Daoyuan. From: *Peng shi zongpu*, 1883 ed., Shanghai Library exemplar, 3: 21a.
The Pengs had an intriguing relationship with Shi Daoyuan, one in which the high Daoist was acknowledged as simultaneously a social peer and a ritual superior. Most strikingly, Peng Long’s wife and Dingqiu’s birthmother was surnamed Shi.\(^{17}\) Born in 1615, Lady Shi passed away in 1658 when Dingqiu was only 14 sui, just half a year before her husband obtained the presented scholar degree.\(^{18}\) Lady Shi was of the Changzhou county Shis. Her father, Shi Yangsi 仰思, had served in the Disciplinary Office of the Princely Establishment (Fan Shenli 藩審理).\(^{19}\) Determining whether or not Shi Daoyuan belonged to the same branch of the Shi lineage requires further research,\(^{20}\) but, as will be seen below, the shared surname did give the Pengs an opening for approaching Shi.

In 1670 Peng Long was cashiered from his post as a magistrate in Guangdong by the censor Jin Guangzu 金光祖.\(^{21}\) As Dingqiu related this event in his autobiography, when he heard news of the matter from reading the capital gazette he immediately turned to a brother-in-law surnamed Shi. Recalling that Shi Daoyuan was said to have good relations with the Governor-General of Liang-Guang, who was posted in the provincial seat of Guangdong, Dingqiu asked his sister to entreat her husband Shi Zuojun 左君 to

\(^{17}\) On Lady Shi, see: Weng Shuyuan 翁叔元 (1633-1701; of Changshu county), “Zeng anren Peng mu Shi taijun muzhiming” 贈安人彭母施太君墓誌銘, PSZP, j. 4: 31a-32b, and Peng Dingqiu “Zeng anren xianbi Shi taijun xingshi” 贈安人顯妣施太君行實, PSZP, j. 4: 34a-38a.

\(^{18}\) Weng Shuyuan, “Zeng anren Peng mu Shi taijun muzhiming,” 31a. On pages 31a-32b Weng quoted from the tomb inscription (muming 墓誌) Dingqiu wrote upon the re-burial of his father Peng Long and Lady Shi together in 1689.

\(^{19}\) Weng Shuyuan, “Zeng anren Peng mu Shi taijun muzhiming.” 32a.

\(^{20}\) One exemplar of a brief (undivided into juan) genealogy of a Shi lineage in Suzhou survives. I have not yet had the opportunity to examine this work. See Wu Jianhua 吴建华, “Suzhou diqu de zongpu: Ji yu Zhongguo jiapu zongmu de tongji fenxi” 苏州地区的宗谱——基于《中国家谱总目》的统计分析, in the same author’s Xingshi wenhua yu jiazu shenhui tanwei 姓氏文化与家族社会探微 (Suzhou: Suzhou daxue chubanshe, 2014): 162.

\(^{21}\) For more on this incident, see Chapters 2 and 3 of this dissertation.
approach Shi Daoyuan and entreat him to intercede on Peng Long’s behalf.\footnote{22} It is notable that with all the social resources available to the Changzhou county Peng lineage this high Daoist was their best politically placed connection.\footnote{23}

To Dingqiu’s immense relief, Shi Daoyuan immediately acceded to his plea. At once Dingqiu set about making travel arrangements, and within several weeks he and Shi together set off by boat to Guangdong. They traveled much of the journey together, and Dingqiu credited divine intercession for a rapid and safe voyage. In Guangdong, Shi interceded with the Governor-General and Peng Long was promptly released from the threat of punitive action.

As I related in Chapter 4, upon his return to Suzhou Peng Long’s fellow elites rallied around him: rather than viewing the charges that censor Jin had made against Peng Long as legitimate, they cast Long in the time-tested mold of a righteous official punished by a corrupt higher up due to his staunch defense of the common people. After his death Peng Long was enshrined at the Cultural Star Pavilion (see Chapter 6) and, decades later, at the shrine to 500 local worthies at the Azure Waves Pavilion (Canglang ting). His descendants played a major role in both enshrinations. The relevant point to the present discussion is that nowhere in the material related to Peng Long’s enshrinement was Shi Daoyuan’s intercession on his behalf recorded. Even within the Peng clan archive, Peng Dingqiu’s manuscript autobiography is the only source

\footnote{22} Peng Dingqiu, *Shijiang gong nianpu*, 8a.  
\footnote{23} From his reading of Dingqiu’s literary anthology Xu Jianxun 徐健勋 noted that Dingqiu had approached Shi Daoyuan atop Qionglong shan for assistance regarding his father, but was not aware that Shi had been informed of the incident through an intermediary previously dispatched by Dingqiu or that Shi subsequently accompanied Dingqiu for a portion of the voyage to Guangdong. See: Xu Jianxun, “Qingdai shiren Peng Dingqiu yu daojiao yinyuan chutan” 清代士人彭定求与道教因缘初探, *Hunan keji xueyuan xuebao* 湖南科技学院学报 34.2 (2013): 75.
mentioning it. Clearly, Peng Long’s descendants preferred to credit Dingqiu’s filial intervention rather than that by a high Daoist cleric.

In his 2006 study of the collaboration of Complete Perfect Daoist clerics and a Manchu general during the consolidation of Qing control of Nanyang 南陽, Henan, in the 1650s, Liu Xun stressed the need to study each locale individually to understand the role played by Daoists in the immediate post-conquest order. In the Nanyang case, he demonstrated that the Daoist clerics were “skillful negotiators of power who could parley their moral and symbolic influence into practical benefits for themselves and the local community.” The above account certainly confirms this impression in regards to Shi Daoyuan in the Suzhou region. Liu also found that the “personal piety” of local officials mattered. While I do not have information on what exactly gave Shi leverage with the Governor-General of Guangdong, it is likely that the patronage of Shi by Manchu princes and the Shunzhi court is part of the answer. In addition, Peng Long’s established relationship with Celestial Vault Mountain and the proximity of his ancestors’ tombs implies a pre-existing devotional relationship with Shi Daoyuan. The element in the above account that was absent in Nanyang was the claim of kinship ties between a prominent literati-official familial linage and the highest-ranking Daoist cleric in the region. This element confirms the broader finding in the field of Chinese Religions that the biological families ties of monastics continued to matter after they had taken vows to leave the mundane world.

While this brief discussion hardly does justice to the topic as it relates to Suzhou and the Yangzi Delta valley more broadly, it does testify to Shi Daoyuan’s ability to act

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as an intermediary between a high official of the new regime and a member of a literati-official family in his home area. Attention to Peng Shaosheng’s representation of this episode also shows how, despite the deep gratitude the Pengs felt at the time of Shi’s intercession on their behalf, they felt that the conventions of honoring their own ancestors did not find a place for continuing to acknowledge his role, but rather elided it completely in favor of the filiality trope. In the narrative passed down in the Zhishen lu and other Peng-produced sources, the exact mechanism of Peng Long’s release was ignored while stress was laid on Dingqiu’s arduous journey and lachrymose reunion with his father. The alacrity with which Shi’s role was obscured by Dingqiu and his descendants indicates why it has taken scholars so long to acknowledge the important role played by high Daoists in elite politics.

The Abbey of Primordial Mystery

The Daoist institution with which the Pengs had the closest ties was the Abbey of Primordial Mystery in the north central area of the city of Suzhou (Illustration 7.3). Administratively the Abbey was located in Wu county, which covered the western half of the walled city. Paul Katz characterized the Abbey as “one of the oldest and most important Taoist sacred sites in South China.”26 Though its existence under a string of names is testified as far back as 276 CE, the Abbey was imperially designated in the Ming as under the control of the Zhengyi 正一 (Orthodox Unity; i.e., Tianshi dao 天師道 [Way of the Celestial Masters]) sect. Present day scholars are developing a significant body of work on the Abbey in the Qing and Republican period, in part because the area

immediately in front of the complex—“In Front of the Abbey Street” (Guanqian jie 觀前街)—was the hub of commerce from at least the late Qing and remains so today.27 Shi Daoyuan’s prominence in early Qing Suzhou was due in part to his successful rebuilding of first the Celestial Vault Mountain complex, then parts of the Abbey.

In 1673, two years after his ordeal in Guangdong, Peng Long called upon the aid of Shi Daoyuan for divine, rather than terrestrial, intercession. Peng Long’s mother had died in the fifth month; on the fifteenth day of the seventh month Shi conducted a ritual on her behalf.28 The occasion was the “Central Prime” festival (Zhongyuan 中元), the

Illustration 7.3
Abbey of Primordial Mystery, Qianlong Period or later. Source: Yuanmiao guan zhi, ed. Gu Yuan.

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27 On Xuanmiao guan from the 1920s to the early ‘30s, particularly as it played into the then prevailing dichotomy between preservation of “historic traces” (guji 古蹟) or “national essence” (guocui 國粹) versus economic development, see: Peter Carroll, Between Heaven and Modernity: Reconstructing Suzhou (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006): 225-38.

28 Qionglong shan zhi 穴龍山志 (Qionglong Mountain Gazetteer), six juan. Reproduced in Zhongguo daoguan zhi congkan, v. 14-15. Although the editors do not identify the exemplar, the collection seal on j. 1: 1a reveals it to be that of the Shanghai Library.
Daoist ritual that became famous in its Buddhist guise *yulanpen* (J. *Bon*). Peng Long composed a poem to depict the ascent of the “Salvation Master” (*du shi* 度師) Shi to the altar to distribute alms to hungry ghosts on behalf of Peng Long’s mother. Dingqiu, twenty-nine *sui* at the time, also composed a prose record of the occasion.

Although the record is preserved in the *Qionglong shan zhi*, the ritual itself occurred at the Abbey.

**Peng Qifeng and Abbot Hui Yuanmo**

Peng Qifeng had particularly close relationship to Abbot Hui Yuanmo 惠遠謨 (*zi* Xuzhong 虛中, *hao* Danfeng 澹峰). Hui was a second generation disciple of ritual and administrative transmission from Dingqiu’s teacher Shi Daoyuan, indicating a parallel relationship as master-patron between local abbots and a gentry family lineage.

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The compilers of the *Siku quanshu zongmu* named Li Biao 李標 editor (*bian* 編). While several pieces in which Li is credited as author are included in the *Qionglong shan zhi*, as with many gazetteers, the precise nature of the involvement of those credited as editors is questionable. According to Wang Zhijuan 王志娟, who introduces the work in the *Zhongguo daoguan zhi congkan*, the actual editor was likely the Daoist priest Shi Daoyuan himself. Wang Zhijian also identified Wu Weiye 吳偉業 and Xiang Qiu 向球 as compilers (*zuanxiu* 纂修).

On the history of Maoshan, see *Maoshan zhi* 茅山志; Dingqiu’s record of his late-life visit to the mountain is “You Maoshan ji,” in NYWG.


30 Peng Long, “Guichou zhongyuan Shi dushi dengtan shishi yin fushi yi ji zhi” 癸丑中元施度師登壇施食因賦詩以紀之 (Composing a poem to record Ordination Master Shi’s Ascent to the Altar to distribute alms on Central Prime of the guichou year), *Qionglong shan zhi*, j. 2: 72a.

31 Peng Dingqiu, “Fuji” 附記 (Appended Record), *Qionglong shan zhi*, j. 2: 72a-b.

32 The editor himself, Gu Yuan, was a tenth generation patriarch of another of Suzhou’s great families. See: Zhang Xuequn 張學群, “Suzhou Gu shi (shang)” 苏州顾氏（上） (The Gus of Suzhou: Part I) and “Suzhou Gu shi (xia)” 苏州顾氏（下） (The Gus of Suzhou: Part II), in *Suzhou mingmen wangzu*, eds. Zhang Xuequn et al., 1-25 and 26-45, respectively. On Gu Yuan, see: 15.
Buddhists; and an examination of the Pengs can fill in the picture in the early to mid-Qing in relation to Daoist Abbots as well. Present when Qianlong set up his mobile palace (xing gong 行宮) at the Abbey on one of his four Southern Tours, Qifeng provides invaluable information on the differential between imperial and local gentry contributions to the Abbey after a devastating fire.

A Question of Scale: Peng Involvement in the Abbey of Primordial Mystery and the Cultural Star Pavilion Compared

A full accounting of the relations between Daoist institutions in the Suzhou region and the descendants of Peng Dingqiu is beyond the scope of this chapter. In the following section I provide an overview of writings by Peng clan patriarchs on the Abbey of Primordial Mystery that demonstrate consistent involvement from the early Kangxi period to the Daoguang reign (1821-50; see Appendix 7.1). In lineal terms, this period covers the ninth generation (Peng Long) through the fourteenth (Peng Xizheng and Xilian), with omissions only in the eleventh generation (that of Peng Dingqiu’s sons). The period covered by these inscriptions is over 150 years, forty-five years and some two lineal generations shorter than the documentary record on the Cultural Star Pavilion explored in the previous chapter.

The reason for this discrepancy is not an exclusive reliance on Gu Yuan’s Daoguang reign gazetteer on the Abbey; I have surveyed other sources, such as the

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literary anthology of post-Daoguang reign Peng patriarchs, and the stelae stored at the Abbey in the present day. Rather than a problem of insufficient evidence, I posit that the Peng involvement in the Abbey did indeed decline after the 1830s. As Miyazaki Ichisada 宮崎市定 (1905-91) pointed out in a 1951 article, Suzhou experienced a severe depression in the Daoguang reign. The cataclysmic loss of standing in the empire that Suzhou experienced during the Taiping occupation in the early 1860s was multi-causal and reflected long-term economic cycles involving such factors as maintenance and neglect of waterways. I am not able to perform a rigorous analysis of the collective holdings of the Peng corporate lineage and of individual patriarchs in this period, but I find it plausible that in a period of general economic downturn one of the quintessential literati-official lineages of the early to mid-Qing would concentrate its diminished resources closer to home. Literally and figuratively, the Cultural Star Pavilion was “closer to home” for the Pengs than was the Abbey of Primordial Mystery.

The point I would like to stress here is that the Abbey did not lose its prominence; the Pengs did. The Abbey maintained its position as the heart of cultural and economic life of the city with striking consistency through the late Qing, Republican period, and Communist revolution; through market liberalization and down to the present day. The Cultural Star Pavilion represented a smaller field of civic intervention than the Abbey. With their involvement in the Cultural Star Pavilion, the Pengs made claims of citywide intervention through geomantic and ritual means. At the zenith of their terrestrial success,

34 Miyazaki Ichisada, “Min-Shin jidai no Soshū to keikogyō no hattatsu” 明清時代の蘇州と軽工業の発達 Tōhōgaku 2 (1951): 64-73.
from the tenth through thirteenth lineal generations, Peng patriarchs also played a prominent role in the larger civic playing field of the Abbey. When lineal fortunes declined in the fifteenth generation, patriarchs could no longer compete on the expanded playing field, so they limited their efforts to a site to which they had a much stronger—and often exclusive—claim.

The Pengs and the *Daozang jiyao*

In addition to social, financial, and ritual ties to local Daoist institutions, Peng patriarchs produced texts that were incorporated into most of the major Qing lay Daoist canons. The *Daozang jiyao* (Essentials of the Daoist Canon) was edited by Jiang Yupu 蔣予蒲 (zi Yuanjing 元庭; jinshi 1781; 1756-1819), a former *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Complete Works of the Four Treasuries) proofreader (*jiaoguan* 校官) and acquaintance of several Changzhou county Pengs in the fourteenth lineal generation (that of Peng Shaosheng’s nephews and Qifeng’s grandchildren). Jiang selected some 200 works from the Ming Zhengtong era Daoist canon and added roughly 100 more derived from spirit-writing altars in the Qing to create the most important Daoist canon of the Qing dynasty. As I explore at greater length in Chapter 8, in 1906 the editor of the revised edition of Jiang Yupu’s collection asserted that Dingqiu had edited the first edition of the work prior to Jiang. Despite its persistence in some works of scholarship in the People’s Republic of China, this assertion is not tenable. The Changzhou county Pengs were, however, represented in Jiang Yupu’s *Daozang jiyao*. I will consider that role briefly here.
One work prefaced and published by Dingqiu is included in the *Daozang jiyao*: *Zhen quan* 真詮 (Perfected Commentaries), the reprint of a Ming Jiajing-era alchemical treatise.\(^{36}\) As with Dingqiu’s childhood memorization of the *Ganying pian*, his preface to the reprint provides a window into the profound emotional complex of continuing one’s father’s interests conceived of as an act of filial devotion.

Dingqiu relates that his father had obtained the work in his youth and revered it as the orthodox teachings on nourishing life, clear and concise in contrast to the myriad other error-ridden alchemical books he had perused. As his father’s printed edition was becoming brittle and its ink fading, Dingqiu decided to have new blocks carved in order both to honor the will of his late father and share this notable work with other cognoscenti (see Appendix 7.2). Dingqiu’s clarity in explaining the provenance of his family’s copy of this work and his motives for having it reprinted differ markedly from an early preface describing difficult to date encounters with transcendents as they related the work’s origin before its initial printing.

Dingqiu did not write extensively in prose on Inner Alchemy in the works collected in his literary anthology *Nanyun wengao*, but admonitions on the impropriety of alchemical practice and, later, instructions on alchemical matters from figures such as Lü Dongbin appear frequently in the séance transcripts from Dingqiu’s spirit-writing altar. Dingqiu’s poetry collection also contains much of interest in relation to alchemy.\(^{37}\) Peng Long and his close friend You Tong 尤侗 (1618-1704) of Changzhou county were

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\(^{36}\) Examined by Liu Xun for the *Daozang jiyao* Project.

\(^{37}\) The earliest edition of Dingqiu’s *Nanyun shigao* 南昀詩槀 is that of 1726 reproduced in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, v. 167: 251-469.

On the Yous as a Suzhou great family, see: Shi Xiaoping 施晓平, “Wumen You shi: Houqi zhi xiu,” 吳門尤氏：后起之秀 in *Suzhou mingmen wangzu*, 445-53; on You Tong in particular, see: 448-49.
enthusiasts of alchemical practices. You Tong’s *You Xitang quanji* spills over with discussions of Buddhism, Daoism, and related spiritual practices. The Dao-Buddhist hybrid Inner Alchemical “Golden Elixir” (*jindan* 金丹) practices also appear in You Tong’s work, as in You’s preface to *Jindan mijue* 金丹秘訣 (Secret Oral Teachings on the Golden Elixir).³⁸

Matching up the sponsors of print-runs of alchemical books with preface writers, consumer circles begin to emerge. For example, Dingqiu was no more than two degrees of separation away from the authors of the two prefaces for the two early Qing editions of *Xingming guizhi* 性命圭旨, the amply illustrated Inner Alchemical compendium first printed in 1615. *Xingming guizhi* went on to become one of the most reprinted alchemical texts of the Qing.³⁹ These two preface writers were Peng family friend You Tong and Li Pu 李樑, a former classmate of the Daoist priest Shi Daoyuan.

According to recent research by Tao Jin, the *Daozang jiyao* text *Yu quan* 玉詮 (Jade Commentaries), was edited by Dingqiu’s great-grandson Shaosheng. Additionally, Shaosheng’s nephew Xilian assisted Jiang Yupu 蔣予蒲 (zi Yuan ting 元庭; 1756-1819) with the preparation of the *Daozang jiyao*.⁴⁰ Tao also speculates that Jiang consulted

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³⁸ “*Jindan mijue* tici,” in You Tong, *Xitang zazu erji* 西堂雜組二集 (Shanghai: Wenrui lou, 1900), j. 4, ce 8: 10a-b. The brief (5 page) *Jindan mijue* contained in *Zangwai daoshu*, v. 9: 366-68, does not contain a preface by You Tong or anyone else. The title is sufficiently generic that it need not refer to the same text.

³⁹ The two most accessible editions of this work are that in *Daozang jinghua lu* 道藏精華錄, ed. Ding Fubao 丁福保 (1922), j. 9, and *Zangwai dao shu* 藏外道書 (Chengdu: Ba Shu shushe, 1992-1994), v. 9: 506-95. For an editions history of this work see: Shirai Jun 白井順, “Seimei keishi shoshi kō” 『性命圭旨』書誌考, Tōhō shūkyō 104: 1-22.

⁴⁰ Tao Jin 陶金, “Suzhou Dadong wushang jinji tianxian chuanjie keyi chutan: Yi ge Qing dai Beijing yu Jiangnan wenren jitan jiaohu yingxiang de anli 蘇州『大洞無上九極天仙傳戒科儀』初探──一個清代北京與江南文人乩壇交互影響的案例, *Daoism: Religion, History and Society* 5 (2013): 111-141. An individual named Song Rong 宋鎔 also assisted Jiang Yupu and Peng Xilian. Song Rong was likely of the same Changzhou county Songs who participated in the Cultural Star Pavilion activities since the early Kangxi period.
works held in the Peng clan collection for his *Quanshu zheng zong* (Complete Works of the Orthodox Lineage). Thus while Dingqiu was most certainly not the editor of a Kangxi reign *Daozang jiyao*, he, his grandson, and a great-great-grandson were all involved—even if posthumously—in a manner previously obscured by scholars’ efforts to understand He Longxiang’s misleading 1906 preface.

Conclusion

The records relating to Celestial Vault Mountain and the Abbey of Primordial Mystery show consistent involvement from Peng patriarchs from the ninth through the fifteenth generations, or from the early Kangxi through the Daoguang reigns. In the same period lineage members printed, prefaced, and otherwise endorsed and aided in the distribution of Daoist scriptures. Questions raised by these practices include: To what extent was patronage of Daoist institutions common among the leading lineages of Suzhou in the early to mid-Qing? How did the centrality of the Abbey to urban life influence the politics of its patronage? Put differently, what were the dividends of supporting it for the gentry and literati-official lineages in terms of the positive perception of their peers? Did involvement in lay devotional publishing necessarily imply a relationship with ordained priests: i.e., even if such a relationship was invisible in the completed published product. Do the compilers on whom we have significant biographical information demonstrate a pattern of such social and ritual contacts? In this chapter I have raised more questions than I have been able to answer. I only hope I have

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Judith Boltz authored the entry on *Yuquan* for the *Daozang jiyao* Project. On Jiang Yupu and the *Daozang jiyao*, see Mori, “*Dōzō Shūyō to Shō Yobu no Roso fukei shinkō.*”
demonstrated that the interaction of the major familial lineages of the Yangzi Delta with Daoist institutions is a fruitful topic for further research.
Part IV

Posthumous Peng Dingqiu
Chapter 8

A Prolific Spirit:

Peng Dingqiu’s Posthumous Career on the Spirit Altar, 1720-1906

Peng Dingqiu passed away on the ninth day of the fourth month of the fifty-eighth year of the Kangxi reign (27 May 1719) at his home in the southeastern corner of the city of Suzhou. On the fifteenth day of the third month of the following year—the night of the last full moon before the one year anniversary of his death—Dingqiu’s spirit descended to a spirit-writing altar set up at the home of his disciple Wang Xun 王勳 in neighboring Songjiang prefecture. In addition to Wang, at least two other men were present; neither was related to Dingqiu, but among those present were residents of Suzhou.¹

Just as Wang sensed (gan 感) that his teacher (shi 師) was present, the posthumous Dingqiu delivered a heptasyllabic quatrain. Literary preliminaries dispensed with, the recently deceased Dingqiu got to the point. He declared: “Last year I returned to a state of perfection. I now hold the post of Secretary of the Divine Empyrian.”²

Wang was startled and bewildered (jingyi 驚疑) by his late master’s declaration. He turned for clarification to those present from Suzhou. They testified that matters were as Dingqiu had said (guoran 果然). Apparently in his hometown Dingqiu’s acquaintances had already received word of his appointment as a celestial official. Nevertheless, rather than a member of the Peng corporate lineage or a non-lineage resident of Suzhou, it is

¹ In addition to Wang Xun himself, Wang reported that a Cheng Kaizhang 程開帳 and Wang Pugu 汪樸谷 were also present. He did not clarify whether these men were from Suzhou or if others were present as well.
² 吾昨歲已歸真。掌玉霄案吏矣。Wang Xun, “Ji Nanyun fuzi wen” 祭南畇夫子文 (Composition on the Sacrifice to Master Nanyun), PSZP, j. 8: 31b. Punctuation as in original.
Chapter 8

upon the testimony of Wang that later Pengs drew for evidence of their exalted ancestor’s apotheosis.

Wang related the above episode in an elegy (jiwen 祭文) that he recited at a ritual occasion memorializing his late teacher.3 Fifty-three years after Dingqiu’s first posthumous return, Dingqiu’s great-grandson Peng Shaosheng closed his anthology of Dingqiu’s séance transcripts, Zhishen lu 質神錄 (Record of Interrogating the Spirits, preface 1773), with Dingqiu’s quatrain and report of his celestial promotion. Shaosheng cited Wang’s elegy as the source of this passage.4 As Shaosheng was working some eighty years before the Peng residence was incinerated in the Taiping occupation of Suzhou (1860-63), he presumably had access to the original transcripts of his great-grandfather’s spirit-writing sessions; there are few other cases in the Zhishen lu in which Shaosheng cited his sources as he did with Wang Xun’s elegy.

The entirety of Wang’s elegy is also preserved in three out of four of the extant editions of the Peng shi zongpu 彭氏宗譜 (Genealogy of the Peng Clan).5 Considering

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3 Wang Xun, “Ji Nanyun fuzi wen,” j. 8: 30a-31b.

On the conventions of the genre of jiwen (which Wu refers to as “requiems”) from the Tang to the Ming dynasties, see Pei-yi Wu, “Childhood Remembered: Parents and Children in China, 800-1700,” in Chinese Views of Childhood, ed. Anne Behnke Kinney (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1995): 129-156. I have yet to encounter a full discussion of the conventions of social performance of jiwen in the early Qing. For the most extensive collection of jiwen culled from genealogies, see: Zhongguo jiapu ziliao xuanbian: Li yi fengsu juan 中国家谱资料选编：礼仪风俗卷, eds. Chen Jianhua 陈建华 and Wang Heming 王鹤鸣 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2013).

4 Peng Shaosheng’s anthology of Peng Dingqiu’s spirit altar transcripts, Zhishen lu, contains a significant variant: “incense table companion” (xiang’an lü 香案侶)—i.e., a fellow spirit-writing circle member—for Wang’s “officialdom companion” (yuanlu lü 鴛鷺侶). Zhishen lu, 1842 edition, Gest Library exemplar, 73b, and Wang Xun, “Ji Nanyun fuzi wen,” Peng shi zongpu, j. 8: 30a. The poem and announcement of Dingqiu’s celestial appointment also appear in Peng Qifeng’s Shangshu gong nianpu 尚書公年譜 (Autobiography of the Grand Secretary, last entry 1784), under the entry for Kangxi 59 (1720). Unpaginated manuscript, Suzhou Museum exemplar.

5 Wang’s composition is included in the Peng shi zongpu of 1829, 1883, and 1922. The reason for its omission in the edition of 1867 is that the Taiping Civil War (1850-64) inflicted massive human and infrastructural damage on the Changzhou Pengs, as with all Suzhou literati-officials. Immediately following the conflict, the editors did have access to previous editions of their own genealogy.
that neither Wang nor the two other men he identified as witnesses to Dingqiu’s posthumous descent were Peng lineage members, it appears that Wang’s elegy was valuable to later Peng lineage members precisely because it provided outsider testimony of their ancestor’s divine appointment.

In addition to the prestige Dingqiu bestowed to his descendants through his two-fold optimus distinction and cultural projects such as his editorship of the imperially-mandated Quan Tang shi 全唐詩 (Complete Poetry of the Tang dynasty, 1706), Dingqiu was an active lineage organizer. He edited a new edition of the clan genealogy in 1703 and built their first ancestral shrine in his family compound in 1710. Indicative of the active role Dingqiu took in the education of his heirs, his scholarly works exhibited a consistent interest in elementary education (chuxue 初學). In works such as the primer Rumen fayu 儒門法語 (Oral Instructions of the Classicist School, 1697), Dingqiu’s textbook for his own clansmen became a textbook for thousands of students in the centuries to come.⁶ The pedagogical shadow cast by the historical Dingqiu was a dynamic element in the attribution of spirit-written works to him after his death.

As the most direct socially sanctioned inheritors of Dingqiu’s legacy, Dingqiu’s familial descendants had a great stake in his posthumous representation. They were thus hardly passive observers in his apotheosis. As I discuss in the following chapter, within a year of Dingqiu’s death his descendants filed petitions with local officials for the construction of shrines where Dingqiu’s spirit could receive the spring and autumn sacrifices at both the Changzhou county and the Suzhou prefectural schools. Both

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⁶ Rumen fayu was published in at least twelve distinct editions in the Qing and Republican periods. On the ideological project evident in the work, see: Peng Guoxiang 彭國翔, Jinshi Ruxue shi de bianzheng yu gouchen 近世儒學史的辨正與鉤沉 (Taipei: Yunchen wenhua, 2013): 587-612.
petitions were successful, and the shrines endured into the late nineteenth century. On the more intangible level of fame and literary reputation, for centuries after his death generation upon generation of Dingqiu’s descendants would publish and republish his works. Further examples are available. In the following chapter I attempt to work out the implications of the success in multiple, mutually implicated fields of cultural, political, economic, and religious power. Although outside the scope of the present chapter, the reader should bear in mind that the spirit-writing compositions explored here are only one element in a complex of posthumous projects related to Dingqiu’s perception and memory.

A Posthumous Oeuvre

In this chapter I negotiate the bibliographic and historiographical complexities raised by the propensity of Qing dynasty literati spirit-writing enthusiasts to continue composing poetry and exhortations after abandoning their physical form. Such a study necessitates attentiveness to the particular circumstances in which the name and reputation of the dead were activated and made to serve the interests of the living. In this sense, it is a straightforward Reception History through a Religious Studies lens. I also wish to assert that, however much of an oxymoron it may initially appear to be, the posthumously manipulated object maintained a degree of control over his posthumous image. In the case of Peng Dingqiu, acts in which he deliberately and consistently engaged in his lifetime laid the groundwork for his posthumous return. The control of the historical Dingqiu over the forms of the posthumous Dingqiu diminished over time and space, as those who had known the historical Dingqiu personally died off and as his name
circulated in circles beyond those social ties to his descendants. Yet reliable depictions of
the historical Dingqiu stayed in continual circulation and impacted what could be claimed
about him.

In this chapter I explore a spectrum of malleability of Dingqiu’s posthumous
image. Factors that impacted the claims that could be made by the latter day manipulators
of Dingqiu’s image included: presence or absence of the historical Dingqiu’s writings on
a given topic; the presence or absence of claims to socially recognized familial or
scholarly descent from Dingqiu on the part of the manipulator; spatial distance from
Suzhou; and temporal distance from the lifetime of the historical Dingqiu. These factors
not withstanding, I argue that Dingqiu’s spirit exercised an agency akin to that Science
Studies pioneer Bruno Latour has attributed to microbes and other nonhuman actors: it
constituted a “third party” in human exchanges.\(^7\) The contours of what the posthumous
Dingqiu could be made to declare on the spirit altar were informed—though not
dictated—by the past choices of the historical individual himself.

Establishing a Baseline of Authenticity for Works by the Historical Peng Dingqiu

Establishing a baseline of works reliably attributable to the historical Dingqiu is a
more complicated task than simply considering dates of woodblock carving. As alluded
to above in considering the circumstances of Peng Shaosheng’s compilation of Zhishen
lu, the Changzhou county Pengs held a major collection of books and images from the
early through the mid-Qing dynasty, and they shared access to these works with fellow

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\(^7\) As developed in *The Pasteurization of France* and subsequent works. See Bruno Latour, *The
local elites.\textsuperscript{8} The existence of this collection and other non-printed sources of the historical Dingqiu’s writings means that we can not apply a mechanical standard for “historical” or “posthumous” works such as whether a particular piece was published in Dingqiu’s lifetime. For example, in Chapter 3 I argued that, although not attested to in surviving printed form until decades after his death, two works in which the deities praised Dingqiu’s devotion and admonished his detractors are historically reliable because their internal dates and overall message are consistent with the relevant account in Dingqiu’s autobiography.\textsuperscript{9}

However, despite the clear existence of an intra-lineage means of material transmission of spirit-altar works and other writings, it is crucial that we subject clan members’ claims regarding their own ancestors to the same scrutiny as claims by non-lineage members. In other words, the endorsement by Dingqiu’s descendants of a certain work is an insufficient basis for present day scholars to accept its historical authenticity. Descendants’ accounts of their ancestors were no less self-interested than those who could not claim a familial tie with Dingqiu or a social tie to his descendants.

In the discussion that follows I read works reliably authored by Peng Dingqiu against later works that were not reliably authored by Dingqiu. The latter category consists of explicitly spirit-written works and potentially more confusing works attributed to the historical Dingqiu by later editors that were either likely to have been spirit-written

\textsuperscript{8} For example, Seunghyun Han noted that the Pengs were a major source of the images of former worthies in \textit{Wujun mingxian tuzhuan zan} 吳郡名賢圖傳贊 (preface 1873), ed. Gu Yuan 顧沅. Gu’s work, in turn, was the basis for the shrine to five hundred local worthies at the Azure Waves Pavilion (Canglang ting 滄浪亭). See Han’s “Shrine, Images, and Power: The Worship of Former Worthies in Early Nineteenth Century Suzhou,” \textit{T’oung Pao} 95 (2009): 181.

\textsuperscript{9} The two pieces are “Doumu quanshi wen yi pian” 斗姥勸世文一篇 (The Dipper Mother’s Exhortation to the World in one folio) and “Wenchang dijun xunshi wen sanpian ming” 文昌帝君訓士文三篇命 (The Thearch Lord Wenchang’s Instructions to Scholars in three folios).
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or—as in the case of the *Chongkan Daozang jiyao* (Recarved Essentials of the Daoist Canon, 1906)—falsely attributed without a posthumous authorial function having been at work. (For a summary of works discussed in this chapter and their relation to the historical Peng Dingqiu, see Table 8.1).

Table 8.1

Works by, received by, or attributed to Peng Dingqiu (1645-1719) discussed in this chapter. Arranged chronologically by date of publication or last entry in manuscript.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Role attributed to Peng Dingqiu</th>
<th>Earliest date of publication or last entry of manuscript</th>
<th>Produced by historical Peng Dingqiu, explicitly spirit-written, or dubiously or falsely attributed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nanyun shi gao</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Preface 1708</td>
<td>Historically reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shijiang gong nianpu</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Manuscript; includes material circa 1720</td>
<td>Historically reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanyun wen gao</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Preface 1726</td>
<td>Historically reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhishen lu</td>
<td>Descending spirit</td>
<td>Preface 1773</td>
<td>Explicitly spirit-written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Peng Ningzhi xiansheng zashuo” in Yuanzai bidu shu</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>Likely spirit-written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xu Zhishen lu</td>
<td>Descending spirit</td>
<td>Preface 1842</td>
<td>Explicitly spirit-written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three compositions attributed to Dingqiu in Yu Zhi, ed., <em>Deyi lu</em></td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td>Likely spirit-written (on the basis of previous inclusion in <em>Yuanzai bidu shu</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuju gongguo ge zhengzong</td>
<td>Descending spirit</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Explicitly spirit-written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baofu queyuan</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Likely spirit-written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chongkan Daozang jiyao</td>
<td>Editor of original Kangxi reign edition</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Falsely attributed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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In Chapter 1 I identified the works published in or near Dingqiu’s lifetime that are most useful for understanding his devotional commitments. These are his twenty-seven *juan* poetry anthology *Nanyun shi gao* 南昀詩槀 (Preliminary Draft of Nanyun’s Poetry, preface 1708) and twelve *juan* prose anthology *Nanyun wen gao* 南昀文槀 (Preliminary Draft of Nanyun’s Essays, preface 1726), as well as his manuscript autobiography *Shijiang gong nianpu* 侍講公年譜 (Chronological Autobiography of the [Hanlin Academy] Sub-Expositor, circa 1719).

As for spirit-written works and other compositions of dubious or false authenticity, the following survey includes all the relevant works that I have encountered. However, Dingqiu’s name was so pervasive in the spirit-writing milieu from the early Qing on that it is likely further works exist. The material I have assembled thus far is sufficient to demonstrate a recognizable posthumous oeuvre attributed to Dingqiu. The existence of this oeuvre has not previously been considered as a unified body of work either by Qing dynasty spirit-writing practitioners or by present day scholars. Although hagiography is far from my goal, I am aware that by drawing attention to these materials as a related body of work I am inevitably engaged in an act of canon formation.

Regarding the texts discussed below that were neither circulated in Dingqiu’s lifetime nor expressly identified as spirit-written, I propose that the burden of demonstrating plausibly must be on those who wish to link a work to the historical Peng Dingqiu not found in his own voluminous writings from his lifetime. This is the exercise I attempted in relation to the “Doumu quanshi wen yi pian” 斗姥勸世文一篇 (The Dipper Mother’s Exhortation to the World in one folio) and “Wenchang dijun xunshi wen sanpian ming” 文昌帝君訓士文三篇命 (The Thearch Lord Wenchang’s Instructions to
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Scholars in three folios) in Chapter 3.\textsuperscript{10} In light of Dingqiu’s posthumous popularity among his descendants and in broader spirit-writing circles, his name alone on a mid-Qing to Republican period (1911-49) work is simply not enough to claim its contents as evidence of an early Qing worldview or practice: a more elaborate argument must be presented.

My primary motivation in identifying a posthumous oeuvre is exclusionary: i.e., clarifying which texts were \textit{not} composed by the historical Peng Dingqiu so as to be able to write with greater accuracy about the early Qing charitable milieu in which he operated.

\textsuperscript{10} As far as I have been able to discern, the first printed appearance of the Wenchang dictates was in the \textit{Di jun jie shizi wen} 帝君戒士子文 (The Thearch-Lord’s Admonitions to Scholars; preface 1737) of Huang Zhengyuan (on whom see below). Dingqiu’s revelations were not titled in this work: \textit{incipit}: 康熙甲寅秋日…：\textit{zhen} 貞 8a-11a. In the itemized principles (\textit{fanli} 凡例) of the \textit{Yinzhiwen tushuo} (on which see below) Huang referred to Wenchang’s revelation to Dingqiu as “Peng Ningzhi xiansheng jia jiangbi sanpian” 彭凝祉先生家降筆三篇 (Descent-by-brush to the Residence of Master Peng Ningzhi in three folios): \textit{yuan} 元 4b.

The same text appeared in three articles (\textit{tiao} 條) as “Ming Peng Dingqiu xuanshi” 命彭定求宣示 (Commands for Peng Dingqiu to Promulgate) in \textit{Wendi shuchao} (preface 1768), ed. Zhu Gui 朱珪. In the \textit{Wendi shuchao} Zhu selected 14 of the 24 \textit{juan} of the “inner case” (\textit{nei han} 內函) of Liu Tishu’s 劉體恕 anthology \textit{Wendi quanshu} 文帝全書, thirty-two \textit{juan}, 1743. Scholars have not as yet identified an extant exemplar of the 1743 \textit{Wendi quanshu}. On the authority of Zhu’s testimony that he only subtracted from but did not add to the collection, the Peng Dingqiu material should have been in Liu’s original 1743 \textit{Wendi quanshu}. See Zhu’s preface: \textit{xu} 序 1a. I consulted the Waseda University exemplar of Zhu’s \textit{Wendi shuchao}, which is itself a recutting (\textit{chongke}) from 1882. The 1882 edition, as with Zhu’s initial edition of 1768, is 14 \textit{juan}. In their prefatory material those who prepared the recutting did not indicate that they had added any material to the body of the work. The three missives said to have been received by Peng Dingqiu appear in j. 11: 19a-23a.

The Dipper Mother text, titled “Yuanming Doudi quanshi wen” 圓明斗帝勸世文 (Text to Exhort the World by the Dipper Empress of Perfected Brightness), is preserved in the \textit{Jingxin lu} 敬信錄 (Record of Reverent Faith), which was reportedly first published in 1749, though I have not located this edition. The expanded (\textit{zengding} 增訂) 1831 edition of the \textit{Jingxin lu} appears in \textit{Sandong shiyi} 三洞拾遺, v. 5, itself reprinted in \textit{Zhongguo zongjiao lishi wenxian jicheng} 中国宗教历史文献集成, ed. \textit{Zhongguo zongjiao lishi wenxian jicheng bianzuan weiyuan hui} 中国宗教历史文献集成编辑委员会 (Hefei: Huang shan shushe, 2005), v. 51-70. \textit{“Yuanming Doudi quanshiwen”} is also included in the \textit{Dangui ji} 丹桂集 (Collection of the Cassia Fragrance [Palace]), among other collections. As far as present day scholars have been able to discern, no known independent edition of the Dipper Mother text circulated as a woodblock print; Dingqiu’s account indicates that it would have circulated as a rubbing.

My secondary motivation is less traditional. In the spirit in which Makita Tairyō,11 Robert Buswell,12 Michel Strickmann,13 and other scholars approached Buddhist “apocrypha” (or indigenous Chinese scriptures) and Frances Yates explored the Hermetic Corpus,14 there is much that we can learn in the posthumous oeuvre of Peng Dingqiu about the prevailing worldview in the milieu in which they were produced. Dingqiu’s posthumous oeuvre provides a concise overview of long-term trends in the morality book milieu in which elite individuals were iconized and appropriated by a diverse range of actors in diverse locales.

As Anthony Grafton stressed in his monograph Critics and Forgers, since antiquity the quest to expose inauthentic works has been a dialectical motor driving the development of scholarly technique.15 There is thus a well-developed range of vocabulary to discuss the textual issues addressed in this paper in both the Western tradition and the East Asian one (particularly within Buddhism). I do not entirely rule out the possibility of forgery of work attributed to Peng Dingqiu by his descendants and view Peng Shaosheng as particularly deserving of scrutiny in this regard.16 But for the bulk of the material

covered in this paper I reject the term forgery on the following basis. A “rogue Classicist” (in Bruce Rusk’s phrasing) such as the mid-Ming figure Feng Fang 豐坊 (1493-1566)\(^{17}\) or a European counterpart such as Annius of Viterbo (born Giovanni Nanni; 1432-1502)\(^{18}\) deliberately falsified texts, consciously leaving behind the forgers’ own personal signatures in a manner that betrayed a perverse challenge to would-be discoverers.

In contrast, the deliberate element of deception is generally alien to the spirit-writing process. Dingqiu and others in his milieu aspired in their lifetimes to become celestial officials (tianguan 天官) after their passing. For this reason, “forgery” would be a flat-footed way of understanding this complex process. Dingqiu—by the actions of his descendants, disciples, and believers to whom he had no familial or social connection—achieved his goal of immortality by posthumous contact with the living in a socially validated manner. He did so within a year of his death, as evinced Wang Xun’s record of the events of 1720 in his elegy to Dingqiu.

As we will see below, with the passage of sufficient time explicitly spirit-written material could, however, be incorporated back in to material attributed to the historical figure. In Dingqiu’s case, the historical personage had wished for his ideas and persona to stay active in the world of men after he was gone. That ideas that would be attributed to

\(^{17}\) Rusk characterized Feng as “the most prolific forger of classical texts in the Ming dynasty.” See: Bruce Arthur Rusk, “The Rogue Classicist: Feng Fang (1493-1566) and his Forgeries” (PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2004): 19. For a study of the legal concept of forgery contemporaneous with Peng Dingqiu, see: Mark Peter McNicholas, “Forgery and Impersonation in Late Imperial China: Popular Appropriations of Official Authority, 1700-1820” (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2007).

him after his death were unthinkable in his lifetime was the price he paid for staying “alive” without a corporeal form.\textsuperscript{19}

The category of pseudepigrapha is less accusatory than “forgery” and more accommodating of divine inspiration, but is already taken to indicate Jewish revelations between 300 BCE and 300 CE and Jewish and Christian ones in the later end of that time frame. On the model of works attributed to early Greek philosophers one could speak of a “pseudo-Peng Dingqiu,” but the stress on inauthenticity again distracts from the way in which, within the worldview of Dingqiu and his spirit-writing successors, existence as a celestial official would have been elevated over mortal existence. The opposite is implied by the prefix “pseudo.”\textsuperscript{20} For these reasons I have opted for the adjective “posthumous” as the most value-neutral way of describing this body of work.

Perception of Peng Dingqiu in the Immediate Post-Kangxi Reign Morality Book Milieu

The crucial element of Peng Dingqiu’s fame in his lifetime and in death was his achievement in 1676 of the two-fold \textit{optimus} distinction. While this achievement alone would have been sufficient to bring glory to Dingqiu, the Changzhou county Peng lineage, and Suzhou, in this chapter I am particularly concerned with an additional element that made Peng Dingqiu the symbol of the terrestrial rewards of devotion to Wenchang for the remainder of the Qing dynasty and on to the Republican period. This element is Dingqiu’s reception on his own spirit altar and subsequent prophecy predicting

\textsuperscript{19} On “unthinkability” in evaluating past religious environments, see Lucien Febvre’s classic study \textit{The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century: The Religion of Rabelais}, trans. Beatrice Gottlieb (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

\textsuperscript{20} For an example of a bibliography of works falsely attributed to a classical author in the Western tradition, see: Charles B. Schmitt and Dilwyn Knox, \textit{Pseudo-Aristoteles Latinus: A Guide to Latin Works Falsely attributed to Aristotle before 1500} (London: Warburg Institute, University of London, 1985).
his two-fold *optimus* distinction in the precise year in which he did in turn fulfill the prophecy. These are the events related in Chapter 3. I now wish to explore the legacy of that prophecy in light of the information about the Peng clan as a corporate entity provided in Part III.

A baseline for what enthusiasts of morality books knew of Peng Dingqiu in the initial decades following his death can be seen in the sizable body of works on Wenchang devotion edited by Huang Zhengyuan 黃正元 (fl. 1734-55) from 1734-37 while he was an official in Fujian province.21 Although Huang did not claim that these works were comprehensive, in their breadth they anticipated the ever-expanding Wenchang canons of the eighteenth century: Liu Tishu’s 劉體恕 (or Qiao 樵) *Wendi quanshu* 文帝全書 (Complete Works of the Literary Thearch, preface 1743); Zhu Gui’s 朱珪 (1731-1807) *Wendi shuchao* 文帝書鈔 (Draft Works of the Literary Thearch, preface 1768); and the *Wendi quanshu* of 1775 of Guan Huai 關槐 and Wang Lüjie 王履階.

The first two out of the five works constituting Huang Zhengyuan’s Wenchang canon include materials relevant to the Pengs: *Di jun jie shizi wen* 帝君戒士子文 (The Thearch-Lord’s Admonitions to Scholars)23 and the *Yinzhiwen tushuo* 陰騭文圖說 (The

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21 Yau Chi-on 游子安, *Shan yu ren tong: Ming Qing yilai de cishan yu jiaohua* 善與人同: 明清以來的慈善與教化 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2005): 145. The edition available to me of Huang’s Wenchang canon is the reprint (*chongyin* 重印) of 1880 in one case (*han* 函), eight *ce*, held by the Gest Library. No comprehensive title is given on the box, individual cover slips, or coverleafs. The case may have been constructed by the original buyer, rather than the publisher or bookseller. The uniform paper and layout of the works indicate that they were produced in tandem.


23 *Di jun jie shizi wen* is the title on the cover-leaf. The title on the coverslip is *Pei ming lu* 配命錄 (Record of According with Fate).
Composition on Hidden Virtue, Explicated and Illustrated). Huang’s *Ganyingpian tushuo* 感應篇圖說 (Tract on Harmony and Response, Illustrated and Explicated, 1755), which has received significantly more scholarly attention, contains no extraordinary exemplar of the rewards of implementing the scripture’s doctrines. That is to say, there are many examples of the terrestrial rewards of implementing the teachings of the *Ganying pian*, but none who stands above the other exemplars in the manner that Huang presented the鹏s doing so in the Wenchang works.

Dingqiu’s three 1674 revelations from Wenchang are provided following an exhortation to revere paper with writing on it and the eponymous *Jie shizi wen*. Immediately after the revelations received by Dingqiu, Huang presented a selection of his own communications with Wenchang in which Wenchang stated explicitly that Huang was now Dingqiu’s inheritor as Wenchang’s primary disciple on earth. The first communication, dated 1731, stated:

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24 The four ce of the *Yinzhiwen tushuo* are numbered yuan 元, li 利, heng 亨, and zhen 贞, after the first line in the commentary on the *Qian* 乾 hexagram in the *Yijing* 易經.

The other three titles in the compendium are: *Yu xu jie gongguoge* 御虛階功過格 (this is the title on the coverleaf: the coverslip title is *Taiwei xianjun Chunyang zusi gongguoge* 太微仙君純陽祖師功過格 [Ledger of Merits and Demerits of the Taiwei Transcendent-Lord Ancestral Teacher Pure Yang Lű], ce 6; *Xing tian zhen jing* 性天真境 (True Mirror of Innate Nature and Heaven), ce 7; and *Yu hai ci hang* 慈航 (A Compassionate Raft in the Sea of Carnal Desire), ce 8.


27 In a statement potentially offering insight to the anthologization process of spirit-altar transcripts in the late imperial period, Huang specified that he was only including a hundredth of the communications he had received: 今之所錄，特存十一於千百爾 (*zhen* 1a-2a) and “Jie shizi wen” (*zhen* 3a-5a). Dingqiu’s revelations are not titled: *incipit*: 康熙甲寅秋日, *zhen* 8a-11a.
Although those in the world who recite my “Tract of Hidden Virtue” are many, those who are able to embody and promote it forcefully are few: it is only Master Peng Dingqiu of Wu commandery [Suzhou] who had extensive understanding of its principles. Therefore I descended to his abode on multiple occasions to warn and instruct him. In order to exhort the believers of the world, I not only blessed him personally, but blessed his male descendants.

As for Master Huang Zhengyuan [who is now before me]: You have long served me. “In moments of haste, you cleave to [me]; in moments of danger, you cleave to [me].” You constantly “lower the rites.” I therefore announce to you that which I before announced to Master Peng.

The séance closed with a peroration confirming Huang’s status as Wenchang’s new Peng Dingqiu: “Among my disciples, up until this point there was only Master Peng Dingqiu. Since you [Huang] are the Dingqiu of today, you should reverently listen to my words.”

Nowhere in this passage nor anywhere else in his compendium did Huang give any indication of regarding Peng Dingqiu as a celestial official of Wenchang. Huang rather portrayed Dingqiu and his descendants exclusively as terrestrial exemplars of Wenchang devotion.

What made Peng Dingqiu such an attractive figure to Huang and Huang’s imagined readership of fellow literati-officials? The second ce of the collection makes the answer abundantly clear: the trifecta of Dingqiu’s consistent service to Wenchang

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28 An allusion to Lunyu 4.5: 君子無終食之間違仁，造次必於是，顛沛必於是。
29 Huang’s séance transcripts are untitled. Incipit: 正元遵奉帝君. Di jun jie shizi wen, zhen 12a-b. The first transmission, and the only one to mention Dingqiu, bears the subtitle “Admonitions to Office-Holders” (Ju guan zhi xun 居官之訓). The implicit characterization of Dingqiu as a significant terrestrial official is interesting in as much as it shows recognition on the part of Huang of Dingqiu as a respected servant of the Kangxi emperor.
30 吾弟子之中已成就，彭子定求矣。子即今日之定求也，其敬聽予言. Di jun jie shizi wen, zhen 13b.
beginning before his two-fold optimus distinction; the two-fold optimus distinction itself; and the evidence of the continued favor of Wenchang to the patriline granted by Peng Qifeng’s achievement of the two-fold optimus distinction.

The following anecdote, titled “Numinous Proofs of Serving and Practicing the Composition on Hidden Virtue” (Fengxing Yinzhiwen ling yan 奉行陰騭文靈驗), was placed directly after the Yinzhiwen itself. It can be considered the baseline for what mid-to late Qing morality book readers knew of Dingqiu:

The entire family of Peng Dingqiu of Su commandery [Suzhou] worships and serves the Thearch-Lord with extreme sincerity and reverence. Each sip and each mouthful [of which Dingqiu partook] he dedicated in prayer [to the Thearch]. The Thearch frequently descended via planchette to his abode. The “Injunctions in Three Folios” and “Heart-mind Penance Ritual” were [bestowed in order to] admonish the world. Sir [Peng] then had them piously carved, printed, and disseminated. From dawn to dusk he observed and implemented [their injunctions].

In the renzi year of the Kangxi reign [1672] he received the provincial recommendation [i.e., was awarded the raised scholar degree]. In the bingchen year [1676] he was the top graduate of both the metropolitan and palace examinations. In the bingwu year of the Yongzheng reign, his grandson Qifeng received the provincial recommendation. In the dingwei year [1727] he was the top graduate of both the metropolitan and palace examinations. [Thus] the grandson carried on the moral excellence of the grandfather, something rarely seen since antiquity.

Final evidence of Huang’s conception of Peng Dingqiu and Qifeng as the ultimate exemplars of Wenchang devotion lies in the illustration of Qifeng passing through the optimi arch (Illustration 6.1), presumably at the Suzhou prefectural school. As I discussed

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31 Yinzhiwen tu shuo, ed. Huang Zhengyuan, ce 1 (yuan 元): 6a. Punctuation, the underlining of proper names, and the respectful single space preceding “Thearch-Lord” are as in the original.
in Chapter 6, the picture follows directly after that of Wenchang himself. It is separated off from all the illustrations that follow in that it is not paired with an anecdote: the pairing was the “Numinous Proof” that followed the Yinziwen and preceded the portrait of the Thearch-Lord. The banners flanking the arch both declare: “Grandfather-grandson two-fold optimi” (zu sun huizhuang 祖孫會狀), a phrase that quickly became synonymous with Dingqiu and Qifeng after Qifeng’s success.32

Explicitly Spirit-Written Works

The first record of a posthumous descent by Peng Dingqiu after his spirit’s 1720 visit to Wang Xun’s altar is recorded in the Xu Zhishen lu 繼質神錄 (Continuation of Record of Interrogation of the Spirits, 1842).33 Xu Zhishen lu is a collection of séance transcripts along the lines of the 1773 anthology by Peng Shaosheng which it claimed as its predecessor. The paratextual material in Xu Zhishen lu, however, provides less detail than its precursor. Of the seventeen deities whose communication it preserves, only four appeared in the Zhishen lu. This begs the question: in what way did the anonymous editor(s) understand the work to be a “continuation”? In addition to Peng Dingqiu himself, the three other overlapping deities were Lü Dongbin, Wenchang, and the Ming loyalist Huang Daozhou 黃道周 (1585-1646).34

32 In this saying the hui is an abbreviation for first place metropolitan examination candidate (huiyuan); the zhuang for first place palace examination candidate (zhuangyuan). Hence my insistence on the term “two-fold optimus”: Qing readers were very aware that Peng Dingqiu and Qifeng excelled “ordinary optimi.”

33 The Xu Zhishen lu is included in the 1842 recarved (chongkan) edition of Peng Shaosheng’s Zhishen lu (though it is not acknowledged on the coverleaf). To the best of my knowledge, it did not circulate independently.

34 As revealed in Yuquan (JY 243), Huang appeared on the altars of both Dingqiu and those of his contemporaries in Suzhou. On the historical Huang, see: Yang Zhaozhong 杨肇中, Tianren zhixu shiye xia de wan Ming ruxue chongjian: Huang Daozhou sixiang yanjiu 天人秩序视野下的晚明儒学重建——黄道周思想研究 (Beijing: Zhongguo kexue shehui she, 2013).
The sole preface to the *Xu Zhishen lu* is by Du Qiaolin 杜喬林, a late Ming official from Songjiang prefecture whom Dingqiu was responsible for apotheosizing. A consideration of Du’s preface demonstrates the prominent place of the Changzhou county Pengs in the imaginary of those who received the transmission; a prominence analogous to that granted Peng Dingqiu by Huang Zhengyuan.

Du identified himself as a “grandee of Wenchang’s Jade Bureau” (Wenchang Yuju daifu 文昌玉局大夫) who had been ordered by Wenchang to deliver the preface. Du related that, since the Song dynasty, the Learning of the Way had been muddled (Daoxue bu ming 道學不明). In response, Wenchang had ordered the perfected officials of the Jade Bureau in tandem with immortal teachers to descend via the stylus to propound his teachings. The works of admonitions and lyrics (*xun ci* 訓詞) disseminated in this manner were no less than one million *juan*.

Of old, Du related, his friend Huang Chunyao 黃淳耀 (1605-46) carved the *Zhengjiao lu* 正教錄 (Record of Correcting the Teachings). Unstated, but likely known to mid-Qing readers, is that Huang was among the Classicist martyrs who died in Jiading county resisting the Qing conquest. Positing Du Qiaolin as Huang’s friend rendered the historical Peng Dingqiu’s veneration of Du as a circuitous memorialization of the Jiading martyrs.

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35 *Xu Zhishen lu*, xu 1a-b.
36 This opening phrase echoed that of Peng Shaosheng’s preface to the *Zhishen lu*: “From the point at which the Learning of the Sages lost its clarity the road connecting Heaven and Man was severed.” 自聖學不明，而天人之路絕。ZSL, xu 1a. Shaosheng in turn was alluding to the “Chu yu xia” 楚語下 chapter of the *Guoyu* 國語. I am indebted to Terry Kleeman for identifying this allusion.
37 The posthumous Du Qiaolin referred to Huang by his *hao* Tao’an 陶菴: *Xu Zhishen lu*, 26b-27a. It is likely that the *Zhengjiao lu* is the *Zhengjiao pian* 篇 provided to Shao Zhilin 邵志琳 by Peng Shaosheng and included in j. 45 of Shao’s *Lüzu quanshu*. See: Lai Chi-tim, “Qingdai sizhong Lüzu quanshu yu Lüzu fuji daotan de guanxi,” *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan* 42 (2013): 200.
martyrs. Though the Qianlong emperor would rehabilitate the Jiading martyrs, memorialization of them had certainly been *verboten* in Dingqiu’s day. Emissary Du continued to relate that, in the present Qing dynasty, Liu Tishu edited *Wendi quanshu* and *Lüzü quanshu* after having collected the works of phoenix halls far and wide. Zhu Gui 朱珪 then re-engraved (*xu juan* 續鐫) the former of these works as *Wendi shuchao* while Peng Shaosheng, for his part, circulated the *Zhishen lu*. Reading Du’s preface we thus revisit, schematically, the history of Wenchang devotional publishing in the mid-Qing as it relates to the Pengs that I discussed in Chapter 6.

As evidence of the moral reformation these works brought about in the world, Emissary Du claimed, in the present day the Sage Emperor himself esteemed and worshiped the Literary Thearch, who was now included in the register of sacrifices. Wenchang’s official recognition resulted in turn in the broad dissemination of the salvific effects of spirit altar messages, causing Heaven and man to once again be connected. At this desirable stage philanthropists (*haoshan zhi shi* 好善之士) donated the funds to have the blocks of the *Xu zhishen lu* carved. Du placed the present collection on par with a penance ritual liturgy which he had transmitted to Peng Dingqiu in 1680, some hundred and sixty years earlier.

In his preface, Emissary Du thus set out a genealogy of spirit-writing from the Song dynasty to the present day in which the Pengs played a major role. Emissary Du was on solid ground in portraying the Pengs as influential promoters of Wenchang devotion in the early and mid-Qing. More questionable is Emissary Du’s granting of

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39 According to a subscript commentary in the 1775 *Wendi quanshu*, Liu’s personal name (*ming* 名) was originally Tishu, but he changed it to Qiao and made Tishu his style name (*zi* 字). *j. 1: jiu xu* 舊序 22a. In his preface Emissary Du specified that Liu’s personal name was Tishu.
40 Due to confirmation in Dingqiu’s *Shijiang gong nianpu*, I accept that the transmitted *Xinchan* liturgy is likely to be very close to that received by Dingqiu in 1680.
equal credit for the canonization of Wenchang to Peng Shaosheng as to Zhu Gui.

Although an important personage in his own day, Shaosheng turned down the one official post ever offered him. Zhu, in contrast, served six decades in officialdom, including several of the highest posts possible, such as Grand Secretary. The weight these two men brought to Wenchang devotion could not have been equal. Yet Emissary Du’s formulation of such a claim helps us to place Xu Zhishen lu in a camp of devotees who admired not only Peng Dingqiu but the Changzhou county Pengs as a corporate entity.

As for the transcript of Dingqiu’s own posthumous descent preserved in the Xu Zhishen lu, in his descent-via-the-brush (jiang bi 降筆) “Master Peng Nanyun” 彭南昀公 addressed the Wenchang Xiaojing. Although the posthumous Dingqiu’s endorsement of the Wenchang Xiaojing comes down to us in an séance transcript anthology, in terms of length and content it would have been perfectly suited to have served as a preface. As the historical Peng Dingqiu did compose a preface to this work, we have a remarkable opportunity to compare how the historical Dingqiu and posthumous Dingqiu treated the same scripture.

As I discussed in Chapter 6, the historical Dingqiu’s preface is collected in his prose anthology Nanyun wengao. It subsequently appeared as a preface to Guan Huai’s Wenchang Xiaojing in later Wenchang compendia such as the 1775 Wendi quanshu. Following the conventions of the prose anthology, the Nanyun wengao version did not include a date, but the 1775 Wendi quanshu gives us the eleventh month of 1706.

Although Dingqiu did not mention writing the preface in his autobiography, he did record that in the eleventh month of the year he collaborated with Cheng Zhonglong 程仲龍 (zi

41 Posthumous Dingqiu termed the Wenchang Xiaojing the Wenchang chunxiao zhenjing (Wenchang’s Perfected Scripture of Pure Filiality) and specified that it was in six juan.
Ziyun 子雲) of Xiuning county, Huizhou prefecture, in raising funds for renovating the Venerating Scriptures Pavilion (Zunjing ge 尊經閣) at the Changzhou county school.

Thus the historical record matches perfectly with the Wendi quanshu dating.

In Chapter 6 I examined the historical Peng Dingqiu’s preface to the Wenchang Xiaojing. Here I will consider that by posthumous Dingqiu. Posthumous Dingqiu based his credibility in asserting the profundity of the Wenchang Xiaojing on his own literary talents, which he contended had been unsurpassed when he was alive. He continued that the Supreme Thearch employed him as his sole representative of true filiality, showing his favor by specially sending an ambassador to Dingqiu from the Jade Bureau. His male descendants were still enjoying the vestigial remnants of this favor, as evinced in their success in the examinations.

The posthumous Dingqiu stated that as a youth he saw the commentary (zhu 注) on the scripture by Qiu Jun 邱濬 (1421-95). The “commentary” being referred to is possibly a preface to the Wenchang Xiaojing attributed to Qiu Jun and dated 1492. Posthumous Dingqiu’s statement thus directly contradicted that made by the historical Dingqiu that he only saw the Wenchang Xiaojing late in life.

Thus, the historical Dingqiu:

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42 Qiu’s surname is also commonly written 丘. On Qiu Jun, see: Cheuk Yin Lee 李焯然, Qiu Jun pingzhuan 丘濬評傳 (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2005). For a highly presentist biography with no mention of Wenchang devotion, see: Wu Jianhua 吳建华, Mingdai jingshi ru chen: Qiu Jun 明代經世儒臣: 丘濬 (Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2007). Although the characters for their names are the same, the author of the Qiu Jun biography should not be confused with the Wu Jianhua who recently prepared a punctuated edition of Wang Ao’s collected works and who has also written extensively on the Peng clan.

43 Along with a preface by the high official Wang Ao 王鏊 (1450–1524) also dated 1492, if authentic Qiu’s preface would be the oldest claimed for the work. However, the earliest printed editions including these prefaces dramatically post-date the lifetimes of the purported authors, and no scholar has as yet attempted to prove or disprove that Qiu or Wang actually wrote them. The work of Chinese University of Hong Kong doctoral student Hu Jiechen promises to clarify this and many other obscure points relating to late imperial Wenchang scriptures. For the Wenchang Xiaojing prefaces attributed to Qiu and Wang, see the 1775 Wendi quanshu, j. 5: 3a-5a.
Chapter 8

1) Invoked through quotation a more venerable Wenchang scripture: the reliably Song dynasty Huashu rather than the later Wenchang Xiaojing, whose earliest prefaces claim to be from the mid-Ming. He also related it to one of the required works of the civil service examination curriculum, the Zhongyong, thereby securing a precedent of deeper antiquity and imperial orthodoxy.

2) Provided a biographical anecdote explaining how he first encountered the work.

3) Identified the person who prepared the edition for which he was writing a preface.

As for the posthumous Peng Dingqiu, in place of item one, he boasted of his own accomplishments and those he had secured for his descendants. In effect, by the time of the transmission a century or more after his death, Dingqiu himself had become all the classical precedent needed for a spirit-writing group to accept the legitimacy of the scripture. This process developed further in the two examples below, in which the compilation of entire scriptures was credited to Dingqiu. As for items two and three, however, the posthumous Dingqiu essentially fulfilled them; a fact that speaks more to the generic conventions of preface writing than to an attempt to mimic his voice after his death. The biographical anecdote provided by the spirit altar Dingqiu directly conflicted with that provided by the historical Dingqiu, showing that the human receivers of the communication and those who selected this communication for publication did not feel the need to vet it against the published work of the historical Dingqiu. From this comparison it is apparent that even if the compilers of the Xu zhishen lu had read the historical Dingqiu’s prose anthology Nanyun wengao, they did not model the posthumous Dingqiu to conform to the historical Dingqiu.
A subscript commentary following spirit altar Dingqiu’s *Wenchang Xiaojing* preface provides valuable information on involvement by the Changzhou county Pengs in spirit-writing after Dingqiu’s passing, and the extent to which the corporate involvement of the Pengs and their acquaintances was acknowledged in a mid-nineteenth century spirit-writing milieu. The anonymous editor stated that Dingqiu, You Tong, Peng Sunyu 彭孫遹 (1631-1700), and Peng Ningqiu set up an altar and received teachings from Du Qiaolin and Huang Daozhou; all of which is true. You Tong, Peng Sunyu, and Ningqiu all participated in Dingqiu’s spirit altar in Beijing in the late 1670s after he achieved his two-fold *optimus* distinction. Additionally, when the high official Chen Yanjing 陳延敬 (1639-1712; 1658 *jinshi*) of Zezhou, Shanxi, visited Suzhou, he too sought teachings at the altar. All this is documented in Dingqiu’s autobiography and verified in the literary anthologies of You Tong and Peng Sunyu. The anonymous author of the commentary thus revealed himself to have been well informed about spirit-altar matters in the Kangxi reign.

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44 Chen was Dingqiu’s supervisor when Dingqiu first served in the Hanlin Academy. For Chen’s biography, see: ECCP, v. 1: 101. In *Shijiang gong nianpu*, Dingqiu claimed to be the printer of Chen’s literary anthology *Wuting Wenbian* 午亭文編. The work, as reproduced in the *Qingdai shi wen ji huibian*, v. 153: 1-525, contains no trace of Dingqiu’s involvement.

45 *Xu Zhishen lu*, 3b-4a.

The commentary continued that subsequent spirit-writing practitioners included Wang Jingming 王敬銘 and Dingqiu’s grandson Peng Qifeng; both of whom, the editor noted, had portions of their spirit altar communications carved and distributed. To Wang and Peng Qifeng the editor attributed the fact that, down to the time of writing, spirit altars continued in Taicang county, Suzhou prefecture, among other places.
A fuller work by the posthumous Dingqiu than that of his short statement on the *Wenchang Xiaojing* contained in the *Xu Zhishen lu* is the *Yuju gongguoge zhengzong* 玉局功過格正宗 (Orthodox Summation of the Jade Bureau Ledger of Merits and Demerits, 1889) (Illustration 8.1). The nuances of the contents of this ledger itself are worth exploring in relation to the internal development of the genre. Here I will confine myself to discussing paratextual elements related to the posthumous position of Peng Dingqiu. The *Yuju gongguoge zhengzong* contains five prefaces, none of which are dated and four of which (including those by Wenchang and Lü Dongbin) were spirit-written. The preface by Wenchang (called here the Thearch-Lord Primordial August of Zitong [Zitong yuanhuang dijun 梓潼元皇帝君]), explained that the work was that which “Peng Dingqiu of Changzhou [county] compiled—though-descending via the Plum Altar of the Ancient Layered Valley in Western Zhejiang [province].” Wenchang was explicit about the role Dingqiu played as patron saint of the Plum Altar. He declared: “Master Peng’s merit was solid rather than superficial, so that the merit of the various disciples of the

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46 1 ce, 2 juan (上下). 1889, Zhejiang Library exemplar (普 11639).
47 The most significant work on the ledgers genre in English, Cynthia Brokaw’s *The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit: Social Change and Moral Order in Late Imperial China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), ends with the eighteenth century. Of the twenty-two extant ledgers from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries listed by Brokaw in her appendix (pp. 241-42), one likely contains material related to Peng Dingqiu: the *Jingxin lu* (preface 1746), on which see above.
48 “Zitong yuanhuang dijun xu” 梓潼元皇帝君序, *xu* 2a.
Plum Altar also has aspects which cannot be surpassed.”\textsuperscript{49} The third preface is attributed to Nanping jidian 南屏濟顛 (d. 1209), the Southern Song monk who went by the clerical name Daoji 道濟 but was more commonly known as Jigong 濟公.\textsuperscript{50} Jigong characterized the work at hand as “personally finalized by the Jade Bureau’s Peng Dingqiu,” a key element in setting it apart from the myriad other ledgers of merit and demerit which, in the quintessential phrase of print culture exhaustion, Jigong described as being so numerous as to “make an ox sweat and fill a room to the rafters.”\textsuperscript{51}

The first postface (ba 跋) following the ledger itself was by an apotheosized Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 (1811-72), the leader of the Hunanese Army to whom the turning of the tide in the Taiping Civil War is often credited. Zeng’s inclusion in the Yuju gongguoge is a vivid reminder of the dramatic changes in the fortunes of the Qing empire since the Kangxi reign in which Dingqiu lived out the entirety of his adult life. By virtue of his greater seniority as a celestial official, Dingqiu outranked Zeng in the celestial bureaucracy as the Yuju gongguoge editors conceived of it.

Zeng’s postface, dated 1889, specified that it was delivered through descending to the Plum Altar. In it the posthumous Zeng explained that, although his loyalty and filiality while alive had been insufficient, after passing away he had humbly received a celestial post in the Cassia Palace (Guigong xianzhi 桂宮仙職). The title of the postface specified only slightly more precisely that Zeng served as Assistant-of-the-Left (zuofu 左輔), which presumably made him second only to Wenchang himself. The preface was

\textsuperscript{49} “Zitong yuanhuang dijun xu,” xu 3a.
\textsuperscript{50} On Jigong, see: Meir Shahar, Crazy Ji: Chinese Religion and Popular Literature (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 1998).
\textsuperscript{51} “Nanping jidian chanshi xu,” 南屏濟顛禪師序, xu 4.a.
laid out like a memorial, with honorific spaces, line breaks, raised imperial titles, and the minister’s own name in offset subscript. Zeng’s memorial was delivered on the occasion of the completion of the ledger, which Zeng, after Dingqiu’s late life moniker, termed the *Nanyun xiansheng gongguoge zhengzong*, and praised highly.

False Attributions 1: The *Yuanzai bidu shu*

Before considering works questionably attributed to the historical Peng Dingqiu, there is one falsely attributed work we must examine because portions of it were subsequently included in a historically ambiguous one. Specifically, the editorship and authorship of a portion of *Yuanzai bidu shu* 元宰必讀書 (The Must-Read Works of Optimus and Grand Secretaries, 1800) was claimed for the historical Dingqiu, and, as Sakai Tadao first pointed out, neither claim is tenable.\(^52\) Exploring why it is untenable compels us to provide a fine-tuned chronology of a complex of charitable activities in which the Changzhou county Pengs were intimately involved in the early and mid-Qing dynasty (see the discussion in Chapters 1 and 4).\(^53\)

\(^{52}\) As did Sakai, I examined the three known editions of this work, those of 1800, 1839, and 1843. I am grateful to Hu Jiechen for providing me digital facsimiles of both the 1800 edition in the School of African and Oriental Studies Library exemplar, and of the privately held 1843 exemplar. I also examined the exemplar of the 1839 edition held by the University of Chicago, Regenstein Library (1681 4234). I will cite the 1800 edition below, but the content of the three editions as they relate to the present discussion are the same.

\(^{53}\) On Peng lineage charitable activities, see Fuma Susumu 夫馬進, *Chūgoku zenkai zendōshi kenzū* 清國善會善堂史研究 (Kyoto: Dōhōsha shuppan, 1997), esp. 166-167, 382-84, and Yau Chi-on, *Quanhua jinzhen: Qingdai shanshu yanjiu* 劝化金箴: 清代善书研究 (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 1999), esp. 87-98. Among the works upon which Yau drew for his pioneering portrait of the Peng clan are ones such as the *Yuanzai bidu shu* and *Baofu queyan*, which I consider to be spirit-written.

Though Yau’s work is often a model of bibliographic clarity in a particularly mine-laden field of study, in work first published between 1997 and 2010, Yau cited compositions attributed to Peng Dingqiu in the *Yuanzai bidu shu* without adequate attention to their historical authenticity. See: Yau Chi-on, “Ming mo-Qing chu gongguoge de shengxing ji shanshu suo fanying de Jiangnan shenhui” 明末清初功過格的盛行及善書所反映的江南社會 in *Shanshu yu Zhongguo zongjiao*, 14; “Xiuxing zhe de huaxiang: Shanshu bi xia de Huang Zhengyuan yu Liu Shanying” 修省者的畫像：善書筆下的黃正元與劉山英, in *Shanshu yu Zhongguo zongjiao*, 26.
Chapter 8

*Yuanzai bidu shu* consists of what by the mid-Qing had become the triumvirate of morality books: *Taishang ganying pian* 太上感應篇 (Tract of the Most High on Action and Recompense), *Wenchang dijun guangxun dangui ji* 文昌帝君廣訓丹桂籍 (Expanded Instructions of Thearch Lord Wenchang’s Vermillion Cassia Record; i.e., *Yinzhiwen*), and *Wudi jueshijin* 武帝覺世經 (The Martial Thearch’s Scripture Awakening the World). A final section titled “Peng Ningzhi xiansheng za shuo” 彭凝祉先生雜說 (Miscellaneous Disquisitions of Master Peng Ningzhi) will be the focus of my discussion here (for a listing of what I will refer to as the “Peng Ningzhi disquisitions” see Table 8.2). ⁵⁴

Use of the moniker “Ningzhi” to refer to Dingqiu deserves comment, as it may be a flag indicating posthumous claim of authorship. The standard biographies give Dingqiu’s cognomen (*zi* 字) as Qinzhi 勤止. Ningzhi was only infrequently used as an appellation for Dingqiu in his lifetime; interestingly, one of these few uses is by Dingqiu’s fictional “uncle” Peng Sunyu. Sunyu participated in the spirit-altar Dingqiu ran in Beijing in the late 1670s, and recorded his experience in part in his poetry anthology *Songgui tang ji* 松桂堂全集 (Complete Folios of the Cypress and Cassia Hall). In a 1678 New Year’s Eve poem composed at the height of activity of the Beijing spirit-writing circle centered on the recently minted *optimus* Dingqiu, Sunyu refered to Dingqiu as

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⁵⁴ The 1900 edition of the *Yuanzai bidu shu* includes the triumvirate of morality books without the “Peng Ningzhi” disquisitions, demonstrating that, for one editor at least, “Ningzhi”’s contributions did not figure among the “must reads.” This edition is reproduced in *Ming-Qing minjian zongjiao jing Juan wenxian* 明清民間宗教經卷文獻 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 1999), v. 10: 475-91. Although the 1900 edition deserves attention, I will not discuss it further in this dissertation.
“Ningzhi.” Other morality books that gave Ningzhi as Dingqiu’s cognomen include: Huang Zhengyuan’s *Yinzhiwen tushuo* (discussed above); the 1775 *Wendi quanshu* (in the course of discussing the same Beijing spirit-writing circle in which Peng Sunyu had participated); and *Baofu queyan* (discussed below).

Table 8.2
The Peng Ningzhi Disquisitions attributed to Peng Dingqiu in *Yuanzai bidu shu* (1800)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(The Disquisition on Teachers)</th>
<th>(Three Disquisitions on Obstructing Desire)</th>
<th>(Disquisition on Cherishing the Written Word)</th>
<th>(Disquisition on Loving Sentient Beings)</th>
<th>(Disquisition on Printing [Wenchang’s] <em>Scripture of Filial Piety</em>)</th>
<th>(Disquisition Extrapolating on the <em>Scripture of Filial Piety</em>)</th>
<th>(Disquisition on Saving the [female infants who would otherwise be] Drowned)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Shi shuo” 師說</td>
<td>(The Disquisition on Teachers)</td>
<td>“Zhiyu san shuo” 窒欲三說</td>
<td>“Xizi shuo” 憐字說</td>
<td>“Aiwu shuo” 愛物說</td>
<td>“Kan Xiaojing shuo” 刊孝經說</td>
<td>“Guang Xiaojing shuo” 廣孝經說</td>
<td>“Jini shuo” 準溺說</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(The Disquisition on Teachers)</td>
<td>(Three Disquisitions on Obstructing Desire)</td>
<td>(Disquisition on Cherishing the Written Word)</td>
<td>(Disquisition on Loving Sentient Beings)</td>
<td>(Disquisition on Printing [Wenchang’s] <em>Scripture of Filial Piety</em>)</td>
<td>(Disquisition Extrapolating on the <em>Scripture of Filial Piety</em>)</td>
<td>(Disquisition on Saving the [female infants who would otherwise be] Drowned)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first preface to *Yuanzai bidu shu* is by Ding Xu 丁煦 and dated 1800. Ding foregrounded the importance of the Changzhou county Pengs in the morality book milieu, yet crucially, his first sentence stressed not the extent of the Pengs’ good works, but the extent to which the Pengs’ were *visibly rewarded* for them. Ding wrote: “Since antiquity

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55 I used the edition of *Songgui tang ji* contained in *Peng Xianmen quan ji* 彭羡門全集 (Shanghai: Saoye shanfang, 1911), 1: 29b.
those who cultivated virtue and who were protected and recompensed were many. Yet none flourished like the Peng clan of Changzhou county.”

Ding continued: “The lord, taboo name Dingqiu, cognomen Ningzhi, who proffered up this ledger of merits and demerits, tirelessly delighted in good works.” Ding characterized the attainment of the two-fold *optimus* degrees by Dingqiu and Qifeng as the “recompense of Heaven” (*Tian zhi bao* 天之報), continuing: “Both lords were recorded in the Literary Palace, in which they received great sacrifices and fragrant offerings. The scintillating resplendence of [the Pengs’] superlative examination ranking continues uninterruptedly to the present day. Of scholars within the seas there are none who do not envy them.” Ding explained that the Peng clan continued to be rewarded for its good works through the examination success of latter day members. As an example, Ding provided the most recent presented scholar from the Changzhou county Pengs, Dingqiu’s fifth generation descendant Peng Yunhui 蘆輝. Yunhui had placed second on the Shuntian provincial exam in 1798, and taken his presented scholar degree the following year. Even in the absence of the 1800 exemplar of *Yuanzai bidu shu* held by the School of African and Oriental Studies Library, Ding Xu’s provision of Peng Yunhui’s name instead of other Peng clan members who achieved presented scholar degrees between 1798-1839 would have provided sufficient evidence of a Jiaqing era (1796-1820) edition of *Yuanzai bidu shu*, as the editors of the 1839 edition claimed.

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56 自古修德護報者多矣。未有如長洲彭氏之盛也。
57 公，諱定求，字凝祉，奉《功過格》，樂善不倦。
58 二公皆為注籍文宮，馨香奕奕。科甲熾盛，至今不絕。海內士林，無不畢朘。Ding Xu, *xu 1a.*
59 Ding erroneously wrote the *ri* 日 classifier for the *guang* 光 classifier in the character *hui.*
Ding Xu stressed that all the success enjoyed by Dingqiu’s descendants was due to Dingqiu himself: “The splendidness of all these men is in being the lord’s family.”\(^\text{60}\) In Ding’s recounting, Dingqiu recited morality books ceaselessly, then wrote out a volume (ce 冊) by hand, which he then presented to people, inscribing the cover slip “Must-reads for Optimi and Grand Secretaries.” Further explaining the title, Ding embellished that Dingqiu once said to people: “One who does not read these will most certainly not be able to arrive at [the status of] optimus or grand secretary. Furthermore, since antiquity, as for the optimi and grand secretaries who have stood lofty in the heavens and erect on the earth, of those who [names and deeds?] perdure, there are none who did not exert themselves in this regard.”

嘗與人曰：「非為讀此，盡可以致狀元宰相。而自古狀元宰相之磊落，軒天地卓乎不巧者，未有不從此用力也。」

Ding continued: “The lord also authored seven disquisitions on miscellaneous subjects, combined them [with the previously mentioned morality books], and had them printed in a slim volume.”\(^\text{61}\)

The first consideration in evaluating the claims made by Ding Xu in his preface is what occurred in the eighty years between Dingqiu’s death in 1719 and Ding Xu’s preface of 1800. Regarding the claims highlighted by Ding, the most important occurrences were Peng Qifeng’s attainment of the two-fold optimus distinction in 1727, and his subsequent rise to the Grand Secretary of the Board of War (Bingbu shangshu 兵部尚書, 1763-66). To put it differently, before 1727 there was no optimus but Dingqiu among the Changzhou county Pengs, and until 1763 there were no grand secretaries in their ranks. The phrasing of the quote attributed to Dingqiu by Ding Xu does not strictly

\(^{60}\) 人皆以為華在公家。Ding Xu, xu 1a.

\(^{61}\) 公又著雜說七篇，一並彙鐫小本。Ding Xu, xu 1b.
imply that Dingqiu predicted a further *optimus* and grand secretaries among his
descendants, but the absence of such—and the boastfulness of such title—make its
selection by Dingqiu implausible. Ding’s account clearly sought to entice readers with
the promise of obtaining a portion of the fortune of the Changzhou county Pengs: such
was the motivation of the editors who chose the title.

In 1960 Sakai Tadao (1912-2010) first cast doubt on Dingqiu’s editorship of the
*Yuanzai bidu shu* on the grounds that the *Jueshijing* postdated the Kangxi reign in which
Peng Dingqiu died.\(^\text{62}\) In the 1999 expanded edition of his masterwork Sakai stated
explicitly that the “Miscellaneous Discourses” were not by Dingqiu, but rather compiled
by unknown others after his death.\(^\text{63}\) Sakai did not note, however, that the posthumous
nature of Dingqiu’s contributions to *Yuanzai bidu* has ramifications for the reliability of
Yu Zhi’s *Deyi lu* (on which see below), which contains two of the seven Peng Ningzhi
disquisitions.

Here I will expand briefly on Sakai’s original insights. First of all, Dingqiu’s
relationship with the *Jueshijing* requires further comment. As scholars such as Sakai, Yau
Chi-on, and Goossaert have discussed, the first reliable preface for this scripture is 1691
and the first printed edition appeared in the 1720s. This chronological window overlaps
nearly exactly with the last three decades of Dingqiu’s life, which means it is conceivable
that the historical Dingqiu encountered the scripture; certainly, there is no way to prove
that he was *not* acquainted with the *Jueshijing*. The important point, however, is that the
grouping of the *Ganying pian*, *Yinzhi wen*, and *Jueshi jing* into a triumvirate was only a

\(^{63}\) Sakai, *Zōho Chūgoku zensho no kenkyū*, v. 2: 193-194; see also v. 1: 520-21.
product of the mid-Qing.\textsuperscript{64} The historical Dingqiu could not have clustered the three together as did the “Peng Ningzhi” figure.\textsuperscript{65}

Among the Peng Ningzhi disquisitions the two on the merits of distributing the \textit{Wenchang Xiaojing} are most plausibly traceable to the historical Peng Dingqiu on the grounds that we have writing published in his lifetime in which he enthusiastically endorsed the scripture. Yet as we saw in above in the discussion of the explicitly spirit-written piece by Dingqiu in the \textit{Xu Zhishen lu}, the historical Dingqiu’s endorsement of the \textit{Wenchang Xiaojing} enabled rather than limited posthumous commentary by the Dingqiu persona on that particular scripture.

Considering the “Discourse on Carving the \textit{Scripture of Filial Piety}” in the “Peng Ningzhi xiansheng zashuo” we might reasonably expect it to be an excerpt from Dingqiu’s endorsement of the \textit{Wenchang Xiaojing} contained in Dingqiu’s own literary anthology. The historical Dingqiu did, in this case, write a well-distributed work aligning

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{64} For further discussion, see: Vincent Goossaert, “Spirit Writing, Canonization and the Rise of Divine Saviors.”
\item \textsuperscript{65} Two late Qing \textit{Jueshi jing} anthologies claiming to be based on “original Suzhou Peng editions” (Gusu Peng shi yuanben 姑蘇彭氏原本) also deserve explanation. These two works are: Li Gan’s 李淦 \textit{Jueshi jing tushuo 圖說} (Scripture Awakening the World, Illustrated and Explained) from the Daoguang reign (1821-50) and Pan En’gao’s 潘恩誥 \textit{Jueshi jing zhuzheng 注證} (Scripture Awakening the World, with Commentary and Proofs) of 1850. A facsimile reproduction of the 1899 edition of the \textit{Jueshi jing zhuzheng} by a “Mr. Wu” (Wu shi 吳氏) is contained in the \textit{Zangwai daoshu}, v. 4: 121-164.

I have only seen the latter and will limit my remarks to it. Pan stated in his postface that his father first saw the work in 1806 (\textit{Jueshi jing zhuzheng}, 87b; rpd. v. 4: 164). The latest internal date in the work is 1755 (The 1755 date appears on p. 31b; rpd. v. 4: 136). This provides a fifty-year window in the mid-Qing for the original production of this work. This period clearly has no bearing on the historical Peng Dingqiu. Additionally, the phrase “original Suzhou Peng editions” did not claim editorship by a Peng patriarch, but only that a Peng patriarch had either sponsored the printing or simply owned the exemplar upon which the edition of 1850 was based. Lai Chi-tim considered a contemporaneous attribution to a previous Peng exemplar in the Ōtani University exemplar of the 1852 \textit{Lüzu quanshu} (Complete Works of Patriarch Lü). See his “Qingdai sizhong Lüzu quanshu yu Lüzu fuji daotan de guanxi,” 202-03.

The claim of the \textit{Jueshi jing tushuo} to be based on an original Peng edition was noted in Liu Wenxing 劉文星, “Guandi Jueshi zhengjing zhushi ben chutan: Yi Huang Qishu suo ji de san zhong Jueshi zhenjing wei li” 《關帝覺世真經》注釋本初探: 以黃啟曙所絹的三種《覺世真經》為例, in \textit{Jindai de Guandi xinyang yu jingdian: Jian tan qi zai Xin, Ma de fazhan} 近代的關帝信仰與經典: 兼談其在新、馬的發展 eds. Wang Ch’ien-chuan 王見川, Su Qinghua 蘇慶華, and Liu Wenxing (Taipei: Boyang Wenhua Shiyè Youxian Gongsi, 2010): 48 n. 3. National Taiwan Library holds an exemplar of the work.
with the interests of the compilers of Yuanzai bidu shu. Yet neither of the two disquisitions on the Wenchang Xiaojing in “Peng Ningzhi Xiansheng zashuo” contains passages from the one reliable piece we have by the historical Dingqiu on the Wenchang Xiaojing.

As we saw above in the contrast between the compositions on the Wenchang Xiaojing by the historical and posthumous Dingqius, the writing of the historical Dingqiu was characterized by identification of personal contacts (“my old friend”), precise geographical locations, and particular names of editions. All of these conventions are absent in the two Wenchang Xiaojing-related Peng Ningzhi disquisitions. If we cannot find an overlap between compositions the historical Dingqiu wrote and those attributed to him in Yuanzai bidu shu on a topic he clearly addressed, how much more suspect are concepts he did not mention in his literary anthology, such as cherishing the written word and saving female infants from drowning? 66

66 While I have been informed that there is an electronic edition of the Xuxiu Siku quanshu collection, which includes both Dingqiu’s literary and poetry anthologies, I have not yet had access to them. Facsimile versions of both works are available in Google Scholar (reproducing the 1881 Peng Zuxian compendium edition in the Harvard-Yenching exemplars), but the accompanying digitization is so indifferent that one cannot rule out the inclusion of a word or phrase in the original text based on a search of this source alone. Nonetheless, this imperfect method, and the old-fashioned but time tested one of actually reading the text, have failed to identify key words in the Nanyun wengao such as xizi and jini 濟溺.

On the discourse around female infanticide in the nineteenth century, see: Michelle T. King, Between Birth and Death: Female Infanticide in Nineteenth-century China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014). Ann Waltner discussed the practice in relation to high dowries in the Yangzi Delta in “Infanticide and Dowry in Ming and Early Qing China,” in Chinese Views of Childhood, ed. Anne Behnke Kinney (Honolulu, University of Hawai’i Press, 1995): 193-218. For an inadequate survey of the practice itself, see: D. E. Mungello, Drowning Girls in China: Female Infanticide since 1650 (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008). Mungello mentioned Dingqiu in connection with anti-infanticide agitation, but Mungello’s work is so error-ridden that it is difficult to recognize Dingqiu. Rather than researching the historical personage, Mungello followed his sources in referring to a “Peng Zhuangyuan,” as if “Zhuangyuan” were a proper name rather than the title optimus (a title which, in any case, is insufficient to distinguish between Dingqiu and his grandson Qifeng). Mungello also identified Dingqiu as “of the Zhangzhou District of Suzhou in Jiangsu Province”; a mistake for Changzhou county (there was no “Zhangzhou county” anywhere in Jiangsu). Mungello, Drowning Girls, p. 32 and caption to figure 2.14.
Chapter 8

Questionable Works Attributed to the Historical Peng Dingqiu

In posthumous attributions to Peng Dingqiu, the explicitly spirit-written material has been the easiest to place, while the false attribution of the Yuanzai bidu shu places a greater burden on scholars who would reject its historical authenticity. The picture becomes even more complicated, however, when we consider the Deyi lu (Record of Attaining [Goodness], 1869) by the Wuxi prefecture moralist Yu Zhi (1809-74).

Yu has received significant attention from scholars in recent years due to his program for a gentry-led social reconstruction in the wake of the Taiping Civil War (1850-64).67 As major exemplars of the charitable mode of local elite leadership, the Changzhou county Pengs played a significant role in Yu Zhi’s program as articulated in the Deyi lu (for a list of pieces by, attributed to, or mentioning Changzhou county Pengs the Deyi lu, see Table 8.3). In particular, Yu included three pieces attributed to Peng Dingqiu in his Deyi lu. The placement of two out of three of these compositions—those on cherishing the written word and releasing life—suggest that Yu presented Dingqiu as a locally legitimate patron of the practices. Yu Zhi’s use of Dingqiu in these sections was analogous to the way in which he invoked Fan Zhongyan (989-1052)—a Suzhou native and the paragon of gentry-local elite activist in the late imperial period—at the inception of the work as a whole. Although less literally iconic than in Huang Zhengyuan’s Yinzhiwen tushuo, Peng Dingqiu also served in the Deyi lu as a patron saint.

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67 See Yau, Quan hua jin zhen, 99-102; Tobie S. Meyer-Fong, What Remains: Coming to Terms with Civil War in 19th century China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013): 21-63; and King, Between Birth and Death: Female Infanticide in Nineteenth-century China, 46-76.
Conversely, there are practices in the *Deyi lu* in which Changzhou Pengs engaged but for which Yu Zhi opted to promote other paragons.

### Table 8.3

Pieces by, attributed to, or mentioning Changzhou county Pengs in Yu Zhi ed., *Deyi lu* (1869)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peng Dingqiu (attributed)</td>
<td>“Peng Nanyun dianzhuang jini shuo” 彭南畇殿撰濟溺說</td>
<td>2: 26a-b (1: 155-156)</td>
<td>In <em>Yuanzai bidushu</em>, as “Jini shuo”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Jingkou Jingjie tang fangxing Peng shi Xuli hui” 京口敬節堂仿行彭氏恤嫠會</td>
<td>3.2: 1a-3b (1: 219-24)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yu Zhi</td>
<td>“Jiuhuang fubao” 救荒福報</td>
<td>5: 19a (1: 385)</td>
<td>Yu characterized the Pengs of Suzhou as one of exemplarily charitable clans of the realm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peng Dingqiu (attributed)</td>
<td>“Peng Nanyun Xiansheng Quanju fangsheng hui shuo” 彭南畇先生勸舉放生會說</td>
<td>7: 1a-b (1: 471-72)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiang Yuan 江沅 (1767-1838)</td>
<td>“Suzhou Peng shi fangsheng chi gui yue” 蘇州彭氏放生池規約</td>
<td>7: 2b-3a (1: 474-75)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yu Zhi</td>
<td>Postscript to “Shang jie hui gui yue” 賞節會規約</td>
<td>7.3: 3a (1: 511)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peng Dingqiu (attributed)</td>
<td>“Peng Nanyun xiansheng xizi shuo” 彭南畇先生惜字說</td>
<td>7.2: 1a-b (2: 829-30)</td>
<td>In <em>Yuanzai bidu shu</em> as “Xizi shuo” 36b-38a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yu Zhi</td>
<td>“Jingjiehui jilue” 敬節會紀略</td>
<td>16.4: 10a-b (2: 1109-10)</td>
<td>Yu described the Changzhou prefecture Association for Cherishing Chastity (Jingjie hui) as having been modeled on the Changzhou county Peng’s Xuli hui.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 8

The pieces attributed to Peng Dingqiu in *Deyi lu* are on stopping female infanticide, establishing associations for releasing life, and cherishing the written word. Yu did not acknowledge it, but as Yau Chi-on has noted, the pieces on female infanticide and cherishing the written word are identical to those earlier included in the *Yuanzai bidu shu*. Given the posthumous attribution to Peng Dingqiu of the editorship of the *Yuanzai bidu shu* and the likelihood that at least several of the disquisitions attributed to Peng Dingqiu in that work were not authored by the historical personage, we have to subject the compositions in the *Deyi lu* to scrutiny as well.

What makes the *Deyi lu* different from the *Yuanzai bidu shu* is that, unlike the unknown editor(s) of the former, Yu was a personal acquaintance of several of Dingqiu’s descendants. As children Peng Weigao 慰高 (sixteenth generation) and Yu Zhi were both student of the Yuanhe county instructor Zhang Jiabin 張嘉賓 (zi or hao Yongxian 詠仙). In the eulogy (*mubiao* 墓表) Peng Weigao composed on Yu Zhi, Weigao analogized Yu’s lifework to the gist of Peng Dingqiu’s Classicist primer *Rumen fayu*. In addition, Yu included one piece on Peng lineage charitable practices that clearly postdated Dingqiu: that on the home for chaste widows established by Peng Shaosheng (thirteenth generation) in 1773. Yu Zhi also included several passages in which he praised the Pengs in a manner that revealed the extent to which he was implicated in the view of the lineage that Peng clan members in the mid-Qing wished to disseminate. For example, in his

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68 Yau, *Quan hua jin zhen*, 93.
70 On the role of the Changzhou county Pengs in establishing homes for chaste widows in the Yangzi Delta, see Chapter 4.
introduction to the exhortation to form societies for releasing life attributed to Peng Dingqiu, Yu wrote:

The master, personal name Dingqiu, and his grandson Qifeng, were both number one in the metropolitan and palace examinations. It was an extraordinary event for the entire Wu [Suzhou] region. Of the families of hereditary virtue in the prefecture of Suzhou, the Peng clan is foremost. For generations their family abstained from killing [living creatures]: therefore their success in the examination continued uninterrupted, so that even today they continue to thrive.

The similarity of Yu’s characterization to Huang Zhengyuan’s 1737 statement on Dingqiu and the Peng clan in the *Yinzhi wen tushuo* is remarkable. The only significant difference is the inclusion of “abstaining from killing,” which is itself a flag that this practice took on greater importance for Dingqiu’s descendants after his death than it had in his lifetime.

This brings us to the other major development that occurred in the interim between Dingqiu’s passing in 1719, Ding Xu’s 1800 preface to the *Yuanzai bidu shu*, and the publication of *Deyi lu* in 1869: the Changzhou county Pengs had become recognized by their literati-official and gentry peers as some of the most committed philanthropists in the realm. Indeed, by time Yu Zhi finally got around to publishing *Deyi lu* some six years after the Taiping occupation of Suzhou ended, the Changzhou county Pengs were past their Qianlong-Jiaqing era prime: they were a “brand” symbolizing gentry-led localist philanthropy as much as they remained a viable institution.72

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71 *Deyi lu*, ed. Yu Zhi, j. 7: 1a; rpt. 1: 471.
72 Paize Keulemans first suggested that I consider the Changzhou county Pengs as a brand.
Dingqiu’s prose anthology and autobiography provide ample evidence that he dedicated much of his long life to philanthropic acts. His commitments ranged from sponsoring printings, to constructing shrines to local worthies (including Jade Bureau emissary Du Qiaolin), as well as fundraising on behalf of the county and prefectural schools. He was also an innovator in lineage organization, editing a new edition of the clan genealogy in 1704 and erecting an ancestral temple (zong ci 宗祠) in 1710. (Dingqiu did not, however, establish charitable schools or estates for the Changzhou county Pengs.)

Dingqiu’s philanthropy was largely ad hoc. It was only after his grandson Qifeng rose to be one of the most powerful officials in the realm, from the 1730s-60s, that the Changzhou county Pengs had the wealth, social prestige, and qualified personnel necessary to institutionalize lineage philanthropy. They did so in what appears to have been a largely successful campaign to persuade their peers that their good fortune was entirely deserved: if not on the basis of living members of the lineage, then on the basis of the past good works of their ancestors. On the ideological level, Qifeng’s son Shaosheng was the clan’s great propagandist. In the time honored Chinese fashion, whenever Shaosheng wished to justify a practice, he cited the precedent of a venerable ancestor. In the Qianlong period, Shaosheng’s great-grandfather Dingqiu was his most venerable ancestor. Rather than treating Shaosheng as an expert on his own lineage to whom we should defer, we must regard his claims regarding Dingqiu with the skepticism due such an interested party.

In their 2007 article on the charitable activities of the Changzhou county Pengs, Ge Huiye and Wang Weiping asserted that the clan’s first systematic philanthropy was

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73 In order that he manage lineage affairs Qifeng called Shaosheng back to Suzhou after Shaosheng passed the metropolitan examination in the same class with his elder brother Shaoguan. Qifeng did so before Shaosheng could sit for the palace examination.
the pool for releasing life (放生池). They stated that the practice began
with Dingqiu at the Cultural Star Pavilion, but cited only the account by Peng
Shaosheng, who himself built a pool for releasing life in the Southern Garden (Nanyuan
南園) directly south of the Peng mansion. In addition to being motivated to identify an
exalted ancestor, citing Dingqiu for precedent also lessened the Buddhist associations of
Shaosheng’s project.

I am not stating categorically that Dingqiu did not construct a pool for releasing
life at the Cultural Star Pavilion, but if he did do so he did not place anywhere near the
importance on it that his descendants did. In his historically reliable works Dingqiu did
mention the releasing life practice at the Cultural Star Pavilion: as described in Chapter 6,
Dingqiu stated that in 1663 his teacher Wu Yu 吳愉 convened a monthly meeting for the
dual purposes of releasing living things and cherishing the written word. In Wenxing ge
xiaozhi 文星閣小志 (Modest Gazetteer of the Cultural Star Pavilion), the two juan
gazetteer on the pavilion that Dingqiu edited, he made no mention of such a pool, nor
depicted one clearly in the accompanying illustration. Furthermore, neither Dingqiu’s
literary anthology nor his autobiography includes the phrases “ceasing [to eat meat and
eating] vegetarian” (斷葷) or “maintaining the precept on abstaining from

75 “Wenxing ge xiuzaow gongcheng ji,” in NYWG, j. 4: 7a; rpd. 321.
76 Wenxing ge xiao zhi 文星閣小志. The Shanghai Library holds the only known copy of this work (線善 T368681); reproduction in Zhongguo yuanlin mingsheng zhi congkan 中國園林名勝志叢刊, eds. Zheng Xiaoxia 鄭曉霞 and Zhang Zhi 張智 (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2006), v. 31: 1-67. Dingqiu’s printed compilation is preceded by a handwritten, unpaginated composition by Peng Qifeng titled “Mu xiu Wenchang ge yin” 養修文昌閣引 dated 1752. See the discussion in Chapter 6.
killing [living creatures]” (chi shasheng zhijie 殺生之戒) attributed to him in Deyi lu disquisition on societies for releasing life. It is well known that Dingqiu resuscitated a vegetarian society inspired by the Tofu Society (Doufu hui 豆腐會) of late Ming Donglin Faction martyr Gao Panlong. Yet, without evidence to the contrary, it is just as likely that the Deyi lu disquisition on societies for releasing life was an elaboration of Dingqiu’s posthumous persona made plausible by his admiration for Gao Panlong, rather than an actual composition by the historical Dingqiu.

While nineteenth century philanthropists and present day scholars are correct in viewing Peng Dingqiu as a having been involved in philanthropic practices that became widespread in the nineteenth century, the nineteenth century philanthropists who used Dingqiu’s name went further by claiming that he practiced and advocated the exact practices that they did. In so doing, they blurred distinctions in the philanthropic movement between the early and mid-to late Qing, as do present day scholars who fail to distinguish between the respective oeuvres of Peng Dingqiu-as-historical-personage and Peng Dingqiu-as-posthumous-authority.

In the most detailed and conceptually ambitious account of philanthropy in late imperial China, Angela Leung asserted the coherence of the mid-sixteenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries as a comprehensive unit, in contrast to the greater influence of Protestant missionaries and increased emphasis on governmental order in the

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77 See, for example, the biography of Dingqiu in ECCP, v. 2: 617.
78 It is tempting to characterize the posthumous Peng Dingqiu as a celestial official only, but several of the sources considered did not portray him in this light. Rather, they stressed his worldly dedication to good works and rewards received both in his lifetime (examination success, office-holding, progeny) and continuing on after his passing (continued progeny).
philanthropic works produced during and after the Taiping Civil War. Leung also argued that during the Qianlong reign the Buddhistic drive for “universal salvation” (puji 普濟) that had motivated philanthropists since the late Ming was replaced by a “Confucianization” (Ru jia hua 儒家化). While I largely accept Leung’s periodization, I argue that Dingqiu’s location in the Kangxi period and the popularity of his representation in both the mid- and late Qing make him an ideal tool with which to further hone our periodization of late imperial philanthropy.

In terms of the larger trends within the genre of morality books evident in the material related to Dingqiu, the Baofu queyan 保富確言 (Sure Words on Protecting Wealth, 1903) reflects the trend since the mid-Ming of ever more blatant promises of rewards to those who follow the teachings in these works. The Baofu queyan claimed to have been authored (zhu 著) by Peng Dingqiu, whom, as with the Yuanzai bidu shu and portions of the Yuju gongguo ge, it referred to by the rare-in-his-lifetime cognomen of Ningzhi. According to the preface, at the time of authorship Dingqiu was a licentiate

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80 Liang, Shishan yu jiaohua, 4.

81 The edition which I consulted is that of the Leshan she 樂善社 (Delighting in Goodness Society) morality book compendium Zhenben shanshu 珍本善書 (Rare Editions of Morality Books) of approximately 1940. It is included in volume 19, Peng Ningzhi xiansheng zashuo. This is the only independent printing I have encountered of the Peng Ningzhi disquisitions. As discussed above, they originally followed the Ganying pian, Yinzhi wen, and Jueshi jing in Yuanzai bidu shu.

In a fascinating discussion of views on the permissibility of accumulating wealth and advice for both disseminating and preserving it, Yau described the 1903 edition of the Baofu queyan published by the Weiijing tang 維經堂 on Celestial Peace Street (Tianping jie 天平街) in the city of Guangdong (Yangcheng 羊城). The 1903 edition claimed to be a recarving (chongke). Yau also cited further works drawing on the Baofu queyan from 1929 to 1941, and reproduced a coverleaf in his Quanhua jinzhen, 232.

Following the Peng Ningzhi disquisitions in the Leshan edition of Baofu queyan are brief treaties are titled “Chengjia shi fu” 成家十富 (Securing the Family: Ten [practices] for Wealth) and “Baijia shi qiong” 败家十窮 (Losing the Family: Ten [practices] for poverty), discussed in Yau, Shan yu ren rong, 231-232. The two treaties are anthologized in Jia xun—fuzu de dingning 家训: 父祖的叮咛, ed. Xu Zi 徐梓 (Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 1996). Xu assigned the title to these works “Zhijia geyan” 治家格言 (Aphorisms on Controlling One’s Family): 364-68.
(shengyuan 生員), which was the window between his passing of the county licentiate examination (tongzi shi 童子試) in 1661 at 17 sui and 1672 at 28 sui when he passed the provincial examination after two failures and earned the elevated scholar degree.\textsuperscript{82}

*Baofu queyan* included sixteen methods for accumulating virtue and preserving one’s wealth. In Yau’s summary, these included: refraining from lasciviousness, cherishing living beings, providing relief in years of drought, establishing charitable schools, distributing herbal remedies, and printing and disseminating morality books. The Dingqiu persona drew particular attention to the lack of charitable infrastructure in towns and villages, and expressed his hopes that wealthy families would share their medicinal salves and herbal pills with villagers, as well as establish foundling homes beyond those already extant in large cities.\textsuperscript{83}

False Attributions 2: The Positing of a Kangxi Era *Daozang jiyao*

Beginning in the late 1890s He Longxiang 賀龍驤 compiled an expanded edition of Jiang’s massive compendium on the basis of a printed exemplar of Yan Yanfeng 嚴雁峰 stored in Sichuan. The resulting work, the *Chongkan Daozang jiyao* was published in 1906 by the Two Immortals Cloister (Erxian’an 二仙菴) in the Black Ram Palace (Qingyang gong 青羊宮) in Chengdu, Sichuan. In his preface, He Longxiang claimed that there was an original edition of the *Daozang jiyao* compiled by Peng Dingqiu. He stated: “We express our gratitude to the Premier of our dynasty, Peng Dingqiu, who

\textsuperscript{82} Yau, *Shan yu ren tong*, 232.

\textsuperscript{83} Yau, *Shan yu ren tong*, 231, citing *Baofu queyan* 6,13b, and 16b.
compiled the *Daozang jiyao*. He continued: “Unfortunately, the table of contents of the original collection stops short of recording the number of fascicles and does not provide a detailed listing of their contents.”

In a separate composition, He Longxiang elaborated:

As for the *Daozang jiyao* compiled by the Minister of State Peng Dingqiu, it is partly derived from the [Ming] imperial edition [of the Daoist Canon] and partly from bookshops’ current editions. Although the content of these current editions was genuine and refined, they were not included in the Daoist Canon.

As Monica Esposito has observed, He Longxiang twice mentioned Peng Dingqiu as editor and referred to him by the titles of Xianggong 相公 and Xiangguo 相國. In a third composition, also dated 1906, He Longxiang again employed the title Xiangguo, but this time with the name of Peng Wenqin 彭文勤, writing: “When I heard that the Erxian’an was re-editing the *Daozang jiyao* of the Minister of State Peng Wenqin, my heart was full of admiration.” As Esposito has noted, Wenqin was not a moniker for Peng Dingqiu, but rather was a posthumous name (shi 諡) for his grandson Qifeng. Yet, despite the presence of not only Peng Dingqiu but also his great-grandson Peng...
Shaosheng in certain works contained within the *Daozang jiyao*, He Longxiang’s attribution to Dingqiu of editorship of the entire canon was not only erroneous, it backdated the work by over a century.

The He Longxiang misattribution, however, has had a great impact in scholarship on the *Daozang jiyao* and bibliography of Peng Dingqiu. Yoshioka Yoshitoyo 吉岡義豊 (1916-79) voiced doubt regarding the Peng Dingqiu attribution in the 1950s, as did Liu Ts’un-yan in a 1973 article. Yet the misattribution was continued in the most influential history of Daoism compiled in the post-Cultural Revolution period, Qing Xitai’s 卿希泰 four volume *Zhongguo daojiaoshì* 中国道教史 (History of Chinese Daoism). In a brief 1996 preface to a reprinting of the *Daozang jiyao*, Qing insisted on the existence of an original edition edited by Peng Dingqiu, though he offered no additional supporting evidence. Qing Xitai’s great prestige as the dean of Daoist Studies in the PRC ensured that the He Longxiang misattribution was accepted in numerous reference works in Chinese, Japanese, and English. Esposito’s detailed bibliographical studies of the

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90 *Zhongguo daojiaoshì* 中国道教史, ed. Qing Xitai 卿希泰, Revised ed. (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1996), v. 4: 453-54.


In contrast Wang Ka’s 王卡 entry on the “*Daozang Jiyao*” in the *Zhonghua daojiaoshì* 中華道教大辭典, ed. Hu Fuchen 胡孚琛 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe; Xinhua shudian jingxiang, 1995): 230. For further information
Daozang jiyao have established with certainty that there was never any Kangxi era ur edition compiled by Peng Dingqiu, but the weight of bibliographic inertia and the embracing of the Peng Dingqiu theory as an article of faith by elements of the mainland Daoist community make a quiet death for the misattribution unlikely.\footnote{Qingyang Gong Chuanqi 青羊宫传奇, ed. Qiang Jinwu 强金武 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhau chubanshe, 2012), 146-147, is an example of a Daoist institution in Chengdu continuing to propagate the fallacy of an original Kangxi edition edited by Peng Dingqiu. A counter-example is the Daoist priest-Daoist Studies scholar collaboration Qingyang Gong, Erxian'an Zhi 青羊宫二仙庵志, eds. Li Hechun 李合春 and Ding Changchun 丁常春, advisor Li Yangguo 李远国 (Chengdu: Chengdu dongjiang yinwu youxian gongsi, 2006). In this work only the Jiang Yupu edition of Daozang jiyao is mentioned in the text, although the accompanying footnote politely directs the reader to Qing Xitai’s Zhongguo daojiao shi.}

Here I will limit my remarks on the He Longxiang misattribution to three considerations:

1) He Longxiang did not pick the name of a celebrated Qing literati at random. The contents of the Daozang jiyao contained evidence of a consistent interest in Daoist devotional activities from among the Changzhou county Pengs from the early to mid-Qing (ninth to thirteenth generation). That is to say, Dingqiu’s 1710 reprint of the mid-Ming Inner Alchemical primer Zhenquan 真詮 (Perfected Commentaries) stated that the work was much respected by his father Peng Long; Dingqiu’s own name appeared in the Kangxi era Suzhou spirit-writing transcripts collected in Yuquan, which Peng Shaosheng (thirteenth generation) edited.

2) The above documented popularity of the celestial official Peng Dingqiu on spirit altars in and beyond the Yangzi delta kept his name in circulation long after his death.\footnote{Elena Valussi’s entry on “Peng Dingqiu” in The Encyclopedia of Taoism noted both sides of the attribution debate without offering her own verdict, see: Encyclopedia of Taoism, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2008): 784-785. Yet if Pregadio did not consider Dingqiu the editor of an original version of the Daozang jiyao there was little reason to include him in the Encyclopedia, especially considering that more important Qing editors such as Liu Tishu were omitted.}
passing. He Longxian did not resurrect Dingqiu some one hundred and eighty-six years after his death: as a celestial official Dingqiu had never died.

3) In addition to Peng Dingqiu’s consistent presence in mid- and late Qing spirit altars and their published collections, there is another factor in He Longxiang’s choice that scholars have yet to consider. This is that a major funder of the expanded Er’xian edition of the *Daozang jiyao*—Peng Hanran 彭翰然 of Xinjin 新津 county near Chengdu—was surnamed Peng.

The genealogical record on Sichuan is slight, but the gazetteer record is considerable. The *Xinjin xian zhi* 新津縣志 (Xinjin County Gazetteer, 1686) records a Peng Guan 彭瓘 who, after obtaining the presented scholar degree in the Ming Zhengtong reign, served as magistrate in Nanchang, Jiangxi province.\(^{94}\) Even if Nanchang is in northern Jiangxi and the Qingjiang area to which the Changzhou county Pengs traced their ancestry is in the south, a magistrate was likely to have been aware of a significant branch of the same surname in the same province. At least one Changzhou county Peng did serve as an official in Chengdu during the immediate post-Taiping Civil War period. But no direct communication in recent history with the Changzhou county Pengs would have been necessary for the Xinjin county Pengs to have considered members of the Changzhou county lineage as their relatives: by sharing a common surname all were considered to have a common ancestor. As Maurice Freedman (1920-75)\(^{94}\)

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\(^{94}\) *Xinjin xian zhi* 新津縣志, 7a; facsimile reproductions in *Sichuan fu zhou xian zhi* 四川府州縣志, ed. Gugong Bowoyuan 故宮博物院編, v. 1 and *Gugong zhenben congkan* 故宮珍本叢刊, v. 20 (Haikou: Hainan chubanshe, 2001), 122. Peng Guan’s name does not appear in the section on Ming dynasty examination successes (*ke di* 科第): 13a; rpd. 125.
wrote more than half a century ago: “In an agnatic system with a small number of
surnames, genealogy widely distributed the benefits of honors individually acquired.”

He Longxiang’s naming of Peng Dingqiu as original editor choice was predicated
on Peng Dingqiu’s fame after achieving the optimus degree and his continued relevance
in the spirit-writing and morality book milieu upon apotheosis, but He’s selection of
Dingqiu could well have been a canny move in courting Peng Hanran’s sponsorship as
well. The considerations need not be mutually exclusive. Just as in his preface to the
edition of Zhenquan contained in the Erxian’an edition of the Daozang jiyao Peng
Dingqiu presented his sponsorship of the recarving of the woodblocks as a filial act of
continuing his father’s intention, so He’s claiming of Peng Dingqiu as the original editor
of the Daozang jiyao would have made it possible to pitch a contribution by Peng Hanran
as a filial act in the broad sense of the shared familiality of surnames across the empire.

Conclusion

In light of the above discussion the 1906 claim by the editor of the Chongkan
Daozang jiyao of an original Kangxi reign canon edited by Peng Dingqiu falls in to place.
The false attribution of the Daozang jiyao is not an isolated example of far-flung editors
using Dingqiu’s name for their purposes, but one of many cases both preceding and
following the 1906 canon.

The preceding survey of works posthumously attributed to Peng Dingqiu offer a
unique window into the Chinese style of apotheosis. Certainly it is widely recognized
within the field of Chinese Religions that deities commonly have their origins in

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95 Maurice Freedman, Lineage Organization in Southeastern China (London: Athlone Press, University of
historical or quasi-historical persons. Individual examples that have received significant scholarly attention include: the Three Kingdoms general Guan Yu 關羽; 96 the supposed Tang dynasty presented scholar Lü Dongbin; 97 the Southern Song monk Daoji; 98 and the elusive Ming dynasty recluse Zhang Sanfeng 張三豐. 99 While Guan Yu and Daoji were both historical individuals, the historicity of Lü and Zhang is dubious. Relatively scant historical materials on Guan Yu and Daoji have given rise to continuous posthumous elaborations, some ranging quite far from the historical sources. In the cases of Lü Dongbin and Zhang Sanfeng, any historical personage who may have once gone by these names became entirely subsumed to a complex of characteristics attributed by later beliefs to the cultic object.

In the case of Peng Dingqiu, believers in his posthumous manifestations were more constrained in that which they could attribute to him. The same factors that made him an attractive figure to invoke increased the posthumous force of the historical persona: to wit, his success in the civil service examinations; service to the Kangxi emperor; pivotal role in a rich and powerful family; ties to many of the prominent men of his day; literary renown; and so on. Latter day invokers of Dingqiu’s name such as He

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97 Katz asserted: “For the purposes of this study, which focuses on his cult, the question of Lu [sic]’s existence is irrelevant and attempts to provide a definitive answer, fruitless.” Paul Katz, Images of the Immortal: The Cult of Lü Dongbin at the Palace of Eternal Joy (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1999): 53. Katz conceded that there was possibly a historical Lü Yan who was a present scholar of the Tang, but, as with Seidel’s Zhang Sanfeng, whatever historical person might have once existed had been long obscured by hagiographic re-direction (p. 53).
98 Shahar, Crazy Ji.
Chapter 8

Longxiang need not to have gotten the biographical particulars right in order to have imbued their own endeavors with the glory accumulated by the historical Dingqiu.

The quality of documentation of Dingqiu’s terrestrial and posthumous existences provides the opportunity to observe a case of apotheosis in real time. Doing so provides insight into the way in which overlapping aspects of the persona of historical figures endured and mutually reinforced one another after death. In this chapter I have emphasized Dingqiu as an icon of the terrestrial rewards of Wenchang devotion. Yet he also lived on as a revered ancestor, a Classicist paragon, and a literary figure. All these aspects and more contributed to making him someone who remained relevant to a diverse group of people in diverse locales after his death. What more could the historical Dingqiu have wished for?
Part V

The Sum of the Parts
In this dissertation I have been concerned with understanding the construction of the Changzhou county Peng lineage as paragons of the charitable style of status justification in the Yangzi Delta in the early to mid-Qing dynasty, as well as with the ramifications of that construction in subsequent decades. This is an entirely different goal than aggrandizing the Pengs: i.e., accepting and perpetuating the claims made by lineage members and their allies. Certainly there was frequently a gap between the reason given for a certain practice and the social purpose it served. As Jerry Dennerline wrote in regards to intra-lineage philanthropy: “Charity involved a contradiction. The rhetoric stressed corporate welfare, while the practice confirmed the hierarchy of wealth and power.”1 Those who initiated philanthropic endeavors or other social activities such as a spirit-writing altar had the greatest determining power in the interests it served: hence the competition in initiating and accomplishing such endeavors.

However, we must also bear in mind that would-be leaders had no power to exercise if others did not recognize their claims. For this reason one of my central interests in this dissertation has been not only what claims members of the Peng lineage made, but to demonstrate that they actually succeeded in persuading others to accept and promulgate these claims. As I documented in Chapter 8, quite soon after Peng Dingqiu’s death, the claims relating to Dingqiu’s spirit-altar revelations became promulgated well beyond those who had a direct claim as Peng Dingqiu’s familial and intellectual lineage

descendants. The reason is that everyone else wanted what Peng Dingqiu had had: recognition and the highest level of the imperial government and descendants who performed outstandingly well on the examinations.

On Shrines and Other Multipliers of Iconic Power

Shortly after Dingqiu’s death in 1719, Suzhou elites began discussing the possibility of constructing a shrine at which Dingqiu’s spirit could receive the spring and autumn sacrifices at both the Changzhou county and the Suzhou prefectural schools. Both petitions were successful, and the shrines endured into the early twentieth century.  

Zhang Boxing 張伯行 (1651-1725), a former acquaintance of Dingqiu’s who also served as Governor of Jiangsu province and was appointed the Secretary of the Board of War in 1723, wrote an account of the Changzhou county school shrine to Dingqiu. In it Zhang politely stated that local notables (Su zhi renshi 蘇之人士) first broached the idea in 1721. Plans were then taken in hand by Dingqiu’s eldest surviving son, Zhengqian 正乾, and other members of the familial lineage, and the shrine was erected the following year (Illustration 9.1).  

Fittingly, the erection of the shrine to Peng Dingqiu at the

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2 The shrine to Peng Dingqiu (in what was by that time the joint Changzhou-Yuanhe county school) was incinerated in 1860 with the Taiping occupation of Suzhou. It was rebuilt promptly after return to imperial rule in 1867. It was apparently still standing in 1933, at the time of the publication of the Republican period Suzhou gazetteer. See: (Minguo) Wuxian zhi 吳縣志, 1933, j. 26 shang 上: 34b. While several of the main building in the county school complex still stand, as far as I am aware the shrines in the northeastern flank are no longer. During my fieldwork in Suzhou I was not able to gain access to this site at the corner of Pingjiang lu and Ganjiang lu; it is currently employed as an elementary school.

3 Zhang Boxing, no title, (Minguo) Wuxian zhi, 1933, j. 26 shang: 34a-b. Previous gazetteer mentions of the Peng Dingqiu shrine included the Changzhou xian zhi 長洲縣志 of 1753 (j. 5: 16a) and Yuanhe xian zhi 元和縣志 of 1761 (j. 5: 22a). I consulted the Erudition Gazetteers database, which provides digital facsimiles as well as searchable digitized text. Neither of these earlier references to the shrine included the record by Zhang Boxing. They do, however, support my point that Dingqiu and other Changzhou county Pengs were a consistent feature of the cultural and physical landscape in Qing Suzhou in mutually reinforcing ways.
Changzhou county school in 1722 coincided with the death of the Kangxi emperor, who had personally bestowed honors onto Dingqiu and under whom Dingqiu had lived out the entirety of his adult life.

Given the alacrity with which the Peng clan members completed the shrine to their recently deceased patriarch, one imagines that there was an informal process of consensus building behind the scenes before the formal petition for the shrine could be submitted. This informal consensus would have entailed the “spending” of intangible assets such as prestige and goodwill. The formal petition involved submitting an application to either the magistrate (county-level shrine) or prefect (prefectural-level shrine) who, if they concurred, would forward the application on until it reached the Ministry of Rites, which determined fitting objects for imperial veneration. To come from a clan member initially would have been perceived as too blatantly self-serving; hence Zhang Boxing’s careful—if vague—assertion that the initial proposal originated outside the Peng lineage. As with Wang Xun’s contemporaneous verification of Peng Dingqiu’s confirmation as a celestial official in Wenchang’s bureaucracy, discussed in the previous chapter, extra-clan testimonies mattered.
Chapter 9

Shrines to local worthies provided a bi-annual focus for the mandate for local elite rule. Local elite cohesion was in turn the foundation of collaboration with the imperial apparatus. As explored briefly in the discussion of the shrine to Peng Long in Chapter 6, shrines provided a physical and ideological crystallization of a particular program of elite cooperation. In her study of the 1498 shrine to a faithful widow in Changshu county, Katherine Carlitz described the structure’s “multiplier effect on her iconic power.” In this chapter, the shrines to Dingqiu are just one of the multiplier effects on the iconic power of the Dingqiu and the Changzhou county Pengs more broadly that I would like to explore.

On the more intangible level of fame and literary reputation, for centuries after his death, generation upon generation of Dingqiu’s descendants would publish and republish his works. Additionally, beginning with Dingqiu’s fame as the optimus of 1676, others beyond his immediate familial relatives and friends wished to claim his prestige and imbue themselves with his glory. In the morality book milieu Dingqiu’s posthumous persona reached as far as France. The missionary Gabriel Palâtre adapted an illustrated tale of Dingqiu as a savior of female infants slated for drowning in his L’infanticide et l’oeuvre de la Saint-Enfance en Chine (Illustration 9.2). Palâtre produced his French language work, accompanied by a lengthy Chinese-language appendix, at La Mission Catholique in Shanghai in 1878. As Michelle King has related, the images from the work subsequently circulated widely in Europe.

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5 For further details, see the entry for Dingqiu in the Descriptive Catalog that follows this chapter.
6 Gabriel Palâtre, L’infanticide et l’oeuvre de la Saint-Enfance en Chine (Chang-hai [Shanghai]: La Mission Catholique, 1878): 70 and appendix 29. Mungello reprinted this image as Figure 2.14 in his Drowning Girls in China: Female Infanticide since 1650 (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008). Following Palâtre, Mungello identified the original Chinese source as Guobao tu 果報圖
The drawing of Dingqiu is captioned “The glory obtained by saving infants,” after the Chinese caption “Jiuying rongxian” 救嬰榮顯. The term rongxian deliberately resonated with the terminology of posthumous promotions for ancestors so important to Qing officials, and which constitute the first juan of three extant editions of the Peng shi zongpu. The important point here, however, is that, as I argued in the previous chapter, scholars have yet to identify the historical Peng Dingqiu with anti-female infanticide efforts. Rather, the first printed accounting praising Dingqiu for the practice appeared over eighty years after his death.

The methods of individual and collective self-aggrandizement used by Peng lineage members include: prophecy (of one’s own success); claim to direct access to divinities (charisma); involvement in successful renovation projects of buildings that provided benefits to broader social units than the individual; erecting shrines to one’s ancestors (conceived in terms not limited to familial lineages); editing and publishing (as

(Karmic Responses, Illustrated), one of the four volumes of a Zhuyu yuan (Shanghai; undated), the original of which I have not yet identified.
merit-generating activity and filial performance); sponsoring rituals (for deceased ancestors and local elite self-organization); and establishing philanthropic societies or organizations.

The level at which the above enumerated activities provided benefits can be conceived of as individual or collective. To the individual, benefits could come in terms of career advancement or, as was often the case, compensation for lack of success or deliberate rejection of a conventional career. The collective can be conceived of in terms of the familial, intellectual, or creedal line. In this dissertation many of these activities spanned such multiple categories of the collective. Collective categories also merged or became disentangled over time. Let us consider the example of Peng Dingqiu’s receipt in 1674 of a prophecy of his 1676 two-fold optimus distinction. At the time he received the prophecy it entailed the following immediate benefits to the individual: resolution of a crisis of confidence that had manifest as a severe psycho-somatic disorder; salvaging dignity after a decade of examination failures; and encouragement as he prepared once more to undertake the examination ordeal. When the prophecy was fulfilled in 1676, a divine aura provided legitimacy to the examination results that the secular system alone (i.e., the judgment of the examiners) lacked. The combination of the divine sanction with the tremendous terrestrial prestige of the examination system made an icon of Dingqiu that would outlive the dismantling of the examination system itself.

In effect, Dingqiu’s prophecy encapsulated one of the elements of what Bruno Latour has characterized as the Janus face of knowledge-production: “When things are true they hold” and “When things hold they start becoming true.”8 By fulfilling the

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prophecy, Dingqiu made it true, and ever after—as with Latour’s “black box” of established scientific facts—Dingqiu’s divinely sanctioned greatness was an uncontested social fact. This is why posthumous claims made about Dingqiu—such as that he was a great opponent of female infanticide or the editor of the Daozang jiyao—were considered so plausible.

The prophecy received individually by Peng Dingqiu and pertaining only to himself became an enduring enhancer of not only his own reputation but those of his ancestors and descendants. The prominent place accorded to Dingqiu in Peng Zuxian’s 1881 collectanea of writing by Peng patriarchs is but one dramatic example. Considering the non-familial lineage to which Dingqiu also subscribed, the consummation of his prophecy also enhanced the legitimacy of his Zhu Xi-Liu Jiuyuan via Wang Shouren philosophical synthesis and mid- to late Wenchang devotion.

The example of the 1674 prophecy and the unfolding of its ramifications once it was consummated illustrate how I have attempted to disaggregate distinct elements of a phenomenon and examine its significance diachronically. Only after performing these paired acts of analysis can the components be recombined to form the whole that I am calling synergetic apotheosis.

Continuum Between Tangible and Intangible Assets: The Posthumous Uses of Peng Xingxian

In considering the continuum from intangible quality to material manifestation, let us return to Peng Dingqiu’s granduncle Peng Xingxian, whom I introduced briefly in

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9 Notably, in what criticisms I have encountered of the Peng clan, they often acknowledge Dingqiu’s greatness but complain that over time the virtue of the family began to decline.
Chapter 9

Chapter 4. As with my discussion of Peng Long in Chapter 5, I will treat Peng Xingxian entirely as a discursive object, rather than as a historic personage whose character can be objectively known in a positivistic sense.

Xingxian was seen by a sufficient number of his ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic peers as having deliberately rejected the pervasive venality of his day at the cost of the material rewards that accompanied it. Rather than vying for official position or patronage, Xingxian opted for the ethical choice of a rustic recluse with an attendant absence of creature comforts. In this narrative, material wealth was implicitly available to Xingxian. By deliberately rejecting this wealth he converted it into an intangible form of cultural capital: status as recluse. As with a widow’s chastity, Xingxian’s attainment of ethical paragon status was contingent on the condition of deprivation.\(^\text{10}\)

To take the economic analogy of Bourdieuian cultural capital, the male paragon ancestor’s lauded behavior was, in Marxian terms, a form of primitive accumulation of material deprivation. Taking the clan or lineage (zu 族, zong 宗) as the unit of analysis, this primitively accumulated cultural capital was banked by descendants and paid cultural (intangible), social (both intangible and tangible), and material (tangible) dividends. Such dividends to descendants would have included: preferential treatment by elders, including teachers and the judges at cultural events such as poetry gatherings; improved marriage prospects, in which a lineage with wealth from commerce and trade could gild itself with a portion of dividends paid to the paragon’s descendants in exchange for forging further material gain in marriage alliances. Aside from cultural capital, such inter-familial

\(^{10}\) A deprivation was present despite the narrative convention (dating back to at least Tao Yuanming) in which the recluse was contented with his simplicity; analogously, a chaste widow was not depicted as craving sexual or emotional fulfillment, but her ethical achievement was still predicated on the overcoming of unfilled desire.
alliances would have been based exclusively on criteria of wealth and connections in officialdom. For the descendants of the paragon, such marriage alliances—involving both sons and daughters—represented improved investment opportunities, prospects for loans, and other such material translations of their symbolic capital.

At the analytical unit of locality (the Wu/Suzhou region) this form of capital circulation bolstered the credentials of all the local elites by allocating the necessary legitimizing qualities (which, alone, may have been perceived as mutually exclusive) as needed. A concrete example is that in marriage alliances a family with a long Wu region pedigree, but which lacked impressive financial resources, could align with translocal Huizhou merchants rich in economic capital. In this way, the local elite manifested incredible versatility in meeting changes in material (politico-military) and cultural (i.e., from late Ming permissiveness to early Qing strictness) conditions. In addition, the presence of a paragon ancestor gave descendants protection from potential detractors regarding their own behavior: through the circulation of modes of power (cultural, economic, political) all among the local elite who had permitted a conversion between modes (e.g., cultural to financial) had a stake in maintaining the overall edifice to prevent something akin to a currency collapse in which the entire edifice of power maintenance was threatened and fell (as occurred during the Taiping Civil War).

Continuing with the financial analogy, sufficiently bad behavior by a quorum of descendants was tantamount to their spending not only the interest on capital accumulated by their ancestors but the capital itself. Such perceived ethical decline over time is hardly an uncommon rhetorical trope in portraits of familial dynasties. Yet even in

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11 The *reductio ad absurdum* case of such a lineage were the Wus 吳, who claimed the mythical transmitter of the culture of the Central States, Taibo, as their first ancestor.
the case of the cultural and financial depletion of the capital bequeathed by ancestors, given a sufficient attainment of official wealth and power, a descendant could re-stimulate the capacity of the cultural capital of ancestors to pay dividends in the descendant’s own day. A monumental example of latter day priming of the pump of cultural capital is Peng Zuxian’s collectanea of writing by Peng patriarchs. Zuxian carried out this project as he was the governor of Hubei, simultaneous with commissioning surveys of his ancestors’ tomb grounds and compiling a greatly expanded clan genealogy.

The buying into of the ethical qualities of certain paragons by local elites was concretized by the construction of shrines to a certain paragon or cluster of paragons. Such acceptance of the paragon’s qualities by elites who did not share the paragon’s surname was hardly a disinterested affair. Like most ruling groups, the Suzhou elite could be surprisingly small and parochial. Local elites who accepted or furthered claims by descendants regarding the ethical status of a certain ancestor often had first or second-degree relations of inter-marriage to said descendants.

Nineteenth century Western observations of China consistently made disparaging remarks regarding the Chinese lack of maintenance of important buildings. In doing so they failed to recognize that the process of dilapidation coincided with a roughly generational renewal of the informal local elite covenant. Social organizing for financial contributions to maintain the physical infrastructure of local elite ritual performance crystallized a shared set of priorities and collective worldview. Should a shrine’s utility as a focal point of local elite self-perception decline that decline was physically manifest in the physical deterioration of the shrine. Such visible (or literary conventional)

deterioration could provide a member of the local elite the opportunity to galvanize a portion of his peers around values he articulated while in the process of a successful repair and renovation campaign he demonstrated his own competency and social backing.

Complexifying the Model

The posthumous utility to his descendants of Peng Xingxian is a single example of the continuum between a lineage’s tangible and intangible assets and of the mutability between different modes of power. A measure of the complexity of the sources of the Changzhou county Pengs’ power is that Xingxian was only one of seven of the Pengs installed in the shrine of five hundred local worthies at the Azure Waves Pavilion. In the space of little over two centuries, seven men—from Xingxian in the eighth generation to Shaosheng in the thirteenth generation—had been accepted by local elites as among the most impressive men ever to leave a mark on the region in the nearly three millennia since the (mythical) Taibo down to the mid-Qing.13 Additionally, these men were far from the only notable figures in the lineage; indeed, from chaste widows to guixiu poets to Pure Land devotees, a number of women in the lineage became paragons in fields that complimented and reinforced the stature of men in the lineage and the lineage as a whole. Like the successful corporation that it was, the Pengs had diversified assets in multiple fields. These assets brought in different dividends at varying and unpredictable rates. Yet

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13 As Seunghyun Han has noted, the process of selecting the five hundred-plus worthies was hardly an objective process. Friend of the Peng lineage Gu Yuan formulated an initial selection relying in part on portraits held in the Peng clan library, see: Han, “Shrine, Images, and Power: The Worship of Local Worthies in Early Nineteenth Century Suzhou,” *T'oung Pao* 95.1-3 (2009) and the discussion in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Peng Nian appeared in Gu Yuan’s printed compendium but not the built shrine. I speculate that the reason for Peng Nian’s omission from the shrine is that, by the mid-nineteenth century, due to his antinomianism—however fashionable it may have been in the mid-Ming—Peng Nian was no longer a deployable cultural resource.
as long as these assets were productive, the lineage *qua* lineage (as distinct from the poorest members born or married into it) survived and thrived.

These are the elements:

a) Intangible socio-culturally recognized qualities of ancestors. This category specifically includes “hidden merit” (*yinde* 陰德) identified in eulogies and other writings by lineage and non-lineage members after the ancestor’s death.

b) Such intangible qualities could manifest in material forms, such as imperial awards. An example is Suzhou prefect Tang Bin’s recommendation to the Kangxi emperor of Peng Xingxian and his nephew Peng Long as local worthies. Such imperial recognition entailed a material component in the document of official recognition and a monetary award. Another example is the tokens of imperial favor bestowed upon Peng Dingqiu by Kangxi on his Southern Tours. One was a four-character calligraphy sample selected from a Tang poem. This too was accompanied by a cash gift. Intangibly, it was an imperial award of cultural status. This gesture of largess was indirectly related to the civil examination system, in that many of those so favored had come to Kangxi’s attention through official routes.

As illustrated by the pride of place granted in their genealogies, of immense importance to Peng lineage members were patents of honor for ancestors dead and alive (termed *zhici* 制詞 in the *Peng shi zongpu*, but more commonly called *fengdian* 封典). Scholars suggest that in the
Kangxi period such recognition may have been granted as a sign of imperial favor, by the mid-Qing these patents were certainly sold for a price. In that rich familial lineages were delighted to pay for them, these patents are an example to financial capital being directly converted to cultural capital.

c) Civil examination success and offices held.

d) Publications. These kept the ancestor’s works alive. The act of printing itself was an assertion of the contemporary relevance of the ancestor’s writing, as well as a claiming of the ancestor’s legacy on the part of the one commissioning the edition. As with shrine construction and other reifying acts considered in this chapter, printing thus embodies the coexistence of cultural, financial, and social capital.

Envisioning Distinct Elements Individually and In Tandem

One can imagine charting each of these distinct factors mapped on grids which could subsequently be overlaid in order to discern an overall picture. The x-axis would represent temporal progress over the time covered in this dissertation; the y-axis socio-cultural stature for the lineage as a whole. While some elements I have explored could be easily mapped, others pose significant problems of relative values.

One of the most straightforward elements to chart would be civil examination success. The y-axis would move from county student to raised scholar to presented scholar, on to the apex of two-fold *optimus*. The graph would begin with the lineage’s first presented scholar in 1511 and continue to the end of the Qing dynasty, when Peng
men continued to place in the new Western learning examinations even after the civil
service examinations were abolished in 1905. The highest peaks in this graph would be
1676 and 1727, the respective dates of the two-fold optimi distinctions of Peng Dingqiu
and Qifeng, but would remain high at the corporate level due to the six sons and
grandsons of Qifeng who obtained presented scholar degrees from 1747-89.

Other areas of corporate lineage achievement would be difficult to map with
similar precision. These areas include financial holdings and representation in morality
books. In regard to the chapters on the Cultural Star Pavilion and Abbey of Profound
Mystery, one could graph each year a Peng patriarch initiated a renovation drive, but one
would still have to comment upon the relative importance of these two sites in relation to
all the other shrines for which Peng patriarchs composed fundraising calls. There is the
added element of whether or not the renovation campaign succeeded, how long the
composition endured, and to whom it was available. For example, if carved in stone,
where was the stele placed and how long did it survive? The local history record in
Suzhou is sufficiently rich that such questions are often answerable. In terms of
manuscript or print circulation, each new edition could be graphed on the y-axis, but this
would be something of an illusion of precision in that the technology of woodblock
printing meant that one could produce the same “edition” for decades if one still
possessed the original (and repaired and supplemented) woodblocks.

Regardless, the question remains of what relative value to assign on the x-axis.
My distinction between historically authenticable compositions and those written
posthumously would entail two different charts, but how would one assign distinct values
to, say, a preface versus a visual representation of Peng Dingqiu or Peng Qifeng as an exemplary *optimus*?

While respective values to be accorded each category are open to debate, the overall point remains: the image of the Peng lineage as philanthropic paragons involved the simultaneous demonstration of virtuosity in diverse social and cultural realms. At the risk of employing a hokey metaphor, imagine that each member of the lineage—male or female—could create a juggling ball labeled with their name and the category of their accomplishments. Some, such as a chaste widow or minor degree holder, would only cause the labeling of one ball, while others, like Peng Dingqiu and Peng Qifeng, who could claim multifaceted achievements, would have produced many. A large familial lineage was like a collective juggling act that kept all these balls in the air, continuously wooing onlookers. With such a powerful display, the actual *content* of the original achievements became secondary. As the power of the surviving lineage members faded due to changing circumstances such as civil examination quotas, demographic expansion, and the diminishing economic centrality of Suzhou, it became increasingly difficult for a sufficient number of clan Pengs to devote their energies to the juggling act, resulting in dropped balls and an overall diminishment of the impressiveness of the spectacle. Other descendants, latter day disciples, or someone completely beyond the scope of the original social milieu of the clan members could claim the ancestors’ legacy piecemeal or on a large scale. But such deployments could only bring to mind the grandiosity of the display that once was; they could not once again orchestrate the entire feat.
Appendices
Appendices

Appendix 3.1

Spirits Who Descended to the Peng Compound Spirit-Altar, 1679-1720

From *Zhishen lu* 質神錄 (preface 1773), ed. Peng Shaosheng. 1842 reprint, Gest Library exemplar. Also in Guan Huai 關槐, expander (zengji 增輯), *Wendi quanshu* 文帝全書, Waseda University exemplar. Guan divided the work into two *juan* (上下) but, beyond occasionally providing Shaosheng’s subscript commentary in full sized characters, made no changes to the work. Although the Gest edition of *Zhishen lu* is later than that of Guan Huai’s *Wendi quanshu*, I take the former as closer to the original form of the work because all the subscript notes are formatted properly and because it is not yet divided into two *juan*. The *Zhishen lu* is arranged chronologically. When no month or year was given, I have filled in the preceding one in brackets.

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<th>Appellation of spirit in séance transcript</th>
<th>Proper Name</th>
<th>Recipient/address</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Page Number in 1842 rpt. of Zhishen lu</th>
<th>Page Number in Guan Huai ed., Wendi quanshu</th>
<th>Type of Communication</th>
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<td>Du Xiaolin 杜喬林, zi Meiliang 梅梁</td>
<td>Peng Dingqiu 彭定求</td>
<td>Winter KX 17.10-12 (14 Nov. 1678-10 Feb. 1679) Beijing</td>
<td>1a-2b</td>
<td>j. 46: 1a-2a</td>
<td>Sending a letter (jishu 寄書); sending an oral transcript (ji yin shu 寄音書); sending poetry (ji shi 寄詩)</td>
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<td>Master Du 文昌右大夫杜先生</td>
<td>Du Qiaolin 杜埓林</td>
<td>Peng Long 彭長</td>
<td>Altar in Beijing; recipient of letter (Peng Long) in Suzhou</td>
<td>2b-3a</td>
<td>2a-3b</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master Yichuan 伊川</td>
<td>Cheng Yi 程伊 (1033-1107)</td>
<td>You Tong 尤通</td>
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<td>3a-b</td>
<td>4a</td>
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<td>Luo Hongxian 羅洪先 (1504-64)</td>
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<td>Du Qiaolin 杜埓林</td>
<td>All present (zhuzi 諸子); then You Tong 尤通</td>
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<td>4b</td>
<td>5a</td>
<td>Verse (shi 詩)</td>
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<td>Master Dongpo 東坡先生</td>
<td>Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101)</td>
<td>You Tong 尤通</td>
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<td>5a</td>
<td>5b</td>
<td>Verse</td>
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<td>“Master Peng” 彭子</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>5b-6a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master Changli 崔黎先生</td>
<td>Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824)</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td></td>
<td>5b</td>
<td>6a</td>
<td>Composing poetry (tishi 題詩)</td>
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<th>Li Bo 李白</th>
<th>Unspecified; then You Tong</th>
<th>5b-6a</th>
<th>6a-b</th>
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<td>Huang Daozhou 黃道周</td>
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<td>6a-7a</td>
<td>6b-7b</td>
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<td>Master Lianxi 濰溪先生</td>
<td>Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017-73)</td>
<td>Peng Dingqiu, You Tong, Peng Ningqiu</td>
<td>7a-b</td>
<td>7b-8b</td>
<td>Discussing hexagram divination (lun gua zhan 論卦占)</td>
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<td>8b-9a</td>
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<td>Huang Daozhou 黃道周</td>
<td>You Tong</td>
<td>8a-9a</td>
<td>9a-b</td>
<td>Speaking (shuo 說)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primordial Thearch</td>
<td>Wenchang 魯</td>
<td>Peng Dingqiu, Peng Sunyu, You Tong, Peng Ningqiu, and Zhan 徐 (Tingshang 亭上)</td>
<td>KX 17.12</td>
<td>9a-10b</td>
<td>10a-12a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Huang</td>
<td>Huang Daozhou 黃道周</td>
<td>Peng Dingqiu</td>
<td>KX 18.1-3</td>
<td>10b-11b</td>
<td>12a-b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Huang</td>
<td>Huang Daozhou 黃道周</td>
<td>Day after preceding session</td>
<td>11b-12b</td>
<td>12b-14a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Huang</td>
<td>Huang Daozhou 黃道周</td>
<td>12b-14a</td>
<td>14a-15b</td>
<td>Composing poetry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Lianxi</td>
<td>Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤</td>
<td>KX 18.6 (8 July-5 Aug. 1679)</td>
<td>14a</td>
<td>15b</td>
<td>Composing poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li Yehou 李鄴侯</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14a-b</td>
<td>15b-16a</td>
<td>Composing poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tao Yuanming 陶淵明</td>
<td>Tao Qian 陶潛 (365?-427)</td>
<td></td>
<td>14b</td>
<td>16a</td>
<td>Composing poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriarch Lü 呂祖</td>
<td>Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓</td>
<td>14b-16a</td>
<td>16a-17b</td>
<td>Composing poetry; then 事句 (rhymed verse?) 七言; 言懷詩…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Huang</td>
<td>Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤</td>
<td>7th month</td>
<td>16a-18b</td>
<td>17b-20b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Shizhai</td>
<td>Huang Daozhou 黃道周</td>
<td>8th month</td>
<td>19a</td>
<td>21a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du</td>
<td>Du Qiaolin 杜泉林</td>
<td>12th month</td>
<td>19a-24b</td>
<td>21a-27a</td>
<td>Preface to Fuchu lu (復初錄)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du</td>
<td>Du Qiaolin 杜泉林</td>
<td>KX 19.1-3 (29 April-25 July, 1680)</td>
<td>24b-30b</td>
<td>27a-33b</td>
<td>Bestows a tract in several folios (授文數篇)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du</td>
<td>Du Qiaolin 杜泉林</td>
<td>[KX 19 or 20] 2</td>
<td>30b-31a</td>
<td>34a-b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Shizhai</td>
<td>Huang Daozhou 黃道周</td>
<td>Peng Dingqiu</td>
<td>KX 20.6/8 (22 July 1681)</td>
<td>31a-32b</td>
<td>34b-35b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Man Shizhai</td>
<td>Huang Daozhou 黃道周</td>
<td>9th day</td>
<td>32b-35a</td>
<td>35b-39a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huang and Du together</td>
<td>Huang Daozhou 黃道周 and Du Qiaolin 杜泉林</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>35b-36a</td>
<td>39a-40b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Shizhai</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>KX 37.2 (12 March-10 April 1698)</td>
<td>36b-50b</td>
<td>j. 47: 1a-16b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du</td>
<td>Perfected Ge (Ge Zhenren 葛真人)</td>
<td>KX 39.5.5 (21 June 1700)</td>
<td>To Peng Dingqiu, who was visiting the Jade Purity Altar (Yuqing tan 玉清壇) in Celestial Heart-Mind neighborhood (Tianxinli 天心里) [in SE Suzhou]. According to a note by Peng Shaosheng, the Jade Purity Altar was established in 1663 and, at the time of Dingqiu’s visit, was overseen by Chen Hejiu 陳鹤九.</td>
<td>16b-17a</td>
<td>Postface to Jiangxi lu 豫章後序</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfected Ge</td>
<td>Ge Hong 葛洪 (283-343)</td>
<td>KX 39.5.5 (21 June 1700)</td>
<td>Subscript notes record Dingqiu’s two poems in response to the Perfected Ge.</td>
<td>51b-52a</td>
<td>17b-18b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfected Pure Yang (Chunyang Zhenren)</td>
<td>Lü Yan</td>
<td>KX 39.8.15</td>
<td>Subscript notes record Dingqiu’s two poems in response to the Perfected Ge.</td>
<td>51b-52a</td>
<td>17b-18b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du</td>
<td>Du Qiaolin</td>
<td>KX 42 (1704)</td>
<td>Master Du descended at the Purple Void Pavilion (Zixu ge 紫虛閣) in Huating [i.e., Songjiang prefecture].</td>
<td>54b-55a</td>
<td>21b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du</td>
<td>Du Qiaolin</td>
<td>KX 44.5.7</td>
<td>As this day was Peng Dingqiu’s birthday, he sponsored Daoist priests a penance ritual in obeisance to the Celestial Court (Li chao tian chan 礼朝天懺), as well as a salvation ritual (Lian du fa 煉度法). Master Du composed a text for the occasion.</td>
<td>55a</td>
<td>21b-23b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Shang Wenyi (Shang Weiyi gong 商文毅公), Assistant-of-the-Right of the Osmanthus</td>
<td>Shang Lu 商禄 (1414-86)</td>
<td>KX 44.12.21 (4 Feb. 1706)</td>
<td>Transmitting-the-Heart-Mind-Altar (Chuanxin tan 傳心壇) in the Cloud Harmony neighborhood</td>
<td>56b-57a</td>
<td>23b-24b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palace (Guigong youfu Shang Wenyi 桂宮右輔)</td>
<td>(Yunhe li 雲和里). According to a note by Peng Shaosheng, the altar was devoted to Great Unity (Taiyi 太乙).</td>
<td>58a-59a</td>
<td>25a-26b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Shang Wenyi</td>
<td>KX [45.1].9 (1707)</td>
<td>59b</td>
<td>26b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celestial Lord Wei (Wei Tianjun 韋天君)</td>
<td>KX [45.1].15</td>
<td>60a</td>
<td>27a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Shang Wenyi</td>
<td>KX [45.1].23</td>
<td>60a-61b</td>
<td>27b-29a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du</td>
<td>KX [45.1].21</td>
<td>61b-62a</td>
<td>29a-b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celestial Lord Wei</td>
<td>KX [45].2.1</td>
<td>62a-b</td>
<td>29b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celestial Lord Wei</td>
<td>KX [45].2.9</td>
<td>63a-b</td>
<td>30b-31a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Shizhai Huang Daozhou</td>
<td>63b-64a</td>
<td>31a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Shang Peng Shiqian and Peng Zhengqian</td>
<td>KX [45].5.1</td>
<td>64a-65b</td>
<td>31a-33b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Shang</td>
<td>KX [45].10.15</td>
<td>65b-66a</td>
<td>33b-34a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du Du Qiaolin Peng Dingqiu</td>
<td>KX 46.10.27 (20 Nov. 1707)</td>
<td>66a-67a</td>
<td>34a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du Du Qiaolin</td>
<td>67a-b</td>
<td>35a-b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Shang Shang Lu Peng Dingqiu</td>
<td>KX 47.2.3 (23 Feb. 1708)</td>
<td>67a-b</td>
<td>35a-b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du Du Qiaolin</td>
<td>KX 49.10-12 (21 Nov. 1710-16 Feb. 1711)</td>
<td>67a-69a</td>
<td>35b-37a Composing poetry; declaration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Jade Void (Yuxu zi 玉虛子)</td>
<td>69a-b</td>
<td>37a-b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Jade Void</td>
<td>69b-70a</td>
<td>37b-38b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du Du Qiaolin</td>
<td>KX 52.lichun (1713)</td>
<td>70a-71b</td>
<td>38b-39a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Shang</td>
<td>KX 57.12 (20 Jan.-18 Feb. 1719)</td>
<td>71b-73a</td>
<td>39b-41b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Du Du Qiaolin Peng Qifeng</td>
<td>KX 58 (1719-1720)</td>
<td>73a</td>
<td>41b-42a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Nanyun Peng Dingqiu</td>
<td>KX 59.3 (8 April-6 May 1720) Residence of his disciple Wang Xun in Songjiang</td>
<td>73b</td>
<td>42a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

Appendix 4.1
Prominent Figures in the Changzhou County Pengs Lineage¹

1 Peng Xueyi 學一．
Moved the family from from Qingjiang 清江 county, Linjiang 臨江 prefecture, Jiangxi province, under the reign of the first Ming emperor (1368-98).

2 Peng Zhongying 仲英．
Biological son of Xueyi’s elder sister and her husband Yang Haizhong 楊海中; posthumous adopted heir of Xueyi, as mandated by a local magistrate in order to fill Xueyi’s place on the military register.

3 Peng Yanhong 彦洪
zi Bin 斌．
Only son of Zhongying.

4 Peng Chun 淳
zi Zhipu 至朴; hao Dan’an 澹庵．
Third son of Yanhong.

5 Peng Shi 時²
zi Zhongzhi 中之; hao Nanchuang jushi 南窗居士 (“Retired Scholar of the Southern Window”).
Eldest son of Chun.

Fang 敷 jinshi Zhengde 6.3.181 (1511)³
zi Yinzhi 寅之, Sigan 斯干; hao Xizhi 西枝．
Second son of Chun.

Wei 曰
zi Shengzhi 升之; hao Donglou 東樓．
Merchant. Third son of Chun.

6 Peng Tianzhi 天秩
juren Jiajing 40 (1561)

¹ According to the 1829 Peng shi zongpu. I have checked all jinshi dates against Ming-Qing jinshi timing bei lu suoyin 明清進士題名碑錄索引 (Index to the Epigraphic Record of Ming-Qing Presented Scholars), ed. Zhu Baojiong 朱保炯 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1998). Other reference works in this regard are Fang Zhaoying 房兆楹 and Du Lianzhe 杜聯喆 eds., Zeng jiao Qingchao jinshi timing bei lu: fu yin de 增校清朝進士題名碑錄: 附引得 (Taipei: Distributed by Chinese Materials and Research Aids Service Center, 1966).
² Not to be confused with the identically named Peng Shi 彭時 (1416-1475) of Anfu 安富, Jiangxi, on whom see the entry by Tildemann Grimm in DMB, v. 2: 1119-20.
³ On the register for Suzhou, Zhili province.
Appendices

zi Jiyong 季庸; hao Wushan 梧山.
Fourth son of Shi.

Peng Nian 年.
Painter and calligrapher. Son of Fang.

7 Peng Ruxie 汝諧
juren Wanli 28 (1600), jinshi Wanli 44.3.5 (1616)4
zi Yuanle 原樂; hao Weian 蔚庵, Liaowei 萊蔚.
Second son of Tianzhi.

8 Peng Dexian 德先 (1590-1665)
gongsheng
zi Jingxing 敬興, Jingyu 敬輿; bie hao Jigong 集公; zi hao Youhu yusou 遊湖漁叟,
Yuzheshan jiao 玉遮山樵.
Eldest son of Ruxie.

Peng Xingxian 行先
Wu county student
zi Wumin 務敏, Yiling 贽令.
Third son of Ruxie.

9 Peng Long 瑕 (1613-89)
jinshi Shunzhi 16.2.66 (1659)5
zi Yunke 雲客; hao Yi'an 一菴.
Second son of Dexian.

10 Peng Dingqiu 定求 (1645-1719)
juren Kangxi 11 (1672), jinshi (two-fold optimus) Kangxi 15.1.1 (1676)
zi Qinzhi 勤止, Fanglian 訪濂; hao Nanyun laoren 南昀老人.
Only son of Long.

Peng Ningqiu 寧/寗求
jinshi (tanhua) Kangxi 21.1.3 (1682)
zi Wenqia 文洽; hao Zhanting 瞻庭.
Grandson of Xingxian, son of Xingxian’s second son Huang 璜.

11 Peng Shiqian 始乾 (1671-1706)
First son of Dingqiu

Peng Zhengqian 正乾 (1679-1745)

4 Registered in Wu 吳 county, Zhili province.
5 First Peng jinshi registered in Changzhou county.
Appendices

Guoxuesheng
zi Cuncheng 存, hao Tizhai 悌齋.
Second son of Dingqiu.

12 Peng Qifeng 啟豐 (1701-84)
juren Yongzheng 4 (1726), jinshi (two-fold optimus) Yongzheng 5.1.1 (1727)
zi Hanwen 翰文, Shipu 示浦; hao Zhiting 芝庭.
Enterprising son of Dingqiu.

13 Peng Shaoqian 紹謙
juren Qianlong 12 (1747)
Eldest son of Qifeng.

Peng Shaoguan 紹觀
juren Qianlong 12 (1747); jinshi Qianlong 22.2.57 (1757)
Second son of Qifeng.

Peng Shaoxian 紹咸

gongsheng
Third son of Qifeng.

Peng Shaosheng 紹升 (1740-96)
jinshi Qianlong 26.2.18 (1761)
zi Yunchu 允初; hao Erlin 二林, Chimu 尺木, Zhiguizi 知歸子; fahao (dharma
name) Jiqing 際清.
Fourth son of Qifeng.

14 Peng Xihan 希韓
juren Qianlong 30 (1765).
Son of Shaoqian.

Peng Xifan 希范
juren Qianlong 39 (1774)
zi Jiacai 嘉材
Son of Shaoguan.

Peng Xilian 希濂 (d. 1819)
jinshi Qianlong 49.2.9 (1784)
zi Suzhou 潮周
Eldest son of Shaoxian.

Peng Xiluo 希洛
jinshi Qianlong 52.2.11 (1787)
Second son of Shaoxian.
Appendices

Tao Shan 陶善 (1756-80)
zi Qingyu 慶餘; hao Yuexi 月溪.
Poet; wife of Peng Xiluo.

Peng Xisu 希涑 (1761-93)
jushi Qianlong 49.2.9 (1784)
hao Lantai 蘭臺
Fourth son of Shaoxian.

Peng Xizheng 希鄭
jinsi Qianlong 54.3.15 (1789)
Fifth son of Shaoxian.

15 Peng Yunhui 蘊煒
jinsi Jiaqing 4 (1799)
zi Baozhen 葆真; hao Yuanfeng 遠峰.
Son of Xiluo.

Peng Yunzhang 蘊章 (1792-1862)
enke juren Jiaqing 23 (1818), jinsi Daoguang 15.2.50 (1862)
zi Zongda 琮逹, Teibao 鐵寶; hao Yong’e 永莪, Yi gu laoren 訒榖老人; yi (imperially bestowed posthumous name) Wenjing 文敬.
Second son of Xisu.

16 Peng Zuxian 祖賢 (1819-85)
juren Daoguang 8 (1855)
hao Shaoting 芪庭.
Fourth son of Yunzhang.

17 Peng Shixiang 謝祥
jinsi Daoguang 20 (1894)
Descendant of sixth generation patriarch Tianrui 天瑞; Shixiang is the only lineage jinsi not of the branch of Tianrui’s younger brother Tianzhi.

18 Peng Taishi 泰士
jinsi Guangxu 24.2.45 (1898)
Grandson of Weigao.

Peng Shixiang 士襄
jinsi Guangxu 29 (1903)
Descendant of tenth generation patriarch Peng Ningqiu.
Appendices

Appendix 4.2
Editions of Peng shi zongpu

The earliest extant Peng shi zongpu (Genealogy of the Peng Clan) is that of 1829. Its comprehensive catalog (zongmu 總目) lists six previous editions:

1) 1595, edited (biance 編次) by seventh generation patriarch Peng Ruxie;
2) 1650, re-edited (chongji 重輯) by eighth generation patriarchs Peng Dexian and Peng Xingxian;
3) 1703, revised (xuxiu 續修) by tenth generation patriarch Peng Dingqiu;
4) 1742, expanded (zengxiu 增修) by eleventh generation patriarchs Peng [Zaishu] and Peng Zhengqian;
5) 1766, revised (chongxiu 重修) by thirteenth generation patriarch Peng Shaoxian;
6) 1801, revised (chongxiu) by fourteenth generation patriarchs Peng Xihan and Peng Xiluo.\(^7\)

The standard reference works on Chinese genealogies list four extant Pengshi zongpu by the鹏s of Changzhou county. The four extant genealogies all take Peng Xueyi 彭學一 as their apical ancestor. All four editions of the genealogy were printed on woodblocks that were originally stored in the Peng clan Yiyantang 衣言堂 (1867) and

\(^6\) I have not been able to locate an individual by this zi among the eleventh generation in the 1829 PSZP.
\(^7\) PSZP, 1829 ce 1, zongmu 1a. Electronic copy of Shanghai Library edition (catalog number JP704) in author’s collection.
Appendices

Yiyanzhuang 衣言莊 (1883) in Suzhou. Following the editions listed below are the holders of the exemplars of the editions that I have identified. Exemplars that I have personally examined are preceded by an asterix (*).

7) 1829 in four ce, eight juan, edited by fourteenth generation patriarchs Peng Xizheng and fifteenth generation patriarch Peng Yi. *Shanghai Library (catalog number JP704; digitized copy in author’s possession), Nanjing Library, Renmin University (Beijing; missing juan 1-2);
8) 1867 in two ce, four juan, reedited (xuxiu) by sixteenth generation patriarch Peng Weigao. National Library of China, Renmin University, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences History Department Library, Nankai University (Tianjin), Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences History Department, Tokyo University, *Tōyō Bunko (catalog number 160; shou juan, juan 1-2, mo juan),10 Utah Genealogical Association;
9) 1883, in six ce, twelve juan, reedited (xuzuan 續纂) by sixteenth generation patriarch Peng Zuxian. *Shanghai Library (長 304198-203), Nanjing Library, Nanjing University, *Suzhou Museum (MHC1/8),11 Changshu Museum, Tokyo

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8 The Yiyantang was first constructed by eighth generation patriarch Peng Dexian. See Peng Dingqiu, “Chongxiu Yiyantang ji” 重修衣言堂記 (Record of the Restoration of the Yiyan Hall), in NYWG, j. 4: 26a-27a.
9 Shanghai Library holdings are supplemented with Shanghai tushuguan guancang jiapu tiyao 上海圖書館館藏家譜提要 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2000): 790.
10 The edition listed as microfilm held by the Shanghai Library in Zhongguo jiapu zongmu is that of the Tōhō Bunka reel 62 (shou juan and juan 1 in one ce) and 63 (juan 3 and an unnumbered juan containing prefatory material in one ce).
11 Electronic copy only available for viewing. In contrast to the Shanghai Library digitized copy, the recto and verso are presented together, with the banxin 板心 clearly visible in the center. There are extensive unique handwritten remarks on this copy, particularly in the genealogical chart in juan 2.
Appendices

University, Library of Congress, Renmin University (juan 1 and 2 only), Tōyō Bunko (catalog number 159),
12 Utah Genealogical Association;
10) One prefaced 1922 by Peng Wenjie 彭文傑, Peng Zhongdai 彭鍾岱 and six other named editors in thirteen juan (shou juan plus twelve juan), twelve ce.13
National Library of China, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences History Department Library, Peking University, Central Minzu University, Liaoning Library, Nanjing Library, *Suzhou Museum (two exemplars: MHC1/29),
14 Suzhou University, Renmin University (missing j. 9, pp. 80-162, j. 3, pp. 1-108), Suzhou Library (M/10/06; only the first juan, j. 3-7 and 9-12), Shanxi Academy of Social Sciences Genealogical Materials Center, Tōyō Bunko (catalog numbers 27 and 657), Columbia University, and Utah Genealogical Association.

Unidentified fragment: *Shanghai Library (Xuhui 徐匯 [XH 994-997]; 4 ce, 9 juan)

The table of contents for the earliest extant edition (1829) is as follows:

Juan 1: Forty-two imperial commendations (zhi ci sishi’er dao 制詞四十二道)

12 Reels 63 (shou juan to juan 9) and 64 (juan 10-12) of microfilm collection.
14 Suzhou Museum Materials Division staff Xu Gangcheng cataloged this exemplar as the 1881 edition with a supplement (buyin 補印) in 1922 by Peng Wenjie, rather than an entirely new edition, as the Shanghai tushuguan guancang jiapu tiyao editors have classified it (digital copies of the handwritten catalog entries for both exemplars held by the Suzhou Museum in the possession of the author). As recorded on the cover, this exemplar was gifted to Li Genyuan 李根源 in Minguo 18.3 (March 1929) by Peng Jia 嘉.
Appendices

Juan 2: Genealogical chart (shi xi tu 世系圖) and abbreviated biographies (xiao zhuan 小傳)

Juan 3: One folio (pian 篇) of epitaphs (mubiao 墓表), ten folios of tomb inscriptions (muzhiming 墓誌銘), three folios of eulogies (xingzhuang 行狀), and one folio of biographies (zhuan 傳).

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Juan 8: Twenty-three folios of miscellaneous compositions (zawen 雜文).\(^\text{15}\)

\(^{15}\text{PSZP, ce 1: zongmu 1a-b.}\)
### Appendix 4.3

#### Table of Contents Pengshi zongpu

*Edition of 1829*

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Appendix 5.1
Transcript of Jade Bureau Emissary Du Qiaolin addressing Wang Zhesheng of Kunshan with the spirit-altar in 1713; from Peng Shaosheng, ed., Zhishen lu (Record of the Interrogation of the Spirits, 1773), 70a-71a.

On the Establishing Spring day of the fifty-second year [of the Kangxi reign; 6 Feb. 1713] Master Du [Qiaolin] descended… Mister Wang Zhesheng of Kunshan [county] approached [the altar] to pay his respects. [Wang then] inquired as to the gist of the similarities and difference among the Three Teachings. Indicating [Wang, Emissary Du] declared: “Mister Wang has come! [This makes] the old man profoundly happy. The various worthies of the Wenchang Bureau, in evaluating contemporary scholars, have determined that you are a good sort. For a long time now I have wished to take you by the hand and provide you with proof of purified causation.17

“You have already ordered the essentials of the preceding Classicists and your heart-minded dwell in careful study. There is no gulf between the branch and the root [of your practice]. You can also study inner effort and modulate and nourish the body and mind. What reason have you to search out another path? For the principle of Classicism is not in the differentiation of words and doctrines, nor is inner effort in the movement of the physical form, for both of these terms are but a drop of Heart-Mind.18 The mystery of the entirety of the Myriad Transformations can enable one to emerge from the gate of life and death and pass through the [karmic] fruits of Man and Heaven. To do so is not an insignificant feat; one can ascend the Great Vehicle.

16 I.e., altar supervisor Peng Dingqiu.
17 The term jingyin 净因 appears repeated in the Taishō Buddhist canon in the sense that I translated it here, as a contraction for qingjing yinyuan 清淨因緣 (purified karmic causation).
18 The compound xuming is not clear to me. Zdic.net provides two meaning: xin 心 (heart-mind) and 空明. I wonder if here it could mean 空名 (empty name; i.e., misnomer).
Your family has had generations of virtue. Many of the spirits of your ancestors have obtained [these exalted heights of transcendence]. As for speaking of whether it is permissible to participate in the Learning of Chan, it too is no more than the trace of your daily effort evinced in your personal comportment. Therefore if your wish to render into void all that there is, why not discard the dregs of Classicism and Daoism and obtain their divine marrow? What need is there to participate in Chan?

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19 Due to the Kangzi reign taboo on the character xuan 玄, the common replacement character yuan 元 is used in the text.
五十二年立春日。杜先生降。。。。。[70a/b]昆山王子喆生來謁。問三教異同之旨。示曰：「王子到來。老人深喜。文昌局中諸賢，評論當今儒林，必以子為良士。久欲援手一證淨因矣。

「子既以前儒理要，留心講究。根本不差。又為習學內功；亦是調養身心一助：何必更求別路？但儒理不在詞說之異同；內功不在形體之運用。此中自有一點虛明。萬化渾全之妙，方可出生死之門，透人天之果。非小小伎倆。可登大乘也。

「子家世德。先靈多上達者。若言禪學可參，亦不過為子平日功夫滯於形迹。故欲其空諸所有耳。[70b/71a]苟能於儒元二宗，去其渣滓，得其神髓？亦何必參禪哉？」
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Appendix 5.2

Peng Qifeng

“Preface to the Recarved Complete Works of Ancestor Lü”

Among what the [people of the world] term the “Daoist School,” many [of their contents] do not accord with [those of] Sir Kong. As I contemplate the text Laozi, that which is called “Returning to the root,” “Restoring the lifespan,” and “Knowing constancy” has the same quintessential meaning as the great [Classic of] Changes’s “Washing the Heart-Mind” and “Storing Away in Secrecy.” Are [the meanings of these terms] actually different from one another? “Those who do fail at it, while those who grasp lose it” and “To have all-under-heaven and not accord with it.” Is the gist [of these phrases] actually different from one another? Its essence is thus, its practical application is thus, and those who say “ultimately Daoism and Classicism are different” are wrong.

Those whom later [generations] termed “life-extenders,” are but a sectarian division of the Daoist School, and the divisions within their practical application differs little from Classicism. Regarding “merciful compassion” and “saving the world” and the affairs of

20 I.e., Confucius.
22 “Appendix to the Changes” (Xici shang) 繫辭上: 聖人以此洗心，退藏於密. The phrase ends with the paired characters alluded to by Qifeng below: 吉凶與民同患. Zhouyi zhuzi suoyin 周易逐字索引 (A Concordance to the Zhouyi) (Hong Kong: Shangwu Yinshuguan 1995), 80/65/3. Peng Qifeng’s assertion appears to be in accord with Lin Zhao’en’s 林兆恩 reading of these terms. See the discussion in Berling, The Syncretic Religion of Lin Chao-en, and Burton-Rose, “Integrating Inner Alchemy into Late Ming Cultural History.”
23 From the twenty-ninth verse of the Daodejing: 天下，神器，不可為也，為者敗之，執者失之 and “有天下而不與之.” Laozi zhuzi suoyin, 10/29A/10-11.
“auspicious and inauspicious [divination]” and “shared concern,” what difference have they?

By means of a transcendent body, Patriarch Lü Pure Yang obtained the Way. [His] lingering corporeal form resides in the world, sometimes concealed, sometimes manifest. Among those whom the [people of the world] admire as “life-extenders,” there are none who do not regard the Ancestor as the point of return. The words of the Ancestor gradually came to fill All-Under-Heaven. I once picked up and read them. They primarily follow the original version of Laozi’s *Five Thousand Character [Classic]*. This work was contemporaneous with Sir Kong, and also simultaneously captured Sir Great Hero’s quintessential meaning.

The Patriarch was present in the world beginning in the Song dynasty, at which time he encountered the Chan Master Yellow Dragon, who awakened to a separate transmission outside the [orthodox] teachings. This is his portent. In the Kangxi reign Sir Liu [Tishu] of Yiling compiled the Ancestor-Teacher’s scriptures and exhortations and had them carved in one anthology. In time the blocks wore down. The gentleman Wang Lüjie of Renhe [county] contacted his friend the gentleman Shao Ruzhen [and together they] assembled that which had been dispersed and [thought] lost, extending and enlarging them, so that they obtained sixty-plus *juan*.

When I contemplate *The Unified Book of the Chan Lineage* I learn that the point of return of the Daoist arts of the realm genuinely do not surpass Śākyamuni.

---

24 I.e., the Buddha Śākyamuni.
25 For Lü to manifest in the world?
26 One of the two counties constituting Hangzhou.
27 Ming Zhilin 志琳.
28 A later edition ends the text here, with the words: “which can be called complete.” Considering the prioritization of Buddhism over Daoism and Classicism in the following paragraph, Peng Qifeng’s original composition was likely altered.
Appendices

Transcendents like Patriarch Lü and Classicists like the Thearch of Literary Culture,\textsuperscript{29} even they took refuge in their heart-minds and feared for latter generations. Those who wield Classicism and Immortalism yet belittle Buddhism: contemplate this book and you will also immediately know from where they came.\textsuperscript{30}

Imperially-bestowed presented scholar, imperially bestowed Guanglu grandee, Grand Secretary of the Board of War.

Preface respectfully composed by Peng Qifeng of Changzhou county

\textsuperscript{29} I.e., Wenchang dijun.
\textsuperscript{30} This entire paragraph is excised from the \textit{Quanshu zongzheng} edition, replaced by “It can be said not to be complete.”

While I am tempted to render this as a rhetorical question—“How can it be said not to be complete?”—the final particle \textit{yi} \textit{矣} does not grant this latitude. Perhaps the editors who inserted it intended it as sanction for a later edition in Qifeng’s preface to the “original edition.”
In the following Chinese language text I use “Peng xu” 彭序 (Peng preface) from Lüzu quanshu, 1a-4b, as my base version. I mark variants in Quanshu zongzheng 全書宗正 (Peng xu 1a-b). Both works are reproduced in Lüzu Chunyang quanshu 呂祖純陽全書 (Taiwan: Huangji chubanshe, 1982), at v. 1: 103-110 and v. 1: 323-324, respectively. Unfortunately, I have not yet had the opportunity to examine earlier exemplars of the Lüzu quanshu and Quanshu zongzheng. I consulted the parsing in the Quanshu zongzheng, but the punctuation below is ultimately my own.

重刻呂祖全書序

彭啟豐

世之言「道家」者，多不合於孔氏。余觀《老子》書如所謂「歸根」，「復命」，「知常」者，與《大易》「洗心藏密」之旨。有以異乎抑無以異乎：「為者敗之，執者失」之與「有天下而不與」之旨。有以異乎抑無以異乎。其體如是，其用如是。而謂道與儒，果有異者非也。

後之言「長生」者，蓋道家之派別。而其用，乃稍與儒異。然其「慈悲度世」，與夫「吉凶同患」之情。有以異乎抑無以異乎。純陽呂祖，以僊身而得道。留形住世，或隱，或現。世之慕「長生」者，莫不以祖為歸。于31 是祖之言，遂滿天下。

予嘗取而讀之。大率原本《老子五千言》。時出入於孔氏，又兼通大雄氏之旨。世傳祖在宋時，遇黃龍禪師悟教外別傳。此其徵也。

31 Insignificant variant: the homophone particle yu 於.
康熙中義陵劉氏彚《祖師經訓》，刻為一集。久之其板漸廢。仁和王君履階屬其友邵君儒珍，網羅散失，推而廣之，得六十餘卷。32余觀《禪宗一書》，知天下道術之歸。誠無過於大雄者，仙如呂祖，儒如交帝，方且皈心恐後焉。彼之執儒仙而誹佛者觀於此書，亦庶幾知所反乎。

賜進士及第

誥授光祿大夫兵部尚書

長洲彭啓豐

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32 In the Quanshu zongzheng edition from 余觀 to 知所反乎 is replaced by 可謂弗備矣。
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Peng Dingqiu, editor (ji), *Wenchang ge xiao zhi* 文星閣小志 (Modest Gazetteer of the Cultural Star Pavilion)

Based on the exemplar held by the Shanghai Library (線善 T368681); facsimile reproduction of Shanghai Library exemplar in *Zhongguo yuanlin mingsheng zhi congkan* 中國園林名勝志叢刊, eds. Zheng Xiaoxia 鄭曉霞 and Zhang Zhi 張智 (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2006), v. 31: 1-67.

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Compositions on or Calligraphic Samples Relating to Suzhou Daoist Institutions by Peng Lineage Patriarchs, 1673-1830

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<td>“Muxiu Yuanmiao guan Zhenwu dian yin”</td>
<td>Nanyun wengao j. 12: 47a-b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peng Qifeng</td>
<td>12 “Hui fashi xiaozhuan”</td>
<td>Yuanmiao guan zhi (YMGZ) j. 4: 9a</td>
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<td>Peng Qifeng</td>
<td>“Chongxiu Yuanmiao guan bei”</td>
<td>QL 39 YMGZ j.10: 5a-6b; JDBZ #277</td>
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<td>Peng Qifeng</td>
<td>“Zeng Hui Xuzhong lianshi liu shi”</td>
<td>YMGZ j. 7: 6a</td>
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## Appendices

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<tr>
<td>Peng Qifeng</td>
<td>“Youxian ci ti Hui Xuzhang lianshi zhao” (Inscription of the Lyric “Wandering Transcendents” illuminated by Alchemical Master Hui Amidst-the-Void)</td>
<td>YMGZ j. 7: 6b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peng Qifeng</td>
<td>“Ti Hu fashi xiang zan” (Composition on Portrait and Encomium on Ritual Master Hu)</td>
<td>YMGZ j. 10: 6b-7; JDBZ #278 (p. 392)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peng Qifeng</td>
<td>“Hui fashi zhuan” (Biography of Ritual Master Hui)</td>
<td>YMGZ j.10: 7a-8a; JDBZ #279 (pp. 393-94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peng Qifeng</td>
<td>“Hui Danfeng Xueling gao xu” (Preface to Hui Danfeng’s Draft Manuscript of Xueling)</td>
<td>YMGZ j.10: 8a-b</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peng Shaosheng (1740-1796)</td>
<td>“Chongxiu Lingbao zuyuan ji” (Record of the Rebuilding of the Cloister of the Patriarch of Numinous Treasure)</td>
<td>1735 (QL 60)</td>
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<td>YMGZ j. 10: 1a-b; JDBZ #285 (p. 400)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiang Yupu; headpiece inscribed by Peng Xilian (d. 1819)</td>
<td>“Chongxiu Yuanmiao guan Wenchang dian ji” (Record of the Rebuilding of the Wenchang Place at the Abbey of Primordial Mystery)</td>
<td>1816 (JQ 21.11)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>YMGZ; JDBZ #288 (pp. 403-04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peng Xizheng</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>“Chongxiu Yuanmiao guan juxianlou bei ji” 邑修元妙觀聚仙樓碑記 (Record of the Stele commemorating the Rebuilding of the Gathered Transcendents Pavilion of the Abbey of Profound Mystery)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendices

Appendix 7.2


Based on digital facsimile of editions available in Daozang jiyao Project (JY 244).

In his youth my late father obtained the work Perfected Commentaries, which he esteemed as the orthodox teachings of nourishing life, vibrant and increasingly brilliant. It is certainly a comprehensive listing and primer for new initiates. Up until my late father’s waning years he repeatedly stated succinctly: “In my life I’ve read alchemical books from all over. Confusion and errors have arisen. This work, in contrast, is pure and subtle. It delivers on the promise made by the other works.” I received repeated injunctions that were quite sincere to leave it stored in our collection.33

The years have slipped past and the paper and ink have become parched and indistinct. I fear that not long from now they will be lost entirely. For this reason I have had the blocks recarved in order to fulfill the posthumous intention of my late father and with the wish that other cognoscenti also obtain proof [of its value].

Inscribed on Kangxi gengyin (1710), the first day of the eleventh month, by the Mountain Man who Praises Perfection, Peng Dingqiu

33 Qie, literally a bamboo basket for storing books, but often used as a metonym for a collection itself.
僊學真詮小引

先君蚤歲得真詮一書。奉為養生正宗。精神漸旺。定當總卯即蒙指示。洎先君晚年。
復題簡端日。平生閱歷四方丹術甚夥。迷謬錯出。不如此書。潔淨精微。可以守約。
自得丁寧切摯。留藏篋衍。歲月荏苒。楮墨模糊。恐日久失傳。因重梓之。以承先
君遺志。願與識者共證焉。

康熙庚寅孟冬朔詠真山人彭定求識34

34 Punctuation follows that added by hand to the edition reproduced in the Daozang jinghua.
Appendices

Appendix 8.1
Séance Transcripts in *Xu Zhishen lu*

This table is arranged by frequency of appearance of descending deity, then alphabetically by surname in cases in which the number of descents is the same. Based on the Gest Library exemplar of 1842.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Deity Referred to in Text</th>
<th>Common Name of Deity</th>
<th>Number of Appearances</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fuyou dijun and Yuqing neixiangchen 玉清內相臣 (Inner Minister of the Jade Purity [Heaven])</td>
<td>Lü Yan (zi Dongbin)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6b-8a; 9a-10a; 10a-12a; 12a-13b; 14b-15b; 16a-b; 17a-b; 18b-19a; 21b-22b; 22b; 24b; 25b-26a; 26b-27a; 36a-37b; 38a-b; 41a-b; 45a-b; 46a-47a</td>
<td>Due to a compilation error there are two page 36s in the 1842 Gest exemplar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiao Wenzhong hou 蕭文終侯 (Duke Literary Finality Xiao)</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5a-b; 12a; 13b-14b; 15b-16a; 16b-17a; 17b-18a; 19b-20a; 20b-21a; 22b; 24a-b; 24b-25b; 26a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huang Zhongjie 黃忠節 (Loyal-and-Steadfast Huang)</td>
<td>Huang Daozhou</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27b-28b; 28b-29a; 31a-b; 32a-b; 34b-35a; 37b-38a; 39a-40a; 41b-42b; 43a-b; 44a-b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yushan zushi 雨山祖師 (Ancestral Teacher of Rain Mountain)</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28b; 29b-31a; 31b-32a; 35a-b; 40a-41a; 42b-43a; 43b-44a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yusong wang 漁淞王 dijun</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4a-5a; 5b-6a; 8a-9a; 21a-b</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lu Qingxian 陸清獻</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2b-3b; 45b-46a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Xiyi Chen zushi 希夷陳祖師 (trad. 871-989)</td>
<td>Chen Tuan 陳摶</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6a-b; 20a-b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yushan zushi 玉山祖師 (Ancestral Teacher of Jade Mountain)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18a-b; 23a-24a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yuanhuang dijun 元皇帝君 (Primordial August Thearch Lord)</td>
<td>Wenchang</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1a-b; 32b-34b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aizhi Cao zushi</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24a</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Title</td>
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<td>Section</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>愛芝曹祖師 (Mushroom-loving Ancestral Teacher Cao)</td>
<td>Ma Yu 馬錫 (1123-83)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19a-b</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Danyang Ma zushi 丹陽馬</td>
<td>Peng Nanyun gong 彭南昀公 (Master Peng Nanyun)</td>
<td>Peng Dingqiu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3b-4a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hufa Wang tianjun 護法王天君 (Celestial Lord Protects-the-Rites Wang)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35b-36a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wenchang Yuju zhenguan (Perfected Official of the Jade Bureau of Wenchang)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27a-b</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yang Zhongmin 楊忠愍</td>
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<td>2a-b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yuanming Doumu tianzu 天尊 (the Celestial Esteemed Completed Mother-of-the-Way)</td>
<td>Dou mu (Dipper Mother)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44b-45a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zhao zhenjun 趙真君 (Perfected Lord Zhao)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26a-b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhu wen gong 朱文公 (Literary Lord Zhu)</td>
<td>Zhu Xi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1b-2a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive Catalog of Changzhou County Peng Clan Members:

Works and Biographical Sources

“Bibliography can be a blunt instrument,” David McKitterick, Librarian at Trinity College in Cambridge, has written in regard to English works in manuscript and print between the fifteenth and eighteenth century.¹ My effort below to give some precision to the following catalog entries comes at the price of a certain unwieldiness. My intention is to provide as much information as possible about title pages, prefaces, postfaces, and publishers, as well as variations in content between exemplars. In cases of rare works, I identify holding libraries. In cases of reprints, to the extent that the information is available, I identify the copy being reproduced. I then list typeset editions, identifying when possible the exemplar upon which they are based, and relevant excised or added material. The entries are loosely modeled on Pierre-Étienne Will ed., Official Handbooks and Anthologies of Imperial China: A Descriptive and Critical Bibliography (Leiden: Brill, in progress).

Each entry is organized in the following manner:

Name

Examination status (when applicable)

Courtesy names (zi 字) and style-names (hao 号)

Birth order and wives and concubines

¹ David McKitterick, Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order, 1450-1830 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 136.
Biographical sources: primary (Ming and Qing dynasty) and secondary (Republican to present). Signed biographies are listed alphabetically by author; unsigned biographies are listed by the editor or, when the editor is unknown, the title of the anthology in which the biography appeared.

Works. In ordering the works I have adapted Tsien Tsuen-hsüin’s unpublished manuscript “Terminology of the Chinese Book, Bibliography, and Librarianship.” Tsien’s order is as follows: 1) Original Works; 2) Compilations; 3) Punctuations; 4) Annotations and Commentaries; 5) Revisions; 6) Criticisms; 7) Translations; 8) Anonymous Works; 9) Doubtful Authenticity; 10) Imperial Authorship.” I have not had use for items 3, 6, 8, and 10. I modify “Punctuations” to “Corrections and Punctuations.” Following the discussion in Chapter 8, I modify Tsien’s “Doubtful Authenticity” to “Posthumous Attribution.” I also include information on Peng patriarchs as publishers and their material culture relics, such as paintings and stelae. This results in the list: 1) Original Works; 2) Compilations; 3) Annotations and Commentaries; 4) Corrections and Punctuations; 5) Translations; 6) Publisher; 7) Posthumous Attribution; 8) Paintings and Other Non-Book Material Culture Relics. (I consider it misleading to classify annotations and commentaries as not original, but let these categories stand for present purposes.) I list works chronologically within each subsection. Reprints and modern edition appear after the original work. I only reproduce the titles of reprints when they differ from that of the initial work. If no publication information is provided beyond the title I have not yet located a copy of this text. For rarer editions I include some holding libraries, but this information is far from complete. In cases in which I have not provided
the translation of a title it is because I would like to examine the work further before positing an English rendering.

I have searched many of the works below in the Catalog of Chinese Language Ancient Books (Zhongwen guji shumu ziliaoku 中文古籍書目資料庫) maintained by the National Central Library in Taiwan. The catalog includes books published in traditional formats (mostly stitch-bound) until, for the most part, the early twentieth century. It lists materials held at in major collections in Taiwan, the PRC, and the United States. Although it is the closest thing to a union catalog that exists, with the exception of the National Library of China, holding information of libraries in China is incomplete, as it is for Japan.

In the bibliographic entries I abbreviate late Ming and Qing dynasty reign names (e.g., “KX” for “Kangxi”).

Regarding editorial and publishing terminology, I have attempted to provide only one translation for each Chinese term. However, several of the Chinese words below strike me as legitimate synonyms. My translations for terms used in this catalog are listed below. I am grateful to Soren Edgren and Martin Heijdra for discussing with me the terminology of the East Asian book.

Author (zhuan 撰)

Carved (of woodblocks) (ke 刻; juan 鐳)

Case (chi 帛)

Collate (jiao 較)

Colophon (ti 題)
Compiler (n.); compile (v.) (zuan 纂)

Corrector (n.); corrected (v.) (ding 訂); less commonly, depending on context, “editor”

Cover-leaf (fengmian 封面)

Edit (v.); editor, compiler (n.) (bian 編; ji 輯; bianjj 編輯)

Preface (xu 序; xu 敘)

Postface (ba 跋; houba 後跋; houxu 後序 [lit.: “back preface”])

Recorded (v.); recorder (n.) (lu 錄)
Descriptive Catalog

Fifth Generation

**Peng Shi** 時

*zi* Zhongzhi 中之; *hao* Nanchuang jushi 南窗居士 ("Retired Scholar of the Southern Window").

Eldest son of Peng Chun.

Biographical and bibliographical resource: *Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou juan*: v. 1: 316

**Peng Fang** 戱

*jinshi* ZD 6.3.181² (1511)

*zi* Yinzhi 寅之, *sigan* 斯干; *hao* Xizhi 西枝.

Second son of Chun.

Biography:

Liu Lin-sheng, DMB, v. 2: 1117 (under son “Peng Nian”)

Sixth Generation

**Peng Nian** 年 (1505-66)

*linsheng*

*zi* Kongjia 孔嘉; *hao* Longchi 隆池.

Son of Peng Fang.

² The first number in this series is that of the reign (Zhengde). The second is the class (of three) in the metropolitan examinations. The third is the ranking within that class.
Descriptive Catalog

Biography and Scholarship:

Clunas, *Elegant Debts*

Liu Lin-sheng, DMB, v. 2: 1117-18

*Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou juan* : v. 1: 378-79

Original Works

*Longchi shanjiao ji* 隆池山樵集 (Longchi’s Mountain Bananas Anthology), 2 *juan.*

Abstract in *Siku quanshu cunmu tiyao.*

Paintings and Other Non-Book Material Culture Relics

*Yanshu lu* 烟水錄 (Record of Fog), 1 *juan.* Peng Nian’s sketchbook.


*Seventh Generation*
**Descriptive Catalog**

**Peng Ruxie** 淑諧

*juren* WL 28 (1600); *jinshi* WL 44.3.5 (1616)

*zi* Yuanle 原樂; *hao* Weian 蕊庵, Liaowei 蕊蔚.

Second son of Tianzhi.

Biography:

*Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou juan*: v. 1: 488

---

**Eighth Generation**

**Peng Dexian** 德先

*gongsheng*

*zi* Jingxing 敬興; *hao* Jingyu 敬與; *bie* hao Jigong 集公.

Eldest son of Ruxie. Wife *née* Cai 蔡 (d. KX 13.5.10 [1674]).

---

**Ninth Generation**

**Peng Long** 彭瓏 (1613-89)

*jinshi* SZ 16.2.66 (1659)

*zi* Yunrong 雲榮; *hao* Yi’an 一菴; posthumous title (bestowed by disciples) Renjian

xiansheng 仁簡先生; Chengyuan *zi* 澄源子.

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3 Lady Cai was entombed by her son in the family grave at Jade Obstruction Mountain (Yuzhe shan) in the twelfth month. Peng Dingqiu, *Shijiang gong nianpu*, 2a; 14a.

4 Peng Long is not recorded in *Gongju kaolüe* 貢舉考略 under the entry for SZ 16. Three hundred and fifty men passed that year, of whom this work singled out only six. Huang Chonglan 黃崇蘭, *Guochao gongju kaolüe* 國朝貢舉考略 (Gusu [Suzhou]: Jingyi tang, 1821), j. 1: 9a-b.
Biographies in:


Tang Jian 唐鑑, *Qing ru xue’an xiao shi* 清儒學案小識 (Shanghai: Wenrui lou 文瑞樓, 1884): j. 8: 19b-20b.


Biographical and bibliographic source:

*Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou juan* 江蘇邑文志: 蘇州卷. v. 1: 616

Annotations and Commentaries

*Xiaojing zuan zhu* 孝經纂注 (Compilation of and Commentary on the *Classic of Filial Piety*). 1 juan.

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5 Name by which Peng Long signed “Wenxing ge keye xu” 文星閣課業序, in *Wenxing ge xiaozhi*, ed. Peng Dingqiu, j. 2: 2b.
Descriptive Catalog


Shanghai Library (005585). The Shanghai Library exemplar includes Peng Long’s commentary, followed by that of his son Dingqiu.

There are at least two other works with this title: a 1 juan work selected and with a commentary by (xuanzhu 選注) Li Qipei 李啓培. Woodblock edition of DG 7 (1881) held by the Zhejiang Library; and one punctuated (ding 訂) by Sun Chuancheng 孫傳澄. The Qingyinju lou 清篁居樓 edition of Sun’s work is held by the National Library of China.

Tenth Generation

Peng Dingqiu 彭定求 (1645–d. KX 58.4.9 [1719])

juren KX 11 (1672); 6 jinshi KX 15.1.1 (1676) 7

zi Qin zhi 勤止; hao Fang lian 訪濂, Nanyun laoren 南昀老人, Fuchu xueren 復初學人 (“The Student Who Returns to the Fundamentals”), Yong zhen shan ren 詠真山人 (“Mountain Man who Chants Odes to the Perfected”). 9

Biographies in:

Gu Yuan, ed., Wujun mingxian tu zhuan zan, j. 18:19a.

Li Huan 李桓, ed., Guochao qixianlei zheng chubian 國朝耆獻類徵初, j. 117: 4a-13b.

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6 Ranked twenty-second.
8 Given by his grandfather in 1655 when Dingqiu was 11 sui. Peng Dingqiu, Shijiang gong nianpu, 2a.
9 Zhen quan: xiao yin 1a.


Zhang Weiping 張維屏, *Guochao shiren zhenglue chu bian* 國朝國朝詩人徵略初編, *j.* 9: 9b-10b

Biographical and Bibliographical Source:

Rufus O. Suter in ECCP, v. 2: 616-17

*Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou juan*: v. 1: 738-42

**Original Works**

*Nanyun shi gao* 南昀詩槀. 27 *juan*. Preface by Dingqiu dated 1708. Additional preface by Dingqiu’s disciple Tang Sunhua 唐孫華.

Descriptive Catalog

-GX 7 (1881). 6 ce. In Peng Zuxian collectanea. Includes a preface by Dingqiu (zixu 自序; 1a-b) dated KX 47.5 (1708). *Tōbunken, *Columbia University

Nanyun wen gao 南昀文槀 (Preliminary Draft of Nanyun’s Essays). 12 juan.
-GX 7 (1881) 6 ce. With new appendix (fukan 附刊). In Peng Zuxian collectanea.
*Tōbunken, *Columbia University, *University of Chicago-Regenstein (5466 4234)

Shijiang gong nianpu 侍講公年譜 (Chronological Autobiography of Master Sub-Expositor). Last entry 1718.
-Circa early 1720s. Handwritten exemplar. Includes appended biographical material on Dingqiu. *Suzhou Museum (only known exemplar).

Mi zheng lu 密證錄. Author (zhuan) “Peng Nanyun”


Yaojiang shi hui lu 姚江釋誅錄 (Record of Explicating Attempts to Destroy the School of Yaojiang [i.e., Wang Shouren]). Author (zhuan).

Individual ce held by *University of Chicago-Regenstein (1307 4234)


A work composed entirely of paratexts centered around a portrait of Peng Long in his study commissioned by Dingqiu directly after his father’s death, the work includes remembrances and poems by acquaintances. Appended is one of the twenty-seven chronological divisions of Dingqiu’s Nanyun shigao, apparently selected only on the basis of what the compiler of the 1877 edition had available to him. The included section is that of the year 1714; it diverges only slightly from that in the Kangxi edition of Nanyun shigao.

-1 ce. GX 3 (1877). *Suzhou Library.
Compilations

*Rumen fa yu* 儒門法語 (Model Words of the Classicist School). Editor (*ji*).

After *Quan Tang shi*, *Rumen fayu* appears to be the most reprinted of Dingqiu’s works.

-KX 36 (1697). 2 ce. *Shanghai Library 線 531940-41; no publication information; red reading marks throughout plus additional corrections.

-QL 17 (1752). 1 ce. Postface (*houba*) by Peng Qifeng dated QL 17.4.1 (1752). *Shanghai Library 線 436850)

-DG 2 (1822). *Shanghai Library 線長 634194).

-DG 26 (1846). Postface (*houxu*) by Peng Qifeng (1a-b); additional printing history by Peng Yunce 蘇策 (2a-b). *Shanghai Library 線 436851; no publication information; missing title page.


-TZ 4 (1865). Yiyantang (Changzhou county Peng clan publisher). *Shanghai Library (5 copies: 線長 250517; 線長 634195; 線長 006440; 線長 007935; 線長 006435)

-GX 1 (1875). Jiangsu xuezheng shu 江蘇學政署. *Shanghai Library (2 copies: 線長 016880; 線長 108573)

-GX 7 (1881). E’yuanshufu 鄂垣撫署 (Peng Zuxian collectanea ed.; see below) *Shanghai Library (2 copies: 線長 454773, 線長 436852)

-GX 23. Yangzhou fuxue 揚州府學. *Suzhou Library
n.d. (Qing) ms. Shanghai Library (線普長 010077)


*Rumen fayu jiyao 儒門法語輯要

-GX 7 (1881). In Peng Zuxian collectanea.

-GX 16 (1890). *Tōbunken.

*Rumen fayu ji 儒門法語集. 1 juan.

-n.d. (Qing dynasty) manuscript. *Shanghai Library (線善 771739-40).

Descriptive Catalog


Quan Tang shi 全唐詩 (Complete Poetry of the Tang Dynasty). 900 juan, plus 12 juan table of contents. Used as its basis the Tang shi tongjian 唐詩通箋 of Hu Zhenting 胡震亨 and Tang shi 唐詩 of Ji Zhenyi 季振宜. Includes some 48900 poems by 2200 poets from the Five Dynasties and Tang. High number of exemplars testifies to the large number printed and their effective distribution. They quickly reached Edo Japan and Joseon Korea. I have not made a comprehensive effort here to address the many editions and significant scholarship on this collection.

-KX 46 (1707). Yangzhou Poetry Bureau 揚州詩局.


Scholarship on Quan Tang shi: Wang Cheng, Yangzhou keshu kao 揚州刻書考, 57-59.

Wenchang ge xiao zhi 文星閣小志 (Modest Gazetteer of the Literary Star Pavilion). Circa 1711. Dingqiu editor (ji). -The *Shanghai Library (線善 T368681) exemplar is the only known copy of this work. Dingqiu’s printed compilation is preceded by a handwritten, unpaginated
composition by Peng Qifeng titled “Mu xiu Wenchang ge yin” 募修文昌閣引
(“Solicitation of Funds for Renovation of the Literary Star Pavilion”) dated QL 17 (1752). The title page bears no date, but I speculate that Dingqiu oversaw the printing himself, and Qifeng had his preface stitched on at a later date.

*Ming xian meng zheng lu 明賢蒙正錄. 2 juan. Dingqiu, editor (zuangji), Wang Yutu 汪與圖, proofer and commentator (can ping 參評).
-TZ 9 (1870). *University of Chicago, Regenstein (2259.7 4234).

*Zhongjie yishi 忠介遺事 (Past Affair of [Zhou Shunchang’s Persecution]).
Dingqiu, ed. (ji).
-GX 29 (1903). Cut by Tang Wenzhi 唐文治 et al. Facsimile reproduction of exemplar held by Beijing Shifan Daxue in XXSK: shi 史 v. 86: 851; the Siku quanshu tiyao catalog entry is reproduced following the collection itself. The XXSK edition is that appended to Zhou Zhongjie Gong jinyu ji 周忠介公燼餘集 (Anthology of Master Zhou [Shunchang]’s Cinders).

Annotations and Commentaries
*Xiaojing zuanzhu (cf. Peng Long). Dingqiu, editor (zuan 纂)

Translations
*Xiaojing pangxun 孝經旁訓 (Classic of Filial Piety with Marginal Explanations).
Translation into Manchu completed KX 25.2 (22 Feb.-23 March 1686). Dingqiu is credited as the Project Manager; I have not been able to determine if he actually knew Manchu. Dingqiu’s preface is included in Chinese in his autobiography Shijiang gong nianpu, 31a-b.

Publisher (Patron and initiator of re-cutting and printing)


-In gui ji 鬼集 6 in the 1906 Er xian’an edition of the Daozang jiyao.

The transmission of this version is credited to “the Daoist student Yang, the Master Who Nurtures Perfection” 葆真子陽道生傳本, edited by “the Daoist who Maintains the Web” 守網道人 Peng Dingqiu (1a). It contains a “Record of Encountering the Perfected” (Yu zhen ji 遇真記) dated Jiajing 30.8.1 (1551).

Dingqiu signs his “foreword” (xiaoyin 小引) “Mountain Man who Chants Odes to the Perfected” (Yong zhen shanren 詠真山人); it is dated first day of the first month of winter of KX 49.10.1 (21 Nov. 1710). Dingqiu explains that his father admired the work, and that now, seeing the paper become brittle and the ink blurry, Dingqiu decided to have the work “recut” (chongkan 重刊) in order to honor his late father’s intentions; Dingqiu’s terminology implies that the previous version was also printed. The text guides adepts through the steps to Inner Alchemical apotheosis, closing with “Parturition of the [Immortal Embryo” (tuo tai 脫胎) and “Returning to the Origin” (huan yuan 還元). The late page of the
Descriptive Catalog

text states: “Blocks stored in the Feng Creek Peng Residence” (ban cang Fengxi Peng di 板藏葑溪彭第) (j. xia: 24a).

-Jiajing edition (preceding Dingqiu’s involvement). Peking University; the only other known exemplar was sold at auction in Beijing on September 15, 2007 for 85,000 RMB. ⁴⁰


Scholarship on Zhen quan: Liu Xun, “Zhen quan,” Daozang Jiyao Project (forthcoming)

Posthumous Attributions

Yuanzai bidu shu 元宰必讀書 (The Must-Read Works of Optimi and Grand Secretaries). Peng Dingqiu, textbook editor (ke 課)


-DG 19 (1839). Beijing: Yuanhui zhai 元會齋. *University of Chicago, Regenstein (1681 4234)

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⁴⁰ Wei Li 韦力, Zhongguo guji paimai shuping 中国古籍拍卖述评 (Beijing: Zijincheng chubanshe, 2011): v. 2: 244. On the same page Wei also includes a color photograph of the preface (yin 引) and the handwritten colophon by the Huang Shang 黃裳.
Descriptive Catalog


According to title page: 古夾谷梅壇刊. The prefaces are: 碧落洞天帝主慈訓 (*xu* 序 1a-b); 梓潼元皇帝君序 (*xu* 2a-3a); 南屏濟顛禪師序 (*xu* 4a-5a); 天雷上相純陽帝君序 (*xu* 6a-7a); and 蓬萊掌教香山白太傅序 (*xu* 8a-9a). The Principles of Compilation (*fanli* 凡例) is attributed to Old Man Nanyun 南昀老人—a late life moniker of Peng Dingqiu—as *shi* 識 (*玉局功過格正宗凡例* [*fanli* 凡例 1a-2a]). Then follows the Table of Contents (*玉局功過格正宗目錄*). Each of the *juan* bears the credit: “Gentleman of the Jade Bureau Peng Dingqiu Descended Selector” 玉局大夫彭定求降選, followed by “Corrected by the Various Disciples of the Plum Altar of Ancient Squeezing Valley” 古夾谷梅壇諸子校訂.

**Peng Ningqiu** 寧寗求 (1649-1700)

*jinshi* (*tanhua*) KX 21.1.311 (1682)

*zì* Wenqia 文洽; *hào* Zhanting 瞻庭.

Biographical and bibliographical resource:

*Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou juan*; v. 1: 752

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11 *Qingdai weike xingshi lu*, j 下: 5b.
Descriptive Catalog

Eleventh Generation

Peng Yingqian 彭應乾

Biographical and bibliographical resource:

Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou juan: v. 2: 843-44

Twelfth Generation

Peng Qifeng 彭啟豐 (1701-84)

jinshi (double optimus) YZ 5.1.1 (1727)

zi Hanwen 翰文; hao Zhiting 芝庭 (Courtyard Mushroom); studio names Diemeng kan 蝶夢龕, Yanyuan xuan 延綠軒, Langai caotang 蘭陔草堂, Hanqing ge 涵青閣, Manxian ge 幌仙閣, Huanyin Shuwo 環蔭書屋, Chuyun yuan 鉏雲園, Xiangshan laoren 香山老人.

Biographies in:

Dou Zhen 竇鎭, Guochao shuhuajia bilu 國朝書畫家筆錄, j. 1: 55a.

Gu Yuan, ed., Wujun mingxian tuzhuanzan, j. 12: 6a-b.

Han mingchen zhuan 漢名臣傳, j. 31: 26b-34b.

Li Huan, ed., Guochao qixian leizheng chubian, j. 78: 31a-43a.

12 Qingdai weike xingshi lu, j. 下: 10b-11a. Ranked 74th in provincial examination.
13 Yang Tingfu 楊廷福, Qingren shiming bie cheng zi hao suoyin 清人室名別稱字號索引 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2001) and Qing huajia shishi, j. bing shang 丙上: 31a (QZC, v. 75: 670).
14 “He was once received at the gathering of the Nine Old Men of Fragrance Mountain, hence the hao 'Old Man of Fragrance Mountain'. “ 嘗蒙賜與香山九老會, 因號香山老人。 Qing huajia shishi, j. bingshang: 31a.
Descriptive Catalog

Li Junzhi 李濬之, *Qing huajia shishi* 清畫家詩史, 丙上: 31a-b.


_Zingshi liezhuan_, 19: 41a-43b.


Zhu Fangzeng 朱方增, ed., *Congzheng guanfa lu* 從政觀法錄, 14b-16a.

Biographical and bibliographical resource:

*Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou juan* v. 2: 912-13

Original Works

*Zhiting xiansheng ji* 芝庭先生集 (Anthology of Master Courtyard Mushroom).

*Zhiting shi wen gao* 芝庭詩文稿 (Preliminary Draft of Courtyard Mushroom’s Poetry and Essays).


*Shangshu gong nianpu* 尚書公年譜 (Autobiography of the Grand Secretary).

Last entry provides date only; it is for QL 49 (1784), the year of Qifeng’s death. A postface (n.p.: 90a-b) by Qifeng’s great-grandson Peng Yunzhang.

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15 Consisting of the text posted approaching Peng Qifeng’s grave (*shendao beiming* 神道碑銘) by Wang Qisun 王芑孫.
Descriptive Catalog

explains the original plans for publication that came to naught. Unpaginated ms.

*Suzhou Library, *Suzhou Museum

*Peng Qifeng linian jilüe 彭啟豐歷年紀略* (Abbreviated Chronological Record of [the Life of] Peng Qifeng).

Circa 1837. A printed work based on the above manuscript autobiography. A postface by Pan Shi’en 潘世恩 dated 1837 states that Peng Yunzhang brought the manuscript to his attention (121a-b). Pan Shi’en’s postface is followed by an unpaginated handwritten summary of accomplishments (*shizhuang* 事狀) of Qifeng’s by his son Shaosheng. *Shanghai Library (#740039). I speculate that *Peng Qifeng linian jilüe* is based on the *Shangshu gong nianpu* manuscripts.

Annotations and Commentaries

*Yijing richao 易經日抄* (Working Manuscript on the Classics of Changes).


Thirteenth Generation

*Peng Shaoqian 紹謙*

*juren* QL 12 (1747)

Eldest son of Qifeng.

Biographical and bibliographical resource:
Peng Shaoguan 紹觀

jinshi QL 22.2.57 (1757)
Second son of Qifeng.

Peng Shaosheng 彭紹升 (1740-96)

jinshi QL 26.1.18 (1761)
zi Yunchu 允初, hao Erlin 二林, Chimu 尺木, Zhiguizi 知歸子.
Fourth son of Qifeng. Two daughters, no biological sons; adopted brother Shaoxian’s son Xilai.

Biographies in:
Gu Yuan, ed., Wujun mingxian tu zhuan zan, j. 20: 19a.
Jiang Fan, Songxue yuan yuan ji, j. 3 (附記): 6a-?
Qingshi liezhuan 72: 28a-? (1987 ed., v. 18: 5924-7)
Tang Jian, Qing ru xue’an xiao shi, j. 15 (末): 7a-b
Xu Shichang et al., eds., Qing ru xue’an 清儒學案, j. 42: 1640-48 (biographical portion 1640)
Zhang Weiping, Guochao shiren zhenglüe chubian, j. 37: 11a-12a

Biographical and bibliographical resource:
Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou, v. 2: 1013-15

**Original Works**

*Erlin juji* 二林居集 (Anthology of Residing in the Two Groves)

-JQ 4 (1799). 4 ce. “Printing blocks stored at the Tasting Incipience Hall” 味初堂藏版. *Soochow University, Binglin Library (705198)


*Yixing Juji* 一行居集 (Anthology of Residing in Unified Praxis)

-DG 5.10-12 (1835-1836).

-Beijing: Beijing kejing chu, 1919. 4 ce, 8 juan.

Electronic: http://www.minlun.org.tw/2pt/2pt-1-10/t-0.htm

*Guan he ji* 觀河集 (Contemplating the River). 4 juan.

Descriptive Catalog


*Ru xing shu* 儒行述 (Commentary on the Conduct of Classicists).

-In *Zhao dai cong shu Xubian bu* 昭代叢書續編補 (n.p.: Shi kai tang 世楷堂): ce 47, j. 3: 1a-38a.

*Ce hai ji* 滕海集 (Fathoming the Depths of the Sea)

Collection of Shaosheng’s poetry from 18 to around 40 years of age.

**Compilations**

*Jushi zhuan* 居士傳 (Biographies of Scholar Recluses/Buddhist Laymen). 56 *juan*. Shaosheng, ed. (*juan* 鐲).


-Meiji 15.2 (1883). Ishimura Teiichi kunten 訓點桐陰書屋藏本.
Descriptive Catalog


Shan nüren zhuan 善女人傳. 2 juan.

-1872.


-Meiji 16 (1894). Ishimura Teiichi kunten edition. Held by National Diet Library, Japan. A portion of Ishimura’s version was serialized in the periodical Fujin kyōkai zasshi 婦人教会雑誌 (Women’s Congregation Miscellany) from 1889-90.

Studies of Shan nüren zhuan: Lo, “Indeterminacy in Meaning”; Wu, “Leading the Good Life”

According to Qifeng’s preface and Shaosheng’s principles of compilation (*fanli*), *Guansheng dijun quanshu* is largely based on Lu Zhan 盧湛, *Guansheng dijun shengji tuzhi* 關聖帝君聖蹟圖誌 (of circa 1692).

Disambiguation: The *Guandi quanshu* reproduced in *Guandi wenxian huibian* 關帝文獻彙編 (Beijing: Guojia wenhua chubanshe, 1995), v. 5, is not that of Shaosheng, but was rather edited by Huang Qishu 黃啟曙 (preface XF 8) and bears a second prefaced dated DG 15.


Research on *Guansheng dijun quanshu*: Vincent Goossaert, “The Textual Canonization of Guandi” (forthcoming)

*Zhishen lu* 質神錄 (Record of Interrogating the Spirits). Shaosheng, ed. (*bian* 編).

Preface QL 38.7-9 (18 Aug.-13 Nov. 1773). A collection of spirit-writing séances beginning in 1678, primarily overseen by Dingqiu but continuing on after Dingqiu’s death. For the full list of deities who descended, see Appendix 3.1.

-DG 22/8 (1842). Published by the Jiaolin Studio on the south side of the Yangmeizhu Diagonal Road 楊梅竹斜街路南交林齋, which also retained the woodblocks 本宅藏板. Includes the *Xu* 續 *Zhishen lu* (Continuation of the Record of Interrogating Deities). *Gest*

-n.d. in electronic catalog of the National Library of China. 3 *ce*. Includes the *Xu Zhishen lu*. 
Corrections and Punctuations


Huo Yanluo is the name of the thirty-first Liangshan outlaw in the celebrated late Ming novel _Shuihu zhuan_.

-TZ 10 (1871). In Yi xin pudu hebian, j. 2: 8a-28b. Coverleaf: 蘇城得見齋藏版瑪瑙經房印造 Dejian zhai was the printing operation operated in the Abbey of Primordial Mystery in Suzhou. *Suzhou Library M/6163, Waseda University (electronic edition available).*
**Fourteenth Generation**

**Peng Xilian** 希濂 (d. JQ 24.9 [1819])

*jinshi* QL 49.2.9 (1784)

*zi* Suzhou 溯周; *hao* Xiutian 修田.

Junior Vice President of Board of Punishments; Fujian Judicial Commission 按察使.\(^{16}\)

Biography in:

*Guochao qixian leizheng chubian*, *j*. 78 42a-43a; under entry for his grandfather Peng Qifeng

\(^{16}\) *Qingshi gao liezhuan*, *j*. 304.
Peng Xisu 希涑 (1761-93)

juren QL 51 (1786).

zi Leyuan 樂園 (“Happiness Garden”); hao Lantai 蘭臺 (Orchard Platform).

Devoted to the study of Buddhism due to the influence of his uncle Peng Shaosheng.

Wife née Jiang 江 (1747-99).

Biographies:

ECCP, v. 2: 620 (under his son “Peng Yunzhang”)

Jiangsu yiwenzhi: Suzhou, v. 2: 1098

Compilations


Selections of official histories, from the Shiji 史記 to Ming shi 明史, read through the lens of Taishang ganying pian.

-DG 29. Included in Haishan xianguan congshu 海山仙官叢書. 1 ce. Suzhou

Library credits publisher as “the Pans” 潘氏. Small format but finely printed.

Coverleaf substitutes nian 廿 (single character for “twenty”) for er shi 二十. Peng Shaosheng: “Er shi er shi ganying lu yuan xu” 二十二史感應錄 (xu 1a-2b), dated QL 46.4 (1781); fanli (fanli 1a-2a); Peng Xisu “Er shi er shi ganying lu zi xu”
(Author’s preface) (zi xu 1a-2a) n.d.; “Er shi er shi ganying lu xu lun” 緒論 (xu lun 1a-9b).

*Suzhou Library M/17937.


-In XXSK, v. 1286: 173-354. Masters Division, Religion Class. The same edition, held by Beijing tushuguan, includes a 4 juan continuation, Jingtu shengxian lu xubian. It is edited
by a Liangui jushi 連歸居士 (v. 1286: 355-418). Also included is the Zhonglian ji 種蓮集 in one juan (v. 1286: 419-426)

Peng Xiluo 希洛 (1758-1806) jinshi Qianlong 52.2.11 (1787)
zi Jingchuan 景川; hao Yaopu 瑤圃, Jianyuan 簡緣.
Nephew of Shaosheng

Biographies:
Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou, v. 2: 1081

Tao Shan 陶善 (1756-80)
zi Qingyu 慶餘; hao Yuexi 月溪.
Wife of Peng Xiluo.

According to the Ming Qing Women’s Writing Project, biographies of Tao Shan include:
Guochao guixiu zheng shi lu 國朝閨秀正始集 (Record of Female Poets of the Beginning to the End of Our Dynasty); Suzhou fu zhi 蘇州府志; Xiefang ji 擷芳集; Xu zang jing 續藏經 (The [Buddhist] Canon, Continued); and Xiaodai Huan lunshi shilu 小黛軒論詩詩錄 (Record of the Poetry Discussions of the Petite Eyebrows Pavilion). Biographers included Tao Zhang 陶璋 and Peng Xiluo, who authored an abbreviated chronology of events in Tao’s life (shilüe 事略).
Scholarship on Tao Shao: Grant, “Who is This I? Who is That Other?”

**Original Works**

_Qiong lou yin gao_ 瓊樓吟稿. 1 _juan_. 1883 ed. Exemplar of Sun Yat-Sen University Library Collection 中山大學圖書館藏. Electronic facsimile access: Ming-Qing Women’s Poetry Project.

**Peng Xizheng** 希鄭 (1764-1831)

_jinshi_ QL 54 (1789)

_zi_ Huiying 會英; _hao_ Weijian 萬間, Yaquan 雅泉 (“Elegant Font”).

Biographies:

_Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou_, v. 2: 1118

**Peng Xifan** 希范

_juren_ QL 39 (1774)

_zi_ Jiacai 嘉材.

Biographies:

_Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou_, v. 2: 1054

_Fifteenth Generation_
**Peng Yuncan 蘊灿 (1780-1840)**

*zi* Zhencai 振采, *hao* Langfeng 郎峰.

Biographies:

*Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou*, v. 2: 1191

**Peng Yunzhang 蘊章 (24 Aug. 1792-29 Dec. 1862)**

*jinshi* DG 15.2.50 (1835)

*zi* Teibao 鐵寶; original name Zongda 琮達; *hao* Yong’e 永莪, Laoxue’an 老學庵,

*Songfeng ge* 松風閣, *Yigu laoren* 訕穀老人.

Biographies in:

*Suzhou Wenzheng Yibian Xingshi Xiaozhuan* 蘇州文徵乙編姓氏小傳 in *Fu’an Waigao* 復盦外稿, j. 2: 42b-43b

*Qingshi liezhuan* 45: 48b- (1987 ed. 12: 3596-7)

*Xu beizhuan ji* 4: 23b-24b

Biographical and Bibliographical Sources:

*ECCP*, v. 2: 620-621

*Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou*, v. 2: 1243-44
Descriptive Catalog

Original Works


*Peng Wenjing gong quanji* 彭文敬公全集 (latest preface dated 1868). 26 jian.


*Guipu kan congchao* 歸樎蠡叢鈔. 12 jian, *Guipu kan cong xu* 續 chao. 4 jian.


*Laoxue an dushu ji* 老學菴讀書記 (Reading Notes from the Old Learning Hut). 4 jian.

*Heheshu zhiyi* 鶴和數制義. 1 jian. Essays in examination style.
Descriptive Catalog

**Peng Yi** 彭翊

zi Zhongshan 仲山.

Son of Peng Yunzhang

Biographies:

*Jiangsu yiwen zhi: Suzhou*, v. 2: 1258-59

*Sixteenth Generation*

**Peng Zuxian** 祖賢 (1819-85)

*juren* XF 5 (1855)

*hao* Shaoting 芍庭.

Fourth of eight sons of Peng Yunzhang. Governor of Hubei (1880-85).

**Compilations**

*Peng shi zong pu*. Four *juan*, two *ce*.

-TZ 6 (1867). Zuxian, co-editor (with Peng Weigao).

*Changzhou Peng shi jia ji* 長洲彭氏家集 (Family Anthology of the Peng Clan of Changzhou [County]), also titled *Peng shi suo zhu shu* 彭氏所著書 (Books Written by the Peng Clan). Zuxian, editor (*ji*).

-1880-81. *Tōbunken* (complete set). Many other libraries hold individual *ce*. The timing of the production of the collection is revealing in regard to the social nature of publishing among Qing literati-officials. Zuxian began his term as
Governor of Hubei in 1880. He thus launched his term as governor with one of the most impressive calling cards available: a collection of one’s own lineage’s intellectual and cultural production over centuries, produced in a handsome collection that, taken together, would have been over a meter high! The only exemplar of Peng Zuxian’s compendia of clan patriarchs that I have found to be found in cases for groups of separately bound folios is that of the Tōbunken.

Contents:

Peng Dingqiu, author (zhuan 撰), Nanyun quanji 南昀全集 (Complete Literary Anthologies of Nanyun [Peng Dingqiu]).

*Nanyun shi gao*. 17 juan.

*Nanyun wen gao*. 12 juan

*Xiao ti wengao* 小題文稾. 1 juan.

*Nanyun laoren ziding nianpu*. 1 juan.

*Nanyun shi gao fu lu* 南昀詩稾附錄. Peng Dingqiu, original editor (yuan bian 原編).

*Rumen fa yu ji yao* 儒門法語輯要 (Essentials of Model Sayings of the Classicist School). 1 juan

*Mi zheng lu*. 1 juan

*Yaojiang shi hui lu* 姚江釋毁錄. 1 juan.

*Bu xuan lu* 不諫錄. 1 juan.

Peng Qifeng, author (zhuan). Zhiting xiansheng ji 芝庭先生集. 18 juan.

Appended record (fu lu 附錄) 1 juan
Descriptive Catalog

Peng Shaosheng, author (zhuan).

_Erlin ju ji_ 二林居集 (Anthology of the Resident of Two Groves). 24 _juan_

Peng Ji 彭績, author (zhuan).

_Qiushi xiansheng yi ji_ 秋士先生遺集 (Posthumous Works of Master Qiushi). Six _juan_

Peng Shaosheng, compiler (ji).

_Ce hai ji_ 測海集. 6 _juan._

Peng Yunzhang, author (zhuan).

_Peng Wenjing gong quan ji_ 彭文敬公全集 (Complete Anthologies of Lord Peng who Reveres Culture). Consisting of:

- _Peng Wenjing gong quan ji fu lu_ (Appended record to _Complete Anthologies of Lord Peng who Reveres Culture_) 1 _juan_
- _Yi gu laoren shouding nian pu_ 諒穀老人手訂年譜 (Chronological Biography of Old Man Yigu, hand-corrected [by the author himself]) 1 _juan_
- _Guipukan cong gao_ 歸樸龕叢稿. 12 _juan_. Continuation in four _juan._
- _Songfeng ge shi chao_ 松風閣詩鈔 (Draft Poetry from [the Master of] the Breeze-through-Cypress Pavilion). 26 _juan_
  _Hehe lou zhi yi._ 1 _juan_. Supplementary folio (_bu bian_ 補編).

_Nanyue laoren ziding nianpu_. Zuxian, “Meticulous Editor” (_jinbian_ 謹編).
Electronic Resources

Except for dictionaries, in this dissertation I have only cited electronic resources that provide digital fascimiles of the original works alongside the transcript of the text.

Daozang jiyao 道藏輯要 in the Kanseki Repository

https://www.kanripo.org/

Digital Dictionary of Buddhism. Edited by Charles Muller http://www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb/ (DDB)

Eruidtion (Airusheng 愛如生) Gazetteers Database (Difangzhi ku 地方志庫)

Private (subscription only) database

The Ming-Qing Women’s Writings Project 明清婦女著作數字計劃


Zhonghua xungen 中华寻根

http://ouroots.nlc.cn/
Bibliography

I indicate cases in which scholars writing in non-Western European languages provided their own translation of a title with an asterix [*].


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