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Bureaucratic Charisma:

The Zhang Heavenly Master

Institution and Court Taoists in Late-Qing China

Most scholars of Taoist history agree that the origins of the modern Taoist clergy can be found in the Way of the Heavenly Master, Tianshi dao 天師道, established by the mid-second century in Sichuan by the semihistorical figure of Zhang Daoling 張道陵. In 142 AD, according to Taoist tradition, Zhang was visited by Taishang laojun 太上老君 who named him his vicar on Earth with the title of Heavenly Master, a title later also given to Zhang's son and grandson. The Tianshi dao was a large organization run as a semi-independent state under the Heavenly Master's leadership, holding parish registers and gathering all members at compulsory collective meetings. Its political autonomy came to a brutal end in 215, and dignitaries and devotees had to migrate to various parts of the Chinese territory. Gradually during the medieval and Tang periods, the parishes of the Tianshi dao disappeared, and their priests became a freelance clergy loosely organized as the Zhengyi 正一 Order, serving the popular temples built and run by lay associations consecrated to Chinese religion's local saints. This clergy, however, maintained its theological, spiritual, and political allegiance to the heirs of the Tianshi dao's founders.

Hagiography has it that Zhang Daoling's great-grandson, putatively the fourth Heavenly Master, moved to a distant location, the mountain area named Longhu shan 龍虎山 near Guixi 貴溪 (now in Jiangxi province). Zhang Daoling was also said to have once practiced self-cultivation on Longhu shan when young. Actually, the historical links between Longhu shan and the founders of the Tianshi dao are not

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clear. The institution of a Zhang family, claiming descent from Zhang Daoling, transmitting a hereditary position of authority within the Taoist clergy and based on Longhu shan can be historically ascertained only beginning with the seventh century.¹ The notion that the title of Heavenly Master (Tianshi) conferred by Laozi upon Zhang Daoling was hereditary and instituted in perpetuity also seems to be this family's invention. But this invention was a hugely successful one, and the institution of hereditary Zhang Heavenly Masters based on Longhu shan has been alive and influential ever since.

By rule, the Heavenly Master was chosen by his predecessor, and was normally his eldest son, occasionally a nephew;² the state then confirmed the nomination through an edict. When the successor was too young, a regent (often an uncle of the young successor) was named as the acting Heavenly Master. Historical sources document the seemingly reliable genealogy from about the twentieth generation to the present contested 64th successor living in Taiwan; some members of the family are now playing leading roles in mainland Taoism.

State recognition has played a pivotal role in the history of the Zhang Heavenly Masters. The first known official title of a Longhu shan Zhang as Heavenly Master was granted in the mid-tenth century. The prestige and official patronage of the Zhangs and Longhu shan reached new heights with the 30th Heavenly Master, Zhang Jixian 張繼先 (1092–1127), arguably the most charismatic ever. By the Southern Song period, the Longhu shan Zhangs were at the head of a China-wide Taoist ordination system regulating the thousands of priests and their various traditions and liturgical ranks and privileges. As a consequence, from the Song to 1911 their Longhu shan complex continuously enjoyed imperial favors in both financial and political terms.

By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these favors had somewhat subsided when compared to peaks during the Ming period, but the late-imperial Longhu shan headquarters could certainly not be described as being in decline then. Furthermore, as more material is available for this late period, such as archives, the press, anecdotal

¹ Timothy Barrett, "The Emergence of the Taoist Papacy in the T'ang Dynasty," *AM* 3d ser. 7.1 (1994), pp. 89–106.

² I have not been able to see the Zhang genealogy *Liuhou Tianshi shijia Zhang shi zongpu* 留侯天師世家張氏宗譜 compiled in 1890 by the 61st Heavenly Master Zhang Renzheng 張仁晟 (1820–1902, titled 1862), a rare document. I therefore cannot ascertain whether the succession strictly followed seniority in descent, or (as in certain other lineages) also took account of personal qualities and charisma among eligible kins. The name Liuhou for the Zhang lineage is taken from the official title of Zhang Liang 張良 (?–187 BC), a general who helped Liu Bang establish the Han dynasty, and was reputedly Zhang Daoling's tenth-generation ancestor.

sources, and fieldwork material, a study of the last Zhang Heavenly Masters just preceding the twentieth-century upheavals can shed light on aspects of their religious and social role not well documented for other periods, and this is why I deal here with a time span covering eight generations of Heavenly Masters, from the 54th Zhang Jizong 張繼宗 (1667–1715, titled 1680) to the 62d Zhang Yuanxu 張元旭 (1862–1924, titled 1904).³

My topic here is the “Heavenly Master institution,” by which I include the whole of the Zhang family, the Longhu shan temples and residences as well as their clerical personnel and liturgical services. This fascinating institution was a major, and in many ways unique, actor on the late-imperial religious and political scenes and it deserves comprehensive research that would explore its liturgy and music,⁴ spirituality, and theology – topics that are hardly mentioned here. The present article aims at describing and analyzing the workings of the Heavenly Master institution by focusing on its clerical personnel, its relation with the state, and its overall place in the Chinese religious economy.

This is only a preliminary study relying on a limited number of relevant documents. I use some Taoist sources such as liturgical manuals and monastic gazetteers but mostly non-Taoist ones, such as government archives, anecdotic literature, and the press in order to explore how late-imperial Chinese people perceived the Heavenly Master institution and what they thought remarkable about it. While each of these sources provides only a one-sided view of the Heavenly Masters’ activities, taken as a whole, they converge to form a coherent discourse. More details could be unearthed on the working of the institution seen from the inside, and unpublished archives and manuscripts, notably from Taoist families, have the potential to expand vastly the source-base in the future.

Furthermore, the existing relevant scholarly literature is still modest in size, the most important studies so far being those by Zhang Jiyu 張繼禹, himself a member of the Zhang family, a trained Taoist, and a scholar, and Wang Jianchuan 王見川 who has devoted a well-docu-

³ For biogs. of late-Qing Heavenly Masters, see Qing Xitai 卿希泰, ed., *Zhongguo Daojiao shi* 中國道教史 (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1995) 4, pp. 329–33; Zhang Yuanxu 張元旭 (1862–1924), *Bu Han tianshi shijia* 補漢天師世家 (1918), in Koyanagi Shikita 小柳司氣太, *Baiyun guan zhi* 白雲觀志 (Tokyo: Tōhō bunka gakuin Tōkyō kenkyūjō, 1934), pp. 347–56.

⁴ On these, see Cao Benye 曹本冶 and Liu Hong 劉紅, *Longhu shan Tianshi dao yinyue yanjiu* 龍虎山天師道音樂研究 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1996), and Wang Zhongren 王忠人, *Zhongguo Longhu shan Tianshi dao yinyue* 中國龍虎山天師道音樂 (Beijing: Zhongguo wenlian chuban gongsi, 1992).

mented and as yet unpublished dissertation to the history of Heavenly Masters.⁵ I hope to contribute to this growing field by shedding new light on what sort of religious organization the Zhang Heavenly Master institution was. I will begin by sketching its history during the late-Qing period, before focusing on their representatives at the court in Peking, and ending with a more theoretical discussion of the kind of authority and leadership exercised by the institution in late-Qing society.

Notably, I argue that the specificity of the Zhang Heavenly Master institution rested in large part in its articulation of a bureaucratic organization and charisma – that supposedly innate but actually socially constructed ability/power (*ling* 靈) to demonstrate efficacy, to make things happen, notably but not solely in ritual context, and thereby to generate leadership and obedience.⁶ While the Zhangs and their clerical staff were hardly alone in possessing charisma, they were unique in the way they framed it in a thoroughly bureaucratic form.

THE ZHANG FAMILY DURING THE LATE-QING PERIOD

The Zhang Heavenly Masters, like other religious dignitaries within the Qing empire, such as the Dalai Lama, were installed through an imperial edict, and while the court meddled relatively little in the actual choice of the person,⁷ it paid much attention to the nomination ritual and its implied meanings regarding the subordination of the dignitary to the emperor. The precise titles and honors conferred by the imperial state on the Zhang Heavenly Masters changed every so often under successive dynasties (the word *tianshi* was not used in official titles after 1368 and replaced by the more modest *zhenren* 真人), but until 1911 the principle remained in both popular worldview and in

⁵ Zhang Jiyu 張繼禹, *Tianshi dao shilue* 天師道史略 (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 1990); Wang Jianchuan 王見川, “Zhang tianshi zhi yanjiu, yi Longhu shan yixi wei kaocha zhongxin” 張天師之研究以龍虎山一系為考察中心, Ph.D. diss. (Chia-Yi: Guoli Zhongzheng daxue, 2003), and idem, “Zhang tianshi yanjiu xushuo, chengguo huigu yu xiangguan shiliao bianzheng” 張天師研究序說成果回顧與相關史料辨正, *Taiwan zongjiao yanjiu tongxun* 臺灣宗教研究通訊 5 (2003), pp. 165–206.

⁶ The most sophisticated study of charisma in a Chinese context to date is that of Stephan Feuchtwang and Wang Mingming, *Grassroots Charisma: Four Local Leaders in China* (London: Routledge, 2001), but it focuses on local political (and religiously mediated) processes and does not address clerical charisma.

⁷ The governor of Jiangxi province memorialized the throne, who nominated his successor after consultation with the boards of Rites and Personnel. The choice, especially when the deceased Heavenly Master had no sons, must have rested primarily with the Zhang family, and it does not seem that officials were actively involved in favoring some eligible candidates over others. See for instance documents pertaining to the succession of the 57th Heavenly Master in 1780 in the Archives held by the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, no. 94418.

official texts that the Zhang family inherited Zhang Daoling's role as the overseer of Taoism and protector of its orthodoxy.

The Ming court and state had been on the whole very generous patrons of the institution. The Qing state at first continued the Ming policy towards the Zhang Heavenly Master and maintained his titles and ranks at their high Ming level. Under the Qianlong reign, however, it engaged in a trend towards reducing both his formal titles and privileges and his actual powers in supervising the Taoist clergy. In 1742, while confirmed as the 56th Heavenly Master, and having seen the emperor at the Yuanming yuan, Zhang Yulong 張遇隆 (?-1766, titled 1742) was barred from further attendance at court. In January of 1748, his rank was lowered from first to fifth.⁸ It would only rise to third rank in 1766 when the newly enthroned 57th Heavenly Master Zhang Cunyi 張存義 (1752-1779, titled 1766) succeeded in obtaining rain on imperial request.⁹ After forty-seven years of banishment from court audiences, the Heavenly Masters were granted one audience every five years between 1789 and 1819, only to be thereafter banned again and forever. According to one story, the 62d Heavenly Master Zhang Yuanxu came to Peking in 1905 and tried to bribe an official to gain an audience with the empress-dowager Cixi, but his request was turned down.¹⁰ On the whole, the official status of the Zhang Heavenly Master was significantly lower during the nineteenth century than it had been in the Yongzheng reign.¹¹ However, if it received less state honors, probably because of growing hostility from hard-line Confucians, the Zhang Heavenly Master institution, as we see, was still present at court through its representatives on official duty for the emperor's liturgical service – the opposition between state and court being quite clear.

Such political downturns did not dent the Zhang Heavenly Master institution's prestige among the Taoist clergy and the population at large, however. This prestige rested less with imperial recognition than with inherited legitimacy. The Zhang family, one of the earliest instances of a clerical lineage within the Taoist clergy, had developed

⁸ Hosoya Yoshio 細谷良夫, "Kenryū chō no Seiikyō" 乾隆朝の正一教, in Akizuki Kan'ei 秋月観暎, ed., *Dōkyō to shūkyō bunka* 道教と宗教文化 (Tokyo: Hirakawa, 1987), pp. 572-74, 581-84, who sets right the dates of these decisions.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 584.

¹⁰ Hu Sijing 胡思敬 (1870-1922), "Zhang tianshi shoupian" 張天師受騙, in *Guowen beicheng* 國聞備乘 (1911; Chongqing: Chongqing chubanshe, 1998) 1, p. 141.

¹¹ On the history of relations between the Zhang Heavenly Masters and the Qing state, see Wang, "Zhang tianshi," pp. 70-80; Hosoya, "Kenryū chō"; and Qing, *Zhongguo dao jiao shi*, pp. 214, 329-33.

a theory of hereditary charisma and legitimacy, whereby the spiritual qualities needed to uphold the role imparted to Zhang Daoling (that is, restore order in the universe through expelling demons and guarantee the covenant between humanity and the Dao) were genetically transmitted through its blood and bones. The lineage transmission was confirmed by numinous objects handed over from one Heavenly Master to the next, notably Zhang Daoling's sword, a critical tool in exorcistic work, as well as his seal of authority, bearing the name of Zhang Daoling's diocese (Yangping zhi dugong yin 陽平治都功印). Other seals were later granted to Heavenly Masters by emperors and were added to their paraphernalia.¹² The use of such numinous objects as signs of both legitimacy (the proof of possession of the mandate of Heaven) and charisma (qualities that make one deserve this mandate) is a very old tradition, in which imperial and Taoist notions were deeply intertwined.¹³

If the whole institution hinged on the theological status of one person, it relied for its actual working on a much larger set of persons, the family and the clerical officials. The Zhang family indeed wielded power and influence radiating from Longhu shan and along networks of connections with other locally or nationally prominent families, Taoist or not.¹⁴ The well-educated Zhangs were not all full-time Taoists; some made careers in the civil bureaucracy, such as Zhang Qilong 張起隆 (1736–1798, titled 1779) who, before becoming the 58th Heavenly Master, had been a county vice-magistrate.¹⁵ The Zhang family status could only be compared with that of the descendants of Confucius, the Kong family in Qufu, also given a hereditary title (Yansheng gong 衍聖公) and generously financed by the state.¹⁶ Like the Kongs of Qufu, the Longhu shan Zhangs were given titles, privileges, and a right to man-

¹² On Heavenly Masters' sword and seals, see Zhang Jintao 張金濤, *Zhongguo Longhu shan Tianshi dao* 中國龍虎山天師道 (Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 2000 [1990]), pp. 162–67, and Zhang, *Tianshi dao shilüe*, pp. 136–37.

¹³ The classical study is by Anna Seidel, "Imperial Treasures and Taoist Sacraments: Taoist Roots in the Apocrypha," in Michel Strickmann, ed., *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R. A. Stein* (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Etudes Chinoises, 1983) 2, pp. 291–371.

¹⁴ Marriages with imperial princesses or other noble persons were common during the Ming but apparently less so during the Qing. A better knowledge of the precise background of their matrimonial alliances must await a study of the Zhang genealogy.

¹⁵ Lou Jinyuan 婁近垣 (1689–1776), *Longhu shan zhi* 龍虎山志 (1740; edn. with 1844 addenda, kept at Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris), pp. 44a–b. Zhang Daben 張大本 (1767–?), fourth-generation kin and adopted son of the 57th Heavenly Master, also led a distinguished career at the *Siku quanshu* compilation office and in military positions in the provinces: Guo Shusen 郭樹森, *Tianshi dao* 天師道 (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan, 1990), p. 194. More evidence can certainly be found in the Zhang genealogy: *Liuhou Tianshi shijia Zhang shi zongpu*.

¹⁶ In contrast to Longhu shan material, the considerable archives of the Kong family have been kept and partly published. On the late-imperial Kong family institution, see Abigail Lam-

age their heritage (temples, rites) but no spiritual authority to interpret the tradition they were incarnating: this was an imperial privilege, the emperor being the supreme religious authority in the empire and the head of both Taoism and Confucianism.

The Heavenly Master institution was built on the hereditary privileges of the Zhang family but was supported by a large retinue of elite Taoist priests serving as the Heavenly Master's officials. During the Ming and Qing, these priests were known collectively as *faguan* 法官 and held official, if not paid, positions in the imperial bureaucracy. During the late Qing, there were 26 *faguan* positions on Longhu shan.¹⁷ The term *faguan* has various meanings in Taoist contexts; because *fa* usually refers to minor exorcistic rituals, by contrast to the grand classical liturgy (*keyi* 科儀), *faguan* is often synonymous with *fashi* 法師, a master of exorcistic rituals. However, in the context of the late-imperial Heavenly Master institution and state management of Taoism, *faguan* refers to those Taoists given official positions either directly by the state or through the Heavenly Master. They formed a close-knit milieu of elite Taoists constituted as a bureaucratic superstructure over the very loosely organized Taoist clergy and supporting the Heavenly Master in his function as the overseer of Taoist tradition and orthodoxy. Indeed, an eighteenth-century author even found that the Heavenly Masters he met were just "plain ordinary scholars," but his *faguan* were real wonder-making Taoists.¹⁸

During the late Qing, the Zhang Heavenly Master's official task, as defined by his investiture edicts, was to control the orthodoxy of Taoism; however he was not in charge of managing Taoists throughout China, a mission entrusted to another type of state-appointed Taoist official, *daoguan* 道官, in an office named the Daolu si 道錄司 (with eight Taoist officials) headquartered in the capital, and one or two Taoists in each prefecture and county seat.¹⁹ It is very likely that Daolu si officials in Peking and in the provinces maintained a correspondence

berton, "The Kongs of Qufu: Power and Privilege in Late Imperial China," in Thomas A. Wilson, ed., *On Sacred Grounds: Culture, Society, Politics, and the Formation of the Cult of Confucius* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), pp. 297–332.

¹⁷ Lou, *Longhu shan zhi* (1740; Nanchang: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1996; hereafter, *LZ*) 8, pp. 108–9; *Da Qing huidian shili* 大清會典事例 (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1908) 501, pp. 8a–b.

¹⁸ Xu Zhongyuan 許仲元 (fl. 1827), "Zhenren fu faguan" 真人府法官, in *Sanyi bitan* 三異筆譚 (*Biji xiaoshuo daguan* 筆記小說大觀 edn.) 4, pp. 8a–9a. The first of the anonymous *faguan* exorcising demons in this anecdote is probably Lou Jinyuan, on whom see below.

¹⁹ On late-Qing clerical officials, see Vincent Goossaert, *The Peking Taoists, 1800–1949* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, forthcoming), chap. 1.

with the Longhu shan administration, but as no extant archives from either is known and available, this can only remain a hypothesis.²⁰ The Longhu shan's control over nominations in major Taoist monasteries and temples was certainly much more limited under the Qing than it had been under the Ming.

Heavenly Masters visited the imperial court for audiences (except between 1742 and 1789 and after 1819) but also frequently traveled, when invited by lay communities or rich individuals to perform rituals, hold ordinations, and select new *faguan*; they also sent their *faguan* on missions throughout China, something the state tried to curtail. During late-Qing, Heavenly Masters often visited the Jiangnan area, and indeed during the Republican period they were more often in Shanghai than on Longhu shan.²¹ This is also the area where most *faguan* were from, and if the links between the Heavenly Master and local Taoists were quite intimate in Jiangnan and Jiangxi, they were much looser in most other parts of China.

The influence of the living Heavenly Master was not as widespread as the cult of Zhang Daoling, the prime exorcist under Heaven, who was throughout China worshiped as an icon, invoked during rituals, and eulogized in oral or written narratives.²² Yet the charisma of the former fed on the cult of the latter. It would certainly seem that wherever the Zhang Heavenly Master went, usually accompanied by a retinue of *faguan*, he met with devout crowds, eager to see him and have a chance to receive his blessings.²³ The attitude of the local of-

²⁰ A hint at such correspondence is provided by the decision, carved on a stele, of the magistrate of Guanxian 灌縣, Sichuan province, protecting Taoist monasteries and temples on Qingcheng shan 青城山 against excessive demands from pilgrims. The magistrate was thereby answering a formal request from the Zhang Heavenly Master as well as local Taoists. It is most likely that the latter wrote to the former to enlist their help in this procedure. Zhang Daoling's strong links with Qingcheng shan, where several late-Qing Heavenly Masters paid a visit, certainly convinced the Heavenly Master to help, but it is possible that he would not turn down any request for administrative help from any Taoist. See *Changdao guan shijin bei* 常道觀示禁碑 (1883), in Long Xianzhao 龍顯昭, Huang Haide 黃海德 et al., comp., *Bashu Daojiao beiwen jicheng* 巴蜀道教碑文集成 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 1997), pp. 515-16.

²¹ Chen Yaoting 陳耀庭, "Shanghai dao jiao shi" 上海道教史, in Ruan Renze 阮仁澤 and Gao Zhenong 高振農, eds., *Shanghai zongjiao shi* 上海宗教史 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1992), pp. 413-38.

²² Wang, "Zhang tianshi," pp. 81-102.

²³ Zhang, *Tianshi dao shilüe*, p. 161, discusses Ming sources describing the crowds welcoming the Heavenly Master in Peking. Press articles reporting Zhang Renzheng's visit to Hankou in 1874 mention huge crowds, people buying his talismans, audiences with local Taoists, and visits to temples where the Heavenly Master offered plaques: "Zaiji Zhang zhenren zai Han'gao shi" 再記張真人在漢皋事, *Shenbao* 申報, November 26, 1874. Similar scenes (for the Qianlong period) are described in an anecdote discussing the crowds welcoming the Heavenly Master, buying talismans (prices are provided) and requesting exorcisms: Dong Han 董含, "Zhang zhenren" 張真人, *Chunxiang zhuibi* 尊鄉贅筆 (*Shuoling* 說鈴 edn.) 3, pp. 21a-b.

officials was more ambiguous. The Zhang Heavenly Master was an official of the Qing state, but he was not allowed to travel for official business, which left magistrates ample room for choosing how to treat him according to their own convictions. According to the British consular official E. H. Parker, when the Zhang Heavenly Master was in Guangzhou in 1880 “the Chinese officials ignored him utterly.”²⁴ Yet, late-nineteenth-century press articles describing respectful treatment by local officials suggest quite the opposite.²⁵ Moreover, a wealth of anecdotes show that the gentry in general and officials in particular, including high-ranking ones, were actually major patrons of the Heavenly masters’ liturgical services.²⁶

Western accounts of visits to Longhu shan or socializing with the Heavenly Master are numerous; however, B. Penny has shown that they are more informative about the exotic phantasms of the visitors than about the Taoists and their activities.²⁷ While some nineteenth-century Western visitors dubbed him “the Taoist pope,” in overt protestant criticism of both Catholic and Taoist hierarchies and pomp, most apparently failed to understand the nature of his religious authority. To understand why the Zhang Heavenly Master was treated as a semidi-

²⁴ Benjamin Penny, “Meeting the Celestial Master,” *East Asian History* 15–16 (1998), p. 53.

²⁵ In 1874, the Hankou magistrate honored him: “Hankou xindao tianshi 漢口新到天師,” *Shenbao*, November 6, 1874. “Tianshi dao Yue” 天師到粵, *Shenbao*, September 28, 1880, describes the pomp of the Heavenly Master’s official boat, in many ways similar to that of a high civil or military official, as well as the crowds of devotees trying to approach him. Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716–1798), “Guian yuguai” 歸安魚怪, in idem, *Zi buyu* 子不語 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986) 13, pp. 303–4, suggests that local magistrates welcomed the traveling Heavenly Master as a rule. “Dake wen Zhang zhenren shi” 答客問張真人事, *Shenbao*, June 17, 1904, says that the Heavenly Master, then living in Shanghai, was on good terms with all local officials and awed the local population (this very hostile article, influenced by the anti-superstition discourse that had just begun to form, stands in contrast to previous coverage of the Zhang Heavenly Master in the journal). For more on early 20th-c. attacks on the Heavenly Masters, see Wang Jianchuan, “Jindai (1840–1949) bianju xia de Zhang tianshi, jiantan qi dui Huanan daojiao zhi yingxiang” 近代變局下的張天師兼談其對華南道教之影響, in Lai Chi-tim 黎志添, ed., *Xianggang ji Hua’nan Daojiao yanjiu* 香港及華南道教研究 (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 2005), pp. 386–404. A particularly developed description of the Heavenly Master traveling in princely pomp and selling talismans and other liturgical services can be found in the first anti-superstition novel, published in 1905, which is a both fiercely critical and quasi-ethnographic description of modern Chinese religion: *Saomi zhou* 掃迷帚, in A Ying 阿英, ed., *Wanqing wenxue congchao* 晚清文學叢鈔, “Xiaoshuo yi juan, xiace” 小說一卷, 下冊 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1960) 22, pp. 437–38. On this source and the early anti-superstition literature in general, see Vincent Goossaert, “1898: The Beginning of the End for Chinese Religion?” *JAS* 65.2 (forthcoming).

²⁶ Jiang Jizhu 蔣繼洙 et al., comp., (*Tongzhi*) *Guangxin fuzhi* (同治) 廣信府志 (1873; rpt. Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1970) 12, pp. 35b–36a, describes a *jiao* offering performed by the Heavenly Master on the invitation of a magistrate. More anecdotal evidence is provided in the next section, below.

²⁷ Penny, “Meeting the Celestial Master.”

vine being, in spite of his being very unlike a pope, we need to look at what happened on his home mountain, Longhu shan.

THE LONGHU SHAN COMPLEX AND ITS LITURGICAL SERVICES

The Longhu shan are a chain of low hills (maximum 247 m. above sea level) in eastern Jiangxi connected to the Wuyi 武夷 range extending into Fujian province; the various temples and residences that made up Longhu shan as an institution (which I call here “the Longhu shan complex”) were actually spread over a rather large area and located either on the hills or in nearby villages.²⁸ Longhu shan became covered with temples during the Song and Yuan periods; these temples are described in a partly extant Yuan gazetteer, *Longhu shan zhi* 龍虎山志, and a more detailed 1740 edition of the same name, authored by one of the most prestigious *faguan* ever, Lou Jinyuan 婁近垣 (1689–1776). Some of these temples had disappeared by the Ming and Qing, but the regular income of the institution (landed property, ordination fees, donations) and occasional liberalities of the court for large-scale restorations (notably in 1730–1735, and later in 1867 when the damage caused by Taiping rebels was repaired) ensured that the major temples were kept in excellent condition until the destruction waged by the Nationalist and Communist armies during the 1930s. The Longhu shan is now operating again, on a more modest scale.

The three most important sites were the Zhengyi guan 正一觀, a temple devoted to Zhang Daoling, on the mountain itself; the Shangqing gong 上清宮 in a nearby village, the central place for the institution’s ritual life ever since the Song; and the Heavenly Master’s residence, the Zhenren fu 真人府 (Tianshi fu before the Ming), located about one kilometer from the Shangqing gong. Within the Zhenren fu were the offices where the Heavenly Master and his *faguan* attended to the bureaucratic work of ordination of priests and canonization of local gods, and corresponded with Taoists and officials all over China. Around the Shangqing gong, twenty-four residences (*daoyuan* 道院), each with a distinctive name, housed both the permanent Taoist staff and visiting priests from all over China, some coming just for ordination, some spending several years at Longhu shan for comprehensive training. It

²⁸ A late-18th-c. painting of the mountain and its temples is reproduced in Stephen Little, with Shawn Eichman, *Taoism and the Arts of China* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, in association with U. California P., 2000), cat. 151.

would seem that these *daoyuan* were divided according to lineage, and maybe also by geographical origin of the resident priests.

The continued importance and wealth of the Heavenly Master institution on Longhu shan was based on the large range of liturgical services that it offered to various constituencies, from the Taoist clergy and local lay communities to the imperial court. To clerics, it offered ordinations, and to the court, it sent its best liturgical performers. I discuss both of these aspects in more detail, below. To lay communities it provided the whole range of Taoist rituals, but at prices commensurate with the divine status of the Heavenly Master. The Zhang Heavenly Master was regularly invited to perform *jiao* 醮 offerings and death rituals,²⁹ but by far the most often mentioned service was exorcism. A large amount of narrative material written during the late-imperial period, in particular anecdotes, features the traveling Heavenly Master being called (and dearly paid) for exorcising demons and sprites; in some cases patrons also wrote or came to Longhu shan to make their requests.³⁰

In many of these anecdotes, the exorcistic ritual succeeds in restoring order; in others, the assaulting spirit proves itself to be pursuing a rightful vengeance, and the Heavenly Master cannot punish it. But this does not lessen his prestige and authority, something that is rarely ever questioned in this kind of source.³¹ For instance, several anecdotes in the Shanghai illustrated periodical *Dianshizhai huabao* 點石齋畫報 (published 1884–1898) discuss cases where people, usually literati or officials, call on him (with expensive gifts) to exorcise demons possessing their womenfolk, and the Heavenly Master does the job, either himself or by sending a *faguan*.³² He seems to be considered as presiding over a high court of appeal where justice can be obtained when other,

²⁹ “Ji Zhang zhenren shejiao kou keming” 記張真人設醮叩科名, *Shenbao*, July 7, 1873, has a description of a rather outlandish ritual in which the Heavenly Master is invited by a group of examination candidates to divine the names of the future laureates. Wang, “Zhang tianshi,” p. 126, quotes an early-Qing anecdote about a man who went to Longhu shan to request a death ritual for his deceased father.

³⁰ Wang, “Zhang tianshi,” pp. 110–13, has gathered and studied a comprehensive corpus of anecdotes. As Barend ter Haar has shown, there are also many references to the Heavenly Master institution in two famous collections of anecdotes, *Yuewei caotang biji* (cited below) and *Zi buyu*; full-text electronic searches have identified 13 and 16 anecdotes respectively, a few of which are quoted below.

³¹ For instance, Ji Yun 紀昀 (1724–1805), *Yuewei caotang biji* 閱微草堂筆記 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 1994) 9, pp. 182–83; 17, pp. 421–22.

³² For instance, “Hu ru renfu” 狐入人腹, in *Dianshizhai huabao* 點石齋畫報 (Shanghai: Shenbaoguan, every ten days, 1884–1898; rpt. Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1983), vol. “Mu,” p. 87 (published in 1894) and “Tianshi chu yao” 天師除妖, in idem, vol. “Shu,” p. 70 (published in 1895). Similarly, “Tianshi nanwu” 天師難侮, in idem, vol. “Yue,”

more ordinary judicial rituals (pleading to local gods or the City God, Chenghuang) have failed.³³ The authority of the Heavenly Master even allowed him to confront popular local cults that he saw as demonic, a course of action the Tianshi dao had pursued ever since its beginning during the second century AD.³⁴ Widespread lore, found in countless novels and stories, has it that the Heavenly Master kept all the demons and sprites he had captured locked in jars in his residence.³⁵

The simplest, and most common, service offered by the Heavenly Master institution was the sale of talismans invoking the protection of Zhang Daoling, *tianshi fu* 天師符. These talismans were of extremely common use throughout China, notably during the apotropaic rites of the Duanwu festival during the fifth month.³⁶ The manufacturing and sale of talismans, on an industrial scale, was a major source of income for the Longhu shan institution, which printed and sold them directly or through a network of Taoist temples.³⁷ Furthermore, a variety of other talismans, also empowered by the Heavenly Master's seal, were available for sale. Zhang Heavenly Masters also distributed to temples (presumably often against a donation) talismans, plaques, or other documents stamped with their seal.³⁸

p. 51 (published in 1894), relates how the Heavenly Master taught several doubters a lesson on his mastery over demons and gods. More cases were reported in the daily *Shenbao*: for instance: "Ji Taojia yan tianshi nayao shi" 記陶家堰天師拿妖事, *Shenbao*, April 23, 1873, tells (in a highly admiring tone) the story of a peasant in Zhejiang province suffering from demonic disturbances: an official wrote to Longhu shan on his behalf and sent a large amount of money; the Heavenly Master came with four *faguan* and captured the malevolent sprite. "Tianshi jiang xing" 天師將行, *Shenbao*, June 15, 1877, tells us that while in Shanghai the Heavenly Master did a brisk trade in talismans, but because of time constraints had to turn down most invitations for exorcisms.

³³ For instance Ji, *Yuewei caotang biji* 24, pp. 554-55.

³⁴ "Ji Zhang zhenren zhi yaomiao shi" 記張真人治妖廟事, *Shenbao*, July 5, 1873, describes a Zhejiang mediumistic temple cult whose deity was possessing local people. The Heavenly Master called for bringing this to an end, exorcised the culprit deity, depriving it of any efficacy and thereby causing temple patronage to dwindle.

³⁵ A late-Qing magistrate for Guixi county, where Longhu shan lay, claimed to have been witness to this in 1889; Suhe shengsheng 蘇何聖生, *Yanzui zaji* 檐醉雜記 (undated edn. at IHEC Library, Paris) 2, p. 4b.

³⁶ Wang, "Zhang tianshi," pp. 82-86.

³⁷ Zhang, *Zhongguo Longhu shan*, pp. 105-9. In Caihengzi 采蘅子, *Chongming manlu* 蟲鳴漫錄 (*Biji xiaoshuo daguan* 筆記小說大觀 edn.) 2, pp. 6b-7a, a high official goes all the way to Longhu shan to request (and pay dearly) for a talisman made by the Heavenly Master himself; and a similar case in Yuan Mei, "Baishi jing 白石精," in *Zi buyu* 19, pp. 472-73 (the price of the talisman is thirty taels).

³⁸ For instance, Michael R. Saso, *The Teachings of Taoist Master Chuang* (New Haven: Yale U.P., 1978), p. 73, mentions a protective talisman given to the Chenghuang miao in Xinzhu, Taiwan.

Since at least the Song period, the state guaranteed the Zhang Heavenly Master's monopoly on issuing *tianshi fu* talismans. Late-Qing officials took very seriously the Zhang Heavenly Master's claim to be the guarantor of orthodox Taoism and his monopoly over talismans and other documents sealed with the Heavenly Master's name. When local Taoists in late-nineteenth-century Shanghai offered (sometimes advertising through newspapers) cures by means of Heavenly Master talismans and seals, the Heavenly Master sued, and magistrates arrested and condemned the local Taoists for usurping his privilege.³⁹

Ordinations

Certainly the most important function of the Zhang Heavenly Master institution was that it served as the Zhengyi 正一 Taoists' sole nation-wide training and ordination center – a function it recovered with the ordination staged there in 1991. Ordination was a crucial part of the Zhang Heavenly Master's way of deploying a bureaucratic organization over the Taoist clergy, and it was also a major way for late imperial Taoists to acquire charisma.

During the Song, the Longhu shan complex shared the privilege of being an official Taoist ordination center with Maoshan 茅山 (modern Jiangsu province) and Gezao shan 閣皂山 (modern Jiangxi province),⁴⁰ but by the Ming had gained an undisputed monopoly over Zhengyi ordinations. Ever since the Yuan dynasty, the Taoist clergy was officially and practically divided into two orders: the monastic, ascetic Quanzhen 全真 (with its own entirely separate ordination procedures, based in large monasteries) and the Zhengyi. The Zhengyi order was furthermore divided into two overlapping categories, often but not always called *daoshi* 道士, elite Taoist, and (confusingly, for this term is used in different ways) *fashi*, or *shigong* 師公, or *duangong* 端公, vernacular priest. This distinction needs some clarification before we may explain the logic and significance of the Longhu shan ordination system. The latter, the vernacular priest, was a category of Taoists performing mostly exorcistic rituals, not engaging in death rituals, and devoted to the cult of a particular local pantheon, notably martial exorcistic gods and local goddesses; by contrast, the *daoshi* mostly performed death

³⁹ “Heshang daoshi an leili” 和尚道士案類列, *Shenbao*, May 25, 1877; “Xianzun quzhu yiduan kuangpian” 縣尊驅逐異端誑騙, *Shenbao*, October 17, 1872, and an edict in *Shenbao*, September 30, 1872.

⁴⁰ Maoshan and Gezao shan also invented patriarchal lineages (called Shangqing and Lingbao respectively) during the Song, in apparent imitation of the Heavenly Masters, but these lineages were largely discontinued by the late-imperial period.

rituals and community *jiao* offerings, and dealt primarily with the pantheon of pure, abstract Taoist deities.

The modern vernacular priests' liturgy and local traditions, such as the Lüshan 閩山 (widespread in Fujian and Taiwan) or Meishan 梅山 (found throughout southwest China) traditions, seem to have emerged during the Song period.⁴¹ They mixed Taoist liturgy with spirit possession and cults of blood-consuming local deities to practice spectacular exorcisms. Originally, these new ritual techniques ran contrary to Taoist fundamental theological tenets, as they implied spirit-possession of the priest and striking a deal with demonic beings, both actions considered impure and forbidden to Taoists ever since the foundation of the Tianshi dao. Yet, mainstream Taoism managed to absorb a great deal of the exorcistic rituals and cults during the Song, and the very reason why the Longhu shan complex emerged as the ultimate source of authority in premodern Taoism is that its ordinations very early on included registers needed to master the newly revealed thunder (*leifa* 雷法) and exorcistic rituals of the *fashi* along with the classical Lingbao liturgy.⁴²

Apparently, the *daoshi*, performing pure (non-violent, non-sacrificial) rituals in classical language and the *fashi* who engaged in sacrifices and used vernacular language liturgy stood in total contrast.⁴³ But indeed quite often the very same person performed *daoshi* and *fashi* rituals: he literally changed hats. Such Taoists received separate ordinations as *daoshi* and *fashi*. Yet, the adoption of the exorcistic rituals could only go so far, and there always remained an unacceptable part in the vernacular practices, which elite Taoists described as "heterodox."

By contrast, the *daoshi* who did not perform any vernacular rite, and thus claimed to uphold the grand classical tradition were, apparently since the Ming dynasty, called Qingwei Lingbao 清微靈寶 (sometimes Qingwei, or Lingbao, or Qingwei Zhengyi).⁴⁴ There were also different regional traditions of Qingwei Lingbao Taoists, but they were relatively homogeneous when compared to the bewildering variety of the vernacular traditions. The role of the Heavenly Master institu-

⁴¹ The formation of these vernacular traditions is notably documented by the polemics of some Song-period Taoists such as Bai Yuchan 白玉蟾 (1194?-1229), criticizing them as heterodox: Edward L. Davis, *Society and the Supernatural in Song China* (Honolulu: U. of Hawai'i P., 2001), pp. 150-51.

⁴² Davis, *Society and the Supernatural*, pp. 37-41.

⁴³ Kristofer Schipper, "Vernacular and Classical Ritual in Taoism," *JAS* 45.1 (1985), pp. 21-51; Davis, *Society and the Supernatural*.

⁴⁴ Vincent Goossaert, "Counting the Monks: The 1736-1739 Census of the Chinese Clergy," *Late Imperial China* 21.2 (2000), pp. 56-58.

tion in the rise of the Qingwei Lingbao identity during the late-imperial period seems to have been instrumental. Furthermore, the Zhang Heavenly Master institution conferred some sort of unity over Qingwei Lingbao Taoists whom it ordained by granting them ordination names (*daohao* 道號) according to a single lineage (*fapai* 法派);⁴⁵ accordingly, this lineage and its ordination names are common in areas where Taoists maintained close relations with the Longhu shan complex, notably Jiangnan and Fujian.⁴⁶

How did the Zhang Heavenly Master institution set about both exalting the elite Qingwei Lingbao Taoists and embracing the vernacular traditions? The Longhu shan ordination ritual, in direct continuity with medieval Taoist liturgy, is based on the conferral of liturgical registers, *lu* 籙, which give the ordinand a rank (*zhi* 職) within the spiritual hierarchy of the universe. During the early stages of the Tianshi dao, all devotees were ordained and received *lu*, but only priests received ordinations for the highest ranks. Ordination of laymen has gradually declined in the course of history, but by the late-Qing and Republican periods, some favored lay disciples still received from the Heavenly Master an ordination that conferred ritual protection without entailing any liturgical practice.⁴⁷ However, late-Qing ordinations were mostly dispensed to professional priests.

The ordination ritual, and most crucially, the detail of the various ordination ranks, each with their specific registers, are described in Longhu shan ordination liturgical manuals, of which there seems to have existed several versions or editions.⁴⁸ On top of the complex hi-

⁴⁵ In contrast to Buddhists and Quanzhen Taoists who use lineage generation names (*faming* 法名) as their only names, Zhengyi Taoists keep their birth name and separately take a surname (*daohao*) as their religious lineage's name when ordained.

⁴⁶ This lineage is variously known as Sanshan dixue pai 三山滴血派, Zhengyi pai 正乙派, or Sa Zhenjun Xihe pai 薩真君西河派: see John Lagerwey, "Les lignées taoïstes du nord de Taiwan," *CEA* 4 (1988), pp. 127-43; 5 (1989-1990), pp. 355-68; Zhang, *Zhongguo Longhu shan*, p. 172; Zhang, *Tianshi dao shilüe*, p. 178; Koyanagi, *Baiyun guan zhi*, p. 108 (lineage #37) and p. 115 (lineage #70).

⁴⁷ Ding Huang 丁煌, "Zhengyi dahuang yuxiu yanshou jinglu chuyan" 正一大黃頂修延壽經籙初研, *Daojiao xue tansuo* 道教學探索 8 (1994), pp. 373-430, and 9 (1995), pp. 199-380, discusses in detail the liturgical registers conferred in 1947 by the Heavenly Master to a layperson who was a close associate of his.

⁴⁸ One edition is *Zhengyi tiantan yuge* 正一天壇玉格, authored by the 53rd Heavenly Master, revised by the eminent Suzhou Taoist Shi Daoyuan 施道淵 (?-1678) and prefaced in 1658. I am very grateful to Prof. Wang Zongyu for helping me to gain access to the document, kept at the Peking University Library. Other ordination manuals were in use in Taoist families whom the Longhu shan granted the right to ordain Taoists locally: see, e.g., *Qingwei Lingbao Shenxiao buzhi yuge daquan* 清微靈寶神霄補職玉格大全, in use among leading Taoist families in Tainan, Taiwan: Ding Huang, "Tainan shiye daoshi Chen, Zeng erjia chutan, yiqi jiashi, chuanyan ji wenwu sanyi wei zhuti luelun" 臺南世業道士陳曾二家初探以其家世傳衍及文物散佚爲主題略論, *Daojiao xue tansuo* 3 (1990), pp. 336-37. Two such manuscripts have been

erarchy of ranks were the Qingwei Lingbao ordinations; Taoists initiated in vernacular traditions (such as Lüshan) were also welcome and ordained, but at a lower rank and with a pledge to practice “orthodox Taoism” only. The Longhu shan thus worked, by incentive rather than punitive methods, to maintain the relative purity of Taoist practice, while being inclusive. The Zhang Heavenly Master approach was not to suppress or to ban illicit practice, as he would have been unable to do so thoroughly, but to entice, with the prestige afforded by ordinations, Taoists of local traditions to make their practice closer to orthodox standards. This approach was not unlike the state’s policy of coopting local cults in order to make them (look) more neo-Confucian.

The logic of discriminating inclusiveness that is held in the Zhang Heavenly Master’s ordination is spelled out most clearly in an ordination certificate obtained in 1704 at Longhu shan by a Taoist priest, and it is still held to this day by his descendants. The document, granted by the 54th Heavenly Master, is titled “Tianshi fu zhishi ting gei Zhangxi tan Kang Sheng Yilang zhaopiao” 天師府知事廳給漳溪壇康勝一郎照票。⁴⁹ It opens by stating that the certificate is given in order to “eliminate the heterodox mediumistic rites 杜邪巫事.” The Heavenly Master, it proceeds to say, was charged by imperial order to maintain Taoist orthodoxy but the interdiction of mediumistic rites came to be increasingly disregarded. While traveling on their way to sacrifice to the Five Sacred peaks, the Zhenren fu officials witnessed that the mores in Hunan province had lapsed to the point where orthodoxy and heterodoxy were hopelessly mingled. So the Heavenly Master decided to send *faguan* to sort them out and grant ordination certificates to pure Taoists; he received the official approval of the Hunan governor for a ban on impure practitioners. The *faguan* would go to each village to “check the liturgical standards (of local Taoists), ordain (the pure practitioners) and thereby ban heterodoxy and mediumism 清查教典, 給牒傳度, 以禁邪巫.” The certificate was given to Kang Sheng Yilang, a typical Hakka ordination name, from Guiyang 桂陽 county (present-day Hunan province, near the borders with Guangdong and Jiangxi) who had declared that he practiced orthodox Taoism and would not transgress Taoist rules.

recently published as part of a large series of facsimile Taoist documents from Taiwan: *Longhu shan xiantian tiantan yuge* 龍虎山先天天壇玉格 (Zhanghua: Yiqun tushu gongsi, 2000) dated 1891, and *Tiantan yuge pinshi* 天壇玉格品式 (Zhanghua: Yiqun tushu gongsi, 2003). On Longhu shan ordination, see also Zhang, *Zhongguo Longhu shan*, pp. 167–74.

⁴⁹ Liu Jinfeng 劉勁峰, *Gannan zongzu shehui yu dao jiao wenhua yanjiu* 贛南宗族社會與道教文化研究, in *Kejia chuantong shehui congshu* 客家傳統社會叢書 8 (Hong Kong: Guoji kejia xuehui, Faguo yuandong xueyuan [Ecole Française d’Extrême Orient], and Haiwai huaren ziliao yanjiu zhongxin, 2000), p. 263.

If Kang would lapse into devious practices, the Longhu shan officials would not fail to notice it, and the culprit would be deferred to provincial authorities for punishment.

This document envisioned a close cooperation between Taoist and state officials towards maintaining orthodox and pure religious practices. This was certainly a sincere hope on the Zhang Heavenly Master side, but one that came with time to be less supported by officialdom. As we shall see, if the whole late-Qing officialdom agreed to ban (on paper, at least) exorcists, many officials disapproved of the interference of the Zhang Heavenly Master and his delegates in local religious affairs.

In any case, the above document shows that while the Zhang Heavenly Master institution exalted the superiority of Qingwei Lingbao clerics, vernacular priests, far from being excluded from its ordinations, were indeed among their most active patrons, including the Hakka Taoists of Lüshan tradition.⁵⁰ This is further documented by other fieldwork reports and Taoist families' genealogies.⁵¹ One Hakka genealogy even claims that formerly not only priests but all Hakka people were ordained by the Zhang Heavenly Master.⁵² This is linked to the fact that Lüshan Taoism, as practiced by the Hakka, gives ordination names to all humans, both living people and ancestors.

The documents and oral recollections obtained through field research by anthropologists, without which it would be very hard to make sense of the Zhang Heavenly Master institution's significance for Tao-

⁵⁰ For instances of contemporary Taoists, many of them Hakka, with ancestors who had been ordained at Longhu shan, see Ye Mingsheng 葉明生, "Min Xibei Pu'an Qingwei deng pai diaocha" 閩西北普庵清微等派調查, in Yang Yanjie 楊彥杰, ed., *Min xibei de minsu zongjiao yu shehui* 閩西北的民俗宗教與社會, in *Kejia chuantong shehui congshu* 11 (Hong Kong: Guoji kejia xuehui, Faguo yuandong xueyuan [Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient], Lingnan daxue zuqun yu haiwai huaren jingji yanjiu bu, and Haiwai huaren ziliao yanjiu zhongxin, 2000), pp. 410-11; Zhuang Liwei 莊禮味 and Zheng Runzhen 鄭潤珍, "Nanxiang miaohui daguan" 南雄廟會大觀, in Zeng Hanxiang 曾漢祥 and Tam Wai-lun 譚偉倫, eds., *Shaoshou fu de zongjiao, shehui yu jingji (shang)* 韶州府的宗教, 社會與經濟 (上), in *Kejia chuantong shehui congshu* 9 (Hong Kong: Guoji kejia xuehui, Faguo yuandong xueyuan [Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient], and Haiwai huaren ziliao yanjiu zhongxin, 2000), p. 51; and Nie Deren 聶德仁, "Qiantan Jianing daojiao" 淺談建寧道教, in Yang, *Min xibei*, p. 379 (a Hakka Taoist who received a plaque inscribed by the Heavenly Master for his altar in 1910). More cases could certainly be found in the recent outflow of excellent ethnographies of Chinese local religion and religious specialists, notably as published in the journal *Min-su chü-i*, in the series *Studies in Chinese Ritual, Theatre and Folklore*, ed. Wang Ch'ui-kuei, and *Traditional Hakka society*, ed. John Lagerwey.

⁵¹ Chan Wing-Hoi, "Ordination Names in Hakka Genealogies: A Religious Practice and Its Decline," in David Faure and Helen F. Siu, eds., *Down to Earth: The Territorial Bond in South China* (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1995), p. 79, documents a case of a Hakka priest who while ordained at Longhu shan swore never to practice again certain "heterodox" rituals.

⁵² Chan, "Ordination Names," p. 68.

ists, also show that ordinations at Longhu shan were most of the time actually just a confirmation of a cleric's former ordination by his own master; however, the prestige brought by a trip to Longhu shan was huge: it constituted the purchase of charisma.

Ordinations conferred by the Zhang Heavenly Master as well as the selection of particularly promising young Taoists for internships at Longhu shan and promotion to *faguan* positions did not necessarily take place at Longhu shan,⁵³ as either the Heavenly Master himself or prominent *faguan* also occasionally organized ordination tours in various provinces. Throughout the Ming and Qing periods, Heavenly Masters traveled through the country and held ordinations along the way, a practice which the state, notably beginning with the Qianlong period, tried hard to curtail.⁵⁴ This became a recurring contention between the Zhang Heavenly Master institution and the state: the latter wanted to limit the former's control to Longhu shan only, whereas the Zhang Heavenly Master institution continued to see its role as the supervision of the whole of Taoism throughout China.

Either because of such restrictions on ordinations outside Longhu shan, or because it was just impossible for most Taoists to join a Heavenly Master ordination, the ordination rank once obtained from the Heavenly Master himself was most often transmitted locally within the ordinand's lineage, generation after generation, and with a formal ritual announcement to the Zhang Heavenly Masters on Longhu shan on each occasion. This sometimes worked with the Heavenly Master's approval. For instance, during the late Qing two Taoist families in southern Taiwan, whose members regularly went to Longhu shan, enjoyed the privilege to ordain local Taoists in the name of the Heavenly Master.⁵⁵ Many Taoist families in southern China would mention a Longhu shan ordination in their ancestry. Sometimes, an heir would go back to Longhu shan to renew the ordination. One example is provided by the Lin family in Xinzhu, northern Taiwan.⁵⁶ A scion of this wealthy elite family, Lin Rumei 林如梅 (1834-?), went to Longhu shan in 1886, with

⁵³ "Tianshi zhi Su yuanyou" 天師至蘇緣由, *Shenbao*, May 5, 1877, describes such a session of examining Taoist novices by the Heavenly Master in Suzhou.

⁵⁴ *Da Qing huidian shili* 501, p. 8a; (*Qinding Libu zeli* (欽定) 禮部則例 (1851; rpt. Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1966) 170, pp. 3b-4b (mentioning a case in 1815 when the Heavenly Master was punished for having sent his *faguan* on ordination tours); Goossaert, "Counting the Monks," p. 54 (quoting archival material dated 1739); and Hosoya, "Kenryū chō," p. 588 n. 12.

⁵⁵ Ding, "Tainan shiye daoshi," p. 295.

⁵⁶ Saso, *Master Chuang*, pp. 68-74; Wang, "Zhang tianshi," p. 131.

his brother Lin Xiumei 林修梅. Lin Rumei stayed two years and bought from the Zhenren fu a whole library of liturgical manuals.

The economic aspects of Longhu shan ordination are an important feature. In contrast to Quanzhen ordinations, which were collective and free in imitation of the Buddhist system,⁵⁷ the Longhu shan complex ordained individuals separately and charged a fee. The 63rd Heavenly Master Zhang Enpu 張恩溥 (1904–1969) denied the existence of ordination fees when asked by H. Welch,⁵⁸ but this was probably because of some misunderstanding, or because Zhang Enpu feared that such fees would not make sense to Westerners. Taoist ordinations, in contrast to Buddhist ordinations, have always been expensive, as the ordinand has to offer pledges to his master.⁵⁹ How much was charged is not clear, but depended on the level of the ordination. Yet, Quanzhen training and ordination were apparently also available on Longhu shan. Lin Xiumei who stayed on Longhu shan from 1886 to 1892 was trained in Quanzhen meditation and ordained by monks from the Baiyun guan 白雲觀 in Peking who had lately established a Quanzhen community there.⁶⁰ This is confirmed by other sources: a local Yunnan gazetteer documents the case of Xu Yangchen 許陽晨, who went to Longhu shan in 1712 and underwent complete training there, including a Quanzhen ordination.⁶¹

Canonizations

Since the Heavenly Master could nominate Taoists within the spiritual hierarchy of the universe, so he could nominate gods. A belief in China at that time was that the Zhang Heavenly Master nominated all City gods (Chenghuang) and Earth gods (Tudi gong).⁶² Another related theme also common in narrative sources is that the Heavenly

⁵⁷ Vincent Goossaert, "The Quanzhen Clergy, 1700–1950," in John Lagerwey, ed., *Religion and Chinese Society: The Transformation of a Field* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Chinese U.P. and Paris: EFEO, 2004), p. 721.

⁵⁸ Holmes Welch, "The Chang T'ien Shih and Taoism in China," *Journal of Oriental Studies* 4 (1957–58), p. 192.

⁵⁹ Zhang, *Tianshi dao shilüe*, pp. 160–61, discusses pledges (notably gold rings) given during late imperial ordinations on Longhu shan that are very similar to those discussed in Taoist medieval liturgical manuals.

⁶⁰ Saso, *Master Chuang*, p. 74.

⁶¹ Yunnan sheng bianji zu 雲南省編輯組, comp., *Yunnan difang zhi Daojiao he minzu minjian zongjiao ziliao suobian* 雲南地方誌道教和民族民間宗教資料瑣編 (Kunming: Yunnan renmin chubanshe, 1986), p. 10, quoting the 1921 *Yiliang xianzhi* 宜良縣志.

⁶² Wang, "Zhang tianshi," p. 127, quoting Taiwanese morality books. This belief was common even in Hebei province, where the direct influence of the Zhang Heavenly Master institution was very weak: Sidney D. Gamble, *Ting Hsien: A North China Rural Community* (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1954), p. 400.

Master received all gods – his officials and appointees – in audience at New Year.⁶³ He was reputedly knowledgeable about all the deities and spirits active in the world, and a late eighteenth-century anecdote tells of a magistrate planning to destroy an illicit temple and first checking with the Heavenly Master about the identity and status of this temple's god.⁶⁴

From a liturgical perspective, the process of Taoist canonization (*daofeng* 道封) of local saints and gods worked in the same way as ordinations, that is, through the conferral of liturgical registers, *lu*. Local communities wrote or came to Longhu shan requesting canonization for their gods, which the Heavenly Master granted, in exchange for a payment and, presumably, a pledge to orthodoxy similar to those required from ordinands. The most detailed document I have found on this procedure is an illustrated scroll representing the canonization ritual of a local god by the Heavenly Master in 1641. I assume it is representative of the liturgy used through the Qing and down to the contemporary period, although more evidence is needed before we can reach firm conclusions. In this scroll, the painting shows the newly canonized god going in audience to the Taoist Heavenly courts, where the Jade emperor bestows titles on him; a colophon gives details about the registers conferred on the god by the Heavenly Master.⁶⁵ It is important to note that this canonization was entirely distinct from that of state canonizations, *guofeng* 國封, a well-known phenomenon since the Song period. Major gods, as found throughout China, received both, but many local gods had a *daofeng* without a *guofeng*, or conversely.⁶⁶ However, at least in one case, the two bureaucratic processes of *guofeng* and *daofeng* were linked. Three Jiang 蔣 brothers, who reputedly lived during the Song period, were worshipped in a temple in Hangzhou. The

⁶³ Ding Rouke 丁柔克 (1840-?), "Kuishen" 窺神, in idem, *Liuhu* 柳弧 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2002), pp. 199-200; "Shenchao tianshi" 神朝天師, in *Dianshizhai huabao*, vol. "Yu," p. 19 (published 1895). In Wang Yingkui 王應奎 (1683-ca. 1760), "Longjun zhiyi" 龍君執役, in *Liunan xubi* 柳南續筆 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983) 1, p. 143, a (Ming-period) magistrate pays the Zhang Heavenly Master a visit, and the latter introduces his guest to a servant of his who is a dragon king in exile on earth (and duly proves it by performing a rain miracle). See also Ji, *Yuewei caotang biji* 5, p. 99; 21, pp. 501-2.

⁶⁴ Yuan Mei, "Hui Chen Youliang miao" 毀陳友諒廟, *Zi buyu* 10, pp. 254-55.

⁶⁵ Little, *Taoism and the Arts of China*, cat. 82. Wang Jianchuan, "Zhang tianshi zhi yanjiu," p. 203, has a fascinating document, unfortunately without any indication of origin, related to the canonization of a local god at Longhu shan in 1882 and quoting the memorial requesting the canonization sent to Heaven during the ritual.

⁶⁶ Wang, "Zhang tianshi," pp. 144-46. On the notion of *daofeng*, see Kristofer M. Schipper, "Sources of Modern Popular Worship in the Taoist Canon: A Critical Appraisal," in Hanxue yanjiu zhongxin 漢學研究中心, Guoli zhongyang tushuguan 國立中央圖書館, ed., *Minjian xinyang yu Zhongguo wenhua guoji yantaohui lunwenji* 民間信仰與中國文化國際研討會論文集 (Taipei: Hanxue yanjiu zhongxin, 1994), pp. 1-23.

gazetteer of this temple documents their state canonization in 1808, and also includes official documents issued by the Zhenren fu, where the Heavenly Master claims that according to precedent, when the state has canonized a god, the Heavenly Master is requested to memorialize Heaven (that is, the Jade Emperor) to secure a canonization edict from the Heavenly administration, which the Heavenly Master then did. It is far from sure, although not impossible, that the state actually requested the Heavenly Master to act in this way, and maybe this was the Heavenly Master's initiative, but in any case, this was taken seriously by the gentry compilers of the temple gazetteer.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the willingness of the Heavenly Master to work as a branch of the administration headed by the emperor is quite remarkable: in this document he claims to act not on his initiative but to complete a canonization process engaged in by the imperial bureaucracy.

An anecdote, told in a nineteenth-century collection suggests the extent of the prestige and significance of canonizations granted by the Heavenly Master. It is a story of another Hangzhou temple, in this case devoted to General Shi 施. The temple keeper (called *miaogui* 廟鬼 in local Hangzhou parlance) was ashamed that the god, although enjoying a successful cult and handsome revenues, did not have any title. This lack of title seems to have prevented the temple from organizing a procession, because the untitled general could not be placed in the divine hierarchy that dictated the ritual greetings with the other temples visited during the procession. In 1829, the temple keeper thus sent somebody to the Zhenren fu, with a present of 300 dollars, and asking for a title of earl, *bo* 伯: this was duly granted.⁶⁸

In conducting both canonizations and ordinations, the Zhang Heavenly Master institution tried to work with the civil bureaucracy, but often trespassed the limits to its autonomy set by the latter. Such trespassing sometimes met with punishments, but these were limited, for as we now see, the imperial institution needed the Zhang Heavenly Masters as much as the latter needed the former.

LOU JINYUAN, THE IMPERIAL CHAPLAIN FROM LONGHU SHAN

Through both the Ming and the Qing, the Zhang Heavenly Masters were often in contact with the court, but they were kept at a dis-

⁶⁷ *Guangfu miao zhi* 廣福廟志 (1877; *Wulin zhanggu congbian* 武林掌故叢編 edn.), pp. 18a-21b.

⁶⁸ Chen Qiyuan 陳其元 (1811-1881), "Miaogui manshen" 廟鬼慢神, in *Tongxian zhai biji* 庸閒齋筆記 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989) 8, pp. 178-79.

tance and did not serve as imperial chaplains, that is, priests in close and permanent attendance of the emperor. This role – as far as Taoism was concerned – was filled by other Taoists, often sent to the court by the Heavenly Master institution for this purpose. Without contest, the greatest Taoist chaplain at the Qing court was Lou Jinyuan.⁶⁹ The literature on Lou is rather extensive, although no full account of his life has been written as yet.⁷⁰ Lou's career is reminiscent, in many ways, of the famous Zhang Liusun 張留孫 (1248–1321), sent by the 36th Heavenly Master to become the chaplain of the Mongol emperor Qubilai (r. 1260–1294), and it is likely that such a comparison was in the minds of those living in Lou's time. Like Zhang, Lou was a young Taoist from a hereditary family of Zhengyi priests attached to the Longhu shan complex; he was brought to the court in the retinue of the Heavenly Master, gained the attention of the Yongzheng emperor, and stayed on to embark on a career that would be even more glorious than that of the Heavenly Master himself.

The Yongzheng emperor's familiarity with a number of eminent Buddhist monks is well known,⁷¹ and his interest in Taoism has also been studied.⁷² As his early poetry shows, Yongzheng developed early on a keen interest in Buddhist and Taoist mysticism and self-cultivation; he was a sincere Chan practitioner. As far as Taoism was concerned, he particularly esteemed Zhang Boduan's 張伯端 (eleventh century) tradition of inner alchemy. The emperor, fancying himself as a master of religious doctrine, formed a congregation, *fahui* 法會, with eight disciples, including princes (one of them being the future Qianlong emperor) and a few high-ranking officials.⁷³

Yongzheng was keenly observing the Taoist figures of his time. He bestowed honors and an official funeral on Luo zhenren 羅真人 (?–1727), a Taoist ascetic and eccentric.⁷⁴ While ill in 1729, the emperor asked officials to send him various Taoist doctors: one Jia Shifang 賈

⁶⁹ His *zi* was Sanchen 三臣; *hao* Langzhai 朗齋, *Shangqing wairen* 上清外人.

⁷⁰ Hosoya Yoshio, "Yōshō chō no Seikyō 雍正朝の正一教," *Tōhōgaku* 東方學 72 (1986), pp. 97–110; Chen Wenyi 陳雯宜, "Tan Miaozheng zhenren Lou Jinyuan, You Qing Shizong de zhiyu zhi Gaozong de youli" 談妙正真人婁近垣由清世宗的知遇至高宗的優禮, *Daojiao xue tansuo* 7 (1993), pp. 295–313.

⁷¹ Barend ter Haar, "Yongzheng and His Buddhist Abbots" (forthcoming); Liu Yuhong 劉雨虹, *Yongzheng yu Chanrong* 雍正與禪宗 (Taipei: Laogu wenhua shiye gongsi, 1997).

⁷² Li Guorong 李國榮, "Yongzheng yu dandao" 雍正與丹道, *Qingshi yanjiu* 清史研究 2 (1999), pp. 83–89.

⁷³ Chen, "Tan Miaozheng zhenren," p. 305.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 300; Meng Yongcai 孟永才 (?–1881), *Baiyun xianbiao* 白雲仙表 (1847 original edn.; rpt. *Zangwai daoshu* 藏外道書 [Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1992–1994, vol. 31], pp. 54a–55a.

士芳 from Zhejiang tried to cure the emperor, but failed and was condemned to death.⁷⁵ This did not spell the end of Yongzheng's quest for long life and interest in alchemy. One scholar has gathered evidence that would suggest that Yongzheng set up an alchemical laboratory in the Yuanming yuan, procured and experimented himself with large quantities of alchemical ingredients, ingested the results of his own experiments, and probably died as a result.⁷⁶ He was not the first Chinese emperor to meet with alchemical poisoning.

Yongzheng's relations with Lou Jinyuan, however, seem to have been of another nature. Although Lou did discuss mystical philosophy with the emperor,⁷⁷ and offered advice on alchemy, he was primarily a provider of liturgical services. Lou arrived at court in 1727 as the representative of the 55th Heavenly Master Zhang Xilin 張錫麟 (?-1727). Very little is known of Lou's childhood in the Jiangnan area and training on Longhu shan during the 1720s. The thirty-eight-year-old Taoist was a member of the retinue accompanying Zhang Xilin on his way to the court, and, when Zhang died in Hangzhou, Lou unexpectedly found himself at the head of the delegation.⁷⁸ During the winter of 1730, Lou directed a *jiao* offering-ritual that was successful in expelling from the palace demonic disturbances allegedly caused by the ghost of the hapless Jia Shifang, executed there shortly before (as mentioned, just above). Yongzheng's health recovered as a result. Having gained the confidence of the emperor, Lou was now allowed to be in his personal attendance day and night. Lou would from then on remain in the immediate proximity of the emperor, only leaving the court twice, in 1734 and 1735, to oversee restoration work on Longhu shan.

In the first of a series of prestigious appointments, early in 1731 Lou was given the title of intendant (*tidian* 提點) of the Longhu shan administration, with full fourth rank, and, more importantly, the position of manager of the Qin'an dian 欽安殿, the most sacred Taoist shrine within the imperial palace.⁷⁹ Maybe because the housing of a cleric in the inner sanctum of the palace was problematic, an edict in

⁷⁵ Chen, "Tan Miaozheng zhenren," pp. 300-1, thinks that this episode prompted Yongzheng to distrust Quanzhen Taoism as a whole, which seems unwarranted by the sources. Jia appears to have stayed at the Baiyun guan, but was probably not considered as representative of Baiyun guan Taoism; Hosoya, "Yōshō chō," pp. 4-6.

⁷⁶ Li, "Yongzheng yu dandao."

⁷⁷ LZ 11, pp. 160-65.

⁷⁸ LZ 6, p. 64.

⁷⁹ The chronology of Liu's appointments is provided in various sources, but most precisely in *Da zhenren fu bei* 大真人府碑 (1740), in Beijing tushuguan jinshi zu 北京圖書館金石組, comp., *Beijing tushuguan cang Zhongguo lidai shike taben huibian* 北京圖書館藏中國歷代石刻拓本匯編 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1989-91, 100 vols.; hereafter *Beitu*), vol. 69, p. 64, and in Hosoya, "Yōshō chō," p. 5. The full texts of the some of the appointment edicts are included in *Longhu shan zhi*.

1733 made Lou abbot of the Da Guangming dian 大光明殿 (a large Taoist temple just west of the palace, built under the Ming), with the added favor of entrusting this important position to his hereditary succession. As such, Lou was in charge of conducting rituals for the good weather and peace of the nation. The same edict graced him with the title Miao Zheng zhenren 妙正真人.⁸⁰ In the meantime, a 1732 edict had elevated him further in the formal Longhu shan hierarchy. The Da Guangming dian was restored anew, and the abbot's living quarters added, no doubt for Lou's use; by 1733 the place was ready to receive its distinguished host, as well as the forty-eight Taoist priests (*faguan*) under his supervision, for whom the court had opened formal positions.⁸¹ Although this was not the first time Taoist officials from Longhu shan served as court clerics,⁸² the opening of these forty-eight positions was an unprecedented step in both quantitative terms and in formal arrangements. At the same time, the emperor made sure that the Da Guangming dian was richly endowed, notably with luxurious liturgical implements produced by the imperial workshops. The inauguration ritual was performed by a crowd of 400 Taoists.

It is not sure, however, whether Lou and his acolytes were in permanent residence at the Da Guangming dian, since the Yongzheng emperor also had a residence built for him that was named the Da zhenren fu 大真人府, a name that was also the proper name of the Zhang Heavenly Master's residence and his Taoist administration on Longhu shan. A residence of the same name, being the lodging of the Heavenly Master when in Peking for audience with the emperor, has been in existence since at least the Yuan period. This Peking residence as it existed up to the early Yongzheng reign, and also used for the *faguan* in attendance, was rather small and run-down, or so says an inscription using a very formulaic wording. Therefore, the emperor had it moved and rebuilt on a larger scale outside Di'an men, just outside the Imperial City. This new Da zhenren fu was built between 1731 and 1734 and was actually part of the Taoist temple Miaoyuan guan 妙緣觀 that had been in existence since early in the Ming.⁸³ It was graced by a

⁸⁰ LZ, 1, pp. 4-5. A *zhenren* title for a living person was a very rare honor under the Qing dynasty (the Ming, and even more the Yuan, granted it much more generously).

⁸¹ Yongzheng 11/10/7 edict; LZ 1, p. 5.

⁸² Gao Weitai 高惟泰, a Longhu shan Taoist, cured a prince during the Shunzhi reign: (*Tongzhi*) *Guangxin fuzhi* 10, pp. 59b-60a. The 54th Heavenly Master had already arranged during the Kangxi reign for three of his Taoists (*fayuan* 法員) to stay at the court for the emperor's service: *Bu Han tianshi shijia*, pp. 350-51.

⁸³ *Miaoyuan guan bei* 妙緣觀碑 (1756), in *Beitu*, vol. 71, p. 74. We do not have any later inscription from this temple, and we therefore do not know the later history of the temple and residence.

stele inscription erected in 1740.⁸⁴ A later 1756 inscription reminds the reader that the residence was under the direct supervision of Lou Jinyuan, even *in absentia*.⁸⁵

The 1740 inscription, in spite of its flowery style and enumeration of official honors heaped on Lou Jinyuan and the Longhu shan complex, is ambiguous. It was authored by the acting Heavenly Master Zhang Zhaolin 張昭麟, brother of the deceased 55th holder of the title and uncle of the future 56th, Zhang Yulong, still young and who would not be proclaimed Heavenly Master until 1742 – a long but not unprecedented fifteen years' regency.⁸⁶ Zhang Zhaolin did not mention the Heavenly Masters in his text, and the inscription reads as if the Da zhenren fu was just Lou Jinyuan's residence, Lou being indeed a *zhenren* by now, which would nonetheless smack of usurpation. The possibility of a direct competition between Lou and the Zhang Heavenly Master did not arise, since no Zhang Heavenly Master was welcome in Peking during that period. Nonetheless, the relationship between them was not made totally clear in the stele inscriptions and other contemporary documents. Lou's titles remained below that of the Heavenly Master but it is very clear that he did not defer much to him.⁸⁷

Actually, Lou's ascendancy is linked to a power crisis in the Zhang family. After Zhang Xilin's death in 1727, his brother Zhang Qinglin 張慶麟 was named acting Heavenly Master. However, and for unexplained reasons but apparently in connection to an embezzlement scandal in the Longhu shan complex, he was replaced in 1731 with another brother, Zhang Zhaolin, a move which coincided with the bestowal of considerable palace funds for the restoration of the complex.⁸⁸ Was Zhang Zhaolin in Lou's debt?⁸⁹ Very possibly. But the operation had mixed consequences for the Longhu shan establishment. While Lou was basking in imperial glory and the mountain's buildings were repaired anew, the Heavenly Master's position was crippled by a contentious regency, and right after Zhang Yulong's nomination in 1742, humiliated by a demotion in the empire's hierarchy.

⁸⁴ *Da zhenren fu bei*; LZ 12, pp. 184–85.

⁸⁵ *Miaoyuan guan bei*.

⁸⁶ The 54th Heavenly Master experienced a twelve-year regency.

⁸⁷ A memorial by the Jiangxi governor (*lufu zouzhe* dated 1776 [Qianlong 41/10/16] in palace archives) describes a confused situation just after Lou's death, when it appeared that a deputy, named by and answering to Lou alone, was running things on Longhu shan.

⁸⁸ LZ 1, pp. 1–3 (early 1731 edict where the Yongzheng emperor orders a full-scale restoration as a token of his gratitude towards Lou Jinyuan) and many other documents in the same work (see 1, pp. 8–11 on the lavish landed endowments); Hosoya, "Yōshō chō," pp. 1–3, 8–13.

⁸⁹ In a text written for Lou's seventieth birthday, in 1757 (LZ 15, pp. 303–04), Zhang Zhaojin expresses his gratitude.

Whatever his relations with the Zhang family, protector or usurper, Lou, although not the nominal head of the Taoist clergy, was in a position of effective leadership. One of his initiatives was to create a new lineage. According to Lou's own writings, the various clerical families of the Longhu shan complex belonged to one of three lineages but did not use generational naming patterns, in contrast to formal religious lineages (Taoist, Buddhist, and others) that used "lineage poems 派詩" to confer on those of the same generation names sharing the same first word. Lou created such a poem and had the three lineages share it henceforth.⁹⁰ Lou also used this lineage poem for his personal disciples. Symbolically at least, the whole Longhu shan clergy became Lou's own disciples – even though this only lasted for a while, because another lineage continued to be used for Longhu shan ordinations.⁹¹ Lou did not train disciples in Peking, and his lineage did not take root in the capital; it would seem that in this matter, Lou used his position at court to take decisions pertaining mostly to the Longhu shan institution and the other Taoist centers in Jiangnan closely related to it.

The Yongzheng emperor died on October 8, 1735. His successor, the young Qianlong emperor, was not nearly as keen on Taoism and alchemy, and he promptly sacked many of his father's confidants, both Buddhists and Taoists.⁹² One of his first policies was to conduct a nationwide census of the clergy within an anticlerical framework. As already seen, he also took measures aimed at curtailing the Heavenly Master, notably sharply downgrading his rank in 1748. Lou, however, was retained at the palace – he had actually just returned, having been at Longhu shan at the time of Yongzheng's death. Qianlong must have considered that Lou was innocent of the alchemical death of his father, and it is also likely that he felt he needed Lou's ritual powers. Besides, Lou was probably trying to remain close to the emperor so as to maintain some influence and protect Taoism as much as possible in adverse times. Indeed, as is suggested rather than explicitly stated in Lou's 1740 *Longhu shan zhi*, Lou managed to maintain a measure of autonomy for the Longhu shan institution and clergy during the census procedures.⁹³ The young emperor actually bestowed new honors on his Taoist chaplain: he gave him the honorary title of Tongyi

⁹⁰ LZ 3, p. 29; Qing, *Zhongguo dao jiao shi* 4, pp. 184–89.

⁹¹ For this lineage, see n. 46, above.

⁹² An entry in *Gaozong shilu* 高宗實錄, in *Qing shilu* 清實錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986–1987) 1, Yongzheng 13/8/23, names two: Zhang Taixu 張太虛 and Wang Dingqian 王定乾, neither of whom is otherwise known.

⁹³ Goossaert, "Counting the monks," pp. 55–58.

dafu 通議大夫, head of the Daolu si, and even conferred titles on Lou's parents and grandparents.⁹⁴ At the same time, Lou was appointed abbot of the Dongyue miao 東嶽廟, one of the largest and most affluent temples in Peking.⁹⁵

Because the Dongyue miao had the official status of an imperially sponsored temple, received regular subsidies from the court, and was the stage for regular court-mandated rituals, the court could name its abbot. We see Lou appear as abbot on three different steles that he wrote between 1741 and 1763 for the Dongyue miao's congregations.⁹⁶ But Lou was absent from the temple's ancestral shrine; and the lineage that he created for his disciples, both in Jiangnan and among Taoists working for the court, was not adopted at the Dongyue miao. My interpretation is that Lou did not intend to reform Peking Taoism: he mostly stayed at the Da Guangming dian with other Jiangnan Taoists who would only live a few years in Peking. When named abbot of the Dongyue miao, he certainly left the Dongyue miao Taoists to their own tradition and acted as an honorary abbot, coming when necessary and extending his protection to the temple from the palace. Nonetheless, a direct link between the court Taoists and the Dongyue miao was created. During the following century and a half, Dongyue miao senior Taoists were routinely nominated to positions in the Daolu si (the head of the Daolu si was more usually the abbot of the Da Guangming dian), were frequently called to perform rituals for the court, and received salaries.⁹⁷

We do not know when exactly, or under which circumstances, Lou Jinyuan finally left Peking, but he was still at the emperor's service in 1744, nine years after Qianlong's enthronement.⁹⁸ His career after his return to Longhu shan is hardly known. Qianlong kept Lou in gratitude, for he sent him presents and further honorary titles on his seventieth birthday in 1757.

Lou left a number of works. The best known is his 1740 gazetteer of the Longhu shan, in which several of Lou's poems appear.⁹⁹ Lou

⁹⁴ LZ 1, pp. 5-8.

⁹⁵ LZ 8, pp. 91-92.

⁹⁶ *Dongyue miao Xianhua shenghui beiji* 東嶽廟獻花勝會碑記 (1741), in *Beitu*, vol. 69, p. 87; *Dongyue miao Xianhua shenghui beiji* 東嶽廟獻花勝會碑記 (1756), in *Beitu*, vol. 71, pp. 85-87; and *Jinglu hui ji* 淨爐會記 (1763), in *Beitu*, vol. 72, pp. 33-35. See also Yuan Bingling 袁冰凌, "Beijing Dongyue miao beiwen kaoshu" 北京東嶽廟碑文考述, *Matériaux pour l'étude de la religion chinoise, Sanjiao wenxian* 3 (1999), pp. 137-58; Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400-1900* (Berkeley: U. California P., 2000), p. 515.

⁹⁷ The funerary tablets of the 19th-c. Dongyue miao managers document their positions in the Daolu si: Koyanagi, *Baiyun guan zhi*, pp. 216-19.

⁹⁸ Qing, *Zhongguo dao jiao shi* 4, p. 184.

⁹⁹ LZ 11, pp. 160-65.

also authored an edition of the Qingwei Lingbao funerary liturgy, titled *Taiji lingbao jilian keyi* 太極靈寶祭煉科儀,¹⁰⁰ and the ritual for worship of the Mother of the Dipper, *Dafan xiantian zougao xuanke* 大梵先天奏告玄科.¹⁰¹ Both liturgical manuals were written upon the request of an imperial prince, and copies were kept in palace collections, which suggests that they were used for rituals at court.

Lou Jinyuan was a well-known figure who appeared in several late-eighteenth-century anecdotes. His reputation was apparently high in many circles; he was respected both as a Taoist upholding the great liturgical tradition,¹⁰² and as a gentleman capable of discussing the three religions with literati and developing a critical perspective on self-cultivation techniques.¹⁰³ The famous storyteller Yuan Mei 袁枚 (1716–1798) wrote an anecdote casting Lou as a much shadier figure, yet someone crucial in the process of saving Taoism. According to the story, Lou was raised by an uncle, but having been caught in an illegitimate relation with a servant, the young Lou stole 500 taels (a large sum of money) and ran away. He took refuge on Longhu shan, and on his arrival was met by a Taoist who told him that in order to become a *faguan* there, he had to pay 1,000 taels. The Taoist gave him the missing 500 taels along with three documents to be opened only in case of extreme emergency. Lou was then duly accepted as *faguan*, on his payment of the 1,000 taels, and eventually found himself at the Yongzheng court. There the emperor told the Taoist delegation that if they failed to make rain within ten days, he would annihilate Taoism. Lou managed, using one of the three secret documents, to obtain rain and thus “saved Taoism.” The other two secret documents were used to exorcise Jia Shifang and predict an earthquake. The Yongzheng emperor was then totally reconciled with Taoism and showered Lou with honors, but Lou’s powers were now spent.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ *Taiji lingbao jilian keyi*, in Yoshioka Yoshitoyo 吉岡義豊, *Dōkyō to Bukkyō* 道教と佛教 (Tokyo: Nihon gakujutsu shinkōkai, 1959) 1, pp. 503–75, and *Zangwai daoshu*, vol. 17, pp. 628–98; it has a 1767 preface by Lou himself.

¹⁰¹ *Dafan xiantian zougao xuanke* (Haikou: Hainan chubanshe, 2001; *Gugong zhenben congkan* 故宮珍本叢刊, 525), with an undated preface by Lou.

¹⁰² In Yuan Mei, “Lou zhenren cuo zhuo yao” 婁真人錯捉妖, *Zi buyu* 17, pp. 400–1, though, Lou is invited to exorcise malignant spirits haunting a high official’s home, but he fails to catch all the culprits.

¹⁰³ Zhaolian 昭隤 (1780–1833), “Lou zhenren” 婁真人, in *Xiaoting zalu* 嘯亭雜錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980) 9, p. 274; Ji, *Yuwei caotang biji* 7, pp. 124–25. In Yuan Mei, “Zhi gui ermiao” 治鬼二妙, in *Zi buyu* 9, p. 219, Lou provides sensible advice to high officials on dealing with malignant spirits.

¹⁰⁴ Yuan Mei, “Lou Luo er daoren” 婁羅二道人, *Zi buyu* 21, pp. 501–2.

This probably mixes the atmosphere of anti-Taoist sentiments during the early-Qianlong years with the story of Lou Jinyuan's ascendancy at court; in any case, it is remarkable that even though it did not cast Lou in a very positive light, it credited him with saving Taoism in times of great political danger. This danger was certainly exaggerated in Yuan Mei's telling, and neither the Yongzheng nor the Qianlong emperor ever considered annihilating Taoism.¹⁰⁵ But the story certainly confirms that Lou was widely credited with maintaining the prestige and an institutional existence at court for Taoism in general, and the Zhang Heavenly Master institution in particular, throughout the late-Qing period.

THE SOCIAL MILIEU OF THE FAGUAN

Lou Jinyuan's life sheds light not only on the relationship between the Longhu shan and the late Qing court, but also on the social milieu of the *faguan* who were the actors in this relationship. Beyond Lou's towering stature, I would now like to look more closely at his colleagues and successors and thereby learn more of the Longhu shan clerical staff. First, even though their careers were intimately linked to the Heavenly Master and Lou Jinyuan, their overall position was different inasmuch as it was not a lifetime one. A *faguan*, like a magistrate of the imperial administration, was a position one held for only a limited tenure. The lists of Longhu shan *faguan* between the mid-eighteenth and the mid-nineteenth centuries provided by the local gazetteers suggest an average tenure of about seven years.¹⁰⁶

In Peking, Lou Jinyuan's lasting legacy was the group of *faguan* he instituted as the court Taoists and which remained until 1911. As the term *zhiji faguan* 值季法官 suggests,¹⁰⁷ these Taoists must have been in perpetual personal attendance of the emperor by shifts, performing both regular rituals (*jiao* offerings for the emperor's birthday and other junctures of the Palace's liturgical calendar) and on-demand services in case of a death or illness in the imperial family or natural disaster. Up until the Yongzheng reign, there were two institutions staffed by *faguan*:

¹⁰⁵ The theme of Taoism's survival depending on the Heavenly Master's performance to the emperor comes up in another anecdote, set in 1805. At a Palace audience the Heavenly Master is requested to make rain, but fails; the emperor threatens to eradicate Taoism, but gods (at the Heavenly Master's service) paste talismans on all the Palace buildings (at the time of the Duanwu festival), and the emperor relents: *Chongming manlu* 1, p. 28b.

¹⁰⁶ (*Tongzhi*) *Guangxin fuzhi* 10, pp. 27a-31b, based on 13 indicated lengths of tenure.

¹⁰⁷ *Da zhenren fu bei*. For more detail on late-Qing court Taoists, see Goossaert, *Peking Taoists*, chap. 5.

the Longhu shan administration and the Daolu si (although the Daolu si officials are normally called *daoguan* rather than *faguan*). The group of court Taoists around Lou Jinyuan, posted at the Da Guangming dian, and ten other affiliated temples in the imperial domain,¹⁰⁸ constituted the third. After 1733, there were 48 *faguan* at the court separately from the 26 positions for Taoist officials on Longhu shan, and the 8 positions in the Daolu si.¹⁰⁹ Naturally, the same persons often occupied in turn or simultaneously these various positions in the three branches of the Taoist administration; all of these official Taoists were chosen among the very same pool of clerics. In particular, even though the details are not clear, the officials of the Daolu si were chosen, some among the Jiangnan *faguan* working for the court and some among the local Peking Qingwei clerics (notably from the Dongyue miao).

The three branches worked in close cooperation, the Daolu si being the court Taoists' main channel with civil and court officials: most of the documents issued by or to the Daolu si that I found in the palace archives are related to the monthly salaries and other financial requests of the *faguan* of the Da Guangming dian and the ten other temples.¹¹⁰ Actually, the *faguan* were assisted by other Taoists living in these eleven temples and also receiving a monthly salary, but apparently with no official title. In the only comprehensive list of all court Taoists I have found, dated 1778, we find 155 names, with the *faguan* presumably (this is not entirely clear) distinguished as managers or deputy managers of the eleven temples, and drawing a higher salary, and the others ranked as "second-class" or "third-class Taoist."¹¹¹ Presumably, the *faguan* were from Jiangnan, whereas the "second-class" or "third-class Taoists" were local Peking men.

The background and recruitment of the court Taoists does not seem to have changed significantly between Lou Jinyuan's heyday and the fall of the Qing empire. We find among them two categories: Taoists from the great clerical families from Jiangnan, and local (Peking) men.

¹⁰⁸ The eleven temples managed by the *faguan* were: Da Guangming dian, Dongyue miao, Wanshou gong 萬壽宮, Shiyong gong 時應宮 (the last two in the imperial city), Ninghe miao 凝和廟, Xuanren miao 宣仁廟, Zhaoxian miao 昭顯廟 (the last three in the inner city, devoted to the gods of clouds, wind, and thunder respectively), Yongyou miao 永佑廟, Yuanling gong 元靈宮, Renyou miao 仁佑廟, and Ningyou miao 寧佑廟 (the last four in the Southern park, Nanyuan 南苑, a large suburban imperial villa).

¹⁰⁹ Hosoya, "Yōshō chō," pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁰ Neiwufu 內務府 archives at Number One Historical Archives 第一歷史檔案館, Beijing (hereafter, NWF), Zhangyi si files 3778-3816.

¹¹¹ NWF, Zhangyi si file 3822.

Among the latter, some were recruited from the Dongyue miao Taoists, and others were local disciples of the eminent Jiangnan Taoists. Local disciples are mentioned at different periods,¹¹² but apparently, the institution was not meant to become localized and evolve into a purely Peking lineage, since until the end the court administration itself insisted that the Longhu shan keep sending its best priests to the court. Apparently, the highest positions were reserved for the Jiangnan Taoists, and local disciples were not much promoted, remaining acolytes.

The Jiangnan Taoists serving at court were then themselves the elite among the *faguan* serving on Longhu shan. A list of fifty-four Longhu shan *faguan*, published in a late-nineteenth-century local gazetteer, shows that most of them were from areas very close to Longhu shan, those from Jiangnan being a minority.¹¹³

The *faguan* called to Peking by Lou Jinyuan, and those who succeeded them up to 1911 were mostly recruited among the clerical families managing the major Qingwei Lingbao temples of Jiangnan, that regularly sent some priests to Longhu shan to be trained and ordained, and to staff the Taoist administration there. Among the temples enjoying such favored links with Longhu shan, the most prominent were the Xuanmiao guan 玄妙觀 in Suzhou and the Chenghuang miao 城隍廟 in Hangzhou; the gazetteers of these temples provide biographical notices for some of the Qingwei Lingbao dignitaries who went to Peking. Indeed, the edict entrusting the Da Guangming dian to Lou enjoined him to select his *faguan* among the dignitaries of Longhu shan and Suzhou,¹¹⁴ and a subsequent edict named two of them: Jin Yuanning 金遠寧 and Wang Yuanzhe 王遠喆.¹¹⁵

Among the dignitaries who came to the Da Guangming dian directly from Longhu shan itself, the most prominent was Wang Kecheng 汪克誠. Hitherto a dignitary at Longhu shan, he was made head of the Daolu si in 1777 as well as manager of the Da Guangming dian and Qin'an dian, thus holding concurrently the two most important Taoist official positions in the capital.¹¹⁶ From Suzhou came Pan Yuanguai 潘

¹¹² In 1879, the Da Guangming dian's deputy abbot had a Peking disciple: NWF, Zhangyi si, file 3791. Another case (same file, same year) of a conflict between two Taoists from the Da Guangming dian shows that one was from Peking, and the other from Sichuan.

¹¹³ (*Tongzhi*) *Guangxin fuzhi* 10, pp. 27a–31b. Among these 54 Taoists, 22 were from Guixi county itself, 24 from neighboring counties (all but one within Jiangxi province), and 8 from Jiangnan.

¹¹⁴ LZ 1, p. 4.

¹¹⁵ LZ 1, p. 5.

¹¹⁶ (*Tongzhi*) *Guangxin fuzhi* 10, p. 28a; Hosoya, "Kenryū chō," p. 585.

元珪 (?-1735)¹¹⁷ and his disciple Hui Yuanmo 惠遠謨 (1697-1771).¹¹⁸ Pan's career is not well known, except that his reputation in Suzhou was already great before he went to Peking. Hui had already been nominated by imperial edict among the Longhu shan dignitaries in 1731, and was invited to court in 1733. He became a disciple of Lou but returned to Suzhou to mourn Pan, his first master. He returned to Peking in 1744, apparently as Lou's successor as Qianlong's chaplain. However, he did not stay there very long, and returned to Suzhou in 1750. Zhang Zili 張資理 (1712-1786) came in 1734 and stayed until 1749; he would later be appointed in the Longhu shan administration.¹¹⁹

From Hangzhou came Shi Yuan'en 施遠恩 (1699-1767), a member of a prominent family of Taoist priests, who had entered the Chenghuang miao at the age of nine. He was invited to join Lou Jinyuan at court in 1732, and became one of his closest associates; he was distinguished by Yongzheng in 1735 and promoted in the Longhu shan hierarchy. Like Hui Yuanmo, Shi Yuan'en's name bore the sign of his being a personal disciple of Lou Jinyuan (the *yuan* 遠 character being the second in the lineage poem instated by Lou). Shi then traveled around and worked on Longhu shan before returning to his home temple in 1747. He does seem to have maintained relations with the court under the Qianlong reign.¹²⁰ We have a few further names of Taoists who joined this group, such as Shen Qian 沈謙 from Jiangyin, a Taoist renowned for his poetry and paintings: Yongzheng gave him a *zhenren* title.¹²¹

After the 1750s, sources on the court *faguan* become fewer in number. Archival sources provide more names of court Taoists during the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,¹²² but since we do not have biographical information, I shall not list them here. A few cases of documented figures to have worked as court *faguan* are Gu Shenji 顧神幾 (1710-1777) and Chen Quanying 陳全瑩 (1759-1823).¹²³ Gu arrived in 1752 with his master Xu Dongcun 徐東村,¹²⁴ and returned to Suzhou in 1769. Chen was invited to the Da Guangming dian in 1782, at the

¹¹⁷ Qing, *Zhongguo dao jiao shi* 4, p. 190; Gu Yuan 顧沅, *Xuanmiao guan zhi* 玄妙觀志 (1832; rpt. *Zangwai daoshu*, vol. 20) 4, p. 2a. Pan was a disciple of Hu Deguo 胡德果, himself a disciple of Shi Daoyuan.

¹¹⁸ *Xuanmiao guan zhi* 4, pp. 2b-3b.

¹¹⁹ *Xuanmiao guan zhi* 4, pp. 3b-4b.

¹²⁰ Lu Song 盧崧 et al., comp., *Wushan Chenghuang miao zhi* 吳山城隍廟志 (1789; 1878 edn. in *Zangwai daoshu*, vol. 19) 5, pp. 9a-11a.

¹²¹ Chen Si 陳思, comp., (*Guangxu*) *Jiangyin xianzhi* (光緒) 江陰縣志 (1921 edn.) 21, p. 11a.

¹²² Notably NWF, Zhangyi si, file 3822.

¹²³ *Xuanmiao guan zhi* 4, p. 5a.

¹²⁴ Dongcun is the *hao* of an otherwise unknown Taoist; he is only named in Gu's short biography.

age of only twenty-three, and underwent further training there under the head of the Daolu si, Zhou Xingchi 周星池. The Qianlong emperor once asked him to perform a Thunder Ritual at the Yuanming yuan. In 1789, he was made a dignitary at the Zhenren fu on Longhu shan, but presumably was still often at court, since he regularly prayed for rain in Peking for the emperor. He was back in Suzhou in 1792. According to this chronology, Chen only stayed ten years at court.

The Jiangnan Taoists mostly came to the court when still rather young. Lou himself was only thirty-eight, and most of his acolytes arrived in their thirties. The criterion for eminence in this milieu was not so much age or experience as prestigious filiation and training. The court Taoists mentioned above all had pedigrees as prestigious as Lou's, belonging to prestigious Taoist families, some of which provided a *faguan* in each generation.¹²⁵ Today, local Taoists in the Longhu shan area claim that their forebears all trained on Longhu shan, and some of them were hereditary *faguan* families.¹²⁶

Late-Qing court Taoists, then, were all elite clerics in their own right, working for the most prestigious patron on earth, the Qing emperor. Yet, being named *faguan*, be it in the Da Guangming dian for the court service, or at Longhu shan, or at the Daolu si for the supervision of the Chinese Taoist clergy, was more an honor than a position of real influence or power. Such power could only come from personal charisma produced by extraordinary success in liturgical performance. Some of the Da Guangming dian *faguan* after 1740 gained the personal attention of the emperor, but none rose to the informal status of chaplain that was enjoyed by Lou Jinyuan nor succeeded in inheriting his position and prestige at court. It would seem that Hui Yuanmo was entrusted with Lou's succession, but we do not hear of him in Peking sources. Most of Lou's acolytes had returned to their native Jiangnan in the same time as Lou; it looks as if they considered their stay at court as an important stage in their career, but not as its apex. They returned to become heads of their home temple and bask in local fame, very possibly a more enjoyable and gratifying position than being an emperor's cleric.

At the same time, it seems that the position of court cleric was less sought after during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than during Lou Jinyuan's heyday. The ancient procedure for replacing va-

¹²⁵ Lou's family itself was one of these families: a sixth-generation descendant of Lou Jinyuan was abbot of one of the Longhu shan's *daoyuan* and manager of the Shangqing gong in 1844: *Longhu shan zhi* (BNF), p. 45b.

¹²⁶ Cao and Liu, *Longhu shan Tianshi dao yinyue yanjiu*, p. 43.

cant *faguan* was for their head (the *zhangyin faguan* 掌印法官) to write to the Heavenly Master, who suggested names of Taoists to be promoted. This procedure did not work very well, apparently, for in 1807, 18 positions were vacant, and the Heavenly Master only had 4 Taoists promoted.¹²⁷ An 1815 edict, observing that half the 48 positions were vacant, announced a new quota of 24. In 1819, an edict reported that an official of the Longhu shan had been sent by the Heavenly Master to Jiangnan to recruit young Taoists for the Da Guangming dian; this was forbidden, as the Heavenly Master could only send Taoists from his home mountain.¹²⁸ Still, the reduced Peking *faguan* corps continued its mission. In 1879, a request was sent to the Heavenly Master through the Zhangyi si 掌儀司 (the office of the Palace managing court ritual and religious specialists) and the governor of Jiangxi: there were only 6 *faguan* left at court. The Heavenly Master nominated and sent to Peking 4 of his own staff.¹²⁹

Why was the Longhu shan administration so slow to fill the court Taoist positions? It is possible that the Heavenly Master, who himself was barred from court audience and never went to Peking (with a limited exception between 1789 and 1819), saw no need of depriving himself of his best Taoists to send them to the court. This might be a reason for the decline of the institution of court Taoists during the nineteenth century. Another reason might be internal dissension. An 1879 case in archival files evokes an acute conflict between the head of the Da Guangming dian and his deputy, the first having managed to have the second expelled from Peking and sent back to his native Jiangnan.¹³⁰

An 1839 edict makes it clear that there were then still *faguan* at the Da Guangming dian and that they performed regularly, notably at the Qin'an dian.¹³¹ But they did not enjoy the prestige and influence of the emperor's chaplain that Lou Jinyuan did. Some Da Guangming dian Taoists were embroiled in a scandal in 1890, standing accused of sheltering women in their living quarters.¹³² The Da Guangming dian

¹²⁷ *Da Qing huidian shili* 1219, p. 1b, *xia*.

¹²⁸ (*Qinding*) *Zongguan Neiwufu xianxing zeli: Zhangyi si* (欽定) 總管內務府現行則例掌儀司 (Haikou: Hainan chubanshe, 2000; in *Gugong zhenben congkan* 308), p. 235; and Board of Personnel memorandum (document no. 109101) in Grand Secretariat Archives, Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica.

¹²⁹ NWF, Zhangyi si, file 3791.

¹³⁰ NWF, Zhangyi si, file 3791.

¹³¹ Daoguang 19/11/8 edict in *Da Qing huidian shili* 1217, p. 3a (*xia*)-3b (*shang*), and (*Qinding*) *Gongzhong xianxing zeli* (欽定) 宮中現行則例 (*Jindai Zhongguo shiliao congkan xubian* 近代中國史料叢刊續編, 63rd series, vols. 621-624 [Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1979]) 1, pp. 101a-2b.

¹³² "Daoyuan zangchun" 道院藏春, in *Dianshizhai huabao*, vol. "Xu," p. 44.

was burned down by the allied powers in 1900, but the ten other temples remained in operation, with their court Taoists, until 1911.¹³³ In brief, the institution of court Taoists worked continuously from 1730 to 1911, but was affected by a progressive decline in both the scope of its activities and its prestige. While we might speculate on a possible lack of a later successor able to compare with Lou Jinyuan's charisma, it is also likely that the presence of a Tibeto-Mongol Buddhist chaplain, notably Rolpai Dorje (1717–1786), prevented the emergence of later Taoist chaplains.

CONCLUSION: A TAOIST BUREAUCRACY

Much more could be said on the history of the Zhang Heavenly Master institution in late-Qing China, but the above sketch, in spite of its lacunae, should be a sufficient basis to address larger questions relevant to both Chinese history and religious studies in general. It is clear that the Zhang Heavenly Master institution was a kind of religious bureaucracy, based on a particular but widely accepted interpretation of the bureaucratic paradigm informing Taoist theology and liturgy and, through it, the whole of Chinese religion.¹³⁴ The Heavenly Master's genetically inherited and imperially sanctioned position gave him unique authority, embodied in his seal, to nominate priests and gods in the universe and to discipline demons. Late-imperial Chinese were ready to recognize that even though some individual Heavenly Masters might have sub-standard personal qualities, they were still endowed with awesome powers over humans and deities.¹³⁵ This authority was at the same time recognized and curtailed by the state, which tried to harness it to its own ends (the *faguan* serving as court clerics) and yet resented possible competition with its own project of disciplining and ordering the universe under the emperor's authority.

The Taoist clerical bureaucracy was not in opposition to the state but saw itself as one of its constituent and loyal parts. Indeed, in the Zhang Heavenly Masters' vision, the Longhu shan and the imperial state were parts of one unique bureaucracy. As a part of the civil service, the Heavenly Master organization tried, as did civil officials (and with

¹³³ They are mentioned in 1910 documents: NWF, Zhangyi si, file 3810.

¹³⁴ A recent discussion of the bureaucratic "model" is that of Robert Hymes, *Way and Byway: Taoism, Local Religion, and Models of Divinity in Sung and Modern China* (Berkeley: U. of California P., 2002).

¹³⁵ Yuan Mei, "Lu furen" 陸夫人, *Zi buyu* 13, p. 314, tells how the 57th Heavenly Master Zhang Cunyi died in 1779, punished by Heaven for writing memorials full of mistakes (his *faguan*'s fault, actually).

equally limited success), to control popular practice and bring uniformity and (the pretence of) orthodoxy onto it.

Heavenly Master religion was “popular” inasmuch as it engaged and gave a place to all local, vernacular traditions, but, like the civil bureaucracy, it was at the same time busy defining elites (the *faguan* and more generally the Qingwei Lingbao Taoists), helping such elite emerge and take leadership roles, in the hope that they would then influence local practitioners. The *faguan* elite were in large part chosen among coopted prominent Taoist families, but the institution had room for talented young clerics, such as Lou Jinyuan, to make hugely successful careers they could not have considered otherwise. Thus the Zhang Heavenly Master institution could also provide legitimacy and career opportunities to individual clerics endowed with charismatic qualities of their own, such as Lou Jinyuan: it worked at channeling all available sources of charisma into its bureaucratic framework. Of course, even though it attracted gifted individuals such as Lou, it also failed to attract many more, as most local religious performers and holy men remained aloof from the bureaucratic apparatus of the Longhu shan.

The state endorsed the Zhang Heavenly Masters’ vision of themselves as the spiritual branch of the state apparatus, but only to a limited extent. It coopted the Zhang Heavenly Master institution’s best officials for court service but gradually tried to limit the Longhu shan management of Taoist affairs nationwide, entrusting them instead to a toothless and ineffective parallel bureaucracy (the Daolu si) that it controlled directly – and that was, in contrast to the Zhang Heavenly Master institution, totally devoid of any religious legitimacy. The state did not take exception to the Zhang Heavenly Master vision of spiritual bureaucracy, but it endeavored to put it to the exclusive use of the court. Thus the state bureaucracy limited, but did not annihilate, the Zhang Heavenly Master institution’s ability to work as China’s spiritual bureaucracy.

The officialdom and, more generally, the gentry, did not approve of all aspects of the Zhang Heavenly Master institution (such as ordination tours), but nonetheless often cooperated with it. The narrative and polemical material quoted above suggests that what the gentry writers found most problematic with the Heavenly Master was not the clerical bureaucracy, which they approved, but the demonstrations of charisma, and notably the crowds greeting the Heavenly Master and rushing to buy his talismans and request his help. If there were many aspects of “popular” forms of Taoism at Longhu shan, its patrons as described in

narrative sources were most often officials and gentry members, who felt comfortable with the elite, bureaucratic world of the Heavenly Masters.¹³⁶ Indeed, in the very abundant eighteenth- and nineteenth-century narrative material describing the Heavenly Master and his *faguan* in action, the bureaucratic aspects (the Heavenly Master receiving deities in audience, his judicial interventions, his nominating hosts of celestial officials, his sending living or ghostly officials to carry out his orders) are always emphasized and described with awe. Authors reporting on him also systematically mention that his actions were carried out in written, bureaucratic form (one requested his help through a formal memorial, and he answered by petitioning various deities or officials). For his literate constituency, the Heavenly Master was clearly endowed with bureaucratic charisma: he was someone possessing the legitimate authority to command almost anyone in the universe through writing and formal orders. This bureaucratic charisma was expressed both in ritual (exorcisms, ordinations) and in ordinary dealings with state and society, such as his relationships with the court and the field administration, and his travels in full official pomp and his receiving written requests for help from people afflicted by spirits.

From the Taoists' perspective, what kind of bureaucracy was the Zhang Heavenly Master institution? What kind of control did it exert over clerics? We have seen that through the ordination system, the Heavenly Masters attempted to control practices, but by imposing a symbolical hierarchy of purer and less pure practices instead of banning the latter. In this regard, the term of "Taoist pope" given by nineteenth-century western observers was misleading: the Zhang Heavenly Master had no disciplinary power, not did he fix or interpret doctrine. Heavenly Masters and their *faguan*, including Lou Jinyuan, published remarkably few treatises or books of any kind with respect to their social standing and religious prestige, nor did they engage in debates with other Taoists. That, apparently, was not what Taoists expected from the Zhang Heavenly Master institution.

On the other hand, another fundamental aspect of bureaucracies, religious or not, was well present at Longhu shan – namely, taxation. Not only were ordinations granted in exchange for high fees, but also the Zhang Heavenly Master institution gave itself the right to tax all local Taoists, at least in certain circumstances. According to a contem-

¹³⁶ The high official Ji Yun reports a discussion with the Heavenly Master, who explained that he was just a high official and his *faguan* were his subordinates in their dealings with deities; and Ji (the head of the *Siku quanshu* project!) found this perfectly sensible: *Yuewei caotang biji* 1, pp. 8–9.

porary local informant, Taoists in Jianning county (western Fujian) “all depended on the Zhang Heavenly Master,” who sent delegates each year to collect a tax.¹³⁷

In exchange for such fees and taxes, Taoists obtained a priceless commodity: legitimacy. Like all religious specialists, Taoists, in order to be fully recognized and employed, needed to be endorsed by their local community. However, in contrast to many local specialists whose claims of competence were based squarely on their immediate and visible performances (such as cures and miracles), clerical specialists working within literate China-wide traditions such as Taoism and Buddhism, also needed to be legitimized by some external authority that could guarantee their proficiency and orthodoxy with regard to this literate China-wide tradition. Within Buddhism and Quanzhen Taoism, this was done by the large, spectacular monastic ordinations: the Zhang Heavenly Master institution played a similar role for Zhengyi Taoists. This is why, in spite of their many differences, the Zhang Heavenly Masters and the abbots of the greatest Quanzhen monasteries played comparable roles and were similar types of religious leader – that is, guarantors for the clergy’s orthodoxy and efficiency; and indeed, when Taoism was suddenly urged to organize in a China-wide association in 1912, the Zhang Heavenly Master and the leading Quanzhen abbots found themselves in competition.¹³⁸

In other words, proof of affiliation with the Zhang Heavenly Master institution, whether through ordination (of oneself or of an ancestor), payment of taxes, or other bureaucratic processes, allowed Taoists to claim a high social status as literate specialists, members of a very old, orthodox, bureaucratic, and imperially-connected China-wide religious tradition.

All of this would seem to contradict classical theories in the sociology of religions regarding leadership, authority, and charisma as they have been developed by Max Weber and others. In such theories, the personal charisma of sect leaders is opposed to the rationalistic bureaucracy of churches. Cases where the position founded by a charismatic leader is transmitted to his heirs are analyzed as “routinization” where latter-day successors enjoy a mere shadow of the founder’s charisma. In other words, it is either charisma or bureaucracy. Weber himself, who had no access to any sort of data regarding the Zhang Heavenly Masters, found no such thing as a rational bureaucracy in Taoism, and

¹³⁷ Nie, “Jianning Daojiao,” p. 356.

¹³⁸ The comparison is developed in Goossaert, *Peking Taoists*, chap. 4.

he described Taoists as a “guild of magicians.”¹³⁹ That Weber was ill-informed is well-known and calls for no further discussion here. What is really interesting is that the case of the Zhang Heavenly Master institution has the potential of improving our current understanding of the connection between charismatic leaders and religious bureaucracies in the Chinese context and more generally in any religion.

The missing element that should be added to the classical Weberian model, in order to adapt it to religious bureaucracies such as the Zhang Heavenly Master institution, is the lineage as it was practiced in China in both clerical and nonclerical contexts. Late-imperial Chinese lineage practices were at the same time charismatic (they guaranteed the proper transmission, and not the Weberian “routinization” or “rationalization,” of the founder’s unique charisma) and amenable to the construction of large, durable, and elaborate church-like organizations dealing with issues of orthodoxy and country-wide uniformity, tasks that were until the early-twentieth century the daily business of Taoist bureaucrats on Longhu shan.¹⁴⁰

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Beitu* *Beijing tushuguan cang Zhongguo lidai shike taben huibian* 北京圖書館藏中國歷代石刻拓本匯編
- LZ* Lou Jinyuan 婁近垣, *Longhu shan zhi* 龍虎山志 (1996 edn.)
- NWF* Nei wufu 內務府 archives, Number One Historical Archives 第一歷史檔案館, Beijing

¹³⁹ Max Weber, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, trans. Hans H. Gerth (New York: Glencoe, 1951), pp. 224–25.

¹⁴⁰ For another discussion of a bureaucratic organization based on a clerical lineage (an Amidist sect in Japan) within a Weberian framework, see Sybil A. Thornton, *Charisma and Community Formation in Medieval Japan: The Case of the Yūgyō-ha (1300–1700)* (Ithaca: Cornell University, East Asia Program [Cornell East Asia Series 102], 1999).