Confucian Rituals and Chinese Villagers
Ritual Change and Social Transformation in a Southeastern Chinese Community, 1368-1949

Yonghua Liu

BRILL
Confucian Rituals and Chinese Villagers
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TERMS FOR MEASURES AND MONEY

Area
1 mu = 0.077 hectare
1 tiao = 1/3 mu = 0.0257 hectare

Capacity
1 shi/dan = 67 liters or 99 quarts

Weight
1 shi/dan = 133 lbs
1 shi/dan = 100 jin = 50 kg
1 hu = 30 kg

Length
1 li = 1/3 mile

Money
1 tael (liang) = 37.8 grams of silver
1 tael (liang) = 10 mace (qian) = 10 candareen (fen)
1 silver dollar (yuan) = 10 jiao
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first major debt of gratitude is to the people of Sibao. Their hospitality to me and their generosity in sharing their knowledge with an outsider are what made it possible for me to give a detailed account of their history and experience. I must thank Zou Risheng and Li Shengbao for providing some key texts to me and for introducing me to many of their friends. I am grateful to the late Zou Hengchen, himself a master of rites, for both his willingness to share with me his erudite knowledge in rituals and local history and for his patience with my endless questions. I am also most appreciative of the help provided by Wu Dexiang. Ten years after, my mind is still fresh with the experience of our exhausting but fruitful journey to the distant mountainous village, Huangshikeng. My thanks are also owed to my host and hostess during my stay in Sibao: Zou Junfu and Tong Jiurong. The lodging and tasty food they provided made my fieldwork in Sibao a pleasant experience. I am grateful to Zou Jiangrui, himself an excellent informant, for arranging my interview in Shuangquan. Bao Fasheng, Jiang Huanyou, Li Huoxian, Li Jinbin, Ma Chuanggang, Ma Jiashu, Ma Junliang, Wu Changhua, Wu Derong, Yan Yanghua, Zhou Rongfa, Zou Dingbin, Zou Hengyan, Zou Hongkang, Zou Jinteng, and many others helped me one way or another. I am grateful to them all. I am also indebted to the China Sibao Woodblock Printing Exhibition Center for allowing me to make photocopies of some of its precious exhibitions.

I owe my intellectual debt to a lot of people. I am deeply indebted to my teachers at Xiamen University, Yang Guozhen, Chen Zhiping, and Zheng Zhenman, for introducing me to the fascinating world of the Ming and Qing history. Zheng Zhenman, in particular, generously gave his precious time to help me draw the framework of this book, both in Montreal and in Xiamen, and shares with me his deep understanding of the late imperial Chinese society and culture. I am also grateful to my teachers at McGill, Ken Dean, Robin D. S. Yates, Thomas Looser, Tom Lamarre, and Grace Fong, for their inspiring lectures, their challenging comments to the chapters of my PhD dissertation on which this book is based, and their patience towards a new hand in the academic world. Ken Dean provided unfailing intellectual support from the conducting of fieldwork throughout the publishing of this book. He made extensive comments on different versions of the books. I greatly benefited from his erudition in the
fields, among others, of Chinese religions and local history. Tom Looser introduced me into anthropological methods and theories. David Ownby read my dissertation and made some interesting comments. I thank each of them for their diligent assistance.

I would like gratefully to acknowledge the contribution that Cynthia J. Brokaw made to this study. If my fieldwork in Sibao was at all successful, it was, above all, because of Cynthia’s introducing me into this community. Cynthia also generously provided to me some important ritual texts she collected in Sibao and allow me to use a photograph. Her useful and extensive comments to the chapters of this book contributed greatly.

I am grateful to Chen Chunsheng, Liu Zhiwei, David Faure, and Zhao Shiyu for their willingness to share their rich knowledge and deep understanding of Ming and Qing social and institutional history. Michael Szonyi read two earlier versions of the book and made extensive, insightful, and challenging comments. Dialogue with him is always a stimulating experience. I am also indebted to Wang Mingming. The sinological anthropology he advocates and is practicing, with a strong emphasis on historical process, inspires me to investigate Chinese society and culture from anthropological perspectives. Thanks are also due to Wang Chiu-kuei, Choi Chi-cheung, Chang Jianhua, John Lagerwey, Liang Hongsheng, and Qian Hang for having discussed ideas with me and shown interest in my project.

I want to thank the friends and colleagues who helped me over the past two decades in one way or another. During the many years for preparing this book, I benefited from dialogues with a number of colleagues, including especially Bian Li, Feng Xiaocai, Huang Guoxin, Huang Xiangchun, Li Ren-yuan, Liang Yongjia, Lin Feng, Lo Shih-chieh, Lu Xiqi, Puk Wing Kin, Rao Weixin, Sheng Jia, Donald Sutton, Tam Wai Lun, Wang Jianchuan, Wang Zhenzhong, Wei Deyu, Wen Chunlai, Wu Tao, Wu Hsin-chao, Xie Hongwei, Xie Shi, Ye Tao, Zhang Kan, Zhang Yahui, Zhang Yingqiang, Zhao Bingxiang, and Zheng Li. Chao Xiaohong helped me by making available an important text, a local gazetteer, for this study. Debate with Chen Jingguo helped shape several key ideas presented in this book.

A workshop organized in Sibao in the summer of 2002 was made possible partly by financial support from Ken Dean and Sun Yat-sen University. Chen Chunsheng, Liu Zhiwei, and Ching May Bo of Sun Yat-sen University, Choi Chi-cheung of Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (now at Chinese University of Hong Kong), Fan Jinmin of Nanjing University, Liang Hongsheng of Jiangxi Normal University, Huang Zhifan of Nanchang University, and my colleagues at Xiamen University participated in
the workshop. I am grateful to their comments. Some findings of the book were presented at the historical anthropology workshop organized by Sun Yat-sen University in the summer of 2002. I thank all the participants from their comments.

Part of the revision of this book was done while I was a visiting scholar at Harvard-Yenching Institute (2010–2011). I am grateful to the generous support from the institute. A grant from the Research Foundation for Humanities and Social Science by the State Education Commission of PRC (grant number: 08JC770022), made it possible to revisit Sibao in the past five years. The book has also been supported by the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities (grant number: 2013221001).

I would also like to thank the Archive Museums of Changting, Liancheng, and Qingliu for allowing me to use local archives, especially those related to land reform. I need to acknowledge Zhou Xingdong for introducing to me Liancheng County’s land reform certificate archives. I also gratefully acknowledge the Sibao township government for their help during my stay in Sibao.

Thanks also due to Debra Soled for her expertise in copyediting and extensive comments. Qin Higley, Thomas Begley, and Michael Mozina provided helpful assistance in preparing the text for publication. Macabe Keliher improved my English and made some interesting comments. Kathy and Cora Dean took pains to polish the first chapter of the book. Lin Fan helped me resolve some technical problems with illustrations. Liu Jiacheng made the three genealogical figures in Chapter 5. Huo Renlong, Huang Xuechao, and Dong Qiankun helped me to make the two maps in Chapter 2. I am grateful to them. I would also like to this opportunity to thank the two anonymous reviewers of this book for their insightful comments.

Last but not the least, I am deeply indebted to my wife, Lai Haiyan, who provided invaluable support to this study from the very beginning. I also want to use this opportunity to thank my son, Jiajia, for all the happiness he brings to me.
PART ONE

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER ONE

CONFUCIAN RITUALS IN LATE IMPERIAL CHINESE STATE AND SOCIETY

It was three o’clock on a cold winter morning in 2001. The Zougong 鄒公 Temple of Shangbao 上保, a village in Sibao 四堡 Township of Liancheng 連城 County in the southeastern Chinese province of Fujian, was still filled with noise. Inside the temple, half a dozen musicians entertained the gods of the temple with string and wind instruments amid the suffocating smoke of burning incense. Under the guidance of two lisheng 礼生 (masters of rites), several elders from nearby villages entered the temple and, before the image of the main deity, performed serene rites. They offered incense, read sacrificial texts, presented sacrificial offerings, and, finally, sent the god on his journey back to Heaven. After the performance ended, the temple was filled with the deafening sound of firecrackers.

For those with experience in Chinese village life, the scene is not unfamiliar. Similar scenes of local elites performing rituals under the guidance of lisheng 礼生 can be found in almost every region of China, and historical evidence of these practices abounds in local documents such as genealogies and ritual handbooks and in local gazetteers and collections of official statutes. Yet the rites and the ritual specialists conducting those rites are still understudied. Who are these lisheng 礼生? Where are they from? Which rituals did they perform? What was their role in Chinese village life? What is the historical context that made them and their texts possible? What do the introduction of lisheng 礼生 and the transmission of their ritual traditions in the countryside tell us about larger social and cultural process of late imperial China?

This book examines the encounter between Confucian rituals and Chinese villagers, focusing on the Sibao region from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) through the Communist Revolution in 1949. By taking lisheng 礼生 and rituals that they performed as the point of departure, the book reconstructs several key sociocultural processes in which Confucian rituals were introduced to the Sibao region and discusses how local society promoted and appropriated them. By examining the historical evolution of lisheng 礼生, as well as their liturgical manuscripts and ritual practices, this study explores the historical traces of their role in mediating the relationship
between different institutions of local culture. These arenas of cultural activity, which changed over time, include lineage halls, offices of community compacts, and temples to popular gods. This book demonstrates that the *lisheng* or, more precisely, *gentry-cum-lisheng*\(^1\) played a fundamental role in shaping Chinese culture at the local level and that they were the product of consistent efforts by the late imperial court and the gentry to promote and transform *li* (Confucian rituals) in the Chinese countryside.

More important, the study shows the nature and impact of the Chinese villagers’ encounter with Confucian rituals and the major mechanisms that facilitated this cultural encounter. The promotion of Confucian rituals in the countryside greatly transformed rural social structures and local popular culture. It not only helped to create lineage and territorial organizations but also modified local temple systems and added a new layer of ritual tradition upon the previous ritual corpus. However, this was not a totally top-down process because local cultural elites showed remarkable agency in selecting and using Confucian rituals as the symbol of court and gentry culture. Their typical attitude toward ritual was syncretic rather than fundamentalist. Finally, this cultural encounter was mediated by a group of masters of rites who had a strong interest not only in promoting court and gentry culture but in preserving local ritual traditions as well. Their mediation facilitated the incorporation of Confucian rituals and local ritual traditions and set in motion the process that I call “cultural hybridization.”

**COMMONERS, CONFUCIAN RITUALS, AND NEO-CONFUCIANISM**

This book analyzes the encounter between Confucian rituals and Chinese villagers in the late imperial period—one of the most important episodes in the social and cultural history of the period. It not only involved different social strata—from the imperial court to gentry and extending to the peasantry—and different levels of cultural hierarchy—imperial orthodoxy, gentry culture, and local culture but also had tremendous effects on late imperial society and culture as a whole. The process had its origin in

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\(^1\) “Gentry” is used here in its broadest sense to include all officials, degree holders, and title holders. “Local elite,” as used in this study, refers to all members of gentry and other non-gentry elite who played dominant roles in local economic, social, and political life.
the evolution of ideas in the late imperial period. It is, therefore, necessary to present an overall review of the related intellectual developments.

“Ceremonial rules do not extend to the common people” (li bu xia shuren 禮不下庶人), says the Book of Rites. Confucian rituals, the system of orthodox rituals as prescribed and promoted by Confucians, had long been regarded as “second nature” to social classes above that of the shuren 庶人 (commoners). The commoners were not expected to practice Confucian rituals, not only because they did not have the necessary cultural background and ritual implements with which to perform these rituals but also because knowledge and performance of these rites were used to differentiate early Chinese aristocrats and shidafu 士大夫 (scholar-officials) from commoners.

This situation gradually changed, most noticeably in the twelfth century, though earlier efforts had taken place to create ritual procedures for commoners. For instance, the voluminous official ritual compendium Kaiyuan li 開元禮 (Rituals of the Kaiyuan Era), compiled by decree of Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712–756), provided brief descriptions of family rituals for commoners. However, on the whole the role of these rites was marginal. The first official ritual compendium that seriously attempted to provide ritual procedures for commoners is probably Zhenghe wuli xinyi 政和五禮新儀 (New Forms for the Five Categories of Rites of the Zhenghe Era). Compiled in the early twelfth century, the compendium provides rites of capping, weddings, and funerals for commoners. After this compendium was completed, the court had it printed and circulated throughout China and ordered commoners to follow the rituals prescribed in it. This practice was followed by later official ritual compendia such as Ming ji li 明集禮 (Collected Rituals of the Ming, 1370), Da Ming huidian 大明會典 (Collected Statutes of the Great Ming, 1503), and Qing tong li 清通禮 (General Rituals of the Qing, 1756).

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At the same time, several of the most original Neo-Confucian philosophers, including Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107), Zhang Zai 張載 (1020–1077), and Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200), emphasized the importance of performing rituals in the Neo-Confucian self-cultivation and social reform agenda. Cheng Yi regarded the establishment of ritual order as an antidote to the more fluid and increasingly commercialized society that he saw developing around him. For Zhang Zai, ritual was a strategic approach to self-cultivation. Zhu Xi, in particular, compiled the influential ritual manual Jiali 家禮 (Family Rituals) for gentry and commoners alike. Ritual, to these intellectuals, meant “not only ceremonies for special occasions, marked by formality and heightened emotions, but also everyday expressions of deference and respect.”

When the Ming emperor Taizu attempted to reestablish social order in the second half of the fourteenth century, Neo-Confucianism “played a central role, not by inspiring literati activists but by providing a model for a new social order.” A number of the Ming founder’s early scholarly advisers, who were from Wuzhou 婺州, Zhejiang, already had rich experience in voluntary activism there before they joined Taizu as his advisers. They believed that new institutions, such as the subcanton rural administrative system, should incorporate elements of mutual aid, moral learning, and elite leadership. Through them, the Neo-Confucian vision of a self-supervising moral community, a new social agenda developed in the Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279), was “translated” into legislation aimed at making it universal and obligatory. Most of the early Ming institutional innovations—for example, rituals performed at the altar of the soil and grain (sheji tan)—were inspired by this vision.

The promotion of Confucian rituals among commoners gained momentum in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. During the reign of Emperor Yongle 永樂 (1403–1425), Family Rituals was given unprecedented prominence, second only to Zhu Xi’s commentaries on the Classics. As a result,

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7 Peter K. Bol, Neo-Confucianism in History (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), 258–261.
the book received high acclaim among scholar-officials. Of the nineteen revised versions of *Family Rituals*, at least seven were written during the fifteenth century, including three of the most durable and influential ones. For Qiu Jun 丘浚 (1421–1495), who wrote the popular *Jiali yi jie* 家禮儀節 (*Family Rituals with Specifications of the Procedures*), Confucian rituals were major weapons in combating what he called “heterodox teachings”—the teachings of Daoism and Buddhism. He wrote a new edition of *Family Rituals*, had it published, and sought to have its prescriptions implemented in his home region.⁸

Ritual became even more important as a concern for intellectual elites in the sixteenth century. In the context of the commercialization of social relations, more and more Neo-Confucian scholars stressed the importance of molding the human mind and behavior through ritual. In Guangdong, Huang Zuo 黃佐 (1490–1566) compiled *Taiquan xiang li* 泰泉鄉禮 (*Village Rituals of Taiquan*) in an attempt to extend Confucian rituals beyond the familial domain to other spheres of life of common villagers. In Shaanxi, Lü Ran 呂柟 (1479–1542) and Ma Li 馬理 (1474–1555) tried to revive “the learning of Guanzhong (central Shaanxi)” (Guan xue 關學), which stressed the role of Confucian rituals in reforming the morality of village communities. In Fujian, Zhang Yue 張岳 (1492–1552) and Lin Xiyuan 林希元 (*jinshi* 9 1517) advocated the revival of Confucian rituals.¹⁰ Equally important were Wang Yangming’s 王陽明 programs for reorienting social order in southern Jiangxi, including his influential community compact, after he put down the rebellions of the region, which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

What is especially significant in the propagation of these ritual projects was a specific understanding of the rituals. As Japanese intellectual historian Ito Takayuki 伊東貴之 points out, as far as ritual was concerned, what differentiated Ming scholars from their Song counterparts was not their interpretation of the rituals but the impact that these rituals were meant to have. In other words, while Song thinkers emphasized ritual’s

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⁸ Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Rituals in Late Imperial China*, 173–176.

⁹ *Jinshi* was a degree awarded to those who passed the imperial state’s highest examination in traditional China.

transforming effect on human nature (qizhi 氣質) as seen in individual self-cultivation, the Neo-Confucians during the Ming period emphasized the effects of ritual on the population as a whole. In effect, ritual was popularized and generalized by Ming thinkers in order to reorder human relations. The changes were so great that Itō calls this project “revolutionary.”\(^{11}\) It was in this context that intellectual and ideological obstacles to popularizing Confucian rituals were eventually removed and the rituals reserved for scholar-gentry were adapted and consciously extended to commoners.

If Confucian rituals were no longer the exclusive reserve of aristocrats and gentry and became more or less incorporated into the ritual practices of ordinary people, then how did this process evolve? What was the nature of the process? How did the process influence rural society and peasant culture? This book attempts to answer these questions by providing a historical ethnography of how Confucian rituals were introduced to a southeastern Chinese community and how local society, in particular local cultural elites, responded to them during the Ming and Qing periods (1368–1911).

**The Appropriation of Confucian Rituals**

However, this book is not yet another study on the “political history” of reforming the symbolic life of Chinese villagers in the late imperial period. It does examine how local officials and gentry reformed undesirable customs and promoted Confucian rituals. But the major concern of the book lies in the sociocultural side of the story—the ways in which the practice of ritual itself became a field of confrontation between imperial hegemony and popular appropriation, as well as a process in which different power formations competed for hegemony. This involves investigating the spreading of Confucian rituals in the Chinese countryside from the perspective of Chinese villagers, especially grass-roots cultural elites. To

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elaborate this perspective, it is necessary to introduce several theoretical concepts concerning the context and mechanism related to the major sociocultural processes examined in this book.

First, it is important here to understand that the term *li* may have meant different things to different people. The understanding of peasants and local cultural elites may have varied from that of the reformers of popular culture. This point is implied in the concept of hegemony. According to Antonio Gramsci, cultural hegemony is achieved through accommodating, rather than eliminating, popular culture. Because hegemony is secured not through taking the place of popular culture but through taking it into account, in practice hegemonic culture—in this case, Confucian rituals—tends to be localized. This means that it is misleading to measure popular versions of Confucian rituals against their official gentry/state versions, that is, Zhu Xi’s *Family Rituals*. Practically speaking, pure Confucian rituals existed only in a theoretical sense. Therefore, Confucian rituals, when put into practice, always took the form of local versions that had previously existed: Confucian rituals, as adapted to local society, were almost always modified and supplemented by local ritual practices. It is misleading, therefore, to take a fundamentalist or essentialist approach when discussing Confucian rituals. Only when we take into account local context and local process is it possible to obtain a full understanding of Confucian rituals.

The term *li* also had different meanings because the diffusion of Confucian rituals in the countryside proceeded most frequently through active acquisition rather than passive acceptance. As pointed out by the French cultural critic Michel de Certeau, this process is not consumption in the usual sense but “an entirely different kind of production.” Under this type of production, “a rationalized, expansionist, centralized, spectacular and clamorous production is confronted by an entirely different kind of production, called ‘consumption,’ ” and is “characterized by its uses, its fragmentation (the result of the circumstances), its poaching, its clandestine nature, its tireless but quiet activity, in short by its quasi-invisibility, . . . since it shows itself not in its own products (where would it place them?), but in an art of using those imposed on it.” This shift directs our attention from production to the uses made of the products, from the process of

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promotion to that of “consumption.” As Indians under Spanish rule “often used the laws, practices, and representations that were imposed on them by force or by fascination to ends other than those of their conquerors,” the “consumers” of elite culture “made something else out of them, they subverted them from within—not by rejecting them or by transforming them (though that occurred as well), but by many different ways of using them in the service of rules, customs or convictions foreign to the colonization which they could not escape. They metaphorized the dominant order: they made it function in another register. They remained other within the system which they assimilated and which assimilated them externally.” For Certeau, this act of using is “appropriation.”

As Roger Chartier points out, the usefulness of the concept “appropriation” is that, on the one hand, it “makes it possible to appreciate the differences in cultural apportionment, in the creative invention that lies at the very heart of the reception process,” while, on the other hand, it “also enables us to see that texts or words intended to mold thoughts and actions are never wholly effective and radically acculturating,” because the “practices of appropriation always create uses or representations that are hardly reducible to the wills or intentions of those who produce discourse and norms.” It is not difficult to see the parallels between the concept of appropriation and that of hegemony. Both attend to the process of “consumption” and the circumstances that allow it to take place. The basic difference is that while hegemony implies the necessity to leave some space for popular culture, appropriation emphasizes the possibility for popular culture to create its own space. For me, both concepts imply that more effort should be devoted to the analysis of ritual practices than to ritual discourses, and for that purpose the more appropriate location of historical analysis is village-level ritual texts instead of the texts compiled by Confucians. That is why this study devotes so much space to investigating the lisheng’s ritual handbooks and the interaction between rituals performed by lisheng and larger sociocultural processes.

Although the concept of appropriation does not imply the existence of an authentic popular culture that was essentially different from elite culture, it is difficult to accept the assumption that popular culture does not

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14 Ibid., 32–33.
exist, particularly in the context of late imperial China. Popular culture in the Ming and Qing periods had long been “polluted” and “corrupted” by elite culture. However, if we agree that hegemony is a process of accommodation and appropriation in an act of active production or invention, we must accept that popular culture has its own logic or space to survive. More specifically, it is undeniable that traditions other than mainstream elite culture in the Ming and Qing periods were still felt by villagers and local cultural elites. As I argue here, these traditions range from Daoist religion to unorthodox or indigenous (i.e., non-Han Chinese) ritual practices. What is interesting about this history is that many of these elements can still be observed in contemporary village life in spite of centuries-long attacks launched by the late imperial court, gentry, and modern political and cultural movements. The history unfolds not as a process in which Confucian rituals took the place of popular culture but as a process in which new elements (i.e., Confucian rituals) were overlaid on previous traditions. It is this process of hybridization—the different cultural uses made of Confucian rituals—that this book attempts to address in full.

To examine the promotion of Confucian rituals from a grass-roots perspective also means to investigate the dynamism of the confrontation between Confucian rituals and Chinese villagers. That is to say, it is necessary to explore the context and mechanism within which it was possible to spread Confucian rituals among Chinese villagers. More specifically, the book emphasizes the importance of investigating cultural mediators and their role in sociocultural process such as the spread of Confucian rituals in the countryside.

The book emphasizes the mediating role of lisheng in these sociocultural processes. Sociologically speaking, they were at once the gatekeepers for both Confucian rituals and the alternative ritual traditions of the villagers. Lisheng were not simply ritual specialists; they were also gentry. In Sibao, they were from the lower strata of the gentry, consisting mostly of lower-level officials, government students (shengyuan 生員), and national university students (jiansheng 監生). Their knowledge and understanding of Confucian rituals and ideology was often shallow.

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16 John Fiske argues: “There is no ‘authentic’ folk culture to provide an alternative, and so popular culture is necessarily the art of making do with what is available” (Understanding Popular Culture [Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989], 15).

17 Shengyuan was awarded to those who passed the lowest level civil service examination, while jiansheng was a title usually gained by purchase in traditional China. Both terms were also used to refer to persons who held the degree or title.
at best. This probably explains why they were much less fundamentalist than most Neo-Confucians and more open to the influence of non-Confucian ritual traditions, which made them appropriate candidates for the role of cultural mediators. The ritual handbooks of lisheng, the “accomplices” of Confucian ritualism in the village world, are probably the lowest layer Confucian-style ritual texts that historians can find today. Therefore, rather than regarding lisheng-as-mediators as an obstacle to our understanding of village rituals and local culture, it is more fruitful to consider them the focus of our analysis of the interactions between different cultural traditions. Because the ritual handbooks were and still are used in and for the village world, they are texts closest to and thus most fully engaged with the village world. That is why this book takes pains to investigate this group of cultural mediators, their texts and rituals, and the mediation processes that they initiated or in which they participated. A study of their lives, texts, ritual activities, and roles in cultural change enables us to closely examine the encounter between Confucian rituals and the world of the commoners.

Finally, a word on the mediation process. As Confucian rituals were a ritual and socio-ethic complex that touches upon a variety of different social and cultural practices, mediation between Confucian rituals and villagers understandably took place in multiple sites, including sites of ancestral worship, chaste widow memorial arches, territorial cults, charitable schools, and community granaries. Therefore, to understand the mediation processes as a whole, it is necessary not only to examine lisheng and their texts but also to explore the above-mentioned sites. Several chapters here are devoted to different sites of mediation, focusing respectively on lineage building, community compacts, and local religion. These are perhaps the major contexts in which lisheng operated as ritual specialists. In these sites, we can observe the rituals that they performed and the uses that they made of their ritual texts. These sites were crucial for the overall processes of cultural mediation in the part of China under examination.

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This book presents a history of the social and cultural landscape of the late imperial period through a detailed study of social and cultural history in one locality. Focusing on a locality makes it possible to scrutinize interaction between different aspects of rural life. This is not a study of a single institution but, rather, an investigation of the ways in which different aspects of social and cultural life were interwoven. This study attempts a “historicization” of the “cultural nexus of power” or an analysis of the changing configurations of the “syncretic field of Chinese religion” within a specific local historical/regional system. To accomplish these purposes and get the whole story, I suggest combining a sociological study with cultural analysis. The former studies how society works and changes, whereas the latter investigates how people give, communicate, and negotiate meanings. In addition, it is important to combine agent-oriented approaches with structurally oriented ones. Without this combination, one would have only either actors or stages of historical drama, but not both. This syncretic approach directs our attention to concrete historical practice, that is, the way historical agents lived, acted, and thought within the syncretic field, the interaction between agent and structure. By focusing on mediation and mediators, this relational approach makes it possible for us to understand the dynamism of social and cultural reproduction and transformations in late imperial China.

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19 However, I also consider pre-Ming issues when tracing the history of local institutions, as well as, when detailed information in the late imperial period is not available, the later development of these institutions in Republican (i.e., post-1911) and contemporary Sibao.

20 The term “cultural nexus of power” is Prasenjit Duara’s. A cultural nexus is a set of segmentary hierarchies (lineages, markets), territorial hierarchies (temple cults), interpersonal networks (patron-client, master-disciple relationships), and voluntary associations (irrigation societies, guilds, spirit-writing cults) that converged around temples, altars, and monasteries. See Prasenjit Duara, *Culture, Power, and the State: Rural North China, 1900–1942* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), chap. 1. According to Kenneth Dean, the syncretic field of Chinese religion is “[a]n irregular shaped, multidimensional force-field” that is “opened up around and between and polar attractors of sheng (Confucian sage-hood) and ling (spiritual power) by the attraction and mutual repulsion of those centers” *Lord of the Three in One: The Spread of a Cult in Southeast China* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998], 58). For a discussion of historical transformations of the “syncretic field,” see also Edward Davis, *Society and the Supernatural in the Song* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001).
In my study of the mediating role of *lisheng* and their texts as well as the sociocultural contexts and processes that made them possible, I am indebted to three groups of earlier work. The first group comes from scholars including Kenneth Dean, David Faure, Liu Zhiwei, Michael Szonyi, and Zheng Zhenman, who have conducted extensive research on the sociocultural history of south China, especially in Fujian and Guangdong, in the past three decades. Recent studies on the sociocultural history of south China not only attempt to show the undeniable importance of ritual performance and the manipulation of popular symbols in the late imperial court but also investigate to what extent the court and local officials’ promotion of Confucian rituals influenced social and cultural life in the Chinese countryside.\(^21\)

These studies attempt to reconsider the role of Confucian rituals in late imperial Chinese political life and tend to emphasize the importance of ritual in the creation of cultural integration. They regard ritual as a cultural and political strategy for the construction of power relationships and cultural identity. Going beyond textual study of ritual, they also try to add a historical and social dimension to ritual, investigating it in concrete local and historical contexts. The observations and conceptions of these studies provide this work with a scholarly foundation. By examining the works mentioned above and reflecting upon their limitations, I realized that in order to understand the encounter between Confucian rituals and Chinese villagers, it is not enough to study Zhu Xi’s *Family Rituals* in its different versions. Instead, it is important to focus on ritual texts found

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in different, grass-roots ritual handbooks discovered in the villages and to explore the ritual practices related to these texts. The special intermediate location of the gentry-cum-lisheng and their liturgical texts that provides us with a rare, if not privileged, opportunity to scrutinize the concrete historical experience of Confucian rituals in the countryside—how it was introduced, circulated, modified, and appropriated.

The second group is by Patricia B. Ebrey. In a number of publications, Ebrey translates, comments on, and examines Zhu Xi’s *Family Rituals* and explores how this text was reproduced, adapted, and circulated in late imperial Chinese society. As indicated by the title of one of her books, she offers a social history of this principal Neo-Confucian ritual text. In this sense, the book addresses a similar problem but differs from Ebrey’s work in several ways. First, while Ebrey examines the reproduction, circulation, revision, and “consumption” of Zhu Xi’s *Family Rituals* and its various adapted versions in the late imperial period, this book explores a rather different corpus of ritual handbooks that circulated among village ritual specialists. Although some of them also had the title *Family Rituals*, their contents were very different from those in the work by Zhu Xi. Furthermore, while Ebrey focuses on a group of Neo-Confucian ritual texts, this study focuses on the dynamism that produced the ritual texts and the social and cultural transformations facilitated by the introduction of the related rituals.

The primary focus of this study is on the local context that produced these transformations, including social structure and local culture. But it considers regional and national economic, social, and cultural processes, such as intellectual discourse, political issues, and the commercialization of the rural economy of the Ming and Qing periods. Put another way, this study attempts to analyze rituals and ritual texts that were “located” between high and low cultures from an interactional or relational perspective. Rather than trying to show how Neo-Confucian ideas spread in late imperial society, I focus on how elements from different cultural traditions were synthesized into a new cultural mosaic. It is the contention of this book that the binary opposition between local culture and Neo-Confucianism is an obstacle to our understanding of late imperial Chinese culture. I intend to show that the rituals discussed in the following chapters were not only the outcomes of social and cultural changes but were also important mediating factors in these changes.

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22 Ebrey, “Education Through Ritual”; idem, *Chu Hsi’s Family Rituals*; idem, Confucianism and Family Rituals in Late Imperial China.
The study also benefits from research projects organized by John Lagerwey, Yan Yanjie, and Wang Qiugui. Tingzhou Prefecture, where the community under examination here is located, has become the focus of an extensive ethnographic research project led by Lagerwey and Yang who have published nine ethnographic reports on Tingzhou, under the series title Traditional Hakka Society Series. Two projects organized by Wang and presenting principally ritual and opera texts across China produced three field reports and related texts concerning local drama and Daoist rituals of the old Tingzhou region. Their limitations notwithstanding,

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23 The nine monographs or reports that emerge from the program are: Yang Yanjie 杨彦傑, Minxi Kejia zongzu shehui yanjiu 闽西客家宗族社會研究 (A Study in Hakka Lineage Society in Western Fujian) (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, Overseas Chinese Archives and École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1996); Yang Yanjie, Minxi de chengxiang miao hui yu cunluo wenhua 闽西的城乡廟會與村落文化 (Temple Festivals and Village Culture in Western Fujian) (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, Overseas Chinese Archives and École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1997); idem, ed., Tingzhou fu de zongzu miao hui yu jing ji 汀州府的宗族廟會與经济 (Lineage, Temple Festivals, and Economy in Tingzhou Prefecture) (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, Overseas Chinese Archives and École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1998); idem, ed., Minxi bei de minsu zong jiao yu shehui 闽西北的民俗宗教與社會 (Folklore, Lineage, and Society in Northwestern Fujian) (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, Overseas Chinese Archives, École Française d’Extrême-Orient and Research Program on Ethnicity and Overseas Chinese Economics, Lingnan University, 2000); idem, ed., Changting xian de zongzu jing ji yu minsu 长汀县的宗族经济与民俗 (Lineage, Economy, and Folklore in Changting County), 2 vols. (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, Overseas Chinese Archives and École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 2002); Liu Dake 劉大可, Min xi Wubei de cunluo wenhua 闽西武北的村落文化 (Village Culture of Northern Wuping in Western Fujian) (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, Overseas Chinese Archives and École Française d’Extrême-Orient, 2002); Yang Yanjie, ed., Ninghua xian de zongzu, jing ji yu minsu 宁化县的宗族经济与民俗 (Lineage, Economy, and Folklore in Ninghua County), 2 vols. (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, École Française d’Extrême-Orient and Overseas Chinese Archives, 2005); Zhang Hongxiang 張鴻祥, Changting chengguan chuantong shehui yanjiu 长汀城關傳統社會研究 (A Study in Traditional Society of the County Seat of Changting) (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, École Française d’Extrême-Orient and Overseas Chinese Archives, 2003).

24 For example, Ye Mingsheng 葉明生, Fujian sheng Longyan shi Dongxiao zhen Lushan jiao Guangji tan keyiben huibian 福建省龍岩市東肖鎮閭山教廣濟壇科儀本彙編 (A Collection of Liturgical Texts of the Guangji Tan of the Lushan Teaching in Dongxiao Town, Longyan City, Fujian Province) (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1996); Ye Mingsheng, Min xi Shanghang gao qiang kuilei yu furen xi 閩西上杭高腔傀儡與夫人戲 (Puppet Shows in Gaoqiang Tune and the Furen Zhan in Shanghang, Western Fujian) (Taipei: Shih Ho-cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1995); Ye Mingsheng and Yuan Hongliang 袁洪亮, Fujian Shanghang luantan kuilei furen zhan 福建上杭亂彈傀儡夫人劇 (The Puppet Show Furen Zhan in Luantan Tune in Shanghang, Fujian) (Taipei: Shih Ho-cheng Folk Culture Foundation, 1996).

25 Although rich in information, these reports, in particular those in Traditional Hakka Society Series, must be used with caution. The first problem concerns their methodology. Many of the reports are based on short-term field research. This means that the interviews
these works present rich information on many aspects of village life, or, to quote Daniel Overmyer, they provide “fresh information for an understanding of the culture of the majority of the Chinese people.” In this way, these reports show that it is crucial to enter the village world, not only to collect local documents but also to hear the voices of villagers and to understand the logic of their world, so as to overcome the self-aggrandized Confucian grand narrative. Because the investigation was carried out across the region, they provide indispensable and valuable context for my study of one locality. This book can be seen as a response to the inspiration that I got from these reports, as well as the problems that I encountered in them.

**Principal Themes**

The book is based on my fieldwork of more than a year in Sibao, Tingzhou. I begin with a detailed account of lisheng and their ritual texts. As specialists dealing with family and different kinds of communal rituals, lisheng played and still play important roles in Sibao’s social and symbolic life. Their texts comprise economic, social, and especially religious aspects of Sibao society and are the outcome of social and cultural changes in Sibao during the late imperial period. The description of lisheng and their

The information has neither been organized into a coherent argument nor located in the context of either local history or institutional history. Instead, it seems to have been arranged according to a confined set of topics and a prescribed writing formula (see also Dean and Zheng, *Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plain*, vol. 1, 19–20). Last but not least, rarely do the reports attempt to contextualize local history within institutional history and broader economic and sociocultural processes. Lagerwey is not responsible for these shortcomings, but he is principally interested in Daoist religion and its history—less attention is paid to other sociocultural processes of equal importance for an understanding of western Fujian society and culture.

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27 I went to this community in November 1995, working as a research assistant for Cynthia Brokaw. We worked for more than two and a half months in this community between the winter of 1995 and the summer of 1996. I revisited this community in August 2001 and conducted more than seven months of fieldwork in this community between August 2001 and August 2002. I have also conducted supplementary fieldwork, lasting for more than two months, since late 2003.
texts is followed by a historical inquiry into how lineage organizations, community compacts, and territorial cults emerged in the village world. This study details the weaving of these institutions into Sibao society.

The book is divided into five parts. Part I (Chapter 1 and 2) introduces the theoretical approach of this study and outlines the basic ecological and historical background to the area and the issues discussed in the following chapters. Part II discusses the lisheng, their rituals, and their liturgical texts. Parts III, IV, and V explore three major social historical processes that were closely related to lisheng and their rituals, that is, lineage building, the establishment of community compacts, and the development of local temple networks. The concluding chapter discusses the theoretical implications of this study of the role of the lisheng.

In Part II (Chapters 3 and 4) I describe the lisheng, their rituals, and their ritual texts. Lisheng originated from ritual specialists (also called lisheng) who were appointed to perform rites at court, probably starting in the Former (or Western) Han dynasty (206 B.C.E.–9 C.E.). They played important roles in rituals ranging from funerals, ancestral rites, to jiao festivals of communal offerings. They also performed community compact rituals. They often worked with ritual specialists from other religious traditions that included Daoist priests and Buddhist monks. The writings left by lisheng provide rich information, dealing with a variety of different activities ranging from economic transactions to ritual performances. A careful comparison shows that considerable similarities exist between the rituals they performed and those performed in official religion. But there were also, to a lesser degree, similarities between their rituals and those performed by Daoist priests and Buddhist monks. These similarities suggest that they were important mediators between official religion, local religion, and other religious traditions.

Part III (Chapters 5 and 6) discusses the process of lineage building and its influences and limits in Sibao. The lineage form of ornate ancestral halls and compiled genealogies was introduced to Sibao in the fifteenth century by two Sibao native sons who became high officials. Their efforts to “bring together” their kinsmen were imitated by low-level officials and degree holders from other villages during the late Ming. By the end of the eighteenth century, almost every Sibao agnatic group had become a descent group. The influence of this sociocultural process can be observed in two ways. On the one hand, the growth of lineages modified the forms of ancestral worship by emphasizing the cult of early ancestors and sacrificial rites. Lineage building also profoundly influenced the class structure and modes of dominance that arose from the distribution of land. On the
other hand, the process of lineage building has some important limits. A detailed examination shows that, although by the eighteenth century Sibao had become a lineage society, different agnatic groups may have imagined what a lineage was in very different ways, to the extent that on some occasions even the gentry themselves did not follow the ways of “gentry” culture.

Part IV (Chapter 7) reconstructs the process through which community compacts, another important institution that had its origin in Neo-Confucian thought, were woven into Sibao society. Community compacts were introduced into Sibao at the height of their popularity in the late Ming. The community compact of Shangbao, the best-documented Sibao community compact, was initiated by a group of villages located in the periphery of the Sibao basin in the late sixteenth century and continued to exist until the early twentieth century. This institution was probably set up to counteract the encroachment of strong localized lineages based in the center of the Sibao basin. They not only performed regular functions such as giving lectures on the *Sacred Edicts* and settling local disputes but also involved in the maintenance of irrigation works, the organization of the worship of local gods, and the opening of a new market. This case shows how local people manipulated the symbols of the state for their own purposes. It also demonstrates the limitations of recent scholarship on community compacts and enables us to avoid overstating its connection with either the imperial court or Neo-Confucian discourse.

The issue of local religion is addressed in Part V (Chapters 8 and 9). Sibao had three layers of territorial cults: the cult of the god Zougong, the cult of Shegong and orphan souls, and cults of deities introduced after the mid-Ming. Originally a ritual master, Zougong was transformed into a local patron god before the Ming and, due to the efforts of several local elite, was further transformed into the ancestor of three local descent groups starting in the late Ming. This “privatization” of a public symbol triggered a series of responses from almost every other important descent group, which turned the local people of Sibao into a historically meaningful community. The cult of Shegong and orphan souls was introduced in Sibao in the early Ming. From the mid-Ming onward, when lineages/villages started to establish their own altars of the soil, the god was transformed from a symbol of ideological control into the focus of territorial or associational cults. Part V also discusses several legends of Shegong circulating in the Sibao region, illustrating the fate of a key symbol of the empire in Sibao. The third group of deities was introduced in Sibao after the mid-Ming. The rise of these nationally or regionally popular deities
was closely related to the necessity to mark one’s own community from other ones in an increasingly commercialized society. The development of local religion in Sibao illustrates the complex interplay between lineage and village, agnatic group and territorial cult, economy and religion, and local culture and high culture.

In sum, the findings of this book indicate the complexity of social and cultural processes in the late imperial period. They show the limits of analyzing local culture from an elitist perspective, which emphasizes how local culture was suppressed and eliminated by high culture. In contrast to this “integration with the state” or “gentrification” school of thought, I argue that cultural hybridization, the process in which elements from different cultural traditions were synthesized into a new, constantly changing cultural entity, is a more effective conceptual tool for exploring the dynamism of the reproduction and transformation of late imperial Chinese culture.

**Sources**

In the field of Chinese local history, one important trend in recent decades has been that the study of lineage genealogies has become more important than the study of local gazetteers. This is not surprising given that genealogies sometimes provide more detailed information on the economic, social, and cultural situation of a locality below the county level. Quite a few local gazetteers come from Tingzhou, some of them are well compiled and filled with interesting information. They provide one of the most important sources for tracing the evolution of official institutions and local administration. But in most cases they include very little information on local religion and scarcely mention other unofficial communities, associations, and organizations, such as lineages and villages.

As a study of a subcounty region, this book relies on genealogies of the local lineages. Fortunately, while genealogies in many other places were burned after 1949, almost every Sibao lineage has been able to preserve its genealogy intact. During my stay in Sibao, I was able to read about thirty genealogies, some held in ancestral halls, while others were in private hands. Furthermore, many of these genealogies include information on almost every important aspect of village life. Nonetheless, genealogies also have a bad reputation for distorting historical facts to serve contemporary purposes. As Jan Vansina points out, genealogies “are among the most complex sources in existence” and are both “taxonomies” that are
“used all over the world for speculating about origins” and “social charters” that “validate relationships between groups.” However, precisely because of this “defect,” the manipulated genealogies sometimes provide interesting insights into local history when used carefully and supported by other sources.

I also make considerable use of ritual texts compiled by the *lisheng*. (The nature of this group of sources is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.) This study also relies on account books, family division contracts, and local archives. Over the past seventeen years, I have located and carefully examined more than twenty account books, which provide detailed information on activities such as ancestral worship, territorial cults, land purchases, money and rice lending, and the book business. Family division contracts are another group of sources that merit our attention. I found more than twenty such documents in Sibao. The information that they provide includes not only data on kinship organizations but also, in quite a few Sibao documents, the printing industry and volunteer associations. The value of local archives has long been recognized. But, probably for political reasons, only recently have historians turned to the archives of the land reform movement in the early 1950s for information on land distribution in pre-revolutionary China. Their political overtones notwithstanding, these archives not only give us a concrete picture of economic inequality before the land reform they also provide vivid descriptions of the often-conflicting views of the peasants and the communist cadres concerning social justice and moral equality. All these written sources make it possible to treat local institutions in a historical perspective.

In an effort to understand social structure and local culture, I also collected oral histories and observed ritual performances during my stay in Sibao. These sources enrich the written accounts mentioned above. Oral history, for example, provides particularly important information on settlement history, local patron gods, lineage relationships, and social and symbolic life in the late Qing and Republican periods. The shortcomings of this group of sources are well known, and they should be used critically. That is to say, each person interviewed can relate local history from the perspective of the social grouping to which he/she belongs. It is important to verify what he or she says with other sources. The merits of ritual

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performance for our understanding of local history are undeniable. They provide information on many issues: the relationship between lisheng and Daoist religion, community structure, and peasant worldviews. I observed life-cycle rituals, calendrical rituals, jiao festivals of communal offerings, and other rituals in Sibao, some of which are introduced in Chapters 3 and 4. The most important lesson I learned from these observations is the limits of an elitist reading of local culture and the importance of developing an alternative approach to this issue.
CHAPTER TWO

HISTORY AT THE PERIPHERY: TINGZHOU AND SIBAO

As a remote, mountainous region plagued by bandits and populated by non-Han minority groups, Tingzhou was a place in which both the imperial state and Confucian cultural elites used to have only weak presence. Sibao was no exception in the region until the mid-seventeenth century, when printing and publishing began to emerge in the area. The special merchandise Sibao merchants produced, the book, and the business they did directly or indirectly exposed them to the political and cultural influences of the imperial state and cultural elites and this provided the indispensable soil for the creation and multiplication of *lisheng* and the introduction of their texts and rituals in the community.

TINGZHOU: BANDITRY, ETHNICITY, AND THE STATE

Tingzhou is a mountainous region in the western part of the southeastern coastal province of Fujian. The rugged topography of Fujian is notorious and that of Tingzhou is said to be the most challenging. Low mountains, hills, terraces, and river valleys can be found throughout this region. Hills and low mountains account for more than 40 percent and 35 percent, respectively, of this region. Only 5 to 10 percent of the land is suitable for agriculture, which is the lowest proportion of cultivable land in the province. This varied topography creates more than a hundred small basins, most of which measure less than 10 square kilometers.¹ These basins are centers of economic, social, cultural, and political activity, but they are not isolated from the outside influence. Tingzhou is the origin of three rivers: the Min 閩, Jiulong 九龍, and Ting 汀 Rivers, which flow northeast, southeast, and southwest, respectively, connecting Tingzhou to Fuzhou 福州, Xiamen 廈門, Chaozhou 潮州, and other major regional cities in the coastal area.

¹ Tong Wanheng 童萬亨, ed., *Fujian nongye ziyuan yu quhua* 福建農業資源與區劃 (Fujian Agricultural Resources and Divisions) (Fuzhou: Fujian kexue jishu chubanshe, 1990), 247.
Map 2.1 Tingzhou in the Qing Dynasty.
Tingzhou belongs to the Southeast Coast macroregion in G. William Skinner’s regional system. The Southeast Coast ranges from the southeastern corner of Zhejiang to the Chaoshou-Shantou plain in northeastern Guangdong. The Ting River links most parts of Tingzhou prefecture to northeastern Guangdong, and Skinner puts Tingzhou in the region of the Han Basin, rather than in the regions of Fujian. But for our purposes, it is important to understand Tingzhou’s relationship not only to northeastern Guangdong but also to southern Jiangxi. All three constitute a region with a distinctive ecology, dialect, historical connections, and (in the past) common identity, which differentiates it from neighboring regions. This region connects and divides Skinner’s three macroregions: the Southeast Coast, the Gan Yangzi, and the Lingnan. It was part of the periphery of these macroregions and was remote from Nanchang, Guangzhou, Fuzhou, and other metropolitan and regional cities. Principally because of its inaccessibility, this region provided a niche not only for minority groups and Chinese refugees who arrived later but for bandits and rebels as well.

The 1879 edition of Changting xianzhi 長汀縣誌 (Changting County Gazetteer, hereafter CTXZ) mentions a wide variety of banditry and rebels: bandits from Jiangxi (jiangkou 江寇), Qianzhou (Qiankou 虔寇), Guangdong (Guangkou 廣寇), and Zhangzhou (Zhangkou 漳寇), and from the sea (haikou 海寇), cave bandits (tongkou 峒寇), She minority bandits (shekou 畲寇), and salt bandits (yankou 鹽寇). In the early eighth century, the weak presence of the Tang dynasty (618–907) made this region a paradise for refugees until the establishment of Tingzhou Prefecture in 733, and thereafter the government attempted to register the refugees and put them under control. When the Song dynasty (960–1279) ruled China, salt bandits kept plundering villages, throwing Tingzhou into turmoil for a century. A rebellion that took place in the early thirteenth century lasted about two decades and had a destructive impact on the rural economy.

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4 The “periphery” as used in this book includes criteria used by Skinner. However, in addition to criteria of economic geography, I also consider such factors as the limited number of degree holders and the limited presence of state administration.

5 The core area of these macroregions is shown in Skinner, “Regional Urbanization in Nineteenth-Century China,” 214, map 1.
and the income of the local government. It is not without reason that even Zhu Xi complained that Tingzhou was a place that was “difficult to reach and full of bandits” (li yuan duo dao 路遠多盜).6

The Changting County Gazetteer (1879) reports six cases of banditry and rebellion in Tingzhou during the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), the most devastating of which was the 1346 rebellion led by two Liancheng natives. All six counties in Tingzhou were reported to have been seriously damaged by the rebellion.7 The situation continued well into the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), especially from the mid-fifteenth century onward.8 Like elsewhere in Fujian, Tingzhou was attacked during the Deng Maoqi 鄧茂七 rebellion in 1448–1449. Although the rebellion was suppressed a year later, the social unrest did not come to an end. The county seat of Shanghang 上杭 was attacked in 1463 and again in 1477.9 The situation worsened at the end of the fifteenth century. The Liu Ang 劉昂 rebellion in 1487, consisting of several thousand people, attacked Shicheng 石城, Guangchang 廣昌, and Xinfeng 信豐 counties in Jiangxi and Jieyang 揭陽 county in Guangdong.10 Another bandit gang controlled Damao 大帽 Mountain on the Tingzhou-Jiangxi border and plundered the neighboring region at the turn of the sixteenth century.11 Although most of these rebellions were suppressed by the statesman, soldier, and philosopher Wang Yangming, small-scale banditry and rebellions troubled Tingzhou in 1525, 1540, 1543, 1547, 1553, and 1557.12 After about half a century of peace, the next wave of rebellions, banditry, and rent resistance arose
in the second quarter of the seventeenth century and continued well into the mid-Qing (1644–1911) period.13

Tingzhou was not only the “promised land” of rebels and bandits but also the homeland of the She 畲 and the Hakkas. Recent studies of Fujian’s early history show that, before successive waves of migrants found refuge and came to be known as Hakkas, the border region of the Southeast Coast, including the Gan, Yangzi, and Lingnan area, was originally populated sparsely by Baiyue 百越 people. After this region was incorporated into China during the Former Han dynasty, the government moved many aborigines to the Lower Yangzi region. But those who were left behind evolved into the present-day She during the Tang and Song periods.14 Commonly identified as a subgroup of the Yao 瑶, the She appear to have been mountains-and-hills people, who lived by hunting and slash-and-burn agriculture.15 It is possible that these people were the


15 Sow-Theng Leong, Migration and Ethnicity in Chinese History: Hakkas, Pengmin, and Their Neighbors (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 3; Herold J. Wiens, Han Chinese Expansion in South China (New York: Shoe String Press, 1967), 276. For a recent reappraisal of the evidence related to the She in Fujian-Jiangxi-Guangdong border region,
“cave barbarians” (dongman 洞蠻) or “cave bandits” mentioned in Tang and Song documents, who laid siege to Tingzhou in 897.\textsuperscript{16} In the Shaoxi era (1190–1194) of the Southern Song period (1127–1279), Shanghang “cave bandits” were reported to have ganged up with other “caves bandits” and risen in revolt, only to see their revolt put down after the government captured their leaders.\textsuperscript{17} Aborigines may have also joined the Shaoding bandits mentioned above, for it was reported that in the second month of 1230 the “barbarians” living in Tingzhou, Ganzhou, Ji’an, and Jianchang rose up and plundered these regions.\textsuperscript{18}

Before Mongol troops conquered south China, several troops principally comprising the She (zhu tong She jun 諸洞畲軍), under the command of Chen Diaoyan 陳吊眼 and Xu Furen 許夫人, helped the Song general Zhang Shijie 張世傑 in an attack on Quanzhou 泉州.\textsuperscript{19} This case is particularly interesting as it clearly shows the interaction between the She and Han Chinese. Again, before the fall of the Southern Song in 1279, Kublai Khan (1215–1294) published a proclamation that, if officials, soldiers, and commoners in Zhangzhou 漳州, Quanzhou, Tingzhou, and Shaowu 邵武 as well as “the eighty-four She [tribes]” (bashisi She 八十四畲) surrendered, their officials would be promoted or awarded, while the soldiers and commoners would be left unhurt.\textsuperscript{20} After the Yuan dynasty ended, the She people no longer seemed to be so closely connected to banditry and rebellions in Tingzhou. It is reported that when a rebellion took place in Guangxi in 1527, a group of She troops (shebing 畲兵) from Tingzhou and Ganzhou 贛州 was instructed to suppress them.\textsuperscript{21} The reason may be that, as they interacted with Han Chinese more and more frequently, the ethnic boundary became increasingly blurred. A late-Ming source mentions that the shed people (pengmin 棚民) of southern

\textsuperscript{16} CTXZ (1940), 2/2a.
\textsuperscript{17} CTXZ (1879), 15/8a.
\textsuperscript{18} CTXZ (1940), 2/9a.
\textsuperscript{19} CTXZ (1940), 2/10b. See also Jao Tsung-i, “The She Settlements in the Han River Basin, Kwangtung,” in F.S. Drake, ed., Symposium on Historical, Archaeological, and Linguistic Studies on Southern China, Southeast Asia and Hong Kong Region (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1967), 102.
\textsuperscript{20} Song Lian 宋濂, et al., Yuan shi 元史 (The History of the Yuan Dynasty) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976), 10/211.
\textsuperscript{21} Zhang Tingyü 張廷玉 et al., Ming shi 明史 (The History of the Ming Dynasty) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 318/8249.
Zhejiang were from Tingzhou. It explains that these people “are also called the She people, who are impoverished people from Shanghang of Tingzhou.” Commenting on an early-Qing source, the editor of the Changting County Gazetteer (1879) claims that although the culture of the She may have been very different from that of the Han Chinese, by his time there were, thanks to the successful civilizing policy of his “great dynasty,” few differences between them.

The She and other minority elements are very important for our understanding of the cultural history of Tingzhou. Although the Hakkas claim that they came from the Central Plain, much evidence shows that this might not be the whole story and they have had close connection to minority groups. For example, the practice of Daoist ordination names such as faming 法名 (ordination names), langming 郎名 (names with the character lang) and numeral names was not only widespread among the Hakkas, but also among the Yao and the She. These names disappear from the genealogies sometime in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, while they can still be readily found in the twentieth century Yao and She groups.

Oral tradition also suggests that some communities were involved in the cult of the dog, an important cultural heritage of the She. As a Sibao legend explains, the Lins of Sibao worshiped dogs under the following circumstances. The Lins used to comprise a big lineage and often bullied the Zous from a neighboring village. The Zous plotted their revenge. On a Chinese New Year’s Eve, after all the members of Lin lineage were asleep, the Zous slipped into their enemies’ village, locked their doors, and set fire to all the firewood. All the villagers and livestock were burned to death except one woman and a dog. In order to perpetuate her husband’s family, the woman had intercourse with the dog and gave birth to a boy, who became the progenitor of subsequent generations.

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23 CTXZ (1879), 33/2b–3a.


25 A shorter version of this legend can be found in Yu Feng 余豊, “Chuantong yu shanbian: Difang shehui zhuanxing zhong de zongzu yu minjian xinyang-Yi Minxi Kejia
most legends, this one is not entirely factual, but it does offer an origin story for the Lins’ cult of the dog. Other evidence shows that some local groups are involved in the worship of the world-creating cultural hero Pan’gu 盤古. In Xiaowuling 蕭屋嶺, a small village in western Sibao, the Xiaos perform the ritual called “invitation of the gods” (qingshen 請神), in which they sing the “Song of Pan’gu” (Pan’gu ge 盤古歌). The inclusion of the song in the ritual, as John Lagerwey suggests, “is almost a certain sign of the She origin of the Xiaos, as is the fact that, until recently, they did not eat dog meat.”

It is clear that Tingzhou was a place where local residents were difficult to govern and minority culture had a strong presence. This provides the basic local structure within which local officials performed their responsibilities and everyday administration.

The penetration of Chinese military, political, and cultural power in western Fujian started in the Later Han (25–220 C.E.), but it was not until the second and third decades of the eighth century that the Chinese empire was able to bring this region under more direct governance. Tingzhou Prefecture was established in 733, with four counties placed under its jurisdiction: Changting, Ninghua, Longyan 龍岩, and Shaxian 沙縣. During the Northern Song (960–1127), Longyan and Shaxian were ceded to neighboring prefectures and four more counties—Shanghang, Wuping 武平, Qingliu 清流, and Liancheng 連城—were established and added to Tingzhou in 994, 1098, and 1133, respectively. The imperial court also established six troop units (zhihui 指揮) and twelve strongholds (zhai 寨) in the Tingzhou area, but met with only limited success. Similarly, a guard (wei 衛) composed of five battalions and five thousand soldiers was established in Tingzhou during the Ming. After the suppression of the Deng Maoqi rebellion, the Ming court established two new counties in

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Guilong xiang wei li 傳統與嬗變: 地方社會轉型中的宗族與民間信仰-以閩西客家桂龍鄉為例 (Tradition and Metamorphoses: Lineage and Popular Belief in a Changing Local Society as Seen in the Case of Guilong Hakka Township in Western Fujian) (M.A. thesis, Xiamen University, 2001), 29–30. The dog myth, as Wolfram Eberhard points out, “was characteristic for the Yao tribes” (The Local Cultures of South and East China [Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968], 50).


27 Yongle dadian 永樂大典 (Great Encyclopedia of the Yongle Emperor, hereafter YLDD) (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1977, reprint), 7889/12a.

28 Of these four counties, both Shanghang and Wuping were established in 994.

29 YLDD, 7892/27a–29b.

Tingzhou. The intention of the measure was obvious. One of the counties was called Guihua 归化 (literally “being naturalized”), while the other was called Yongding 永定 (literally “forever settled”). To place Tingzhou under stricter military surveillance, the Zhangnandao 漳南道 circuit was set up to oversee the military activity in Tingzhou and Zhangzhou in 1470, and a military defense circuit (bingbeidao 兵備道) was established in Shanghang in 1488. The position of Nan’gan grand coordinator (Nan’gan xunfu 南贛巡撫) was created in 1509 to deal with new serious threats from cross-border rebellions and banditry. Its major task was to coordinate military and, to a lesser degree, civil administration in the border region of southern Jiangxi, western and southwestern Fujian, northern and northeastern Guangdong, and southeastern Hunan. It was principally through this institution that Wang Yangming was able to suppress major rebellions and banditry throughout the region. But, as mentioned above, even the military circuit had problems eliminating social unrest across the region.

Therefore, while Tingzhou was brought under increasingly stricter state control, especially after the eighth century, the state’s presence in this peripheral region, at least as far as military control and civil administration were concerned, was not strong, not even strong enough to eliminate banditry and rebellion in normal times. Tingzhou was thus a peripheral area not only in terms of economic geography but also in terms of political geography. This had a great bearing on the society and culture of Tingzhou and their relationship to the state. Tingzhou’s peripheral situation in the late imperial period can also be illustrated by reference to the amount of degree holders. Compared with coastal regions of Fujian, Tingzhou produced far fewer degree holders (see Appendix 1). It produced only fifty jinshi in the Ming and eighty-four in the Qing, a far cry from the coastal regions. According to Ping-ti Ho, 654 jinshi were produced in Fuzhou during the Ming and 723 during the Qing, while 627 jinshi were produced in

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31 TZFZ (1752), 2/4a.
32 SHXZ (1939), 1/9b–10a; TZFZ (1752), 2/5b.
33 SHXZ (1939), 1/8b.
34 SHXZ (1939), 1/11a; CTXZ (1879), 15/16a–16b. On the history of Nan’gan grand coordinator, see Tang Lizhong 唐立宗, Zai “daoqu” yu “zhengqu” zhijian: Mingdai Min Yue Gan Xiang jiaojie de zhixu biandong yu difang xingzheng yanhua 在“盜區”與“政區”之間: 明代閩粵贛湘交界的秩序變動與地方行政演化 (Between the “Brigand Region” and the “Administration District”: The Transformation of the Social Order and Local Administration of the Border Region of Fujian, Guangdong, Jiangxi, and Hunan During the Ming Dynasty) (Taipei: Guoli Taiwan daxue chuban weiyuanhui, 2002).
Quanzhou and 524 in Xinghua during the Ming. The statistics of Evelyn S. Rawski show that during the period 1513–1541, 112 jinshi were produced in Fuzhou, 112 in Xinghua 興化, and 65 in Quanzhou; and during 1549–1601, 103 jinshi were produced in Fuzhou, 90 in Xinghua, 237 in Quanzhou, and 137 in Zhangzhou. During the same periods, Tingzhou produced only 2 and 5 jinshi, respectively. If the common view that degree holders such as jinshi played a major role in the stabilization of a Confucianist social order and the spread of orthodox belief and practice is to be believed, it is noteworthy that Tingzhou does not seem to have had many such resources.

**Sibao: Making a Center out of a Periphery**

Sibao is a cluster of villages located in the border area of Changting, Qingliu, Liancheng, and Ninghua Counties. In the late imperial period, it included more than seventy villages of different sizes: forty-four villages in the Sibao subcanton of Changting, twenty-two villages in the Sibao subcanton of Qingliu, and several villages in the Bei’an 北安 subcanton of Liancheng and the Huitong 會同 subcanton of Ninghua (see Appendix 6). Historically, both Changting and Qingliu had a subcounty administrative unit called Sibao since the Southern Song period. They constitute the majority of present-day Sibao. Major villages of the Sibao subcanton of Changting were ceded to Liancheng in the early 1950s. Therefore, present-day Sibao is composed principally of Sibao Township in Liancheng, Changxiao 長校 and Litian 里田 townships in Qingliu, and some villages in the townships of Guanqian 館前 and Tongfang 童坊 in Changting. Its present population is around 42,000 (2002).

The majority of Sibao’s villages lie within the Sibao Basin. This is a long but narrow strip of land, extending for about 15 kilometers. The basin

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36 For a list of villages forming the Sibao subcanton of Changting, see *CTXZ* (1879), 2/3a–3b. For a list of villages forming the Sibao subcanton of Qingliu, see *QLXZ* (1829), 36. As for the Sibao villages in Liancheng and Qingliu, less information is reported. But my informants in Sibao believe that residents of Jiaokeng, Daohu, and Dakengyuan villages in Liancheng (in present-day Beifu) and Zhubeiling village in Ninghua (in present-day Zhiping) used to identify themselves as Sibao ren (Sibao people).

37 *YLDD*, 7890/7a–7b.

38 This figure is based principally on the estimate of local residents.
Map 2.2  Sibao in the late Qing.
stretches from the foot of the Aofeng 鳳峰 Mountains in the east to several lower mountains and hills to the west and becomes narrower at both its northern and southern ends. Although some small villages can be found scattered in the mountainous area to the west and northwest of Sibao, their population is not large enough to change Sibao’s overall demography. Most of Sibao’s population is concentrated in the basin. A river that is a tributary of the Shaxi Stream 沙溪, one of important tributaries of the Min River, runs through the bottom of the northern section, but it is not deep enough for navigation. Another much smaller stream can be found in southern Sibao that flows into a tributary of the Ting River and is also unsuitable for navigation. Communication between Sibao and the outside world thus relies on overland routes. A courier route (yidao 驛道) is reported to have run through the Sibao basin and connected this area to Liancheng to the south and Ninghua and Qingliu to the north before it was replaced by a modern highway in the Republican period (1911–1949). This must have provided late imperial Sibao book merchants with not only an important means of communication but also economic opportunities. Communication between Sibao and Tingzhou, the economic, political, and cultural center of this region, was not as favorable. Even traveling by the shortest route, Sibao residents had to walk about 60 km before they arrived at the city. Moreover, the road was not easy to pass. One would have to cross the mountains and hills that lie to the west of the Sibao basin, where bandits often were reported to have their lairs. This meant that Sibao was to a certain degree inaccessible to Changting, which may have motivated the administrative transfer of Sibao from Changting to Liancheng County in the early 1950s.

Sibao people, though managed by different administrative units, had and still have a strong sense of territorial identity. When they are asked, “Where are you from?” they usually say “We are from Sibao” instead of “We from Liancheng” or “We from Qingliu.”39 There may be several reasons for this. Sibao has its own dialect, which its people claim is a sub-dialect of Hakka. Whether or not this is true, it is certainly different from the dialects of Qingliu, Ninghua, Changting, and Liancheng, all of which are viewed

39 A native of Sibao points out that “the people of this area do not regard the difference of administrative affiliations as important” (Zou Risheng 鄒日昇, “Zhongguo sida diaoban yinshua jidi zhiyi: Sibao-Qiantan Sibao diaoban yinshuaye de shengshuai” 中國四大雕版印刷基地之一: 四堡—四堡雕版印刷業的盛衰, Sibao, One of the Great Woodblock Printing Bases in China: On the Rise and Decline of the Sibao Woodblock Printing Industry], Liancheng wenshi ziliao 連城文史資料 4 [May 1985], 104–105).
as Hakka dialects. Those from Sibao hardly understand Liancheng dialect (Liancheng hua 連城話), for example. The same is true for Liancheng dialect speakers, who can understand only 20 to 30 percent of Sibao dialect. This linguistic difference may have contributed to building Sibao's local identity. Custom is another factor that may reinforce local identity. Sibao people, especially those who live in its heartland, have a clear sense of the differences between their customs and those of surrounding areas. They laugh at the way Ninghua natives perform marriages, with the bride's brothers carrying her on their back through the main door of her parents' house. They also understand quite clearly that although a groom pays a lower bride price for a bride from Liancheng than for one from Sibao, he will have to give many more gifts to his father-in-law at the Chinese New Year. Quarrels over the differences in customs can even lead to the breakup of a family.

Based on size, location, and settlement history, villages in Sibao come in three types. At the bottom of Sibao basin, we can find lineage villages with more than 3,000 members, which are reported to have settled in Sibao by the end of the Southern Song. Four villages fall into this category: Wuge 霧閣, Mawu 馬屋, Jiangfang 江坊, and Changxiao 長校. The second category of villages is usually located at the periphery of the Sibao Basin, including Shuangquan 雙泉, Shangbao 上保, Jiantou 槎頭, and Fengfang 彭坊 villages. These villages have a population that numbers between 1,000 and 3,000 and usually are single-lineage villages. The settlement history of these villages can be traced back to Southern Song. The majority of Sibao villages fall into the third type, small villages with a population ranging from several dozen to several hundred, usually located around the villages in the first category, and in remote, mountainous areas. Mostly they settled in Sibao no earlier than the fourteenth century. Huangkeng 黃坑, Zhangkeng 張坑, Yanwu 嚴屋, and Huangshikeng 黃石坑 are examples of villages of this type. Therefore, several major lineages of the Ming and Qing periods had settled in Sibao before the Yuan-Ming transition. After the founding of the Ming, they were incorporated into the lijia decimal rural administrative system.40 The lijia system was not simply an institution for tax collection; it had social and cultural meanings as well. To be included in the lijia system made one a citizen who was entitled, among

40 See, for example, Ma shi zupu 馬氏族譜 (Ma Family Genealogy, hereafter MSZP) (1993, Lower Shrine branch), 5 ji 集 (Book 5), 2; Zou shi zupu 鄒氏族譜 (Zou Family Genealogy, hereafter ZSZP) (1947, Upper Shrine branch), 1/6.
other things, to own land and to sit for civil and military service exams. It also implied that he was a civilized man rather than a barbarian who was not included in the system and did not pay taxes.\textsuperscript{41} This last implication is especially important for Sibao dwellers. No matter their ethnicity, they would be included in the \textit{lijia} system. The whole process of social and cultural change in late imperial Sibao took place within this system.

The printing industry played an important role in the social and cultural transformation of late imperial Sibao.\textsuperscript{42} Its history in Sibao can be traced back to at least the third quarter of the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{43} The rise of the printing industry in such a peripheral area as Sibao can be attributed in part to the fact that most of the raw materials required for woodblock printing can be readily found there.\textsuperscript{44} Another important factor was the decline in the mid-Ming of the famous printing center in Jianyang in northern Fujian.\textsuperscript{45}

The golden age of the Sibao printing industry was the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For a century-long period starting in the late seventeenth century, Wuge and Mawu, the two villages first involved in printing, became the center of printing in Sibao. The number of publishing houses operated by villagers in these two villages increased significantly during this period. By the end of the seventeenth century, there were at least thirteen publishing houses in Sibao, eight in Wuge, and five in Mawu. Over the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, forty-six new publishing houses were founded, thirty-one in Wuge.

\textsuperscript{41} See Zheng, \textit{Ming Qing Fujian jiazhu zuzhi yu shehui bianqian}; Liu Zhiwei, \textit{Zai guojia yu shehui zhijian-Ming Qing Guangdong lijia fuyi zhidu yanjiu} in \textit{國家與社會之間: 明清廣東里甲賦役制度研究} (Between the State and Society: Study on the Lijia and Taxation System in Ming and Qing Guangdong) (Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 1997); Szonyi, \textit{Practicing Kinship}, 71–72.

\textsuperscript{42} For a detailed study of the printing industry in Sibao, see Zou, “Zhongguo si da dianban yinshua jidi zhiyi”; Chen Zhiping and Zheng Zhenman, “Qing dai Minxi Sibao zushang yanjiu 清代閩西四堡族商研究” (Study on Family Businesses of Sibao in Western Fujian During the Qing Period), \textit{Zhongguo jingji shi yanjiu} 2 (1988), 93–109; Cynthia J. Brokaw, “Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China: The Zou and Ma Family Businesses of Sibao, Fujian,” \textit{Late Imperial China} 17.1 (June 1996), 49–92; idem, \textit{Commerce in Culture: The Sibao Book Trade in the Qing and Republican Periods} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007).

\textsuperscript{43} ZSZP (Wuge, 1947), 34/9a. See also Brokaw, “Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China,” 55–56; idem, \textit{Commerce in Culture}, 79–84.

\textsuperscript{44} Zou, “Zhongguo si da dianban yinshua jidi zhijii,” 105; Brokaw, “Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China,” 52–53; idem, \textit{Commerce in Culture}, 94–96.

\textsuperscript{45} On the printing industry in Jianyang, see Lucille Chia, \textit{Printing for Profit: The Commercial Publishers of Jianyang, Fujian (11th–17th Centuries)} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002).
Map 2.3  Wuge in the Republican Period.

and fifteen in Mawu. A few publishing houses opened outside these two villages as well. Yanwu, Shangbao, and Jiantou each had at least one printing shop and several book merchants. Every year around the fifteenth of

46 Brokaw, *Commerce in Culture*, 86. Wu Shideng’s estimate of publishing houses in this period is much higher: a total of seventy-three publishing houses, fifty-three in Wuge and twenty in Mawu (“Qingdai Sibao keshu ye diaocha baogao 清代四堡刻書業調查報告” [Report on Investigation of Sibao Woodblock Printing Industry During the Qing Period], *Chubanshi yanjiu 出版史研究* 2 [1994], 136).

47 On Yanwu, see Zou, “Zhongguo si da diaoban yinshua jidi zhiyi,” 147. On Shangbao, see “Zhaohua gong zhuang” 兆化公傳 (Biography of Mr. Zhaohua), in *ZSZP* (1946, Yangzibian village), 15/1a. Another man from this village sold books in Guangdong, see “Shizan gong qi dai shishi” 世贊公七代事實 (Biographical Facts of Mr. Shizan, Seventh Generation), in *ZSZP* (1946, Yangzibian village), 15/1a. On Jiantou, see the title page of *Yifang xunzi 義方訓子* (Teaching You Sons with Just and Righteous Methods), published in Jiantou in 1909. Quite a few Jiantou natives worked as book merchants during the Qing period. See, for example, “Jishan zongweng lao xiansheng daren zhuang” 際善宗翁老先生大人傳 (Biography of Mr. Jishan), in *WSZP* (1899, Upper Shrine branch), 8/1a; “Wangsheng zongweng lao xiansheng daren zhuang” 旺生宗翁老先生大人傳 (Biography of Mr. Wangsheng), in *WSZP* (1899, Upper Shrine branch), 8/1a; “Jinlin gong fufu ji lingsi jiren gong jiuyang gong Jishi gong Jiru gong Jishi gong Jijie gong Jiren gong zongxu” 金林公夫婦暨令嗣季任公季仰公季
the first month when a market was held to sell Sibao products, book merchants from Jiangxi, Hunan, Guangdong, and Guangxi flocked to Sibao.48 Sibao publishers not only sold books to the merchants who came to Sibao but also established networks of trade routes and sold books directly. According to Yang Lan 楊瀾, a late-Qing Changting juren who was well-versed in the local history of Tingzhou, “the whole community of Sibao” made it a profession to print and sell books. They “open[ed] bookstores in the city and transport[ed] their texts on their shoulders to the countryside for sale. Not only have they benefited the world of scholarship, but they also serve[d] as permanent property for Sibao families.”49 As Cynthia Brokaw points out, the extent of distribution networks that the Sibao publishers were able to establish is “striking.” Although most booksellers kept to relatively familiar routes dominated by the Hakka within the Fujian-Guangdong-Jiangxi border region, some traveled as far south as the southern tip of Guangdong province, as far north as Wuchang 武昌, Hubei, and as far east as Suzhou 蘇州, and some even traded overseas.50

What were Sibao imprints? Brokaw divides Sibao imprints into three categories: (a) educational books, (b) guides to good manners, good health, and good fortune, and (c) fiction and belles-lettres. Among these categories, the second one is most relevant to the topic of this book. Books in this category include household encyclopedias and guides to the rituals of daily life, medical and pharmaceutical manuals, almanacs, fengshui (geomancy) and divination manuals, and morality books.51 This category comprises a few books closely connected to Confucian rituals and the books in this subcategory can be further divided into two groups: books on yingchou 應酬 (social intercourse) and on jiali 家禮 (family rituals), the former usually being broader than the latter. As used in these books, jiali is the same as Zhu Xi’s Family Rituals, and one of them may be precisely that book (Wengong jiali). An inventory of printing, kept by a publishing house in late Qing Sibao, lists fifteen books that fall into the same category. Eleven of them are in the yingchou group. The other four fall into the jiali group. Of the other nine books, seven fall into the first group,
including *Choushi xubian* 酬世續編 (Further on Social Intercourse), *Choushi jinghua* 酬世精華 (Essentials of Social Intercourse), *Choushi tannang* 酬世探囊 (Easy Social Intercourse), *Choushi bianlan* 酬世便覽 (Brief Guide to Social Intercourse), *Yingchou siliu xinbian* 應酬四六新編 (A Recent Compilation on Social Intercourse Written in Verse), *Choushi baoyao* 酬世寶要 (Precious Essentials of Social Intercourse), and *Choushi bashen* 酬世八珍 (Eight Treasures of Social Intercourse); two fall into the second group: *Wengong si bao* 文公四寶 (Four Treasures of Zhu Xi) and *Jiali jiyao* 家禮集要 (Collected Essentials of Family Rituals).

The books mentioned above are relevant to the analysis of *lisheng* and their texts because, as guides to the rituals of everyday life, they provide useful ritual knowledge to *lisheng* and influenced the latter's ritual manuals (see Chapter 4). In fact, several important texts in these genres were compiled by Sibao residents. For example, *Choushi jinnang*, a widely circulated household encyclopedia during the mid- and late Qing, was compiled by Zou Keting 鄒可庭 (1715–1803), a military *juren* and authors of several books from Wuge, and his second son, Zou Jingyang, 鄒景揚 (1744–1809). This encyclopedia is divided into five sections, and the second section, called *Jiali zuanyao* 家禮纂要 (Selected Essentials of Family Rituals), includes quite a few articles written by Zou Keting and his relatives and friends, some of which are obviously composed for ritual purposes.\(^\text{52}\)

Another group of books with some relevance to the present study are guides to geomancy, fortune-telling, and astrological prediction or reckonings. Wu Shideng lists forty-two books. Excluding three books that have been misidentified,\(^\text{53}\) the total is thirty-nine. The books of astrological reckonings—seven in all—are most relevant to this study. The five books mentioned in Wu's list are principally *tongshu* 通書 (almanacs) which *lisheng* could consult to select auspicious dates (see Chapter 3).\(^\text{54}\) The fact that more than eight hundred titles of books, especially those related to court ritual and gentry culture, were printed in Sibao implies that many of its residents, at least those who could read, were directly exposed to gentry culture. They must have been more or less familiar with orthodox

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\(^{52}\) The popularity of *Choushi jinnang* is indicated by the number of its editions. The preface was written in 1781, but the book is published even today. See Li Qingping 李清平, *Deli choushi jinnang* 得利酬世錦囊 (Deli’s Wise Counsel on Social Intercourse) (Hong Kong: Deli shuju, 1964), an updated edition of *Choushi jinnang*.

\(^{53}\) *Ganying bian* 感應編, *Guanyin jing* 觀音經, and *Guandi mingsheng jing* 關帝明聖經.

\(^{54}\) Wu, “Qingdai Sibao keshuye diaocha baogao,” 150–151.
ways of performing rituals, even if they did not accept or have a deep understanding of them.

Now we turn to a brief discussion of the self-image of the Sibao book merchants, which is in order because many book merchants were *lisheng* and their self-image could naturally connect to their attitudes toward Confucian rituals. Brokaw finds a “common theme” that “runs through all the discussions of family occupational strategy in the Zou and Ma


Image 2.2 A manual of rituals printed in Sibao.
genealogies”: “a fundamental hope for success in the examinations.” But this hope for success in examinations among Sibao people was seldom realized (see Table 3.2). For Brokaw, the “frustrations with the examination system served to fuel the publishing ventures of the two families,” because the association with books and Confucian scholarship provided several benefits, such as literacy and access to literati networks, for the book business. Failed scholars found in it an occupation that was relatively different from other ones: an association between the book trade, learning, and high social status. Sibao book merchants “insisted that they were a special kind of merchant, a 'scholar-merchant' or 'Confucian merchant' (rushang 儒商, rugu 儒賈, or shishang 士商), devoted not just to the petty search for profit, but to the spread of learning.”

Theoretically speaking, this representation of book merchants should not be confused with the self-image of book merchants themselves, because it may well have been an image created by their biographers, mostly scholar-officials. In late imperial Sibao, such a representation could be adopted by book merchants and thus became their self-image, not only because it helped them in their business but also because Confucianism as an orthodoxy was closely related to the power of the court. And this image was not without some reality. Although many Sibao literati turned to the book business after they had failed to pass the examination, the juanna 獻納 system provided an important channel for them to enter the stratum of gentry almost continuously. Sibao sources show that the majority of Sibao degree and title holders obtained their degrees and titles by purchase. Of 327 degree and title holders in the Lower Shrine branch of the Zous of Wuge, 208, or 63.6 percent, most of them jiansheng 監生 (national university students), obtained their degrees and titles by purchase (see Table 2.1). The same was true of other branches and lineages.

Although we do not know the exact percentage of book merchants among

55 Brokaw, “Commercial Publishing in Late Imperial China,” 61.
56 Ibid., 603.
57 Ibid., 64. See also idem, Commerce in Culture, 268–301.
58 The juanna system was a set of policies and regulations concerning purchasing official titles and degrees that evolved in the late Ming and was more regularly practiced during the Qing. On the juanna system, see Xu Daling 許大齡, “Qingdai juanna zhidu 清代捐納制度” (The Juanna System in the Qing Period), in Xu Daling, Ming Qing shi lunji 明清史論集 (Studies in Ming and Qing History) (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000), 1–173.
59 For the Upper Shrine branch of the Zous of Wuge, see ZSZP (Wuge, 1947), Juan mo (the last volume); for the Zous of Yangzibian, see ZSZP (1946, Yangzibian Village), Juan shou (the prefatory volume), 1a–8a.
them, the fact that the degree and titles were purchased means that more often than not these people were merchants.

For present purposes, it is important to understand the roles that these people played in the social and cultural life of Sibao. Min Tu-ki suggests differentiating the shengyuan-jiansheng stratum from higher-level gentry such as jinshi and juren. The following chapters show that it would be better to make a further differentiation between shengyuan and jiansheng, because they could take different attitudes toward the same social process, for example, lineage building or temple construction. The higher proportion of jiansheng among the local elite might explain why they played such an important role in lineage affairs, community compacts, and the establishment of local temples. But their active participation in these activities can be fully understood only from the perspective of their self-image as “scholar merchants,” which may have provided an indispensable motivation behind their enthusiasm for Confucian rituals and accounts for the fact that many of them became the ritual specialists discussed in the following chapters—lisheng.

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PART TWO

LISHENG AS CULTURAL MEDIATORS
CHAPTER THREE

WHO ARE LISHENG?

This chapter and the next provide a historical survey of *lisheng* and their roles in Sibao society. Until recently, *lisheng* have been poorly represented in scholarship.¹ Little is known about their history, their role in Chinese social and ritual life, and the transmission of their expertise and their special texts. Based on official history, imperial statutes, local gazetteers, and ritual texts discovered principally in western Fujian, this chapter attempts to present a brief overview of the history of *lisheng* in imperial state and their penetration into Chinese villages. This is followed by a detailed

examination of lisheng’s role in Sibao society. Lisheng’s rituals and their texts are examined in detail in Chapter 4.

**Lisheng: An Overview**

**Lisheng in the Imperial State**

Lisheng, or masters of rites, as defined in Ming-Qing texts, were ritual specialists under whose guidance the rites of weddings, funerals, sacrifices, and other ceremonies were performed. According to Liang Zhangju 梁章鉅 (1775–1849), a mid-Qing erudite official, “nowadays those who direct ceremonies are called lisheng.”2 An official dictionary compiled in the Qing gives a more concrete definition: “The persons who stand along and call out the rites of rising, kneeling, and kowtowing when sacrifices are offered in saintly temples and halls of early worthies are called lisheng.”3 The book defines lisheng in a broad sense: They were ritual specialists who guided the ritual performance regardless of whether they were called lisheng. This definition takes into consideration the fact that lisheng were often used as a general term and could include many ritual specialists who, though not called lisheng, played a similar role in ritual and thus could properly be put into this category (see below).

One of the earliest references to lisheng can be found in Han guanyi 漢官儀 (Officials and Rites of the Han Dynasty), a now lost book on the official system of the Former Han written by the Eastern Han scholar Ying Shao 應劭. This book says that “in the third month of the spring and the ninth month of the autumn, rites of community archery were studied. All lisheng were appointed from among students of the national university.”4 This source does not tell us what kind of roles the lisheng played in the rites of community archery, although it is not unlikely that they guided the procedures of the rites.

If we hardly know the nature of lisheng in the pre-Tang bureaucracy for lack of evidence, we are certain that lisheng held an official position during the Tang dynasty (618–907). A 792 memorial from the Court of

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4 Cited in Fan Ye 范曄, “Rulin liezhuan” 儒林列傳 (Biographies of Scholars), in *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 (The History of the Later Han) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973), 79/2547, n. 6.
Imperial Sacrifice claimed that “the lisheng are appointed specifically to assist [in the performing of rites].” Another memorial forwarded in 822, also from the Court of Imperial Sacrifice, mentioned that there were thirty-five lisheng in the court. During the Tang period, lisheng were institutionally affiliated with the Ritual Academy (liyuan 禮院 or taichang liyuan 太常禮院), which was in turn affiliated with the Court of Imperial Sacrifice. They were supervised by the four Erudites (boshi 博士) who staffed the academy.

There was another category of lisheng during the Tang. In the late Tang, there existed a local institution called jishuyuan 伎術院, an officially sponsored school for teaching rituals, music, medical science, fortune-telling, geomancy, and so forth. The pupils of the school were called lisheng. Two copies of ritual manuals and letters or shuyi 書儀 that were popular in the Tang period, which were discovered in Dunhuang 敦煌, were reportedly reproduced by lisheng. This suggests that shuyi may have been a basic text that lisheng had to study. It is unlikely that these lisheng belonged to the Ritual Academy. Rather, they were probably would-be professional or semiprofessional ritual specialists that provided ritual services for the society at large. Thus a story from the late Tang indicates that lisheng not only directed the rites of the handover of responsibility at a prefectural yamen but also performed funerary rites.

9 Li, “Tang-Song shidai de Dunhuang xuexiao,” 186; Li, “Jishuyuan,” 596. The Xinji shuyi 新集書儀 discovered in Dunhuang was reproduced by a lisheng called Zhang Rutong 張儒通 from the jishuyuan of Dunhuang in 930. See Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, ed., Dunhuang yishu zongmu suoyin 敦煌遺書總目索引 (Index to the Bibliography of Dunhuang Documents) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 293.
10 Li Fang 李昉, Taiping guangji 太平廣記 (Wide Gleanings Made in the Taiping Era) (Biji xiaoshuo daquan edition) (Yangzhou: Jiangsu Guji guji she, 1995, reprint), 262/19b. This story is cited from Yutang xianhua 玉堂閒話 (Pleasant talks of the Jade Hall). Yamen refers to government office in traditional times.
The Ritual Academy continued to exist in the Song but lost its autonomy after 1040.\footnote{Xu Song 徐松, ed., “Zhiguan, 22,” in Song huìyào jìgào 宋會要輯稿 (Recovered Collections of Important Documents of the Song) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1957), 2869; Tuotuo 脫脫 et al., “Zhiguan, 4,” in Song shì 宋史 (The History of the Song Dynasty) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 164/3883; Hucker, A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China, 308. The reason for the loss of the academy's autonomy is unknown.} The *lisheng* at the institution were “officials without rank” (*liuwaiguan* 流外官).\footnote{Ibid., 99/2442, 101/2467, 103/2506, 109/2626–2627, 120/2820.} Although it is not clear how many *lisheng* were appointed in the academy, we do know that they played an active role in the guidance of a series of imperial rituals.\footnote{Songchao da zhaoling ji 宋朝大詔令集 (Collected Edicts of the Song Dynasty) (Xu xiū Siku quanshu edition), 148/6b; Lu You 陸遊, Jiashi jiùwén 家世舊聞 (Old Observations of Notable Families) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1993), 203.} When the compilation of the *Zhenghe wuli xinyi* was completed in 1113, Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (r. 1100–1126) proclaimed that gentry and commoners alike follow the rituals prescribed in the manual under the guidance of *lisheng* when they performed family rituals and *lisheng* be appointed from among literati of each village. The regulation produced too much trouble to villagers, however, and was thus abolished seven years later.\footnote{Da Yuan shengzheng guochao dianzhang 大元聖政國朝典章 (Compendium of Statutes and Substatutes of the Great Yuan) (1318) (Beijing: Zhengguo guangbo dianzhang, 1998, reprint), 1112, 1120. See also Da Yuan shengzheng guochao dianzhang (Xu xiū Siku quanshu, vol. 787) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002), 28/306.}

The position of *lisheng* as seen in Yuan dynasty (1271–1368) imperial ritual was more of a role to play than an official post. In 1273, a regulation drawn up jointly by the Ministry of Personnel and the Ministry of Rites claimed that it was not necessary to appoint *lisheng* in each circuit, the provincial territorial administrative jurisdiction. It suggests instead that, when the emperor's birthday was celebrated and the rite of sacrifice to Confucius was performed, the role of *lisheng* could be played by one of the officials in the circuit government. This regulation also prescribes the style of dress for *lisheng*.\footnote{Meng Siming 蒙思明, Yuandai shehui jieji zhidu 元代社會階級制度 (Social Class System in the Yuan Period) (Beijing: Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1938), 170. On the *yuehu*} The Yuan source also mentions the existence of “the households of ritualists and musicians” (*liyuehu* 禮樂戶) along with other household types and shows that they were different from the mean people of households of musicians (*yuehu* 樂戶) of the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) periods in that their legal status was similar to that of civil households and military households.\footnote{Meng Siming 蒙思明, Yuandai shehui jieji zhidu 元代社會階級制度 (Social Class System in the Yuan Period) (Beijing: Harvard-Yenching Institute, 1938), 170. On the *yuehu*} But we know little about their relationship to *lisheng*.
The situation of *lisheng* seems to have continued in the early Ming without many changes. *Lisheng* were ordered to be selected from among local civilians, and they were supposed to direct the rites of welcoming, greeting, and sacrifices, in the local yamen in the early Ming. But this policy was abolished in 1388, and thereafter *lisheng* were usually selected from among the government students. *Lisheng* were also appointed in the Court of Imperial Sacrifice and the Guard of Imperial Tombs (*huanglingwei* 皇陵衛). Their function in the Court of Imperial Sacrifice remained intact during this period, but what was different was that the positions were usually occupied by Daoist priests of the Shenye guan 神樂觀 (Imperial Music Office) before 1742. The latter was in charge of sacrifices to imperial tombs. The evidence available also shows that *lisheng* were officially appointed to serve princes in the Ming as well as the Confucian Temples of Qufu 曲阜, Shandong, and Xi'an 西安, Zhejiang, where eighty and forty *lisheng*, respectively, were reported to have been appointed during the Qing period. These *lisheng* were selected from among commoners and tenants of the temple estates. They were responsible for laying out the offerings, calling out and guiding the ritual procedures, and recitation of sacrificial texts.


17 Ming Taizu shilu 明太祖實錄 (Veritable Records of Ming Taizong) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji shudian, 1983, reprint), 188/6a.

18 On the Shenye guan and its role in imperial sacrifice in the Ming and Qing periods, see Liu Yonghua, “Daoist Sacrifices and Imperial Sacrifices in Late Imperial China: The Case of the Imperial Music Office (Shenyue Guan), 1379–1743,” *Late Imperial China*, 33.1 (June 2012), 55–88.

19 See Da Ming huadian (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1976, reprint), 90/1b; Zhang Tingyu 張廷玉 et al., *Ming shi* 明史 (The History of the Ming Dynasty) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 58/1446; Zhu Guozhen 朱國禎, *Yongchuang xiaopin 湧幢小品* (Miscellaneous Notes from the Yongchuang Pavilion) (*Biji xiaoshuo daquan* edition), 6/2a.

20 See, for example, *Ming Xuanzong shilu* 明宣宗實錄 (Veritable Records of Ming Xuanzong) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji shudian, 1983, reprint), 54/4a; *Ming Yingzong shilu* 明英宗實錄 (Veritable Records of Ming Yingzong) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji shudian, 1983, reprint), 264/6a; *Ming Xiaozong shilu* 明孝宗實錄 (Veritable Records of Ming Xiao-zong) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji shudian, 1983, reprint), 120/1a–1b.


22 *Qinding libu zeli*, 50/3b–4a.
In other places, the term \textit{lisheng} was more a role than a post. In this case, the term \textit{lisheng} was probably the general and popular name for persons who performed this role.\textsuperscript{23} Under particular circumstances, however, more specific terms were used to differentiate the various roles involved in the guiding of ritual performance. Thus in an early Ming ritual text we find that \textit{tongzan} 通贊 (general assistant) is mentioned along with \textit{yinzan} 引贊 (guiding assistant).\textsuperscript{24} On different calendrical ritual occasions, government officials would assign four government students versed in rituals to assist in the performing of the rites.\textsuperscript{25} The number of \textit{lisheng} for each county ranged from four to six.\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Lisheng} were also needed at the time of performing state or state-endorsed rituals such as the community wine-drinking ceremony and the offering of sacrifices to the Gods of the Soil and Grain.\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{Lisheng in Late Imperial and Modern Chinese Society}

Our discussion has focused so far on the role of \textit{lisheng} in state and court rituals. What was their role in late imperial and modern Chinese society? Evidence shows that \textit{lisheng} played an indispensable role in the performing of family rituals. According to \textit{Shuyi} 書儀 (Book of Family Rituals) by Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086), at the time of a wedding, the families of both the bride and the groom should appoint ritual assistants (\textit{zanzhe} 贊者) from among their relatives who were versed in ritual. “When the groom and bride perform the acts of ceremony, it is the ritual assistants who guide them.”\textsuperscript{28} In Zhu Xi’s \textit{Family Rituals}, the existence of \textit{lisheng}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{23} Liang, \textit{Chengwei lu}, 358.
  \item \textsuperscript{24} See \textit{Hongwu lizhi} 洪武禮制 (Ritual Institution of the Hongwu Emperor), in Zhang Lu 張鹵, ed., \textit{Huang Ming zhishu} 皇明制書 (Books on Statutes of the August Ming) (Tokyo: Koten kenkyūkai, 1966–1967), 484.
  \item \textsuperscript{25} Li, Liu, and Chen, \textit{Qingdai liubu chengyu cidian} 二十五禮部典 (Guide to Quinary of Rituals), 214; \textit{Qinding libu zeling} 清定禮部典禮 (Books of Rituals of Qing) (Tokyo: Koten kenkyūkai, 1966–1967), 484.
  \item \textsuperscript{26} \textit{Da Qing huidian shili} 大清會典事例 (Collected Statutes of the Great Qing with Supplementary Precedents and Regulations) (Shanghai: Shanghai yinshu guan, 1909), 392/1b.
  \item \textsuperscript{27} The only exception is probably the Confucian Temple of Zhili 直隸, which was allowed to appoint four professional \textit{lisheng}. These \textit{lisheng} were entitled to receive a small amount of subsidies from the government. See \textit{Da Qing huidian shili}, 392/1b; \textit{Qing Gaozong shilu} 清高宗實錄 (Veritable Records of Qing Gaozong) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986, reprint), 772/5b.
  \item \textsuperscript{29} Sima Guang, \textit{Sima shi shuyi} (Guides to Verbal Etiquette Compiled by Sima Guang) (\textit{Congshu jicheng chubian} edition) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 3/34.
\end{itemize}
is self-evident. The performing of the capping ritual, for example, necessitates the role of *lisheng*. In this ritual, the patriarch not only selects “a younger relative versed in ritual to act as usher” but also invites a friend “who is wise and versed in ritual” to act as sponsor, who will also “select for himself a young relative versed in ritual to act as his assistant in the capping.” These three persons guide the whole process of the capping ritual. Although they were not called *lisheng*, their role in the ritual shows that they acted as such.

Qiu Jun, a leading mid-Ming scholar and political thinker who compiled a highly popular simplified version of Zhu Xi’s *Family Rituals*, suggested promoting Confucian rituals by *lisheng*. After receiving orthodox ritual training in government schools, he held that they should direct the rites of funerals and burial. This program was, to Qiu Jun, a powerful weapon to combat “heterodox” rituals, in particular Buddhist and Daoist ones. No evidence shows how Qiu’s suggestion was consciously followed by his contemporary scholar-officials, but some evidence illustrates that in practice *lisheng* often played important roles in family and communal rituals in the Ming-Qing and Republican (1911–49) periods.

Recent social historical and ethnographic studies show that *lisheng* were prevalent in many parts of China. These studies provide crucial information that enriches our understanding of their similarities and differences across China and an indispensable context for an analysis of their history in Sibao.

In late imperial and Republican southeastern Shanxi, the ritual specialists who guided the grand sacrifice (*sai* 賽) were called *zhuli* 主禮 or *zhulisheng* 主禮生 (masters of ceremonials). They were drawn from *yinyang* masters (*yinyang sheng* 陰陽生) “who were local specialists consulted by villagers about everything from the best place to build a house to the astrological suitability of a marriage, and who officiated at domestic rituals, especially when the earth was disturbed, as in digging a grave or laying the foundation of a house,” rather than from lower-level gentry. Together with entertainers (*yuehu* 樂戶) and ritual chefs (*chuhu* 廚戶), they were the most important experts and usually the only ritual specialists of the

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31 I am following Johnson’s translation of *zhuli* (*Spectacle and Sacrifice*, 311 n. 19).
32 Ibid., 236.
sai sacrifice, which often lasted five days. Their active involvement in sai is not a recent invention, since some of their texts were dated mid-Ming. But how yinyang masters became involved in sai is yet to be explored. Evidence from a study of the Yinyang School in the Yuan and Ming periods suggests that yinyang masters, who held previously unpaid positions affiliated to local government, were increasingly connected to the management of local temples from the mid-Ming at the latest. This involvement may have provided them with precious opportunities to participate and dominate the ritual affairs of local temples, including sai.

Lisheng were also present in a Kong lineage village, whose residents claim to be the descendents of Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.), in the northwestern Gansu province studied by Jun Jing. Jing reports that before the Communist Revolution the students at the primary school in this village were not only taught normal courses but also instructed on how to become lisheng, which he renders as “ritual performers.” They were “taught the principles and procedures of temple rituals by an older generation of educated villagers in the hope that they would carry on the tradition of offering sacrifices to Confucius.” Four of the students assisted in the 1949 temple ceremony attended by representatives of the entire Kong lineage. This village apparently had a ritual handbook that provided instructions

33 For a detailed description of zhuli’s role in the sai sacrifice, see ibid., 235–282.
34 One text was dated the Ming Chenghua era (1465–1487); another, 1522; a third, 1574. See ibid., 180–183, 243.
35 Shen Jiandong 沈建東, “Yuan-Ming yinyang xue zhidu chutan” (A Preliminary Investigation on the Yinyang School System during the Yuan and Ming), Dalu zazhi 大陸雜誌 79.6 (December 1989), 21–30. I am grateful to Wang Jianchuan for bringing this essay to my attention.
on how to perform the rite of sacrifice to Confucius.\textsuperscript{37} According to Jing, 
lisheng in this village had no connection to yinyang masters.

Qing period novels often mentioned lisheng in north China when featuring the rite of sacrifice and funerary rites. For example, the late Qing novel \textit{Ernü yingxiong zhuan} 兒女英雄傳 (The Legend of Heroes and Heroines) offers a detailed description of how a lisheng guided the wedding of the hero. The lisheng was, according to the novel, an unsuccessful government student from south China who made a living by providing ritual services.\textsuperscript{38} The late Qing novel \textit{Guanchang xianxing ji} 官場現形記 (The Bureaucracy Exposed), which takes place in Shaanxi province, features the role of lisheng in ancestral rites. One of the protagonists, Zhao Wen 趙溫, passed the provincial government examination, the most difficult step in the ladder of success in late imperial China. As this was a great event in his lineage’s history, the lineage head thought it was his responsibility to report this great success to his ancestors. He thus hired a lisheng to assist in performing the rite of sacrifice. However, his kinsmen had difficulty following the order of the lisheng and could not act in uniform because they lacked experience in participating rituals.\textsuperscript{39} As indirect evidence, this episode suggests that lisheng were not sufficiently present in some parts of north China and many villagers were not familiar with rituals they performed.

In contrast, recent studies show that lisheng were much more visible in south China. For example, during the Ming and Qing periods in Huizhou 徽州, where ritual had taken a distinctive form, lisheng were active in funerary rites, weddings, rites of capping, and rain-praying rituals, as well as the rites of sacrifices to ancestors and patron gods.\textsuperscript{40} According to the diary of a Wuyuan 婺源 county government student written in early eighteenth century, its writer often functioned as lisheng at the ancestral rites and occasionally at funeral rites. In return, he was entertained, along with other lisheng who provided services in the rituals, with a feast called “the feast of lisheng” (lisheng jiu 禮生酒).\textsuperscript{41} Another text shows that at

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 103–114.
\textsuperscript{38} Wen Kang 文康, \textit{Ernü yingxiong zhuan} (The Legend of Heroes and Heroines) (Tianjin: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 2003), 518–522.
\textsuperscript{39} Li Baojia 李寶嘉, \textit{Guanchang xianxing ji} (The Bureaucracy Exposed) (Shenyang: Chunfeng wenyi chubanshe, 1994), 8.
\textsuperscript{40} Wang, “Lisheng yu yishi.”
\textsuperscript{41} Zhan Yuanxiang 詹元相, \textit{Weizhan riji} 畏齋日記 (The Diary of Zhan Yuanxiang), in Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan lishi yanjiusuo Qingshi yanjiushi 中國社會科學院歷史研究所清史研究室, ed., \textit{Qingshi ziliao} 清史資料 (Source Materials of the Qing History),
least five *lisheng* were appointed and the ancestral rites were performed at a local lineage’s ancestral hall: two functioned as *tongzan*, two as *yinzan*, and one as *gongzhu* (liturgist). In the funerary rites, *lisheng* were indispensable at the rites of dotting (*tizhu*), offering sacrifices to the dead at funerary hall, and presenting sacrifices to the Empress of the Soil (*houtu*) at the grave (*situ*). *Lisheng* were also present at the rite of sacrifices to local gods. Thus at a rain-praying ritual in northwestern Wuyuan, five *lisheng* guided the rite of presenting sacrifices to a local god.

Much evidence shows the popularity of *lisheng* in Fujian. Based on his decades of observation of social life in the Fuzhou area, Justus Doolittle describes the role of *lisheng* in both state ritual and popular religion. He describes the sacrifice to Confucius at the prefectural Confucian Temple in Fuzhou in September 1858. The provincial governor and other officials attended the ceremony. Five or six of the highest-ranking officials kneeled in front of the altar and presented the offerings, while most of the officials remained in the courtyard. They presented the offerings three times. Throughout the ceremony, the officials were guided by men whom Doolittle calls “professors of ceremony,” “entitled to dress like graduates of the lowest degree” and who were “always treated with great respect and deference by the mandarins.” Obviously, they were *lisheng* in the state rituals. Doolittle not only mentions the *lisheng* “employed by mandarins” but also reports the existence of another class of *lisheng* who were “employed by the common people.” Compared to the *lisheng* in the government, they were not given official stipends but were “rewarded by fees or wages, which varied according to circumstances.” They were “quite numerous and influential” and were “necessarily literary men, of respectable connections, of polite demeanor, able to assume, when occasion demands, a grave and dignified appearance, self-possessed and authoritative.” In all likelihood these men were similar to the *lisheng* discussed above.

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43 The rite of dotting is performed to enable the spirit of an ancestral tablet by dotting the first stroke of the Chinese character *zhū* with red ink.
46 Justus Doolittle, Social Life of the Chinese (London: Sampson Low, Son, and Marston, 1868), 195–197, 291–296. This evidence has been used by both Susan Naquin and David Johnson in their discussions, respectively, of death ritual and temple festivals in North
The presence of *lisheng* at ritual performances was also observed in other parts of Fujian. In southern Fujian, *lisheng* were involved in the rite of sacrifice performed at the grave of the parents of an important local god called Guangze zunwang 廣澤尊王 (Reverent Lord of Broad Compassion) in Nan’an 南安 County at the end of the nineteenth century. The ritual specialists who performed this rite included a chief sacrificial officiant,

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two libationers, two silk officials, two prayer readers, and two cantors.\textsuperscript{47} The roles these specialists played are more or less similar to those performed by Sibao \textit{lisheng}. Ken Dean also mentions elsewhere that \textit{lisheng} are called \textit{yanshi} 簽師 (masters of the banquet) on the Putian Plain, probably because their major roles, in addition to calling out the sequence of ritual actions, are to prepare the altars and organize the offerings provided during the rituals.\textsuperscript{48}

In pre-1949 Taiwan, \textit{lisheng} and Daoist priests were the most important ritual specialists in performing a variety of different rituals from familial life-cycle rites to communal calendrical rites. The existence of \textit{lisheng} and their ritual troupes were in most parts of Taiwan, especially where the cults of Wangye were popular. According to Taiwanese scholar Li Fengmao, they were active in, among other rites, the rite of offering sacrifices to local gods and funerary rites. Thus \textit{lisheng} played crucial roles in “the rites of welcoming lords” (\textit{yingwang} 迎王) in southwestern port cities of Taiwan. The rites of sacrifices, called “sacrificing the lord” (\textit{siwang} 祀王) or “feasting the lord” (\textit{yanwang} 宴王), were performed by \textit{lisheng}. In Donggang 東港, they organized a bureau called “inner office” (\textit{neisi} 內司) at the concerned temple to manage the ritual activities. The bureau, usually composed of about thirty \textit{lisheng}, was controlled by government students. Although \textit{lisheng} did not play such an important role everywhere in Taiwan, their presence in ritual performances seemed to be common.\textsuperscript{49}

According to Li, \textit{lisheng} were usually recruited from among retired officials, government students, and literati. They studied various texts relating to family rituals: Zhu Xi’s \textit{Family Rituals, Jiali daquan} 家禮大全 (A Complete Collection of Family Rituals) by Lü Zizhen 呂子振, \textit{Jiali huitong} 家禮會通 (Compendium of Family Rituals) by Zhang Rucheng 張汝誠, as well as manuscripts called \textit{jiali bu} 家禮簿 (records of family rituals), which are similar to \textit{jiwenben} 祭文本 (manuals of sacrificial texts) discussed below. Li suggests that local contexts and ethnicity led to local variations when these manuscripts were transmitted and spread.

\textsuperscript{47} Kenneth Dean, \textit{Taoist Ritual and Popular Cults of Southeast China} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 154. Dean uses the term “Masters of Sacrifices” to include all ritual specialists who performed the rite (p. 180).

\textsuperscript{48} Dean and Zheng, \textit{Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plain}, vol. 1, 165–166.

As Li points out, *lisheng* are different from Daoist priests in several ways. First, the profession of Daoist priest was not open to ordinary people, and their esoteric knowledge was usually transmitted through family and master-disciple networks, whereas the position of *lisheng* was usually open to those who were literati versed in ritual. The transmission of their knowledge was not limited to a small and more or less exclusive circle of people. Second, the function of *lisheng* was to guide and assist ritual performance, while Daoist priests performed rituals directly. Third, it usually took longer to become a Daoist priest than a *lisheng*. In Taiwanese festivals, *lisheng* worked side by side with Daoist priests. The former specialized in the rites of sacrifices, while the latter specialized in Daoist fasting and prayers to avert calamities. The former focused on social and human relationships, while the latter stressed religious relations between the sacred and the profane. Li also illustrated the relationship between *lisheng* and Daoist priests by presenting three case studies of Taiwanese ritual occasions.\(^{50}\)

In a village in the Penghu Islands, Taiwan, James Russell Wilkerson reports that the “Shiyan” (waited Banquet), a “Confucian-style” rite of ancestor worship, “is performed by a lineage elder trained as a Confucian Master of Ceremonies (*le-seng* [*lisheng*]), who in the Ch’ing [Qing] dynasty was a local elite with training in the school system, and sometimes was a degree holder.” During the rite, a *lisheng*, dressed in a “long traditional Chinese scholar’s gown,” burns incense and offers tea, wine, and food to the ancestors. (By contrast, in Sibao these activities are usually performed by the chief sacrifier rather than by *lisheng*.) Wilkerson also writes: “Learning to be a Master of Ceremonies is now attractive to late middle-aged villagers” and at least one villager was “actively receiving training by a teacher from outside the village.”\(^{51}\)

In the New Territories, Hong Kong, Hugh Baker mentions the existence of what he calls “ritual officiants” in a lineage village. “They are,” he reports, “the repositories and interpreters of ritual knowledge, men who, by virtue of an idiosyncratic interest in ritual, devote themselves whenever necessary to the task of organizing ceremonies, and make themselves familiar with the forms of service, learning the complicated patterns by heart.” They were neither elected nor chosen nor given official position. They

\(^{50}\) Li, “Lisheng yu daoshi,” 331–359.

served as “ritual officiants” to gain “the satisfaction of his own interests and perhaps a certain amount of prestige from being in the public eye in the execution of the job.” Their numbers were unfixed, and more were required for some ceremonies than for others. Baker reports that a village head “regularly acted as Master of Ceremonies” until his death in the early 1950s. He also mentions that the ceremonies were “conducted partly in a speech foreign to the village, which is said by the villagers to be ‘Ch’ing [Qing] dynasty officials’ language,’ but which bears little resemblance to Mandarin.” The ritual officiants mentioned here are similar to the lisheng that I found in Sibao.

As for Tingzhou, the region in which Sibao is located, recent studies organized by Lagerwey and Yang show that lisheng were and are popular in every county. Appendix 2 is based on information in these studies and indicates that lisheng were widespread in Tingzhou. Of about eighty ethnographic reports whose major topics include ceremonies in the series of Lagerwey and Yang, twenty-six, or about one-third, mention lisheng. Lisheng were involved most frequently (in twenty entries in the table) in different rites and ceremonies performed to patron gods, including offering sacrifices, god processions, temple fairs, jiao festivals, and pilgrimages. The rite of sacrifice to ancestors was another ceremony that frequently involved lisheng (eight mentions in the table). The other three types of ceremonies that involved lisheng were funerals (three mentions), weddings (two), and the rites of sacrifice to the dragon lantern as well as to

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52 Hugh D.R. Baker, A Chinese Lineage Village (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968), 148. A picture that appears between pp. 146 and 147 illustrates the autumn rites performed at the grave of one of this lineage’s ancestors. In front of the grave stood several rows of participants. Between them and the offerings were two men in long gowns. The man on the right-hand side, with a wine-pot in his left hand, seemed to be serving wine to the ancestor. Both men appear to be the lisheng for this rite.

53 Baker, A Chinese Lineage Village, 64. James Hayes mentions the existence of “handbooks” that provide “the text of prayers to be said at local temples and give couplets suitable for use in particular temples” in the New Territories of Hong Kong. They were usually owned by schoolmasters, teachers, and those who held managerial posts in their lineages, villages, and townships. Some of these schoolmasters and respected village elders “would attend at weddings, funerals, and other occasions when the saying of prayers and the making of offerings required the presence of masters of ceremony” (“Written Materials in the Village World,” in David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., Popular Culture in Late Imperial China [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985], 101–103).

54 I have included here those who are called siyi 司儀, sili 司禮, xiansheng 先生, and zanlisheng 贊禮生, whose role in the ceremonies shows that they fall into the category of lisheng.
WHO ARE LISHENG? 61

cannot be taken literally, because they may not be a direct reflection of reality but, rather, the observations of the ethnographers. Lisheng’s infrequent presence at funerals, for example, is contrary to my experience in the region and contrary to expectation. Nonetheless, the statistics still show that lisheng have been crucial in the region’s symbolic life.

According to the studies, the number of lisheng involved in each ritual ranged from one to four, with two the most prevalent. When more than one lisheng was involved, they were given specific names according to their importance and role in the ceremonies. Tongzan (general assistant) was usually the designation of the lisheng who played the most important role. Lisheng of secondary importance were called yazan 亞贊 (secondary assistant) or yinzan 引贊 (guiding assistant). In Gutian, Liancheng, where four lisheng were invited to perform the rite of sacrifice to a local deity, the most important lisheng was called a changtong 唱通 (general cantor), and this position was usually occupied by the most prestigious gentry elite or local notable. The other three were called peitong 陪通 (assistant general cantor), yinzan and peiyin 陪引 (secondary guiding assistant), respectively, according to their importance.

In most cases, lisheng not only guided the ritual procedures but also recited or even composed sacrificial texts (jiwen) written in classical Chinese. As Baker observed in Hong Kong, these ritual texts are usually recited in what villagers regard as “officials’ speech” (guanhua). The position of lisheng was open to the holders of degrees and titles and government officials in the late imperial period and primary school graduates in the

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55 The rites of sacrifice to dragon boat are performed to consecrate the boat before the dragon boat race starts on the duanwu festival (the fifth day of the fifth month). On rites of sacrifice to dragon lantern, see chapter 4.
56 Li Shengbao 李升寶, “Qingliu xian Changxiao cun de zongzu chuantong diaocha” 清流縣長校村的宗族傳統調查 (Lineage Traditions in Changxiao Village, Qingliu County), in Yang Yanjie, ed., Tingzhou fu de zongzu miaohui yu jingji, 283; Huang Yuwan 黃于萬, “Qingliu xian lingdi zhen huang xing minsu” 清流縣靈地鎮黃姓民俗 (Customs of the Huang Lineage in Lingdi Town, Qingliu County), in Yang Yanjie, ed., Tingzhou fu de zongzu miaohui yu jingji, 309.
57 Hua Qinjin 華欽進, “Liancheng xian Gutian zhen zhengyue you dalong” 連城縣姑田鎮正月游大龍 (The Dragon Parades of the First Month in Gutian, Liancheng County), in Yang Yanjie, ed., Minxi de chengxiang miaohui yu cunluo wenhua, 131.
58 Tong Jin'gen 童金根, “Qingliu xian Jinshi xiang de minjian xinyang yu minsu tese” 清流縣東山肖氏的宗族傳說及其廟會 (The Festivals and Myths of the Tong Lineage of Dongshan, Qingliu County), in Yang Yanjie, ed., Minxi de chengxiang miaohui yu cunluo wenhua, 238.
Republican period and is open to high school graduates in the present. Only in exceptional cases are specific criteria required (e.g., a prestigious position), such as in the rite of offering sacrifices to Confucius. In one case (in the 1990s) they were paid for their services.

To sum up, *lisheng* had close connections with the Court of Imperial Sacrifice and specialized in the performance of rituals beginning in the medieval period at the latest. In the wake of the popularization of Confucian rituals, *lisheng* played increasingly important roles in unofficial family and communal rituals. Over the course of several centuries, they were also increasingly exposed to influences from other ritual traditions, resulting in the formation of different “Confucian-style” regional ritual traditions as seen in written materials and observed by modern social scientists. Just when, how, and why this took place is elaborated in the chapters to come.

**LISHENG AND SIBAO SOCIETY**

*A Summary of Rituals in Sibao*

Before giving an account of *lisheng* in Sibao, it is necessary to present a summary of the basic rituals performed in Sibao, regardless of whether they involve *lisheng*.

The first group of rituals in Sibao are those related to ancestors, which take place at family shrines, ancestral halls, or graves, and are usually calendrical. The rites usually performed include presenting offerings to ancestors on important ritual occasions, most frequently at family shrines. Family shrines are usually located in the main hall of each house. Villagers paste paper *shenzhupai* (spirit tablets) of their late ancestors on the wall (sometimes an overall statement that “all descendants of founding ancestor such and such” is used instead). Many Sibao villagers burn incense and present offerings at their family shrines on the first and the fifteenth of each month. These activities also take place on important festivals, such as the Lunar New Year, Qingming, Dragon Boat, Ghost

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60 Zhang Hongxiang 張鴻祥, *Changting chengguan chuantong shehui yanjiu 長汀城關傳統社會研究 (Traditional Society in the Changting County Seat)* (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, École Française d’Extrême-Orient and Overseas Chinese Archives, 2003), 233–234.
festival, Mid-Autumn, and Double Nine when more offerings are usually presented. Beginning on the twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, villagers hang their ancestors’ portraits on the wall, and this often continues until after the Lantern Festival (the fifteenth of the first month). During this period, offerings are also presented to the ancestors. These rites at family shrines are usually performed in the absence of Lisheng and other ritual specialists.

The rite of presenting offerings in ancestral halls takes place three times a year. On New Year’s Eve incense is burned and offerings are presented. If a lineage or branch has a portrait of its founding ancestor, it will hang in the hall on this occasion. A similar rite is repeated during the Qingming and Mid-Autumn festivals. Lisheng are usually invited to assist in the performance of rites in ancestral halls. In some cases, in addition to family shrines and the ancestral hall, there are also zhongting (collectively owned halls), which serve as places of worship for various branches of a lineage. The rites performed here are similar to those in the main ancestral hall and sometimes Lisheng are involved.

The rites performed at ancestors’ graves are called saomu (tomb sweeping). As in other parts of China, this involves not only the cleaning of graves but also the presentation of offerings to ancestors. The social groups range from one family to an entire lineage. If they are made up of a number of members and have a considerable sum of collective funds, they usually invite Lisheng. The second group of rituals are those related to gods. Like ancestors, gods are in need of care from the living. Most frequently the rites are performed during important festivals. On these occasions, some villagers show their reverence to the gods by burning incense and offering food. These rites are usually performed individually rather than collectively, and no ritual specialists are present. In fact, quite a few villagers do not perform these rites at all. Gods play a more important role in village life on their birthdays and when villagers organize jiao festivals of communal offerings. These occasions are generally called huiqi (the dates of the [temple] fair) in Sibao. Every village has its own huiqi, and some have more than one a year. These are not only the time to entertain the gods but also important occasions for exchanging gifts. Food is offered in the temples, and gods are invited to enjoy offerings. Often theatrical troupes are hired and plays are performed to entertain gods as well as guests who come to visit their relatives or friends. The involvement of Lisheng and Buddhist monks in these rites was normal before 1949, but this is not typically the case today, especially for jiao festivals of communal offerings.
Lisheng used to play an important role in these festivals, but now their place has been taken over by Daoist priests. Why lisheng retreated from this “territory” remains to be explored. Some explanations are given in the next section. However, the lisheng’s critical role in the rites of sacrifice to ancestors/gods—supernatural beings who were worshipped both as gods and ancestors—is undeniable. Different kinds of ritual texts addressed to local deities and evidence from oral tradition testify to this point (see Chapter 8 for a discussion of ancestors/gods).

Life-cycle ceremonies fall into the third group of rites performed in Sibao. The first ceremony of this group takes place one month after a baby is born. This occasion, usually called manyue 滿月 (full month), is marked by a banquet hosted by the baby’s parents for relatives and friends. Seldom are ritual specialists involved in this ceremony. Weddings are a second type of life-cycle ceremony, which involves the rite of farewell to the bride’s birth family and her ancestors (chumen 出門) and the rite of worshipping Heaven and Earth (baiting 拜堂). In the past, lisheng were not usually invited to attend the ceremony, but now more weddings are performed under their guidance. The third ceremony that falls into this group is birthdays. In the traditional sense, a birthday does not mean the date of birth and sometimes not even the month of birth. Only over fifty years after one has been born, and then in ten-year intervals, can a banquet be held to celebrate the person’s “birthday.” Some of the celebrations, known as zhushou 祝壽 (the celebration of longevity), are held under the guidance of lisheng. The fourth important life-cycle ceremony is the funeral, which aims to transform the dead into an ancestor. According to one of my informants, before the Revolution if the family of the dead were rich enough, it would hire lisheng, Daoist priests, and Buddhist monks to assist in the funeral. Families of average income usually did not hire lisheng. But now most funerals are performed in the presence of both lisheng and Daoist priests.

The fourth group of rites are those devoted to the dragon lanterns. Every year around the Lantern Festival, many Sibao villages organize a procession of longdeng 龍燈 (dragon lanterns), sometimes called huadeng 花燈 (decorated lanterns). Another activity, balong 拔龍 (renewing the spirit of the dragon), also usually takes place at this time or in the second

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62 The birthday is celebrated on the person’s fifty-first, sixty-first, and seventy-first birthdays.
63 As I discuss below, some jiwenben collected from Sibao include texts related to birthday celebrations.
month. Before the procession begins, it is necessary to present sacrifices to the dragon lantern, and this rite is performed under the guidance of *lisheng* rather than other types of ritual specialists.

The fifth group of rites performed in Sibao are those related to community compacts. Evidence that the rites were performed by *lisheng* is lacking, but we do know that their presence was indispensable (see Chapter 7).

A sixth category comprises the many miscellaneous rites performed for specific purposes in Sibao. When a house is built, a rite must be performed to please and thank nearby gods, especially the Empress of the Soil. In pre-Revolutionary times, this rite was sometimes performed by *lisheng*. When a child is frightened and falls ill, one of her parents performs a rite to bring back the soul (*shoujing* 收驚). Or when a family meets with a mishap, it hires ritual specialist(s), often a Daoist priest, to expel noxious spirits who are believed to have brought about this mishap. Finally, some rites are related to spirit-mediums and spirit writing (*fuji* 扶乩). These rites are performed by the spirit-mediums themselves so they do not involve *lisheng*.

To sum up, a wide variety of rites have been and still are performed in Sibao under the guidance of *lisheng*. *Lisheng* are involved in the “rites of passage” that mark the critical moments of transition of an individual or a social group from one situation to another. *Lisheng* are seen as necessary in two kinds of ritual occasions: those that involve social groups of considerable size such as a lineage and a village, and those that deal with the critical moments of an individual or a family such as funerals, which can create a crisis if not dealt with properly.

**Who Are Lisheng?**

In the late imperial Sibao, the position of *lisheng* was open only to those who held degrees or titles, such as government students, provincial graduates (*juren*), metropolitan degree holders (*jinshi*), and officials, as well as those who received their titles from the government either by their services or by purchase, such as national university students (*jiansheng*,


According to a Sibao lisheng, when one became a national university student, the first thing he should do was to obtain a manual of sacrificial texts (jiwenben). Learning to perform Confucian-style rituals properly was regarded as a basic criterion for gaining status as gentry. This manual could be acquired through copying or purchase and was necessary if the student did not want to be looked down on or wanted to attend the annual banquet held specifically for those who had degrees and titles in his lineage. The lisheng learned this from the experience of one of his cousins, a national university student and also a lisheng.

The requirement for becoming a lisheng changed after the abolition of the civil service examination (keju 科舉) in 1905. During the Republican period (1912–1949), the minimum requirement for becoming a lisheng in Sibao was being the graduate of a primary school. This was especially true in the early Republican period, when only a few primary schools were established in Sibao and thus only a few students graduated from these schools. Before 1905 it was a common practice in Republican Sibao to equate primary school graduates with imperial government students. The requirement did not change until 1949, when the Communists came to power. Today the requirement for the position of lisheng is not as strict as before. Theoretically speaking, it is open to any male villager who knows how to read and write. Nowadays, however, only a few villagers are interested in obtaining this position, probably because it no longer carries much authority.

The cases discussed so far concern ordinary situations. In exceptional cases, different criteria are needed. In Huizhou, lisheng were usually degree and title holders. But when the village concerned did not have sufficient degree and title holders, others were allowed to function as lisheng. Thus in the rite of sacrifices at the grave of one Tang lineage, even a Confucian apprentice (tongsheng 童生) could function as a lisheng. In the rite of sacrifices organized by a Wang lineage, lisheng were recruited from among those who held degrees and titles and those who did not. At the other extreme, such as in the case of sacrifices at the Confucian Temple (wenmiao 文廟), merely being a government student or a primary school graduate was far from enough. Thus, in Republican Tingzhou, whereas

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66 Tong Jingen reports that in Liukeng, Sibao, only siwen 斯文 (literati) and those who are over fifty years old could attend the Qingming banquet (Qingming jiǔ) held in the ancestral hall after the sacrificial rite. Only those who had graduated from primary school were eligible for siwen status in the Republican period. See Tong, “Qingliu xian Jinshi xiang de minjian xinyang yu minsu tese,” 237 n. 1.

a primary school graduate was usually eligible to be a *lisheng* in many rites, the *lisheng* of the rite of sacrifices to Confucius were recruited from among those who held a degree as well as an important position.\(^{68}\)

Obviously, meeting the requirements for a *lisheng* position did not guarantee that a person would become one. If an aspirant did not know how to perform rituals, he might have to receive training from his fellow villagers or from outside masters. The manual of sacrificial texts provided formularies for most ritual occasions that took place in his village. So, he had to copy them and change the dates, names, and so forth, which was not difficult. But he also had to render the texts in fine calligraphy. Before 1949, even primary school training included calligraphy. However, those who started school after 1949 had to invest more effort in practicing calligraphy before they could become a *lisheng*.

Those who wanted to become a *lisheng* might encounter another difficulty: forms of address. This knowledge was not only an indispensable precondition for social advancement\(^ {69}\) but a basic skill that a *lisheng* had to master. A manuscript for *lisheng* compiled in Sibao lists as many as three thousand phrases for addressing people of different types in different circumstances.\(^ {70}\) Becoming familiar with all those words, let alone to memorizing them, was not easy. Indeed, a *lisheng* commented that his most difficult training was learning forms of address. A mistaken form of address could have unanticipated consequences for the parties involved and could result in “losing face” for the *lisheng*.

Moreover, one still has to know how to perform rituals: how to call out each ritual act and recite the ritual text, if necessary, loudly, and in the *guanhua* 官話 (mandarin) style. This does not prove to be a big problem for most people, mainly because as village members they have seen and often participated in rituals of the same kind many times, and the ritual acts have been, as Paul Connerton expressed it, “incorporated” into their bodies through these practices.\(^ {71}\) That said, the situation may not have remained the same during the first three decades after 1949. During

\(^{68}\) Zhang, *Changting chengguan chuantong shehui yanjiu*, 234.

\(^{69}\) On the importance of correct address, see Hayes, “Written Materials in the Village World,” 101.

\(^{70}\) Untitled manuscript from the late 1940s. The document was produced by a retired primary school teacher in Changxiao in the late 1940s. It is a handbook about forms of address, list 2,981 terms of address used by different persons in different circumstances (many of which are the same).

this period, all rites related to supernatural beings were labeled “superstitions” and banned by the government, and a generation of people went through childhood without attending any rituals performed by lisheng. This situation changed after 1978, especially after the mid-1980s. Most ritual practices were revived, based in part on extant ritual texts and in part on elders’ memory, and lisheng performed rituals in their communities again. Through these practices the acts of ritual were again “incorporated” into the bodies of local people.

Finally, lisheng are expected to know how to pick auspicious dates (jian rizi 揀日子). In North China, this seemed to be the work of yinyang sheng (yinyang master), whose basic function is to locate graves with good feng-shui and pick auspicious dates.72 But in Tingzhou, where yinyang sheng are rarely found,73 lisheng perform this function.

The early Qing scholar Yan Yuan 顏元 (1635–1704) pointed out that while “ritual and music were honored by the saints,” those who performed ritual and music, such as lisheng and musicians (chuishou 吹手), “were regarded conversely as humble.”74 This shows the general view of gentry among lisheng in the early Qing in north China, where Yan Yuan was born and grew up. In the Hong Kong community studied by Baker, lisheng did not seem to command much status from their fellow villagers.75 From Baker’s perspective, becoming a lisheng is like pursuing a hobby. In contrast, lisheng appear to have commanded much authority in the Kong lineage village studied by Jun Jing.

In Sibao, too, lisheng were given more reverence than normal villagers. According to an account book recording the incomes and expenditures of annual grave sweeping for a branch of the Zous in Wuge, lisheng were entitled to receive better treatment than their fellow lineage members. For

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73 In the Traditional Hakka Society Series, only once is a yinyang master mentioned. He is hired to pick an auspicious date for a wedding. See Lai Guangyao 賴光耀, “Tingzhou chuautong hunsu”（汀州傳統婚俗）(Traditional Marriage Customs in Tingzhou), in Yang Yanjie, ed., Tingzhou fu de zongzu miaohui yu jingji (Space, Memory, and Social Transformation: Selected Essays in “New Social History”) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2001), 141–147.

74 Yan Yuan, Yan Yuan ji 顏元集 (Collected Works of Yan Yuan) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 672. This evidence implies that some lisheng may not have had a gentry background in the late imperial period.

example, in the spring of 1904, two *lisheng* from this branch were invited to perform rituals at the grave of one of this branch’s ancestors. Each of the two *lisheng* received three rice cakes and 0.25 kg of pork for his services in addition to his share as a member of the branch. And only *lisheng* and the chief sacrificer were privileged to ride in sedan chairs.\(^{76}\) According to other evidence, two *lisheng* were invited to perform a grave-sweeping rite in the spring of 1901, also receiving three rice cakes and 0.5 kg of pork and the privilege of riding in sedan chairs.\(^{77}\) In Sibao, the privilege of riding in sedan chairs was not open to everyone. First, not everyone could afford it. According to the source mentioned above, six sedan chair bearers were hired (two bearers for each chair), who received 0.0666 taels of silver and 1.5 kg of pork for their services.\(^{78}\) More important, even if one could afford to ride in a sedan chair, it might not be socially proper for him to do so. Only after achieving eminence in his community could he have this privilege. Therefore, this privilege distinguished *lisheng* from ordinary villagers.

In the two cases mentioned above, the *lisheng* were not paid except for the pork and rice cakes. This is probably because they served their own branch and performed rituals for their own ancestors. If they were invited to perform rituals on other people’s behalf, such as in the case of weddings and funerals, they were usually paid. In Bankeng, Changting, during the procession of a local deity, some families hired *lisheng* in the procession to perform the rite of sacrifice on their behalf. The *lisheng* was expected to compose a sacrificial text and present offerings to the god, and he was usually paid.\(^{79}\) In the rite of offering sacrifices to ancestors at ancestral graves in Huizhou, *lisheng*, in addition to being entertained with a feast, were usually entitled to receive a small number of copper coins to pay for a sedan chair, some rice cakes, pork, and so forth.\(^{80}\) According to a *lisheng* in Wuge, the income of *lisheng* fell into two categories. Those who participated in the funeral, for instance, usually hired *lisheng* to compose sacrificial texts and paid about 0.2 yuan 元 (silver dollars) for each text. The *lisheng* told me that he once composed a hundred texts at a funeral and was paid more than 20 silver dollars. In addition, the family

\(^{76}\) *Longchuan gong jibu* 龍川公祭簿 (Account Book for Sacrifice to Mr. Longchuan) (Wuge, 1897–1929), 43. A photocopy of this account book is available by contacting the author.

\(^{77}\) *Dingzuo gong jibu* 定祚公祭簿 (Account Book for Sacrifice to Mr. Dingzuo) (Wuge, 1901–1923), 2. A photocopy of this account book is available by contacting the author.

\(^{78}\) *Dingzuo gong jibu*, 5.


that organized the ceremony would also pay for the lisheng’s services. The lisheng once received 1.5 kg of pork and a piece of cloth for his services at a funeral. According to this lisheng, he could earn considerable income. During the Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), he received enough for his service in one ceremony to afford a new suit.

Among the lisheng whom I interviewed in Sibao, I am most familiar with Zou Chen (pseudonym), a native of Wuge and born in 1917. He had several years of private school education before he attended the primary school in his village at the age of eleven. Two years later, in 1930, he graduated with excellent marks from this school. After the turbulent civil war years in the early 1930s, Zou Chen found a job in the nearby Liukeng Primary School and taught there for a year and a half. Later, he worked at various tax collection offices in Changting, then returned to Sibao in 1943, and worked in the township government but resigned from this position a year later. After resigning, Zou Chen opened a cloth shop. In the late 1940s he joined the Guomindang (Nationalist Party), for which he was labeled a “counterrevolutionary” (fangeming 反革命) in 1958. Only after 1978 was this appellation lifted and he was allowed to reopen his shop.

Zou Chen started to work as a lisheng in the early 1930s, that is, after he graduated from primary school. During this period, Sibao had only a few primary school graduates. When asked why people invited him to perform rituals, Zou Chen said that it was because he was a primary school graduate. For him, becoming a lisheng seemed natural. The father of one of his cousins was a national university student and had a manual of sacrificial texts. Zou Chen borrowed the manual from him and made a copy for himself. But he tried not to copy the texts when he was invited to perform rituals. He just imitated the style of the texts in the manual and composed new texts in his own words. He learned how to perform rituals by imitating the performance of other lisheng during jiao festivals and the biannual rite of sacrifice to the ancestors. His excellent marks in primary school also helped, and he once proudly claimed that everyone in his village was aware of them. His ritual practice ended with the advent of the Communist era. Only after the early 1980s, when the time was ripe for ritual revival, did he work as lisheng again. He played an instrumental role in the restoration of ancestral halls, the compilation of genealogies, and the reviving of rituals. He was invited to perform rituals again, and, indeed, he has become an outstanding lisheng in his community, one of the lisheng best versed in rituals among those I met in Sibao. His experience shows the connection between education, lisheng, and the lisheng’s role in the revival of traditional rituals in post-Mao Sibao society.
CHAPTER FOUR

LISHENG AND THEIR RITUALS

LISHENG AND SIBAO RITUALS

Ritual Formats

When Sibao lisheng perform rituals, they follow formats that are popular throughout this region, which can be categorized based on whether they involve two lisheng or four lisheng. The following involves four lisheng, who are given specific names according to their roles in the rituals: tongzan (general assistant), yinzan (guiding assistant), yazan (secondary assistant), and duzan 讀贊 (liturgist). The most important among them is the tongzan, who oversees the entire process, while the others assist in calling out ritual procedures and reciting texts (see Figure 4.1). The other participants in the ritual are the chief sacrifier and assistant sacrifiers, who are usually lineage or village representatives.

The rites performed by four lisheng are usually those rites of greater importance. For less important rites such as weddings, funerals, and the rites of offering sacrifices to dragon lanterns, usually only two lisheng are invited. However, the ritual format itself is similar.

Source: Field Notes.

Figure 4.1 Layout of the rituals performed by four lisheng.
A Ritual Format for the Rite of Sacrifice to the Saints (sheng)\(^1\)
Performed by four lisheng


\[Yazan\] Rise.  
\[Yazan\] Rise.  
\[Yazan\] Rise.  
\[Tongzan\] Move to the front of the seat of the spirit image and present incense.
\[Yinzan\] Chief sacrifier, move to the front of the seat of the spirit image and present incense. Kneel. Present incense. Offer [liquor in the] jue.\(^2\) Invite the spirits to come down. Pour out a libation of liquor. Present the silk. Recite the sacrificial text.  
\[Duzan\] [Recites the sacrificial text while prostrating.]  
\[Tongzan\] Rise.  
\[Duzan\] Rise.  
\[Tongzan\] Perform the rite of the first presentation.  
\[Yinzan\] Chief sacrifier, move to the front of the seat of the spirit image and perform the rite of the first presentation. Kneel. Present the liquor the first time. Present animal sacrifices. Present soup. Present dishes. Kowtow.  
\[Duzan\] Rise.  
\[Tongzan\] Perform the rite of the second presentation.  
\[Duzan\] Rise.  
\[Duzan\] Rise.  
\[Tongzan\] Perform the rite of the third presentation.  

\(^1\) This ritual format can be found at the beginning of the manual of sacrificial texts (Manual 0101, see the third section in this chapter). Another ritual format with minor differences was kindly given to me by Zou Hengchen.  
\(^2\) Jue is a cup-like ritual utensil.
Duzan] Rise.  

[Duzan] Rise.  
[Shan] Perform the rite of urging [the spirits] to eat.


[Duzan] Rise.

[Tongzan] Take the jue in your hands and move to the incense burner. Watch the burning of the text and offer the silk.3 Return to your original place. Send off the spirits. Kneel. Kowtow. Kowtow the third time.


[Tongzan] Relax. The rite is completed.

During the ritual process, the tongzan calls out thirteen times, the yinzan ten times, the yazan six times, and the duzan seven times; the duzan also recites once. The prominent role of tongzan in the ritual is obvious. Not only does he start and conclude the ritual, but also he calls out the most important ritual acts to be performed by the chief sacrifier and other lisheng. The role of yinzan is also important. The majority of ritual acts are actually called out by him. The duzan not only recites the sacrificial text but also calls out simple ritual acts. The yazan seems to the least important among the four lisheng. He calls out only six times, and his words are usually short.

The ritual process can be divided into seven stages: burning incense (shangxiang li 上香禮), triple presentation of sacrifices (chu xian li 初獻禮 [first presentation], ya xian li 亞獻禮 [second presentation], san xian li 三獻禮 [third presentation]), urging the spirits to eat (youshi li 侑食禮), sending off the spirits (song shen 送神), and burning the sacrificial text (fen wen 焚文).4 All stages are marked by kneeling and kowtowing. In the ritual, the chief sacrifier is expected to kneel fifteen times and

3 Although the silk is mentioned here, I did not find any silk in the rites performed in Sibao.

4 Sacrificial texts are burned presumably in order to be transmitted to the supernatural beings to whom they are dedicated.
kowtow thirty-four times, not an easy task when you consider that most of chief sacrificers are men over sixty years old.

A comparison between the ritual format described above and the formats of imperial rituals provides some interesting insights for our understanding of rituals performed by *lisheng*. The basic imperial rituals are described in *Shitong* 十通 (The Ten Encyclopedic Histories of Institutions), *Huidian* 會典 (Collected Statutes), and local gazetteers. The rituals performed at the level of local government consisted of the rites of sacrifice to the sages at the Confucian Temple, similar rites to the god of the soil and grain (*sheji* 社稷), to the gods of the wind, cloud, thunder, rain, mountain, river, and the city god, to orphan souls, the rite of community wine drinking, and so forth (see Chapter 9).5 Space limitations prevent me from describing all the rites mentioned here. The rites of sacrifice at the Confucian Temple and to *sheji* are described here because of their importance for local society in general and local gentry in particular.6

The rites of sacrifice to Confucius were conducted at the Confucian Temple every year on the first *ding* 丁 day of the second and eighth months respectively.7 The rite was performed under the guidance of two *lisheng* by one chief sacrifier (usually the magistrate) and several secondary sacrificers (usually the principal and experienced scholars). Three days before the rite all of them would bathe and abstain from meat, wine, and sex. The day before the rite, the sacrificial animals would be inspected to ensure that they were suitable for sacrifice. The rite is divided into eight stages: the welcoming of the spirits (*yingshen* 迎神), the presenting of the silk cloth and the performing of the rite of presentation of the first sacrifices (*dianbo xing chu xian li* 奠帛行初獻禮), the second presentation (*ya xian*), the last presentation (*zhong xian* 終献), the drinking of wine and the receiving of sacrificial meat (*yinfu shouzuo* 飲福受胙), the

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5 *Hongwu lizhi*, 481–506.

6 Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice*, 306–308, provides a detailed description of the annual sacrifice to Guan Yu as prescribed in the Guangxu edition of the *Shanxi Provincial Gazetteer*.

7 Years and days in the lunar calendar were arranged according to the sixty combinations of the ten celestial stems (*tian’gan* 天干) and twelve terrestrial branches (*dizhi* 地支). *Ding* was the fourth of the ten celestial stems. See Huang, *A Complete Book Concerning Happiness and Benevolence*, 511 n. 4. Thomas A. Wilson gives a brief summary of the liturgy of the state cult of Confucius from mid-fifth century to the Ming in his “Ritualizing Confucius/Kongzi: The Family and State Cults of the Sage of Culture in Imperial China,” in idem, ed., *On Sacred Grounds: Culture, Society, Politics, and the Formation of the Cult of Confucius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asian Center, 2002), 76–79.
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taking away of the sacrifices (chezhuan 徹饌), the sending away of the spirits, and the watching of the burning of the text and the offering of the silk (wang yi 望瘞).

In the first stage, those who participated in the rite first took their places and the hair and blood of the sacrificial animal were buried (yi mao xie 瘞毛血) in a hole dug in advance, then the spirits were invited to come down. In the second, the sacrifices were presented for the first time. They were presented first to Confucius and then to all the other saints in the Confucian Temple. A sacrificial text was recited before the spirit tablet of Confucius. This was followed by the second and the last presentations. In the fifth stage, the participants drank wine and received sacrificial meat. Then, the offerings were taken away and the spirits were sent away. The ceremony was concluded by the burning of the sacrificial text and silk cloth.

This rite differed from the Sibao ritual format discussed above in several ways. First, the fifth stage, the rite of urging the spirits to eat, in the Sibao ritual format was replaced in the official ceremony by the rite of drinking wine and receiving sacrificial meat. Second, the official ceremony was accompanied not only by music but also by dance. Dance was performed three times in the rite, when sacrifices were presented to the spirits. Third, in the official rite when the spirits were invited to come down, no incense was burned. Instead, the hair and blood of the sacrificial animals were buried and the silk cloth was offered. Fourth, the official ceremony was performed in the presence of two lisheng while the Sibao rite was performed by four lisheng. Last, in the official ceremony, the chief sacrifier was expected to kneel and kowtow less: bow eight times, kneel seventeen times, and kowtow seventeen times. As he performed the rite, he was paying respect to five spirits one by one, and each time he knelt only once, rather than three times. However, overall the basic structure of the rite

8 “The stripping of the victims’ hide and the draining of their blood reduced them to the layer of boundary flesh between. They were empty inside and plain outside, unlike the participants, who wore their various prescribed silk robes” (Angela Zito, Of Body & Blush: Grand Sacrifice as Text/Performance in Eighteenth-Century China [Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1997], 159).
9 Hongwu lizhi, 481–485.
10 However, the sacrificial rite performed in the Changting Confucius Temple did burn incense. See CTXZ (1879), 12/13a.
11 Joseph McDermott suggests that the Five Bows and Three Kowtows ritual was inherited by Zhu Yuanzhang from the Yuan dynasty and was spread to the rural community in the middle of the sixteenth century probably through the community compact system
Chapter Four

is quite similar to the Sibao ritual format. At the beginning of the rite, the spirits were invited to come down and a sacrificial text was addressed to them. This was followed by the rites of triple presentation of sacrifices to the spirits. Finally, the sending off of the spirits and the burning of the text concluded the ceremony (see Table 4.1).

Like the rite of spring and autumn sacrifices to Confucius in the Confucian Temple, the rite of sacrifice to the god of the soil and grain was also conducted twice a year. The rite was performed by two lisheng and one chief sacrifier (usually the magistrate) before the county-level altar.

(“Emperor, Elites, and Commoners: The Community Pact Ritual of the Late Ming,” in idem, ed., *State and Court Ritual in China* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999], 306–311). What was popular in the late Qing and Republican Sibao was the Three Kneelings and Nine Kowtows ritual, which expresses more reverence than that mentioned by McDermott. The local gazetteer shows that the same ritual was also practiced when the rite of sacrifice to Confucius and Guandi was performed. But the rite of sacrifice to less important gods was performed with two kneeling and six kowtows (in the case of Tianhou, Zhu Xi, Lüxian 呂仙) or one kneeling and three kowtows (in the case of the loyalists in the Hall of Loyalists 昭忠祠, Chenghuang, Mangshen 芒神, the God of the Soil and Grain). See *CTXZ* (1879), 12/13a, 28a, 37a, 41a–41b, 44a, 46a, 47b.

### Table 4.1 A comparison of the ritual structure between the Sibao ritual format, the Confucian Temple rites, and the Altar of the God of the Soil and Grain rites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage of the Ritual</th>
<th>Sibao Ritual Format</th>
<th>Confucian Temple Rite</th>
<th>Altar of the God of the Soil and Grain Rite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Presenting incense</td>
<td>Welcoming the spirits</td>
<td>Welcoming the spirits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>First presentation</td>
<td>First presentation</td>
<td>First presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Second presentation</td>
<td>Second presentation</td>
<td>Second presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Third presentation</td>
<td>Last presentation</td>
<td>Last presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Urging the spirits to eat</td>
<td>Drinking wine and receiving sacrificial meat</td>
<td>Drinking wine and receiving sacrificial meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Taking away sacrifices</td>
<td>Taking away sacrifices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sending away the spirits</td>
<td>Sending away the spirits</td>
<td>Sending away the spirits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Burning sacrificial text</td>
<td>Burning the sacrificial text and offering silk cloth</td>
<td>Burning the sacrificial text and offering silk cloth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Manual 0101 (Guangxu era [1875–1908]); Hongwu lizhi, 481–506.*
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of the god of the soil and grain. Other civil officials of less importance participated in the rite, and the military officials were not expected to participate. As shown in Table 4.1, the structure of the rite was obviously identical to the one performed in the Confucian Temple. The only major difference is probably that the magistrate knelt and kowtowed less since fewer spirits were involved.12

The similarities between the Sibao ritual format and the imperial rituals are striking: The Sibao ritual format appears to be a copy of the imperial rituals, which is understandable considering the ritual specialists involved. Remember that the position of lisheng traditionally was occupied only by those who held degrees and titles. Many of them must have been government students, who would have watched and sometimes participated in the performance of imperial rituals several times a year. The Sibao natives who became officials would also have participated and, when necessary, performed the state rituals. Moreover, many Sibao people were involved in the printing and selling of books, and some of these books may have included chapters on state rituals. It is likely that they introduced the ritual formats from the ritual books that they printed and sold.13 Nonetheless, when the ritual formats were introduced to Sibao, they did not remain intact. The dance performances were omitted from the Sibao formats, perhaps because it was difficult to hire dancers in the countryside. More respect was paid to the spirits, as expressed in more kowtows, whether they were patron gods or ancestors. These changes may have been made to adapt the ritual formats of the state rituals to the ritual traditions of the rural population.

Lisheng in Action

Among the rituals I observed in Sibao, four were performed in the presence of lisheng, including the rites of sacrifice to a god/ancestor and to dragon lanterns, a wedding, and a funeral.

The Rite of Sacrifices to the Dragon Lantern

As mentioned in Chapter 3, during the Lunar New Year, many villages in Sibao organize a procession of dragon lanterns. This annual procession is

12 For details of the rite, see Hongwu lizhi, 487–493.
13 In the book inventory discussed in the second chapter mentions the Huidian (Qing huidian?) and Fuhui quanshu. Both have detailed information on state rituals. See page 46a–46b of this inventory.
an important social and cultural activity in Sibao. The procession takes place around the Lantern Festival on the fifteenth day of the first month and is usually organized by local lineages. This is probably the only collective activity that involves the cooperation between hundreds of people. In Wuge, the activity is usually organized by a branch rather than by the lineage as a whole. One of the most famous processions, and probably the one with the most history, is the one organized by the Lichong branch (Lichong gongfang 礼崇公房).

The organization of this procession is under the direction of an organization called the Dragon Lantern Society of the Guangyu Hall (Guangyu tang longdeng shenghui 光裕堂龍燈勝會),\textsuperscript{14} which is made up of branch

\textsuperscript{14} Guangyu Hall is the name of the ancestral hall of this branch.

\textit{Source:} Photo taken by Yonghua Liu.

Image 4.1  Sacrifice to dragon lanterns.
heads and subbranch heads. Every “stove” (zao 灶), or household, of the branch is expected to appoint one of its members to participate in the procession. Those who are involved in the procession are divided into two categories: the managers (zhishi renyuan 執事人員) and the ordinary participants. There are twenty managers, selected from participating households by drawing lots (nianjiu 拈鬮). The household that takes charge of carrying the head of the dragon lantern, sometimes known as the “lantern head” (dengshou 燈首), is selected from among these managers, also by drawing lots. The managers are in charge of carrying the head and the tail of the dragon lantern, beating gongs to notify villagers of the schedule of the procession, cooking dishes for the society and the managers, burning incense to the most important local deities, and firing Chinese gunpowder charges. The ordinary participants, that is, those who are not selected as managers, are grouped into several dozen jia 甲, which consist of ten participants.

During the Lunar New Year of 2002, the procession organized by the Dragon Lantern Society of the Guangyu Hall took place on the evening of the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the first month (February 25–26). Three days before the procession, the list of managers and participants was pasted on the walls along the village’s main street. The rite of sacrifice to the dragon lantern took place in the afternoon of February 25. As a rule, the rite was performed first at the main hall of the lantern head’s house (zongting) and again at the Guangyu Hall. The rites were similar except that they took place in different places. The rite described below took place in the zongting of the lantern head.

Before the rite began, two tables were placed in the middle of the zongting. The head and tail of the dragon lantern were put on the table, facing outside. In front of them were placed offerings such as a pig’s head, pork, chicken, fish, dried squid, orange cakes, tea, apples, and roses. The rite was performed by two lisheng along with one suona 噴呐 (Chinese oboe) player and two people who beat a drum and gong, respectively. The lisheng stood at each side of the offering tables. The rite started at 4:00 p.m. and lasted only about seven minutes. The structure of the rite was similar to the ritual format translated above except that it was conducted by two lisheng. At the beginning, the incense was presented, the spirit of the dragon was invited to come down to enjoy the offerings, and the sacrificial text was recited. Then offerings were presented to the spirit three times. After urging the spirit to enjoy the offerings, the sacrificial

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15 The participants of this procession were grouped into thirty-four jia.
text was burned and libation was poured out beside the burner. The difference between this rite and the ritual format discussed above became clear when the rite was concluded. A cock was killed, and its blood was sprinkled upon the head and tail of the dragon lantern. This action was supposed to ensure efficacy—the spirit would act on their prayers and demonstrate its quality of ling (magical power). After this was done, firecrackers were set off to conclude the rite.

The Zou lineage of Shuangquan also organized a procession of dragon lanterns on the Lunar New Year of 2002. The procession lasted three days, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth (February 24–26). The first day was devoted to the procession for “renewing the spirit of the dragon.” Every village is believed to have its “dragon’s pulse” (longmai), the channel through which the power of the nature flows to a lineage or village, and the procession is meant to renew the vital elements and guide their flow through the lineage's ancestral hall into the village. Before performing the rite, the offerings were presented to the dragon lantern. This rite of sacrifice was conducted at 5:40 p.m., on February 24, in front of the ruins of the ancestral hall of the Zou lineage. It was performed by four lisheng in the presence of many villagers and visitors. The rite was different in structure from the ritual format described above only at one point. The sacrificial text was recited right before the spirit was sent away, rather than at the beginning of the rite. The rite concluded at 6:15 p.m., and the procession began afterward.

The Rite of Worshipping Heaven and Earth at a Wedding
In Sibao, weddings used to be performed without the guidance of lisheng but now usually take place in their presence. During my stay in Sibao, I observed only one wedding from beginning to end. Weddings in Sibao usually take place in the winter, before the Lunar New Year, when farm work is finished and villagers have more time for social events. The wedding that I observed took place late in the eleventh lunar month (January 10, 2002). The groom was a middle school teacher from Xikeng, Changxiao township, Qingliu. The bride was a clerk at the Changxiao Post Office from Jiantou, Sibao township, Liancheng. The rite had two parts: rites performed at the bride's house and those at the groom's house.

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16 Cynthia Brokaw, personal communication, June 8, 2003.
The date of the wedding was decided by the groom’s family after consulting *lisheng* and then informed the bride’s family. Three days before the wedding (January 7), an ancestors’ image was hung on the wall of the hall of the bride’s house, and some offerings were presented to the ancestors on the incense table. One day before the wedding (January 9), three big cases of gifts were sent to the bride’s house from the groom’s family in the morning, and they were presented to the ancestors in a branch ancestral hall and a sub-branch ancestral hall of the bride’s family. Afterward, they were placed on the incense table in the bride’s hall and presented to the bride’s ancestors. All these ceremonies were conducted without the help of *lisheng*. People just followed the local customs. The people who sent gifts to the bride’s family stayed there and did not return to their village until the bride had left her natal family.

According to the schedule given by the groom’s family, the time for the rite of “entering the gate [of the groom’s house]” (*jinmen* 進門) was 2:00 a.m., January 10. Based on this schedule, the bride’s family decided that the bride should depart at 9:40 p.m., January 9. After the evening banquet, a women versed in the ceremony of weddings from the bride’s village went into the bride’s bedroom and appeared to give her some instructions.\(^{17}\) In the meantime, the bride dressed. She wore red clothes—a red skirt, red shoes, and a red hair dress. About half an hour before she left her family, she started to cry. It was as much an expression of emotion as the performance of a rite, called “marriage lamentation” (*kujia* 哭嫁) in Sibao. At this juncture, some dishes were prepared for the bride and they served as a farewell dinner. After dinner, the bride had to say farewell to her natal family. While crying loudly, the bride walked to the door in the company of a woman from the groom’s side, who led the bride while holding a rice screen (*mishai* 米篩) before the bride.\(^{18}\) Men from the groom’s village rushed out of the hall and burned two pine torches in front of the house. The man who was in charge of holding the sedan chair lamp waited in front of the house. Firecrackers were set off. As soon as the bride walked out of the house, the woman leading her opened an umbrella. At the same time, people inside the house closed the door, which was meant

\(^{17}\) Unfortunately, the content of the instructions was not given to me.

\(^{18}\) The rice screen is used to protect the bride from an attack by the active spirit of death (*shaqi* 煞氣). This female companion does not have to be one who is versed in ritual. In this case, she was the wife of the groom’s elder brother.
to prevent the outflow of treasure from the bride's side by the marriage of the bride.\textsuperscript{19}

It was still early when the bride arrived at the groom's village. She was led into the groom's house from a side door and waited in the house for the auspicious moment, given a few days before by a ritual specialist, to perform the rite of “entering the gate.” When the moment came, she walked out of the house from the side door and re-entered from the main door. She did this in the company of the same woman who had led her at the time of farewell to her natal family. Once more, the woman led the bride while holding a rice screen before her. At the moment they walked through the door, a cock was killed and its blood was sprinkled on the floor. After the bride entered the house, she was led into her bedroom (\textit{dongfang 洞房}).

The rite of worshiping Heaven and Earth (\textit{baiting 拜堂}), the central part of the wedding, took place in the hall of the groom's house at 10:00 p.m., January 10. An incense table stood in the inner part of the hall and an incense burner, planted with two sticks of incense, was put on the table. Traditionally, the ancestors' image hung on the wall of the hall but after it was destroyed in the Cultural Revolution, the big red character for “double happiness” (\textit{xi 囍}) was pasted up instead. A cushion was also put on the floor. A \textit{lisheng} was invited to guide the ceremony. He gave the groom a quick training course before the ceremony began. As the auspicious moment came, the bride was led by the same woman who accompanied her earlier. Following the instruction of \textit{lisheng}, the bride and groom paid their respects to Heaven and Earth, then to ancestors, and finally bowed to each other. In this ritual, the groom kneeled on the cushion. He did this three times and performed twelve kowtows to Heaven and Earth and kneeled three times and kowtowed nine times to his ancestors. The bride did not kneel but bowed the same number of times. After the ceremony, the bride and groom bowed to each other, the rice screen was taken away, and the bride completed the rite of passage and became a member of her husband's family.

\textsuperscript{19} A similar rite can be found in the New Territories, Hong Kong. According to Rubie S. Watson, as the bride left her father's house, “the door was slammed shut behind her,” which she interprets as “a firm reminder that she could no longer call this household her own” (\textit{Inequality Among Brothers: Class and Kinship in South China} [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985], 122).
Funerals
Like weddings, in the past the funerals of ordinary Sibao people were conducted without the guidance of lisheng, largely because lisheng had to be well paid for their services, and not many people could afford it. Now, most funerals are performed by lisheng along with other ritual specialists such as Daoist priests or Buddhist monks. I was only able to observe one funeral, and even then not the entire ceremony, because family members of the deceased in Sibao, like people elsewhere, are usually reluctant to be bothered by an outsider who has no connection to the family. But with the help of lisheng and several of my informants, I was able to learn the general procedures of funerals and burial rites.

The funeral took place in Jiantou after the death of an elderly man on February 28, 2002. The next day (March 1), the family of the deceased sent one relative to Gechuan town, near Jiantou, to hire four Daoist priests. In the past, funerals were performed by monks from Buddhist temples in the Sibao region (see Chapter 9).20 After the Cultural

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20 In contrast, Daoism seems to have played important role in the funerals of southern Fujian from earlier periods. See Kenneth Dean, “Funerals in Fujian,” *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 4 (1988), 19–78.
Revolution, when religious activities were revived in Sibao, the influence of Daoist priests from Gechuan reached the area. They gradually gained control over many of the important and expansive rituals performed at jiao festivals and funerals, at least as far as the southern part of Sibao area is concerned. Two lisheng from Jiantou and several suona players from nearby villages were also hired to assist in the funeral. In addition, a paper spirit house (lingwu 精屋) and a set of paper appliances, to be sent to the deceased by burning so that he can use it in the underworld, were also ordered.

The hole in the ground for the coffin was dug the next day (March 2), following local customs, by a close relative of the deceased. On the same day, the remains of the deceased were placed in the coffin and afterward covered by several pieces of cloth and a quilt. Shortly before the coffin was carried to the grave (chubin 出殯), the cloth covering the corpse was removed and the coffin was nailed shut. As it was carried to the grave, paper money was scattered. In Sibao, the coffin is usually carried to the grave after Daoist priests and lisheng have finished performing most of the rites. But in the case I observed, it was done before the ritual specialists started to perform rituals because the government banned burials in the ground, and the family of the deceased had arranged for the burial to take place secretly and quickly, before the government discovered it. Therefore, in this case the funeral started only after the deceased had been buried.

While the Daoist priests were performing rituals in the “Place of the Tao” (daochang 道場), a ritual space constructed in the house of the deceased, on March 3, the lisheng were busy sorting gifts and composing sacrificial texts in a nearby house. Whenever a mourner came to attend the funeral, the lisheng would accept their gifts and arrange them in order. Many of the gifts were cloth to be used as “streamers” (fan 幡) that covered the coffin or were displayed in the hall of the house of the deceased. Lisheng were expected to write a paper slip and paste it on the cloth, explaining who gave this gift. Composing sacrificial texts was a more difficult job. Lisheng had to compose one sacrificial text for each of the mourners who wanted one. Of course, they could follow a text format in the manual of sacrificial rituals.

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21 The Daoist priests of Gechuan have their esoteric knowledge transmitted by a Daoist priest named Chen He, who lived in the Kangxi era (1662–1722). Chen He was trained at Longhu shan in Jiangxi and had his base on Mount Yuanfeng in northern Liancheng. See Hua Qinjin 華欽進, “Yuanfeng shan de lai xiangong jiqi daoshi” 员峰山的賴仙公及其道士 (Immortal Lai and Daoist Priests of Mount Yuanfeng), in Yang, ed., Tinguo fu de zongzu miaohui yu jingji, 407–408.
texts, but they still had to ensure that the form of address related to the relationship between each mourner and the deceased was correct. In the case I observed, the *lisheng* wrote over thirty texts of this kind and were exhausted when they finished. These texts were prepared for the rite of sacrifice to the deceased that took place early on the morning of March 4. The rite was performed in front of the paper spirit tablet of the dead. Because *lisheng* had to guide the sacrificers through the rite one by one, the rite lasted more than three hours. Only after the rite was completed did the Daoist priests, in the company of the family and relatives of the deceased, go to the gravesite to perform their rituals.22

In the rituals performed in Sibao, *lisheng* played roles of varied importance. In the rite of sacrifice to the dragon lantern, *lisheng* played an exclusive role, as no other ritual specialists were hired to perform this ritual. In the rite of sacrifice to Zougong described in the following chapters, *lisheng* also played a central role throughout the ritual process. *Lisheng* also played a critical role in weddings, guiding the most important part of the rite, *baitang*. But at funerals, Daoist priests played a similar, if not more important, role as the *lisheng*.

The last case, the funeral, is particularly interesting. I came to the conclusion that while the rites performed by Daoist priests focused on guiding the soul of the dead through the underworld, ensuring both the rebirth of the soul and its journey to the Western Paradise and transforming the dead into an ancestor, the rites of the *lisheng* focused on communications between the family of the deceased and the mourners and between the living and the dead. Thus, it appears from what I witnessed that *lisheng* specialized in the rites of sacrifice, that is, offering sacrifices to supernatural beings. However, they usually accomplish this not by their own performance but by guiding the people who, in their capacity as members of social groups involved (members of a lineage, members of a community, the son of the deceased), are more suitable for performing the rites. In other words, *lisheng* do not work as mediators between human beings and the supernatural. What they do is guide the procedures of the ceremony involved.

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22 Dean reported that in a burial procession in Zhangpu 漳浦, southern Fujian, the *lisheng* guided the rite of sacrifice to the dead at the graveyard. He first “directed the mourners to pour libations by turn in front of the offerings set before the coffin. Then he read a *jiwen*.” Next the son of the dead and his nephew “performed libations to the right of the grave for the Houtu.” This was not observed in the Sibao case (“Funerals in Fujian,” 35).
Kristopher Schipper and Kenneth Dean point out that Daoist ritual provides the unifying liturgical framework for popular religion, while Robert Hymes argues that in addition to the Daoist “bureaucratic model” there exists a “personal model” of communication between religious actors and the divinities. Lisheng have not provided a unifying framework for popular religion. Based on lisheng rituals, the personal model of spirituality does not exist. But they have provided formats as to how the rites should be performed, when incense should be burned, and when and how sacrifices should be presented, and thus provided a channel through which the villagers could communicate with the supernatural. If Daoist priests are both directors of and actors in rituals, lisheng are only directors.

Manuals of Sacrificial Texts

A Summary of Manuals of Sacrificial Texts

Like Daoist priests, lisheng rely on written sources. Almost every rite performed by lisheng is accompanied by the composing, reciting, and burning of written texts, which distinguishes them from ritual specialists such as spirit mediums. These texts—known as jiwen (sacrificial texts), with the manual of them called jiwenben—are usually used to praise the supernatural beings involved, inviting them to enjoy the offerings, and often begging them to intervene in human affairs on behalf of the group (family, lineage and its segments, community) for whom the lisheng are performing their services.

Appendix 3 summarizes the basic details of the fifty jiwenben that I collected in Sibao: where they were found, who used them, who produced them, when they were produced, and so forth. Most jiwenben are in manuscript form, and rarely (three out of fifty) were they printed. Most

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of them (about thirty-three) were produced in the late Qing and Republican periods. About one-third (seventeen) were produced in the 1980s and 1990s, but they were based on earlier text. Naturally, most of those who held or produced them were/are lisheng and regarded them as their most important ritual manuals. I found only one exception. Manual 0201 is held by a young primary school teacher, who keeps it because of its excellent calligraphy. But the person who produced the manual, the young man’s great-grandfather, was a national university student. Appendix 3 shows that most producers of jiwenben were degree or title holders, which confirmed what my informants reported, that only those who held official titles or imperial degrees were entitled to become lisheng. It also shows that since the beginning of the Republican period, more and more teachers became lisheng.

An analysis of jiwenben is in Appendix 4. Jiwenben usually have six parts: yizhu (ritual formats), tieshi (formula), jiwen (sacrificial essays), duilian (couplets), fuzhou (amulets and incarnations), and contracts. Jiwen comprise the most important part. The sacrificial essays can be further divided into three parts: those devoted to gods, ancestors, and the recently deceased. In the 50 jiwenben that I examined, containing 8,472 documents, the number of sacrificial essays exceeds 7,000—about
85 percent. Those used in funeral and burial rites number more than 4,000, more than the total of those devoted to gods and ancestors. The numbers should not lead us to the conclusion that funeral and burial rites were more important than the worship of local deities and ancestors, only that funeral rites comprised many different acts of social intercourse, thus requiring many *jiwen*.

_Yizhu_ comprise the ritual formats in which *lisheng* guided a chief sacrificer, who was in charge of offering sacrifices to supernatural beings through the rituals. *Tieshi* teach how to write invitation cards, gift lists, and so forth and are also an integral part of _jiwenben_. In Sibao as in other parts of China, whether for a wedding, a funeral, or _jiao_ communal offering ceremony, _duilian_ are indispensable, hence the high number of them in _jiwenben_. The inclusion of _fuzhou_ in _jiwenben_ came as a surprise—an issue addressed in the following section. The inclusion of contracts in manuals such as _jiwenben_ shows that _lisheng_ not only were ritual specialists but were involved in social and economic activities.

The _jiwenben_ mentioned above provide a variety of different types of information on the social, economic, and symbolic life of Sibao people in general and _lisheng_ in particular. They show that _lisheng_ were involved in various kinds of ceremonies. Thus Manual 0101, a _jiwenben_ from Wuge, includes sacrificial texts dedicated to Tianhou, Guandi, and Zougong, for local villagers to celebrate the birthdays of these deities, took their images to participate in a ritual procession, organized a _jiao_ communal offering ceremony, and invited the deities to cast out unwelcome figures such as worms, tigers, and plague (see below).

Included in the manual are also a number of sacrificial texts dedicated to ancestors, from the founding ancestor, arguably Zougong, to ancestors of the twenty-first generation. They were also used on different ritual occasions, from grave-sweeping rituals on Qingming to sacrificial rites at ancestral halls on the occasion of the winter solstice, and from commemorating when one kinsman received a degree or an imperial title to when a new genealogy of the lineage was offered.

The manual shows that _lisheng_ played a distinctive role in death rituals and include many sacrificial texts written for different stages in funeral rites. Thus there are texts for _yinhun_ 引魂 (calling back the soul), _chengfu_ 成服 (putting on mourning garments), _rulian_ 入殮 (placing the remains in the coffin), _fayin_ 發引 or _chubin_ 出殯 (carrying the coffin to the gravesite), _rucuo_ 入厝 (placing the coffin in a temporary building) or _rukuang_ 入壙 (placing the coffin in the ground), _chuling_ 除靈 or _shao jinglou_ 燒金樓 (eliminating or burning the spirit house), _zuoqi_ 做七 (offering
sacrifice on the seventh, fourteenth, and forty-ninth days after the funeral), _xiaoxiang_ 小祥 (sacrifice offered one year after the funeral), _daxiang_ 大祥 (sacrifice offered two years after the funeral), and _ruzi_ 入祠 (placing the spirit tablet in the ancestral hall). 

The inclusion of contract forms and community compacts documents in Manual 0401 testifies that _lisheng_ were present when a family was divided, a son adopted, a plot of land leased or sold, and when the _xiangyue_ organizations tried to regulate rural life.

Finally, the evidence from _jiwenben_ indicates the involvement of _lisheng_ in certain relatively unorthodox practices from the point of view of Neo-Confucianism. For example, they seemed to have composed talismans to prevent the encroachment of unwelcome Killer spirits (see below). This calls into question the interpretation of _lisheng_ as “orthodox Confucian-style” ritual specialists.

**Who Wrote the Texts?**

All the sacrificial texts collected in _jiwenben_ are written in classical Chinese. They are usually short and no more than one page. To give readers a sense of their contents and style, I have translated three texts used when _lisheng_ perform the rite of sacrifice respectively to a god, the ancestors, and a person who has recently died.

1. A Sacrificial Text Dedicated to Tianhou (Empress of Heaven, i.e., Mazu)

   O my goddess, [you are] the manifestation of Bodhisattva. [You are] the holiest and the most sincere. [You] control the four rivers (_sidu_)[28] and govern the hundred spirits. If the sea does not ripple, if the sea is calm and unruffled, if the ships navigate stably, they all rely on [your] merciful benevolence. [It] happens respectfully that [today is your] holy birthday. May [you] enjoy offerings eternally. Today the mid-spring falls due, and [we] present pure offerings reverently. [We] beg you, my goddess, protect [us], making the seas calm and the rivers clean. May thou enjoy this! 

2. A Sacrificial Text Dedicated to Ancestors, Used When a Descendant Obtained the Position of Government Student

   O my ancestors! You cultivated [your] virtue. You founded [our lineage] by your honesty. You saw the benefits of the _Book of Odes_ and the _Book of Songs_.

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26 Manual 0101 (Late Qing, Wuge), n.p.
27 Manual 0401 (Early Republican, Shangbao), n.p.
28 The four rivers are the Yangzi, Yellow, Huai, and Ji.
of Documents. Today [so and so] has been confirmed in [his] studies and grasped tablets over his desk, so that he has been admitted into the government school to study there. [This is all] because of your countenance. [I] beg that the virtue of you, my ancestors, will give aid secretly, [so that] he could “break the bough of cassia in the [Lunar] Palace of the Toad” [i.e., becoming a juren] in the eighth month. (If the person was preparing for a military examination, this sentence should be replaced by “so that he could be selected as a hawk on the wing (i.e., become a military juren) in the spring.”) My late ancestors, give aid to him secretly. If he could “tempt the flower of the Park” [i.e., become a jinshi] in the beginning of the spring (or in the fall in the case of military examination), happiness will be extended without boundaries and blessings will expand without limits. [Here] at this auspicious date [I] bring some poor sacrifices, presenting [them] to your respectful grave. [I] inform [you] with respect.30

3. A Sacrificial Text Dedicated to One’s Grandmother, Used at Her Funeral
Alas! My grandmother. You gave birth to my father and his brothers. The three of them met with calamity and were lost to death earlier. My father and uncle passed away successively and left degenerate (i.e., me) behind. I was only a child [at the time] and you, grandmother, regarded me with favor. [You] took care of me attentively. It is because of [your] sustenance that [I] made some achievements. Today, how could you harden your heart and leave your young grandson behind, so that only his form and shadow console each other and [he can only] stand alone desolately. Now it is time to escort the funeral to the grave. [I] wail [so much that I have difficulty] making a sound. [Here I] pour out three libations, mayest [thou] come down to enjoy them. [I] bow down and ask that this be accepted!31

These texts can be divided into three parts. They begin with praise of the merits of the supernatural beings to whom they are dedicated. The praise could be general (Text 2) or specific (Texts 1 and 3). What follows is a claim regarding the time and purpose of the rite performed (god’s birthday in Text 1, examinations and admittance into the government school in Text 2, and the moment to start escorting the coffin to the gravesite in Text 3). In the last part, supernatural beings are asked to enjoy the offerings or give protection to the addresser (a community in Text 1, a single person in Texts 2 and 3). The texts serve as the means of communication between the addressers and the addressed.

31 Manual 0401 (Shangbao, early Republican period), 42a–42b.
Who were the authors of these texts? Where did these texts come from? Were they written by local lisheng or copied from outside sources? These questions can be answered in part because some jiwenben record the names of those who wrote the relevant sacrificial texts. For example, Manual 0104 includes numerous essays written by Zou Lianhui (1839–1911) and his brother, Zou Liankui (1833–1890), in the late Qing. Lianhui, style name Pushan, and Liankui, style name Xingru, were both government students. Manual 0104 shows that Lianhui wrote sacrificial essays for Guandi in 1881 and 1886, while Liankui wrote essays for Guandi, Tianhou, and Zougong in 1864. Lianhui also wrote a series of essays for rituals performed to deal with the troubled years of the late Qing. He wrote an essay dedicated to Guandi, requesting the intervention of the god to expel worms that were destroying the pine trees of the mountain bordering his village in 1885. Six years later, he wrote an essay to invite the same god to expel the plague. He wrote another essay to invite local deities to eliminate demons that cut villagers’ hair and the tails of cocks in 1895. He also wrote an essay for a jiao communal offering organized to pray for rain in 1900 and was happy to make a note that it rained two days after the jiao.

But in most cases, jiwenben record neither the names of the authors nor when the texts were produced. Manual 0104, for example, records only that considerable texts were copied or adapted from an “old version” (jiuben). How then can we address the question of authorship? First, we should evaluate the nature of the three texts translated above. The first text is fairly general and can be used in different temples as long as the temples are dedicated to Tianhou. It need not have been written by a local lisheng but may have been copied from outside sources. The second text is less general since the addressee was specific. He should be a candidate for the degree of government student. This could have been either written by a local lisheng or copied from outside sources. The third one is very specific since the addressee should be a person who has been raised by his grandmother after his father’s death in his childhood. It is probable that this text was written by a local lisheng.

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32 The plural is used here because it is clear that the texts were written by a number of authors instead of a single author.
33 ZSZP (1947), 18/8a–11b.
34 Manual 0104 (Guangxu era, Wuge), n.p. This manual does not specify the date of the essay. But the date is given beside the same essay in Manual 0105 (1931, Wuge).
The problem of the authorship and circulation of the texts can be approached from different perspectives as well. We could compare different texts in Sibao since they are collected from different villages. We could compare the Sibao jiwenben with the books printed there, texts collected from other parts of Tingzhou, texts in official sources as well as the same type of texts from other parts of China if the latter were available. The comparison should not be focused on more specific texts for these texts tend to be written by local lisheng. For example, a large part of Manual 0101 is dedicated to the ancestors of the branch of Zou lineage in Wuge to which the previous owner of the jiwenben belonged. The ancestors range from the founding ancestor to an ancestor of the twenty-first generation. The forms and phrases of these texts may have been copied from outside sources, but it is unlikely that the texts themselves were copied from outside sources; rather, they were likely composed by local lisheng. These texts, of course, cannot be found in other jiwenben collected from other villages, let alone other parts of China. Therefore, when comparing one jiwenben with text from another jiwenben or other sources, we should focus on more general texts that could be used in different places such as Text I.

Although we have fifty jiwenben, a Sibao-wide comparison is almost impossible because of the uneven distribution of the jiwenben (I do not have jiwenben from many villages). But we can indeed make intravillage and intervillage comparisons.

First, I compare sacrificial texts collected in eleven jiwenben within Wuge, the village with the most jiwenben in Sibao and let us take the example of texts dedicated to Tianhou, Guandi, Shegong (社公 or sheji 社稷) and the orphan souls (li 厉 or wusi 無祀), whose popularity makes them especially suitable for comparison. A careful comparison shows that although none of the texts can be found in each of the ten jiwenben, the preceding examples illustrate overlap of texts between them—a number of texts can be found in no less than two jiwenben and thus many jiwenben are connected to other jiwenben in one way or another.

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35 Manual 0102 and 0111 are excluded from comparison because the former is so similar to Manual 0101, while I have only titles of the texts of the latter.

36 What follows is the breakdown of the comparison: (1) There are seven texts dedicated to Tianhou in Manual 0101, eight in Manual 0103, seven in Manual 0104, six in Manual 0105, three in Manual 0106, five in Manual 0107, sixteen in Manual 0108, eleven in Manual 0109, and three in Manual 0110. The only manual that does not include such text is Manual 0112. Two identical texts are found in Manual 0101, 0106, 0108, 0109, and
Second, I make an intervillage comparison between *jiwenben* from Wuge and those from Mawu (Manual 0201–0213) and Yangbei (Manual 0302–0305). The similarity between the *jiwenben* from Yangbei and Wuge is astonishing. As is indicated in Appendix 3, the four *jiwenben* I collected from Yangbei village are held by the *lisheng* Bao Lianglian and Bao Shixiong, who are related to Bao Liangdong, a late Qing and Republican *lisheng*. As a national university student, Liangdong had long been the only *lisheng* in Yangbei, a small village next to Shuangquan and near Wuge. Lianglian claims that his *jiwenben* are copied from Liangdong, who is a cousin. Shixiong is a grandson of Liangdong, and his father, Shengkai, was a *lisheng*, too. A comparison between the *jiwenben* of Lianglian and Shixiong shows that they may not have the same origins. Lianglian’s *jiwenben* include only five texts that also appear in those from Wuge, while those of Shixiong are similar to three *jiwenben* from Wuge. With regard to Shixiong’s two *jiwenben*—Manuals 0304 and 0305, the former has distinctive similarities to a manual from Wuge, Manual 0108, and the latter is similar to another two manuals from Wuge, Manuals 0104 and 0105, whatever the texts concern with essays dedicated to local deities and the death. Manual 0305 even copies the

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0110. Five identical texts are found in Manual 0101, 0108, and 0109. Two are found in Manual 0103, 0108, and 0109. One is found in Manual in Manual 0102, 0108, and 0109, and another one is found in Manual 0103, 0106, and 0110. Five are found in Manual 0104 and 0105. Two are found in Manual 0103 and 0108. One is found in 0108 and 0109.

(2) There are four texts dedicated to Guandi in Manual 0101, nineteen in Manual 0103, nine in Manual 0104, eight in Manual 0105, two in Manual 0106, seventeen in Manual 0107, sixteen in Manual 0108, seven in Manual 0109, and two in Manual 0110 and 0112. Two identical texts are found in Manual 0101, 0103, 0106, 0108, 0109, and 0110. Two are found in Manual 0103, 0107, 0108, and 0112. Eight are found in Manual 0103, 0107, and 0108. Two is found in Manual 0101, 0108, and 0109. Six are found in Manual 0103 and 0107. Another six are found in Manual 0104 and 0105. (3) Fewer texts are dedicated to Shegong. There are three texts to Shegong in Manual 0101, four in Manual 0103, two in Manual 0104, one in both Manual 0105 and 0106, seven in Manual 0107, four in both Manual 0108 and 0109, and one in both Manual 0110 and 0112. One identical text is found in Manual 0101, 0103, 0106, 0108, 0109, and 0110. One is found in Manual 0103, 0104, 0107, 0108, and 0112. One is found in Manual 0101, 0108, and 0109, Manual 0103, 0107, and 0108, and Manual 0103, 0108, and 0109. Another one is found in Manual 0101 and 0109 as well as Manual 0104 and 0105. (4) We have the least texts for the orphan souls. There are two in Manual 0101, one in Manual 0103, three in Manual 0107, one in Manual 0108, and four in Manual 0109. Manual 0104, 0105, 0106, 0110, and 0112 do not have such text. Two identical texts are found in Manual 0101, 0107, and 0109. One is found in Manual 0103 and 0108.

37 Manual 0302 includes two texts, dedicated to Shegong and orphan souls respectively, that also appear in Manual 0101 and 0103; Manual 0303 includes three texts, dedicated to Guandi and Tianhou, that also appear in the same manuals from Wuge.
word *taizu* 太祖 (founding ancestor) before Zougong without change. This is noteworthy because, as mentioned earlier, Zougong is regarded as the founding ancestor of the Zous, and has no kinship connection to the Baos of Yangbei. Furthermore, the same *jiwenben* includes a series of sacrificial essays dedicated to Guandi and Tianhou. Many of them turn out to have been written by Lianhui and Liankui, two important literati from Wuge, during the late Qing. Clearly, the two *jiwenben* of Shixiong must have based on those from Wuge.

In contrast, the *jiwenben* from Mawu and those from Wuge show much less similarity. The twelve *jiwenben* I collected from Mawu can be divided into six groups, held by six *lisheng*. Regarding texts dedicated to the four supernatural beings, more than half (seven) of those from Mawu have no text that is identical to those in *jiwenben* from Wuge. Among those with identical texts, Manual 0205 has four (dedicated to Tianhou, Guandi, Shegong, and orphan souls and identical to Manual 0101, 0103, and 0109), Manual 0207 has three (dedicated to Tianhou, Guandi, and orphan souls and identical to Manual 0101 and 0103), and Manual 0204, 0206, and 0209 have only one (two dedicated to orphan souls, one to Tianhou, and all identical to Manual 0101). Although considerable exchange did take place between *jiwenben* from different villages, it was far from universal. The borrowing of texts, when it occurred, is usually limited.

Third, it would be interesting to compare the Sibao *jiwenben* with ritual books published or circulated in the area, but unfortunately only three complete ritual books or books with at least a section on ritual are available. Nonetheless, a tentative comparison shows a few texts may have been copied from household encyclopedias and guides to daily rituals. For example, the schedule for funerals, “*fusang chongsang sansang ri bianlan*” 伏喪重喪三喪日便覽 (A Brief Guide to Dates for the [First] Funeral, Second Funeral, and Third Funeral Services) and the way to hold funerals, “*Chusang chuzang li chongsang fa*” 初喪出葬禮重喪法 (The Rites for the First Funeral Service and Burial and the Way of the Second Funeral Service), found in Manual 0401 is also in *Huizuan jiali tiewshi jiyyao* 匯纂家禮帖式輯要 (Collection of Essential Formularies for Family Rituals), a woodblock-print book found in Sibao. In addition,

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the handbook of address mentioned in Chapter 3 is largely the same as the chapters on forms of address in *Huizuan jiali teishi jiyao* and *Choushi jinnang xubian*. The editions of *Choushi jinnang* and *Wanbao quanshu* available each include some sacrificial texts, dedicated principally to the deceased at funerals, but none of these texts appears in *jiwenben*. In sum, the relationship between *jiwenben* and ritual handbooks published in Sibao is usually limited and indirect.

A comparison between Sibao texts and official sources is possible because sacrificial texts dedicated to gods of the official religion are usually included in local gazetteers and other sources. Several gods worshiped in Sibao were listed in the *sidian* (register of sacrifices) of the official religion: Wenchang dijun, Guandi, Tianhou, the God of the Soil and Grain, and the orphan souls. At least one sacrificial text was dedicated to each of them, and all have texts included in the official sources. Manual 0101, Manual 0103, and Manual 0401 each has one text dedicated to Wenchang dijun. They are different from each other and from the one included in the *Changting County Gazetteer*. Two texts included in the local gazetteer were dedicated to Guandi and another one to his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. The two texts dedicated to Guandi are not found in Sibao *jiwenben*. But the one to his three ancestors is found in Manual 0401 without any change and in Manual 0103 with only a few changes. In the local gazetteer, one text is dedicated to Tianhou and another one dedicated to her parents. Because Sibao had no cult of Tianhou’s parents, no texts are dedicated to them. But the one dedicated to Tianhou, Text 1 translated above, is in Manual 0101 unchanged. The texts dedicated to the God of the Soil and Grain and the orphan souls are in the *Hongwu lizhi* and the *Da Ming Huidian*. In the *Hongwu lizhi*, two texts are dedicated to the God of the Soil and Grain and the orphan souls are in the

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41 *Huitu zenghu zheng xu wanbao quanshu*, 5/6b–7a, 8a–b. The two texts are dedicated to the ancestor at the grave-sweeping rite and a group of deities for a river crossing. Earlier editions of *Wanbao quanshu* include many more texts of a similar nature. See Wu Huifang 吳蕙芳, *Wanbao quanshu: Ming-Qing shiqi de minjian shenghuo shilu* 萬寶全書: 明清時期的民間生活實錄 (Wanbao quanshu: A Veritable Record of Folk Life in the Ming and Qing Periods) (Taipei: Zhengzhi daxue lishi xi, 2001), 410–416.


43 *CTXZ* (1879), 12/37a–37b; Manual 0101, n.p.
collected in Sibao jiwenben. There are also two texts dedicated to the orphan souls in the *Hongwu lizhi*—one for the rite of sacrifice performed at the level of county and another for the rite at the level of subcanton. They are relatively long compared with the texts dedicated to the orphan souls in *jiwenben*. This comparison indicates that the borrowing of texts also occurred between Sibao *jiwenben* and official sources. It is likely that Sibao *lisheng* borrowed the texts from official sources. This also partly explains the existence of identical texts in several Sibao *jiwenben*—which may have happened when the texts were copied from the same original source.

Caution is in order here. To say that the ritual corpus of *lisheng* was greatly influenced by the official religion does not mean that the latter was the only source of influence. On the contrary, given the active presence of a variety of local and regional ritual traditions, we might expect that the liturgical texts of *lisheng* would leave some evidence of the influence from these traditions. Two groups of texts in *jiwenben* deserve special attention: *fuzhou* and a group of texts with close connection to Daoist rituals.

The first group is *fuzhou* (amulets and incarnations), which are not included in every *jiwenben*. Five out of the fifty *jiwenben* I examined include at least one example.

The *jiwenben* with the most *fuzhou*—twelve—is in Jiangfang, a village in northern Sibao (Manual 0505), copied in 1920s–1930s. The person who copied this text, Jiang Ruigong 江瑞恭, called Qingbo 清波, was a primary school teacher in the Republican period. My informant, also a *lisheng*, told me that he was one of the most important *lisheng* in the area in his time. The amulets in this *jiwenben* were used for weddings and were pasted on the door of the bridegroom’s bed chamber, the main gate, the kitchen door, the door of sedan chair, main hall, the pillar of the left wing, and the wedding bed and brought by the bride and bridegroom.

Another *jiwenben* with several amulets is from Jiantou, a village in southern Sibao (Manual 0405), produced in the late twentieth century by its present holder, also a *lisheng*. This *jiwenben* includes eight amulets, used at weddings and pasted on the main gate, the door of bridegroom’s bedchamber, and the kitchen and brought by both the bride and

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44 *Hongwu lizhi*, 489–490, 500. See also *Da Ming huidian*, 94/7b–8a, 17b–18a.
45 *Hongwu lizhi*, 496–497, 500–502. See also *Da Ming huidian*, 94/12a–14b, 18b–19a.
the groom. Though used in similar rituals, they are different from those included in the *jiwenben* of Jiangfang.

Manual 0401 is from Shangbao, a village to the east of Jiantou. Its present holder, a *lisheng*, said that it was produced in the early Republican period by a *jiansheng/licheng*. The two amulets in this manual are prepared for weddings and the rite of earth-opening (*dongtu* 動土) performed to appease earth spirits when the foundation is laid. The other two *jiwenben* each include one amulet. Manual 0110, produced in the 1980s and 1990s in Wuge, contains an amulet used to enshrine Taisui xingjun 太歲星君, a set of gods in charge of human affairs in a twelve-year cycle. Manual 0205, produced in the 1990s by a primary school teacher who was also a *lisheng*, comprises an amulet used to expel white ants (*qu baiyi fu* 驅白蟻符).

Given the absence of relevant sources from other ritual traditions, it is very difficult to determine the origin of these amulets. We can only glean their origin from the gods mentioned in them. For example, several amulets in Manuals 0505 and 0405 mention the half-Buddhist and half-Daoist god Pu’an 普庵, also mentioned in the amulet for the rite of earth-opening included in Manual 0401. Pu’an is one of the most important gods of the Pu’an school of Buddhism. Recent studies by John Lagerwey and Tam Wai Lun show that this school has a strong presence in, among other areas, northwestern Fujian, including northern Tingzhou.46 So it is not surprising village rituals in Sibao, which is located at roughly the south end of northern Tingzhou, show influences of the tradition. Other amulets are more difficult to explain. The *qu baiyi fu* mentions the goddess Xuannü xianniang 玄女仙娘 (Profound Lady the Immortal Mother) and Masters Zeng and Liao 曾廖先師. The amulets in Manual 0505 mention Marshal Gao 高元帥, Northern Emperor 北帝, Jiutian xuannü 九天玄女 (Profound Lady of the Ninth Heaven), and Buddha. They seem to come from several ritual traditions rather than from a single one.

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The relationship between another group of texts and Daoist ritual tradition is much clearer. Many *jiwenben* have a group of texts with a greater connection to Daoist liturgies than to imperial sacrifices. For example, Manual 0401 includes thirteen sacrificial texts for a variety of different *jiao* and exorcist rites while Manual 0304 has sixteen such texts. The titles of the essays indicate that they are prepared for several types of rituals, in particular *jiao* communal offerings. These *jiao* aim to expel plague, undesirable worms, wild animals (such as tigers), pray for and show gratitude for rain, pacify earth spirits (*anlong* 安龍), and so forth. Although rites such as the expelling of white animals are not unfamiliar in imperial sacrifices, the *jiao* indicated in the titles are obviously alien to imperial sacrifices and gentry culture. We have to thus turn to local ritual traditions of this area to examine their connection to rituals performed by *lisheng*.

During my fieldwork in Sibao, I witnessed several *jiao* communal offering ceremonies, performed by Daoist priests from Gechuan. The subsequent frequent contact with them allowed me access to two groups of Daoist priests from this village who belong to the Zhengyi 正一 School of Daoist religion. A comparison between the sacrificial texts mentioned above and their key ritual texts shows that they may have been closely related. One of their ritual texts is *Bangwen* 榜文 ([Collected] Placards), which includes various essays used in different kinds of rituals. Because they clearly express the aim of each ritual, they are also called *jiaoyi* 醮意 (literally, “meaning of the *jiao*”). Their function is therefore similar to the *jiwen* of *lisheng*.

The *Bangwen* discussed below was produced in the Republican period by a Daoist priest named Chen Weisheng 陳維聲, the elder brother of its present holder, Chen Ruisheng 陳瑞聲, a Daoist priest who frequently provides ritual services at funerals and *jiao* ceremonies for Sibao villagers. The book comprises more than a hundred essays, such as *biaowen* 表文 (memorials), *bang* 榜 (placards), and *yi* 意 (explications). The essays whose titles include with the character *yi* are most relevant to our discussion here because they show clearly which rituals the priests performed and what their purposes are. These essays are prepared for different rituals: the *chan* 懺 repentance rituals for expelling undesirable elements in buildings, the rite to protect sprouts, crops, and trees and expel worms,

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47 The rite of *anlong* is performed to consecrate a space and expel undesirable elements.

48 For example, Tang essayist and philosopher Han Yù 韓愈 (768–824) wrote a famous essay to expel crocodiles during his service in the post of prefect of Chaozhou 潮州.
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the rite to pray for and show gratitude for rain, the rite to protect children from smallpox, the rite to celebrate the birthday of local deities, the rite to expel plagues, the rite to expel tigers, the rite to pray for sons, the rite to celebrate the completion of genealogy compilation, and so forth. Compare this list to those mentioned above. The similarities between them are striking, but how can they be explained?

Is it possible that lisheng performed the rites of expelling tigers or worms by themselves? My informant in Wuge, one of the most famous lisheng in Sibao area, claims that when trees were being attacked by worms, lisheng rather than Daoist priests would be invited to perform the rite of expelling worms. He still remembers that a teacher in the village wrote a sacrificial essay and performed this rite before the altars of Shegong and Bogong, two low-ranking gods said to guard against these worms. The ritual format was the same as the one described above. He believes that the sacrificial essay prepared for the tiger-expelling rite was used in the similar rite, though he has never seen or heard of any lisheng who performed the rite personally.

Another lisheng, an elderly man from Jiangfang, provides similar information. His primary school teacher, Jiang Xicai 江錫材, was famous for his expertise in writing sacrificial essays. He wrote essays to pray for rain in times of drought and those to expel the plague in times of plague as well as those for expelling worms.

Once a teacher in the village planned to construct a grave and hired a fengshui master to find a location. The master did so, but it turned out that the site has been used before long ago and, according to local custom, was not suitable for burial. However, the work went on. Thereafter the bricklayer who constructed the grave soon fell ill. He asked Xicai wrote a sacrificial essay for him. Xicai did so, explaining that the bricklayer was only a hired laborer, and the fengshui master was the one at fault. After the essay was burned, the bricklayer recovered, but before long the fengshui master died. This story may not have been true, but it suggests that it was not surprising for lisheng to performed the rites of, say, worm-expelling and exorcism.

However, the frequent presence of the word jiao in the titles shows that the essays were often written for jiao ceremonies rather than other

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49 According to Qingliu County Gazetteer (Qingliu xianzhi, Republican edition), Jiang Xicai was a graduate of Qingliu fazheng zizhi yanjiusuo 清流法政自治研究所 (Institute for Law and Politics and Self Government of Qingliu) and participated in the compilation of a county gazetteer. See QLXZ (1946), juan shou, 15.
rites. If that is the case, *lisheng* may have frequently performed rituals on the same occasion, as confirmed by my fieldwork. In funerals as in *jiao* ceremonies, *lisheng* and Daoist priests perform their own rituals in the same ritual event. Nowadays the *lisheng* in Sibao no longer participate in *jiao* ceremonies and have not done so for quite some time (predating the era of communism), for reasons they cannot explain, so their recollections are unreliable. But *lisheng* continue to participate in *jiao* ceremonies in other parts of Liancheng, as indicated in my interviews with Daoist priests. For example, a tiger-expelling *jiao* ceremony is performed in a mountainous village in Gutian 姑田 township in northern Liancheng in the tenth or eleventh month every year and lasts two days and three nights. During the ceremony, Daoist priests invite a group of Daoist deities and local gods, recite *Sanyuan zunjing* 三元尊經 (*Reverend Scripture for Three Yuan*) and a local scripture called *Dacheng jing* 大乘經 (*Scripture of Great Vehicle*),50 present offerings to the gods as well as orphan souls, and, finally, send the gods away. The ritual performed by *lisheng* appears in the rite of *shangxiang* 上香 (*offering incense*) and is performed by six *lisheng* and three chief sacrifiers. It appears that *lisheng* rituals are not part of a different ritual tradition but an integral part of Daoist liturgies.

The inclusion of the two groups of texts in *jiwenben*, therefore, may have been the result of long interaction and cooperation between *lisheng* and other local ritual specialists, especially Daoist priests. Although they no longer participate in the *jiao* ceremony performed by Daoist priests in Sibao, the *lisheng* still perform rituals side by side with Daoist priests at funerals. Furthermore, *lisheng* still work with Daoist priests in *jiao* ceremonies in other parts of Tingzhou. The close relationship may have provided an important opportunity for *lisheng* to familiarize themselves with Daoist rituals. However, much work remains to be done before we can attain a full understanding of interactions between *lisheng* and other local and regional ritual traditions, in particular Daoism.

In his recent book, David Johnson investigates the *sai* festivals in southeastern Shanxi in the late imperial period.51 The ceremonies in those festivals were performed by *yinyang* masters, who, like their Sibao counterparts, had a tradition of composing and transmitting sacrificial texts.

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50 This text is not a Buddhist sutra. Rather, it is a scripture produced specifically for a local god in Liancheng.
51 I refer to Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice*, but see also idem, “‘Confucian’ Elements in the Great Temple Festivals of Southeastern Shanxi in Late Imperial Times.”
Johnson raises several interesting questions concerning these ritual specialists, the rituals they performed, and their liturgical texts. Where did the liturgies used by the zhuli come from? Why were the local forms not displaced by either Buddhist or Daoist ones? How were the Shanxi rituals different from rituals performed in South China, for example jiao?

Johnson's answer to the first question is that a given sai liturgy may have been created by a yinyang master based on his own reading and experience. He explains,

there was something like a basic model or template of state-sponsored sacrifice that could have been spread to the countryside by officially designed public rituals like the Community Compact, which was performed before an audience of villagers, or by school rituals like the sacrifice to Confucius that would have familiar to all former government students, or by official sacrifices to Guan Yu that were witnessed many times by all officials. And local ritual specialists could have created their own liturgies on the basis of Zhu Xi's Family Rituals or other orthodox texts, as we have seen in the case of the Sibao ritual manuals.52

The discussion of lisheng, their liturgical tradition, and their texts in this chapter supports Johnson's conclusions. The position of lisheng in Sibao used to be available principally to the holders of imperial degrees and titles from whom one might expect relatively more loyalty to orthodoxy than other social groups. The rituals performed under their guidance were more or less similar in structure to those performed in the official religion, which suggests that lisheng may have adapted their liturgical format from, as Johnson points out, the official religion in which they had probably participated or Neo-Confucian ritual texts, such as Zhu Xi's Family Rituals (or its various simplified versions). The similarities between the sacrificial texts found in Sibao and those included in official sources lead to the same conclusions.

Throughout his book, Johnson posits the sai sacrifice was a regional ritual tradition that evolved out of the interaction between masters of ceremonial and local communities for whom they provided ritual services. “This sacrificial tradition,” he writes, “seems to have evolved pretty much independently of China’s sacerdotal religions, Daoism and Buddhism, just as the ritual opera tradition developed outside the mainstream of Chinese opera.” Sai, although “the closest analogue in the universe of Chinese

52 Johnson, Spectacle and Sacrifice, 312.
ritual” to jiao, turns out to be very different. The ritual texts that he references appear to support this claim as they do not mention amulets, incantations, or any documents related to jiao. But in view of the strong presence of Daoism in southeastern Shanxi, Johnson seems to downplay the influence of Daoism. Even if he does not, the question remains: Why are Daoist elements missing from the rituals? Was it the result of Neo-Confucian purges of Daoist elements in this part of China? Or was it because yinyang masters were able to defeat Daoist priests in a struggle for dominance of the local religious scene? Whatever the reasons, discussion of these issues should clarify and buttress Johnson’s conclusion.

If we accept Johnson’s argument about the absence of any influence from the sacerdotal religions, then the ritual tradition of the lisheng of Sibao seems to differ from that of the yinyang masters of southern Shanxi in an important way. When they produced their own ritual corpus, the lisheng of Sibao not only relied heavily on officially approved texts but also drew on other, less orthodox ritual traditions. They must have borrowed a great deal from Daoist priests, as shown by the existence of many amulets and incantations and the close similarities between some of the lisheng texts and those of Daoist priests. The frequent and close interaction between these two groups of ritual specialists encouraged the sharing of ritual knowledge. In this sense, lisheng functioned as mediators not only between official and gentry culture and village world but also between Confucian rituals and the rituals of other traditions, in particular those of the Daoism.

This close interaction suggests that, rather than looking for elements of one religious or ritual tradition identified as “Confucian” or “Daoist,” it is
more fruitful to examine how Confucian ritual elements were appropriated by local cultural elites and how they were incorporated into local ritual traditions and to study the “dialogues” between different religious or ritual traditions at the village level. It is in the course of these dialogues with and in contrast to other traditions that some ritual elements came to be labeled “Confucian.” The dialogues took place at multiple sites and as part of different sociocultural processes, three of which are investigated in some depth in the following chapters: lineage building, community compacts, and local temple networks.
PART THREE

LINEAGE, RITUAL, AND CORPORATE ESTATES
In the summer of 2001, my host told me that a sacrificial rite would be performed in Shangbao on August 12 at the Zougong Temple for the lineage’s founding ancestor (shizu 始祖 or kaijizu 開基祖) Zougong, or Lord of Zou. An old image of Zougong made of wood unfortunately had been destroyed in a fire by a vagabond several months earlier, during the Lunar New Year. Shortly after the fire, money was collected from members of the three Sibao lineages that regard Zougong as their ancestor, the Zous of Wuge, Shuangquan, and Shangbao, and the donations were paid to carve a new image of Zougong. A young carver was hired from Changting to carve the image, which he finished several days before I arrived.

The first rite that I witnessed when I arrived in Sibao was the rite of dotting the eyes and animating the statue (kai guang) of the image, which was performed by the carver himself at 11:00 p.m., August 11, on the bank of the nearby “water exit” 水口 (shuikou), a strategic geomantic site located downstream on the river that runs through the village. The rite lasted half an hour. After the rite, the image was carried to the Zougong Temple. There the image of Zougong was placed where the former one had been. This was followed by the slaughtering of a pig in the temple. Around 3:00 a.m., August 12, the pig’s head and other offerings, including fish, dry squid, chicken, rice cakes, and wine, were prepared and brought to the temple. They were laid out on the incense table in order.

The sacrificial rite began at 3:50 a.m. The three lineages performed the rite one by one: first came the Zous of Wuge, then that of Shangbao, and lastly that of Shuangquan. This arrangement was based on the order of seniority according to the respective ages of their founding ancestors, who are believed to be Zougong’s three sons. The rite was performed under the guidance of four lisheng, appointed from among members of major branches of the respective lineages, which each had two lisheng. The rite was performed according to the ritual format described in Chapter 4. Throughout the ritual, the lisheng called out the ritual acts in Mandarin with a strong Sibao accent. So did the duzan when he recited the sacrificial text. He recited the text slowly but loudly. During the rite, a hired musical troupe consisting of ten players played traditional music at the
prompting of the *lisheng*. At the end of the rite, the text was put into a burner in front of the temple and burned and then a libation was poured out in front of the burner. In all, rite lasted about half an hour.

A similar ritual, the offering of a sacrifice to ancestors, has been performed by every lineage in Sibao at ancestors’ graves and ancestral halls every year. The importance of this ritual is testified to by the numerous sacrificial essays dedicated to ancestors. If the statistics in Appendix 4 can be believed, these essays comprise 19 percent of the fifty *jiwenben*, second to the proportion dedicated to the deceased. For a villager living in late imperial Wuge, the essays suggested a series of ancestral rites performed in different places and organized by different agnatic groupings. The sacrifices to Zougong, for example, usually took place in the Zougong Temple and involved not only all the Zous in Wuge but also all the Zous in Shuangquan and Shangbao. Similarly, the sacrifices to Zou Qingfu 鄒慶甫, the seventh-generation ancestor of the Zous in Wuge, could take place either in his ancestral hall or at his grave and involved not only all the members of the Upper Shrine branch (*Shangci* 上祠), offspring of Qingfu’s first son, Dingfu 定敷, but also those of the Lower Shrine branch (*Xiaci* 下祠), offspring of Qingfu’s second son, Yesheng 葉勝. The size of the social groupings involved decreased the further one got from the distant ancestors of the villager.¹

Every year in the spring and the fall, members of these groups, or some of them, went to the ancestral halls or graves and, often under the direction of *lisheng*, presented offerings to their ancestors. It was for these ritual occasions that the sacrificial essays were composed, and one of the most important functions of *lisheng* was to guide the performance of these ceremonies. Therefore, the history of the sacrificial essays is essentially related to the history of ancestral rites in Sibao. The question that thus arises is when and how these rituals were introduced to Sibao. When did Sibao residents start to worship their distant ancestors? When did they start to erect ornate ancestral halls and construct spectacular graves? When did they compile genealogies that included their distant ancestors? What happened in the course of this encounter between ancestral worship and village rituals? What were the consequences of the introduction? To answer these questions, we need first to reconstruct the general developmental phases of Sibao lineages by case studies of the Mas of Mawu, the Zous of

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Wuge, and the Yans of Yanwu, as well as a brief description of the Xies of Liukeng.

**Lineage Building**

*The Mas of Mawu*

This story starts in the mid-fifteenth century. In 1439, Ma Hetu 馬河圖, a member of the gentry in Mawu, wrote a preface to the genealogy that he had just finished compiling. The genealogy is no longer extant. In the first preface to the first genealogy in Sibao, which survives, he emphasizes the importance of genealogy. “The root of a human being is his ancestor.” However, “after many generations,” he claims, “the source and the stream become more and more distant.” Therefore, “if a genealogy is not compiled, how is it possible to distinguish one generation from another, to learn [one’s] origin, and to differentiate the close from the distant?” Hetu then mentions that he had “long searched and learned that the source [of our lineage] dated back to Zhou 周, an investigating censor in the Tang.” However, because the relationship between Zhou and his ancestor in Mawu was difficult to establish, the genealogy that he compiled began with the founding ancestor Qilang 七郎 (see below).

After introducing his ancestors, Hetu goes on to tell us that he compiled the genealogy for this “ancient family and great clan,” that is, Hetu’s own lineage, after he became a tribute student. The project was meant to finish what his father never completed. A genealogy is compiled for two reasons. On the one hand, “it meant to let future descendants know that even if the wearing of mourning dress ends, affection for them will not end and they should console one another in times of sorrow and celebrate together in times of happiness.” On the other hand, through consulting the genealogy “the seniors and the juniors will not get confused, and the

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2 When mentioning a kinship group, whether a lineage, a descent group, or one of its branches, I add an “s” to the surname of this group, i.e., “Mas” or “Zous.” This is meant to deal with the problem of scanty evidence and difficulty of determining whether a kinship group was an agnate group, a descent group, or a lineage as defined by Patricia Buckley Ebrey and James L. Watson, in Ebrey and Watson, *Introduction,* in idem, eds., *Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China, 1000–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 5. See also James L. Watson, “Chinese Kinship Reconsidered: Anthropological Perspectives on Historical Research,” *China Quarterly,* no. 92 (1982), 586–622.

3 Wanshou was a previous name of Mawu village, which was also known as Zhegui 折桂 (Breaking a bough of cassias).
close and the distant will be distinguished,” so “the heart of revering the ancestors and respecting the descent line and the meaning of the root of a tree and the source of a stream will be manifested in the Mas.”

Ma Hetu was a prefectural government student who passed the examination for tribute students in 1438 and was appointed as prefect of Cizhou Subprefecture in Henan. In addition to writing his own preface, he also solicited prefaces from two education officials at the national university. His biography reports that after retiring from the government position, he drafted “ancestral hall regulations” (cigui 祠規) and that “at an auspicious time every month, [he] gathered lineage members and taught [them] the regulations,” therefore, “the customs of [our] community/lineage [xiangzu 鄉族] did not demoralized.”

Judging from the preface, the genealogy included basic information on the ancestors: name, birth year, birth order, wives, year of death, and location of their grave. Hetu wrote a biographical note, also no longer extant, for each of his ancestors from his great-great-grandfather down to his father. In addition, Hetu erected an ancestral hall beside the Zougong Temple in Mawu after he became a tribute student. It is reported that the tablets of the founding ancestor and Hetu’s own direct ancestors as well as some ancestors who had lived between the founding ancestor and the sixth-generation ancestors (shizu) were placed within the hall.

If the genealogies of the Mas are to be believed, the settlement history of the Mas in Mawu dated back to a Southern Song ancestor known as Qilang (G1) (see Figure 5.1). It is said that Qilang moved to Mawu from a village in southern Ninghua. Before he settled in the village, people with other last names such as Lai 賴 and Peng 彭 were already settled in the village. In the early history of the Mas, the sixth generation is of utmost importance. Of the three sons of the fifth generation ancestor, Nianyilang 念一郎, Qianwulang 千五郎 and Qianqilang 千七郎 (alias Jinqing 晋卿) became the founding ancestors of two major branches in Mawu, Lower Shrine and Upper Shrine, respectively.

Ma Hetu’s great-great-grandfather, Qianqilang lived in the Song-Yuan transition and appeared to achieve some prominence. He went to North

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5 Ibid., 1/31b.
6 Ibid., 1/31a.
7 Ibid., 1/49a. This ancestral hall was moved to its recent location, that is, next to the ancestral hall of the Lower Shrine branch, in 1643.
The creation of a lineage society


Fig. 5.1  Simplified genealogy of the Mas of Mawu.
China and joined the troops garrisoned in Kaifeng Prefecture and was promoted to general of military strategy (wulue jiangjun 武略將軍). After retiring, he returned to Mawu and appears to have donated funds to build two bridges in the village. The available evidence does not indicate that Hetu's other ancestors achieved social standing, but the wealth Qianqilang amassed in his life must have benefited his offspring and marked them off from ordinary villagers. Hetu was the first member who became an outstanding official in his lineage. Therefore, when Hetu compiled the genealogy, his descent group was not yet an “ancient family and great clan,” as Hetu’s brother claimed, but had just begun its rise.

The metaphors used in Hetu’s preface were familiar to those who lived in the Ming period. “The root of a tree” and “the source of a stream,” the two metaphors used in the text, had been employed in many other similar texts: the preface and postscript of a genealogy. They were used to invoke respect toward one’s early ancestors, whom one hardly knew or remembered. By shifting attention from immediate ancestors to early ancestors, the preface attempted to create a sense of “community” out of the descendants of the early ancestors or, more precisely, the founding ancestor. Members of this community, it was said, should go beyond the limits of the five mourning ranks (wufu 五服). This was not a homogeneous community, but rather one with distinctions based on seniority (both in terms of age and social status) and social distance of kinship relations.

Ma Hetu’s project of lineage building anticipated a series of similar activities in Sibao from the mid-Ming through the late Qing. Fifty years later, another ancestral hall was established at the suggestion of Ma Xun, an outstanding Mawu native. Ma Xun (1421–1496) was in the generation after Ma Hetu. Unlike Hetu, he belonged to the Lower Shrine branch, that is, the branch starting from Qianwulang (G6). Ma Xun’s father, Renmin 任敏 (1378–1444), was a subcanton head (lizhang 里長). His biography reports that at the time he was appointed to that position, he “equalized the corvée labor, curbed the violent and assisted the weak, and quite a few people benefited from his services.”

As a son of a subcanton head, Ma Xun probably had more opportunity to receive a good education than his fellow villagers. He became a jinshi in 1445 at the age of twenty-four. He was first appointed as secretary

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8 The title is difficult to confirm. Hucker’s dictionary does not mention the title.
9 Ibid., 1/31b.
10 Ibid., 5 ji, 2.
(zhushi 主事) of the Ministry of Revenue. Several years later, he became the ministry's director (langzhong 郎中) and was sent to Xuanfu (present-day Xuanhua 县, Hebei) to supervise the logistics of the troops garrisoned there, which he did skillfully, reducing transportation costs by one-third. Sixteen years after he began working in the Ministry of Revenue, Ma Xun was promoted to the position of administration vice commissioner (canzheng 參政) of Sichuan Province.

Ma Xun's later promotions were closely related to military actions in the mid-Ming. After he became the administration vice commissioner, a rebellion, called the Bozhou 播州 Rebellion, broke out in Sichuan, and the provincial government was concerned because the government granaries were almost empty. As soon as Ma Xun arrived, he collected a large amount of grain in Sichuan. Ma Xun's actions in building up the rice supplies using government funds helped put down the rebellion, and because of his outstanding service, he was promoted to the position of right provincial administration commissioner (you buzhengshi 右布政使).

The last and most important appointment in Ma Xun’s career was as right vice censor-in-chief (you fu duyushi 右副都御史), in which he was charged with supervising the Huguang 湖廣 region (Hubei and Hunan). During his seven-year term of office, Ma Xun is reported to have given relief to the hungry refugees from Guanzhong in northwestern Hubei and to have received approval to reduce taxes in a region of Hunan suffering from natural disasters. Ma Xun retired at sixty-six with the title of left censor-in-chief (zuo duyushi).11

When the ancestral hall of the Lower Shrine branch was built, Ma Xun was still in Huguang. He appointed his sons to supervise its construction. Afterward, he wrote an essay to explain why he had done so, an essay that is notable for several reasons. First, although the genealogy of the Mas claims that Ma Xun was the eleventh-generation descendant of the founding ancestor, Qilang, he did not include Qilang in the ancestral hall. Included in the hall were the tablets of his great-great-grandfather and his great-grandfather and his three brothers. This means that the kinship organization, which Ma Xun called a “lineage” (zu), involved only the descendants of Ma Xun’s great-great-grandfather. This is not only different from the hall built by Ma Hetu, which included the tablets of his immediate ancestors as well as that of Qilang, but also from the way prescribed

11 He Qiaoyuan 何喬遠, Minshu 閩書 (Fujian Gazetteer) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1995), 104/3123; MSZP (1993, Mawu), 5 ji, 4–5.
in the *Family Rituals*, which states that the ancestral hall should include one’s lineal ancestors of four generations back (see below).

This essay also shows the situation of kinship ties of the Mas in the fifteenth century. Ma Xun accused his contemporary villagers for caring only about their immediate ancestors, particularly their grandfathers and fathers, for whom they had affection and concrete memories. In contrast, their early ancestors were not given sufficient attention. This meant that the descent group, composed of all the descendants of his great-great-grandfather, had split into several separate lines. The establishment of the hall aimed not only to provide a place where the spirits of the ancestors could rest but also to bring and hold together the previously separated kinship lines. Furthermore, the hall provided a place where a series of rites could be performed to instill lineage consciousness in every member: the rite of sacrifices, capping and weddings, and annual wine drinking. Finally, the lineage as designed by Ma Xun was a morally charged community whose members supervised one another’s conduct so that no illegal and immoral behavior could take place and social and moral order could thus be maintained.¹²

After retirement, Ma Xun ordered his grandsons to compile a genealogy of his descent group. After the genealogy was completed, one of his grandsons, Wenming 文明, wrote a preface.¹³ In it, Wenming writes of the suggestion to compile the genealogy in the spring of 1496, when Wenming and his grandfather were visiting a pavilion at their villa in suburban Changting. Beside the pavilion stood two pear trees in blooming, whose fragrance wafted over to the pavilion. Wenming stood there silently, absorbed in looking at the trees. His grandfather brought him back with the following comments.

You do not appreciate their fragrance and beauty [alone]. There exists the Dao of the root. Do you realize this? Almost everything under Heaven has a root. Take the example of the pear tree. If the root does not stand firmly, it is impossible to have branches from the trunk, leaves from the branches, and flowers from the leaves. Only when its root is planted firm and deep can its trunk grow big and tall, and thus hundreds of branches and thousands of leaves stretch and the flowers are exuberant and their beauty dazzles. Men have their root in their ancestors, is it any different from this? . . . All men come from their ancestors. In the beginning, they are brothers. From the

¹² *MSZP* (1993, Mawu), 2 jì, 3–4. The stele of this essay can be found in the ancestral hall.

¹³ Ibid., 2 jì, 22–23.
brothers come the direct line of descent and then the kindred who wear the untrimmed sackcloth (ji 期) and processed cloth (gong 功) [of mourning dresses]. The generations increase, and the branches extend. If [we] let it go without compiling a genealogy to document it, it is likely that the blood relations like those between brothers will diminish into that of strangers [without any mutual affection].

Ma Xun also told his grandson that his grandfather, Shizhong, had compiled a genealogy but that it had been destroyed during the Deng Maoqi 鄧茂七 (d. 1449) Rebellion, which had a disastrous impact in Fujian in the mid-fifteenth century. He thus urged Wenming to compile a new genealogy. Wenming complied and completed it the next spring when the pear trees were once more in bloom.

In the preface, the metaphor of the root of a tree reappears. Ma Xun’s comments proceeded from an everyday encounter to an abstract principle. Using the metaphor of the pear trees, he attempted to call attention to the importance of caring for his early ancestors and the compilation of a genealogy. It also employed a comparison between blood relations and relations between strangers, which dates back to the essayist Su Xun 苏洵 (1009–1066) in the Northern Song. Compared to the ancestral hall set up by Ma Xun, the genealogy seemed to be more inclusive. Wenming’s preface reports that it started with the founding ancestor Qilang. But it is unknown whether the genealogy, which is no longer extant, included the Upper Shrine branch.

The genealogy of the Lower Shrine branch also included lineage regulations with fifteen injunctions, the first fourteen of which were reportedly drawn up by Ma Xun. They provide a window into Ma Xun’s ideas on lineage building. The first injunction was a restatement of the Sacred Edicts (shengyu 聖諭) of Ming Taizu (1328–1398, r. 1368–1398) (see Chapter 7), which is also reiterated in the twelfth and fifteenth injunctions. The second through the sixth injunctions concern the ancestral hall. The seventh injunction concerned those who committed crimes. The major concern of the eighth and the ninth injunctions was improper marriage. The tenth injunction concerns adoption. The eleventh injunction concerns the proper rites of cappings, weddings, funerals, and ancestral rites.

\[14\] Ji refers to the second-class mourning dress (wearing one year) and Gong is the third- and fourth-class mourning dress (wearing nine and five months respectively).

\[15\] Ibid., 2 jì, 22–23.

\[16\] Ibid., 2 jì, 23.

\[17\] Su Xun, Jiayou ji jianzhu 嘉祐集箋注 (Commentary and Annotation on Collected Works of Su Xun) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2001), 373–374.
The thirteenth injunction concerns the relationship of lineage members to bondservants.

Through these injunctions, Ma Xun attempted to regulate the economic, social, and religious life of his lineage. The purpose of the regulations was, first of all, to stabilize the social order and at the same time to promote a new social order. The regulations specified that the social status of commoners and that of bondservants were not to be confounded, the seniors were to be distinguished from the juniors, and the four categories of people (simin 四民), scholar, farmer, artisan, and merchant, were encouraged to be satisfied with their own professions. Ma Xun appears to have drawn his regulations from the Sacred Edicts and the Family Rituals of Zhu Xi. It is reported that Ma Xun probably initiated the first community compact in Sibao. Although this compact is not extant, it is likely that it was similar to the regulations discussed here (for further discussion, see Chapter 7).

At the same time, it is clear that by drafting these regulations, Ma Xun was trying to eliminate what he thought were licentious religious activities. Consider the eleventh injunction, which states that it was not permitted to be wasteful in the rite or to hire Buddhist monks to recite sutras in the name of paying respect to the deceased. “To insinuate Buddhism so as to worship [the dead] kinsman is particularly not acceptable to the worthy.” It was even worse to believe in “evil Buddhist monks and malignant Daoist priests as well as the ritual masters and the holy mothers,” which “will result in a tendency to elope.” Similarly, the second injunction forbade the practice of “dressing oneself up as [the protagonist] in the old stories” (zhuangban gushi 妝扮故事) and performing plays, since the hall is “the place for [conducting] ceremonies and [executing] the laws” (li fa zhi suo 禮法之所).18

When Ma Xun ordered his sons to establish their ancestral hall, Xie Jian 謝鑒, a member of the Xie family in Liukeng, began to compile a genealogy of his own lineage. This agnate group produced a jinshi, Xie Hui 謝惠, in the early Ming. Xie Hui did not seem to have much interest in the construction of an ancestral hall or the compilation of a genealogy. Instead, he must have found Buddhist temples more attractive since he donated money to build a Buddhist temple near his village. Xie Jian was in the fifteenth generation of his descent group and had been a vice magistrate of Huating 華亭 County, Jiangnan. In the preface he wrote for his genealogy, he explained that the purpose of the compilation was for

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descendants to know not only from whom they originated but also who shared the same common descent. The former would inspire filial piety toward ancestors and the seniors, while the latter would promote harmony among the descendants. Therefore, a genealogy “matters very much.” The genealogy regarded Xie Weiren 謝偉人, a man in the Southern Song, as the founding ancestor. This implies that the genealogy included all descendants of Weiren in Liukeng. It is reported that the genealogy that Xie Jian compiled was simple, including information only about genealogy, burial places, and a village map. Another citation shows that one Xie Yantang 謝燕堂, who was one generation lower than Xie Jian, built an ancestral hall. We are not told who this man was and which ancestors were worshipped at the ancestral hall, but it seems that the hall was relatively large and ornate.

By the end of the fifteenth century, thanks to these three eminent local scholar-officials—Ma Hetu, Ma Xun, Xie Jian—three descent groups had emerged in Sibao. Each of them had an ancestral hall and a genealogy, both of which emphasized the importance of the inclusion of and focus on the early, distant ancestors and the necessity of going beyond the circle of the five degrees of mourning relationship. They organized the collective worship of these ancestors.

Before providing an explanation of the social contexts within which these descent groups were created, we should make it clear that some of the activities involved were not, strictly speaking, legal. According to early Ming regulations, commoners were only allowed to worship lineal ancestors three generations back—that is, their fathers, grandfathers, and great-grandfather—at their home. Ranked officials were permitted to erect a family temple to the east of their residence and to worship lineal ancestors four generations back. At the first glance, the ancestral hall established by Ma Xun appeared to have followed these regulations. But careful scrutiny finds that it differed from state regulations in an important respect. State regulations held that the ancestors in the temple be the official’s great-great-grandfather, great-grandfather, grandfather, and father. In the case of Ma Xun, his great-great-grandfather and great-grandfather and three elder brothers were worshipped instead. While the officially

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19 “Xu,” in LLXSZP (1754), juan shou, 4a–6a.
20 “Fanli,” in Ibid., 1a–2a.
21 “Tu shuo,” in Ibid., 9b.
permitted model of family temple was essentially a family establishment in the sense that the rite was performed by the official's family, the ancestral hall erected by Ma Xun created a descent group for ancestral rites involving not only the descendants of Ma Xun’s great-grandfather but also those of Ma Xun’s great-grandfather’s three brothers. Similarly, the ancestral hall established by Ma Hetu also included ancestors over four generations. These unjustified practices illustrate that “[the] development of popular lineage organization in the Ming and Qing was not based on the official model of the descent-line system. Rather, demolishing the restrictive official system was the essential precondition for this development.”

If the ancestral halls erected by the Ma and the Xie lineages were not legally permitted, why did Sibao scholar-officials still build them? What were their reasons for promoting Confucian-style rituals in their villages? One reason was that these activities could distinguish them from commoners and other kinship groups. A legend in Liukeng illustrates this point clearly. As the story goes, some people living in the village, named Tong, were involved in banditry, or so people from other villages claimed. The villagers could not put up with this humiliation and eventually decided to work to reverse it. So, one of the villagers went to Zhejiang to work as artisan and went to work for a rich family. He stole that family’s genealogy and then returned to his native village. On the basis of this genealogy, a genealogy of the Tongs that fabricates a glorious past was compiled to

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23 Some Ma members of the gentry were not unaware of this problem. They tended to justify this by claiming that they were entitled to do so because their ancestors were high officials. Ma Zuiliang 马最良 (1797–1861), a prefectural government student, for example, justified Ma Xun’s practice by citing the rule that “ritual is created in accordance with feelings” (yuán qíng zhì lǐ 緣情制禮), and the famous 1536 memorial of Xia Yan 夏言 (1482–1548), the president of the Board of Rites, which suggested that an official of the third rank or above and their descendants are allowed to erect a family temple worshiping lineal ancestors of four generations back. But this was not justified. Zuiliang argues that the Mas were entitled to worship Qianqilang, the father of the great-great-grandfather of Ma Xun, because Ma Xun achieved the second rank in the imperial officialdom. But according to Xia Yan’s memorial, after Ma Xun died, his sons should have destroyed the spirit tablet of Qianqilang and placed that of Ma Xun in the family temple (MSZP [1993, Mawu], 2 jì, 1–2; similar justification can be found in MSDZZP, 1/48a–48b; LLXSZP, juan shou, 9b. For Xia Yan’s memorial, see Inoue Tōru 井上徹, Chūgoku no seisoku to kokka no riset 中國的宗族と國家的禮制 (Lineage and State Ritual in China) (Tokyo: Kenmonsha, 2000), 178–199; Chang Jianhua 常建華, Zhonghua wenhua tongzhi zongzuzhi 中華文化通志: 宗族志 (General Gazetteer of Chinese Culture: Lineage) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1998), 98–101.

24 Zheng, Family Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian, 270.
banish their reputation. This story is difficult to verify and seems to have been fabricated to imply that the Tong lineage came by its history falsely. What is noteworthy in the story is that Sibao people believe that a written genealogy can make a difference, changing an agnate group with a shadowy background into one that commands respect. This episode thus provides support for Michael Szonyi's view that the ancestral hall and the genealogy were often employed as a marker of social distinctiveness and as a "status symbol."25

Shifting our focus from the local to the regional level, we find that the attempt to hold kinship members together through the construction of an ancestral hall and the compilation of a genealogy was not a local phenomenon. This activity had its origins in the programs of social reform and moral renewal put forward by Neo-Confucians in the Song.26 It did not become more widespread until the fifteenth century. According to Peng Shao 彭韶, a late-fifteenth-century Putian 莆田 literatus, the gentry and the commoners in Putian were permitted to make sacrifices to their great-grandfathers, grandfathers, and fathers in the early Ming. In the Yongle era (1403–1424), when the Xingli daquan was compiled and the Family Rituals spread throughout the empire, sacrifices to distant ancestors became the common rule. Still, there was not an ancestral hall for the placement of tablets. However, by the time of Peng Shao, the construction of ancestral halls and sacrifices to distant ancestors “became common social practice” and each family had “its own system for the number of ancestors and their arrangements in the niche.”27 Similarly, on Nantai 南台 Island, Fuzhou, the establishment of the earliest ancestral halls in this area dated back to before the Ming. But it was not until the mid-Ming that more and more individuals and families constructed free-standing ancestral halls.28

25 Szonyi, Practicing Kinship, 97.
28 Szonyi, Practicing Kinship, 96–137.
The question thus arises as to why this happened in the mid-Ming. In addition to their commitments to Neo-Confucianism and their intention to differentiate their kinship groups from other parts of local society, were there other reasons behind these scholar-officials’ efforts to hold their kinsmen together? While this is a question beyond the scope of this book, the situation in Sibao suggests an explanation, namely, that the scholar-officials’ activism may have been related to the social crisis of their time. Compared with the image of lineage as seen in Ma Hetu’s essay, Ma Xun’s view of lineage appeared to be different in some important ways. Hetu and his brothers seemed eager to create an “ancient family and great clan” in their community. While we cannot say that Ma Xun did not share this concern, he was more interested than Hetu was in instillation of a group consciousness and social stability.

This is not surprising if we consider the events taking place after Hetu compiled his genealogy. When Hetu was writing his essay in 1439, the mid-Ming rebellions had not yet broken out. The Ye Zongliu 葉宗留 (1404–1448) Rebellion broke out in 1447 and the Deng Maoqi Rebellion in 1448, and both had influenced Sibao society directly or indirectly. Except for several small-scale incidents of banditry and rebellion in the early Ming, the period before the 1440s was a peaceful time in Tingzhou. The situation began to deteriorate in the 1440s. In addition to the two large-scale rebellions, small and medium-scale banditry and rebellion became a constant threat to social order there. This undoubtedly had an impact on Ma Xun. Moreover, Ma Xun had experience with rebellions during his career as an official over forty years, including the Sichuan rebellions in late fifteenth century. When he documented the construction of the ancestral hall, Ma Xun was in Huguang, where he was troubled by the problem of Guanzhong refugees, who were prepared to rebel if they were not dealt with respectfully. It is likely that this experience also contributed to shaping Ma Xun’s view of lineage, in particular its ability to contribute to social stability. Obviously, a corporate lineage organization had a greater chance of surviving social crisis than other social groups that lacked solidarity.

*The Zous of Wuge*

The efforts of Ma Hetu, Ma Xun, and Xie Jian to hold their kinsmen together in the mid-Ming represent the first wave of lineage building in Sibao. This wave differs from the later waves in that the process was initiated and essentially under the direction of outstanding native scholar-officials.
In contrast, the later waves were initiated by minor officials, government students, and sometimes even villagers without any titles and degrees.

The second wave of lineage building began a century later, led by the Zous, who usually trace their settlement history in Wuge to Zou Liulang 六郎 (G2). It is reported that he lived with his younger brothers, Qilang 七郎 and Balang 八郎, on Zou Family Mountain (Zoujia shan 鄒家山) in Shangbao before he moved to Wuge. Balang moved to Shuangquan while Qilang remained in Shangbao. Liulang’s fifth generation descendant, Qingfu (G7), appears to have lived in the turbulent age of the Yuan-Ming transition. Two of his sons, Yesheng and Dingfu (G8), initiated the two major branches, that of the Lower Shrine and that of the Upper Shrine, of the Zous in present-day Wuge.29 The importance of Yesheng and Dingfu to the Zous is apparent in the ornate ancestral halls dedicated to each of them. These halls became important places not only to perform the sacrificial rites but to discuss lineage and community affairs before they were collectivized to be the office of the township government during the time of land reform in the early 1950s.

The first act of lineage building was performed by Zou Xiong 雄 (1488–1581, G12), the grandson of one of Dingfu’s grandsons, in the early Wanli era (1573–1619). Zou Xiong built perhaps the first ancestral hall in Wuge, called the Guangyu Hall or the Ancestral Hall of the Lord of Lichong (Zou Xiong’s father).30 The descendants of Lichong usually call it “the hall of the ancestors.” Zou Xiong was not a government student and does not seem to have received any titles from the government; rather, he was a geomancer of some renown. In the record he wrote for the construction of the ancestral hall, Zou Xiong claimed that he was interested in geomancy in his youth. When he grew up, he went to Jiangxi province and trained with a master of geomancy for many years. After he returned to Sibao, he found a gravesite with good geomancy for his parents. Believing that good geomancy could bring good luck to his descendants, he decided to build an ancestral hall and after searching for some time selected the site where the Guanyu Hall still stands.

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29 ZSZP (1947, Wuge), 1/1a–8a. Again, both names were given according to the location of their branch ancestral halls rather than the order of seniority.

30 An ancestral hall was dedicated to Zou Qingfu, Lichong’s father. This was known as the “hall of incense and fire” and seemed to be relatively different from the ancestral hall. The date of the erection of this hall is unknown.

Fig. 5.2  Simplified genealogy of the Zous of Wuge.

Image 5.1  The Guangyu Hall, Wuge.
In the record, Zou Xiong comments that building the hall would lead to good things for his descendants and those of his brothers. “Every generation will have representatives in official life, and every branch will be well-to-do and honorable.” At the end of the record, Zou Xiong warns his descendants to take care to maintain the geomancy of the hall and not make any changes, fearing that it would lead to bad lucks. Compared to Ma Hetu and Ma Xun, Zou Xiong justified the establishment of an ancestral hall in rather pragmatic and utilitarian terms—that is, geomancy, rather than resorting to Neo-Confucian discourse and the hall’s potential for keeping the family together.

After Zou Xiong, several minor officials and government students of the Upper Shrine branch compiled the first genealogy of the Zous in Wuge in 1590. Zou Bangxian 邦賢 (G13) (1546–1613) wrote a preface to the genealogy and explained the reasons behind its compilation. His preface first emphasizes the importance of genealogy, without which, he claimed, “the origin of the surname and the deeds of the ancestors would disappear and be known to no one.” However, since his “descent group is lax in solidarity and scattered… it would be difficult to compile a genealogy for the whole descent group.” Therefore, he suggested that a genealogy of the branch of Mr. Wenliang 文亮 to which he belonged be compiled. Bangxian compiled his genealogy in the spring of 1598 with the help of several other lower-level gentry. He concluded that “the compilation of a genealogy is not only meant to render meritorious service to the ancestors by recording the ancestors’ virtue completely but also to benefit ten thousand generations by providing [them with] a magic mirror.”

Zou Bangxian was a minor official (liyuan), a clerk in the Changting County government before being appointed county jailor (dianshi 典史) of Haiyang 海陽 County. Several years later, he was promoted to the position of vice magistrate there. His last appointment was as chief commissioner of granaries of Zhaoqing 肇慶 Prefecture. No evidence exists that he had got a degree but, as shown in his self-addressing title at the end of the preface, he seemed to have received a certain title from the court.

During the compilation of the genealogy, Bangxian received assistance from his cousins Xuesheng 學聖 and Yunguang 運光 as well as his nephews Xidao 希道 and Ximeng 希孟. Xuesheng (1523–1598), style name

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31 ZSZP (1947, Wuge), 29/20a–20b.
32 Ibid., juan shou, 10b–11a.
33 Ibid., 1/66a.
Qingquan 清泉, was also a minor official, chief commissioner of the
southern city granary of Hangzhou who had received the title of the court
gentleman for ceremonial service (jiangshilang 僉士郎, 9b).\footnote{Ibid., 1/12b. Note that this title is different from the one given in Bangxian’s preface.} At the age
of eighteen in 1547, Yunguang, style name Kezhai 可齋 (1530–1606), was
the first government student in the history of the Zous in Wuge.\footnote{Ibid., 1/39b, 33/5a.} His biographical note tells us that he was for many years the head of a local poetry society.\footnote{Ibid., juan mo, 1b.} Xidao (1561–1617), the son of Bangxian’s cousin, Xueshun 學舜, was a government student.\footnote{Ibid., 1/49a.} Ximeng (1578–1643), the fourth son of Xuesheng, was also a government student.\footnote{Ibid., 1/18b.} When he joined Bangxian to compile the genealogy, Ximeng was only twenty. He was later involved in commercial activities and became quite wealthy. With this wealth, he bought a great quantity of land and set aside some of this as “book land” (shutian 書田), subsidizing those who prepared for the civil service examination and giving gifts to those who had received degrees.\footnote{Ibid., 34/5a–5b.} Before the land reform, the corporate estate established under his name was one of the biggest in Sibao.

As stated in the preface, the genealogy that Bangxian compiled did not
include all Zou members because they were “lax in solidarity.” It started
with the third son of Zou Dingfu, Zou Wenliang (1377–1430) of the ninth
generation. The descendants of Zou Yesheng were not included in the
genealogy. It is interesting that Wenliang rather than Dingfu was singled
out as the focal ancestor of the genealogy.

Shortly after Bangxian compiled the genealogy, the descendants of
Yesheng started a similar project. The first genealogy of the Lower Shrine
was compiled by two sixteenth-generation Zous of the Lower Shrine branch, Weiyun 思松 (style name Konghua 孔華) and his brother, Weidi 惟棣 (style name Binhua 賓華, 1587–1638, G16). Zou Weiyun’s father,
Sisong 思松 (usually known in Sibao by his style name, Yisheng 一昇, 1550–1607, G15), seemed to be an ordinary peasant.\footnote{Ibid. (1911, Wuge), 19/1a.} It is reported that
after his father died Weiyun had difficulty in continuing his studies, and
Weidi, his elder brother, assisted him so that he could prepare for the
Weidi had financial success to some degree, probably from commercial activities.\footnote{Ibid., 19/1a.} Weiyun wrote a long preface to the genealogy that he compiled, and at the beginning of it, he stressed the importance of compiling such a document. The genealogy is, he claimed, “the means by which human relations are put in order and customs are made tangible.” Unlike history, which was often printed, kept in the libraries, and circulated throughout the empire, genealogies are not public. “As for genealogy, [it] is only the private [knowledge] of one single surname [group]. Except for the relatives and their descendants, who will keep it? Who will remember it?” Furthermore, “as generations become distant, so do men [i.e., ancestors]; as age change, so do affairs.” It becomes very difficult for people in later generations to know their origins. Therefore, the compilation of a genealogy is not only important but also more or less urgent. The genealogy began with a biography and hagiography of Zougong, which was followed by the genealogical chart.\footnote{Ibid., juan shou, 1a–3b.} This was a genealogy only of the Lower shrine branch and did not include the Upper Shrine branch.\footnote{The preface was called the “Preface to the Genealogy of Yesheng Branch.” See ibid., juan shou, 1a.}

The genealogy of the Upper Shrine branch was updated more a century later, in 1706, under the direction of Zou Zhengguo\footnote{Ibid. (1947, Wuge), 6/12b–13a.} (1663–1716), a government student.\footnote{Ibid., 34/14a.} According to his biographical notes, he was a teacher who “rejected Buddhism and revered Confucianism” and believed in the teachings of Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi.\footnote{Ibid., 34/14a.} However, Zhengguo does not seem to have taken much effort to compile a genealogy of all the Zous in Wuge. His genealogy did not include the branch of the Lower Shrine, and no evidence exists that the Lower shrine branch updated its genealogy in the early eighteenth century.

The second half of the eighteenth century was very important for the Zous in Wuge. First, in 1756, the Lower shrine branch built an ornate ancestral hall dedicated to Yesheng, the focal ancestor of this branch. Zou Shengmai wrote an essay to record how the hall was constructed. According to Shengmai, the spirit tablets of Yesheng and Dingfu were placed in the same ancestral hall, which may have been the “hall of incense and fire” of Zou Qingfu, the father of Yesheng and Dingfu. Then, at the turn
of the eighteenth century, Shengmai’s uncle made an unsuccessful effort to construct an ancestral hall dedicated to his sub-branch. The hall was not built until the mid-eighteenth century because the members of this branch had trouble deciding on the location of the hall, seeking a place with good geomancy. Shengmai may have exaggerated the gap between those who took pains to construct an ancestral hall, such as his uncle and himself, and many members of his branch who “were stuck in their common sense (views)” — that is, geomancy. But the lack of success of his uncle’s efforts suggests unmistakably that lineage building was often merely a concern of the gentry, and many people did not share his interest in the project and that, even when they did, they paid more attention to geomantic influence than to the solidarity of the agnate group to which they belonged.47

The Upper Shrine branch dedicated an ancestral hall to Dingfu in 1768 right next to the hall of the Lower Shrine branch. These halls, together with the Tianhou Temple established in 1792, became three of the grandest public buildings in Wuge. No essay recorded how this hall was set up. According to an essay recording the renovation of the hall in 1820, the foundation was funded by two sub-branches of the Upper Shrine descent group.48

In 1764, the Zous compiled the only genealogy that included all the Zous in Wuge. Before the genealogy was compiled, the managers of the project wrote an essay to explain their reason for doing so: The Zous of Wuge were the descendants of Zou Liulang. They divided into two branches after the eighth generation. The Zous had become a lineage with about a thousand male members. Although the members were numerous, they were “at peace” with one another: “One thousand branches and ten thousand streams have one single root and the same source.” The comprehensive genealogy was meant to “make the spirits [of the members] be united and their blood flow through one another.”49

What is noteworthy here is the predominant role that national university students played in the project (see Table 5.1). Twelve men in all were involved in the management of the compilation of the genealogy. Of the eleven managers on whom we have information, eight were national university students and five were obviously involved in commercial activities.

47 Ibid. (1911, Wuge), 21/2a.
48 Ibid. (1947, Wuge), 35/23a–23b.
49 Ibid. (1911, Wuge), juan shou, 1a–3a.
They were Xiongfei 雄飛, Benzu 本祖, Duchen 督臣, Yingwen 盈文, Ming-kui 鳴魁, Shiduan 時端, Zhengyao 徵耀, Zhongyan 中彦, Yiyan 一彥, Huiyan 會彥, Zhengsheng 徵盛, and Zhengxuan 徵璇. The first manager, Xiongfei (1718–1766), was a merchant who did business in Guangdong and Zhangzhou in southern Fujian.\textsuperscript{50} Benzu (1741–1826) was both a successful manager of a printing shop and a book merchant.\textsuperscript{51} We do not know much about Duchen (b. 1699), whose genealogical name was Duguo 都國. But no evidence indicates that he had received any degrees or titles.\textsuperscript{52} Yingwen (1715–1791) (style name Yuzu 御祖) was probably a merchant but no evidence shows that he gained or purchased any titles.\textsuperscript{53} Mingkui (1707–1778) (style name Bingheng 秉衡) does not seem to be a prominent person, but he was the elder brother of Bingjun 秉均 (1718–1796), a rich merchant who played an important role in the opening of the Fair Market of Wuge in 1778 (see Chapter 9).\textsuperscript{54} Shiduan (1723–1772), usually known by his literary name Longchuan 龍川, was a successful book merchant.\textsuperscript{55} Zhengyao (1720–1782), known by his literary name Yixuan 怡軒, was also a book merchant and the father of Zou Jing 經 (1742–1804), a military provincial graduate and regional vice commander of Taiwan naval forces (shuishi fujiang 水師副將, 2b?). He received the title grand master of militant assistance (wuyi dafu 武翼大夫, 7a) because of his son's service for the government.\textsuperscript{56} Zhongyan, known also by his literary name Dancun 澹村, was born into a wealthy family. His father was a book merchant.\textsuperscript{57} We do not know much about Yiyan (1697–1785), Huiyan (b. 1701), and Zhengsheng (1718–1809), except that all of them were national university students.\textsuperscript{58} No information was available on Zhengxuan.

It is not surprising that national university students, from whose ranks lisheng were drawn, were central to the compilation of genealogies. Acting as lisheng and compiling genealogies were expression of the same concern: ritual.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid. (1947, Wuge), 34/37b–38a.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid., 33/27b–28a. For genealogical information on him, see ibid., 7/57a–57b.
\textsuperscript{52} For genealogical information on him, see ibid., 7/14b.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 33/27a–27b. For genealogical information on him, see ibid., 5/93b–94a.
\textsuperscript{54} For genealogical information on Bingheng, see ibid., 9/20a. For a biography of Bingjun, see ibid., 33/40a–41a.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 33/43a–43b.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid. (1911, Wuge), 20/30b–31a, 31b–32a. For genealogical information on Zhengyao, see ibid., 10/108a–108b. For a biography of Zou Jing, see ibid., 20/52a–52b.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 20/21b–22a.
\textsuperscript{58} See ibid., 5/61a–61b, 6/18a–18b, 9/81a–81b.
Table 5.1  Managers of the compilation of the *Zou Family Genealogy* of Wuge in 1764.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Degree/Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xiongfei</td>
<td>Upper Shrine</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>National university student; Secondary Gentleman for Promoted Service (<em>dengshi zuolang</em> 登仕佐郎, 9b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benzu</td>
<td>Upper Shrine</td>
<td>Book merchant</td>
<td>National university student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duchen</td>
<td>Upper Shrine</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yingwen</td>
<td>Upper Shrine</td>
<td>Merchant?</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mingkui</td>
<td>Upper Shrine</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiduan</td>
<td>Upper Shrine</td>
<td>Book merchant</td>
<td>National university student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhengyao</td>
<td>Lower Shrine</td>
<td>Book merchant</td>
<td>National university student; Grand Master of Militant Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhongyan</td>
<td>Lower Shrine</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>National university student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yiyian</td>
<td>Lower Shrine</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>National university student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huiyan</td>
<td>Lower Shrine</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>National university student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhengsheng</td>
<td>Lower Shrine</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>National university student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhengxuan</td>
<td>Lower Shrine</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sources:* Xiongfei: for biographical notes on him, see *ZSZP* (1947, Wuge), 34/37b–38a; for his official title, see *ZSZP* (1947 edition, Wuge), *juan mo*, 4b; Benzu: for biographical notes on him, see *ZSZP* (1947 edition, Wuge), 33/27b–28a; for his title, see *ZSZP* (1947, Wuge), *juan mo*, 4b; Duchen: for genealogical information on him, see *ZSZP* (1947, Wuge), 7/14b; Yingwen: for biographical notes on him, see *ZSZP* (1947, Wuge), 33/27a–27b; Mingkui: for genealogical information on him, see *ZSZP* (1947, Wuge), 9/20a; Shiduan: for biographical notes on him, see *ZSZP* (1947, Wuge), 33/43a–43b; Zhengyao: for biographical notes on him, see *ZSZP* (1991, Wuge), 20/30b–31a, 31b–32a; Zhongyan: for biographical notes on him, see *ZSZP* (1991, Wuge), 21b–22a; Yiyian: for genealogical information on him, see *ZSZP* (1991, Wuge), 5/6a–6lb; Huiyan: for genealogical information on him, see *ZSZP* (1991, Wuge), 6/18a–18b; Zhengsheng: for genealogical information on him, see *ZSZP* (1991, Wuge), 9/8a–8lb; for an essay in honor of his ninety-first birthday, see *ZSZP* (1991, Wuge), 19/20a–20b.

*The Yans of Yanwu*

By the end of the seventeenth century, the main agnate groups of Sibao—the Mas, the Zous in Wuge and Shuangquan, the Lis in Changxiao, and the Jiangs in Jiangfang—had been transformed into lineage organizations due to the efforts of high scholar-officials such as Ma Xu as well as minor officials and low-level gentry such as Zou Bangxian and Zou Weiyun. For the small agnate groups settled in the satellite villages of these lineages or in the peripheral areas, conscious efforts at lineage building, the third wave of lineage building in Sibao history, would only take place a century later.
The several kinship groups that settled next to the Zougong temple of Shangbao who organized themselves into a community compact were one such example (see Chapter 8 for a brief discussion of their lineage building). The Yans in Yanwu, a village next to Mawu, provide another example.

The Yans traced their ancestry to a man called Jiulang 九郎 (G1) (see Figure 5.3). It is reported that Jiulang lived in Yanfang 嚴坊 Village of Guiren 歸仁 subcanton in Changting. He moved to Laijiaxu 賴家墟 because he did business there. Although no one knows exactly when Jiulang moved to Sibao, some members of the Yan family think that it was in the early Ming. As an agnatic group, the Yans comprised only a few families before the tenth generation (living in late Ming). Only after the eleventh generation, and particularly after the fifteenth generation, were the Yans able to expand the number of their lineage members.59

The Yans appear to have been under the control of the Mas after they moved to Sibao. A contract drafted in 1716 shows that the Yans were among the jia households (jiahu 甲戶) in the plot controlled by the Mas.60 They did not pay tax to the state directly; rather, they paid it through the Mas. When the government collected nontax fees or assigned corvée labor, it did so through the Mas. The implication of this arrangement is clear: By relying on the Mas to pay their tax, the Yans were subject to their control and susceptible to their abuse of power. This was the reason for drafting the contract: It stated that after paying 5 taels of silver to the Mas, the Yans would pay tax directly to the government.61

Yanwu had two ancestral halls, one dedicated to the founding ancestor, Qilang, and the other to a thirteenth-generation ancestor, Chengde 成德 (style name Zhouye 周也). The ancestral hall of Qilang was reportedly built in 1778. Although no information is available on the person who managed the establishment and layout of the building and how the Yans performed ancestral rites in the hall, the construction of the hall indicates that efforts had been made to hold the kinsmen together in the final quarter of the eighteenth century.

59 The preceding description is based on ibid., 1/1a–9a.
60 According to the household registration system of the Ming, a subcanton or plot comprised ten jia decimal units and a jia comprised 10 households, which were usually called jiahu or jiashou hu (jia head household). The terms continued to be used in the Qing.
61 Ibid., 4/1a–1b.
Fig. 5.3  The lineage estates of the Yans of Yanwu.

Source: YSZP (1913 edition).
Note: The names in italics represent the ancestors who were endowed estates.
The conscious efforts to build a lineage community were expressed again in 1797, when the Yans compiled their first genealogy. The preface of the genealogy appears to have been drafted by five Yan family members but written by Ma Lüxin 馬履新, presumably a literatus from Mawu—not surprising in view of the fact that the Yans had not produced any degree holder or official by that time. As in other Sibao genealogies, the preface to this genealogy claims it was important because it was the means by which later generations know “the root of a tree and the source of a stream.” At the end of the preface, probably to justify their having to rely on a person from another lineage to write the preface, the collective editors comment that “for those literary scholars and the well-to-do families, the grand enterprise of genealogy compiling is undoubtedly easy to do. But Xing 行 et al. [the Yan editors] earn our living by [relying on our own] skills [xie yi zi shi 挟藝自食]. We undertake to do this as best we can because we are afraid that the order of [our] patriline will be confused.”

If the construction of the ancestral hall of Qilang in 1778 was the beginning of lineage building of the Yans, the compilation of a genealogy in 1797 created a standard lineage organization. By the end of the eighteenth century, almost every kinship group in Sibao had established an ancestral hall, compiled a genealogy, created lineage estates, and performed ancestral rites regularly. In a word, Sibao had been transformed into a collection of lineage societies. The consequences and limits of this change is the topic of the following section.

**Ancestors, Genealogy, and Lineage Building**

Lineage building in late imperial Sibao usually involved a shift from the villagers’ immediate ancestors to early ancestors. When a genealogy was compiled, one person was singled out as a founding ancestor, and a genealogical connection was made between this ancestor and the villagers’ immediate ancestors. The question that thus arises is why one ancestor rather than another was selected as the founding ancestor and how the connection was made between this ancestor and later ancestors. This problem of selecting and compiling can be found in almost every Sibao descent group. But with the Zous of Sibao it assumed a central role and consistently haunted editors of almost every edition of the Zou genealogy.

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62 Ibid., 1/1a–1b.
Their situation shows clearly how the compilation of a genealogy was closely related to the social and cultural processes of the relevant period. It provides an important opportunity to explore the thinking behind the seemingly Neo-Confucian project of lineage building.

Zougong was a local patron god with some popularity in Sibao well before he came to be seen as the founding ancestor of the Zous in Wuge, Shangbao, Shuangquan, and other villages. Two temples, one in Mawu and another in Shangbao, were dedicated to him, and some evidence (see Chapter 9) indicates that both predated the Ming. The early information on this god is confusing. The preface written by Zou Bangxian mentions that the Zous came from Jiangxi and had settled in Sibao beginning in the late Tang. This implies that Zougong lived in the late Tang or earlier. The preface of Zou Weiyun does not mention when Zougong moved to Sibao, but it nevertheless claims that Zougong had received imperial titles from the court several times and that wherever his “majestic efficacy” appeared, he was worshiped by the people of “the four seas.” This implies that Zougong as a god was popular and was worshiped in many areas. A stele erected in the Zougong Temple in the mountain village of Huangshikeng, all of whose residents traced their ancestry to Zougong, gives more detailed information. The text on the stele was written in 1639 by a Qingliu metropolitan graduate, Li Yujian 李于堅 (jinshi 1631).64

[I] have investigated the Zou Family Genealogy. The name of Lord was Yonglong 應龍. His style name was Zhonggong 仲恭. Jingchu 景初 was his literary name. [He] was born in the seventh year, renchen 壬辰, of the Yuanhe 元和 era of the Tang [812]. He married Lady Chen and Lady Li. His ancestors moved from Taining 泰寧 of Shaowu 邵武 [Prefecture] to Shangbao of Changting. His descendant Ershigong 二十二公 moved to Huangshi 黃石 [Huangshikeng] in 1259. The Lord was intelligent in [his] childhood. He was known for his filial serving of his widowed mother. At the age of twenty-four, he ranked first in the metropolitan civil service examination (zhuangyuan jidi 狀元及第). [He] had been appointed to fifteen official positions…. When [he] was a full seventy years old, [he] requested to resign on account of old age and returned [to his native place]. He was granted the title of the Marquis of the Lu State (Luguogong 魯國公). Five years after [his] retirement, in the second year, bingwu 丙午, of the Guangqi 光啓 era [886], he died. He was granted an imperial burial in Longziwei 龍子圍 [in Shangbao], and a shrine was ordered to be dedicated to him. During the eras of Shaoxing [1131–1162] and Shaoding [1228–1233] in the Song, the
barbarians [i.e., the Jin] invaded the Central Plain and plundered Jingzhou, Xiangyang, Hongxian, and the Lianghuai regions. . . .

The Lord commanded spirit soldiers to destroy them, and the bandits were exterminated. [He] was bestowed with the title of the Saintly Prince of Manifested Benevolence, Expressed Brightness, Majestic Relief, and Broad Protection [Zhaoren xianlie weiji guangyou shengwang 昭仁顯烈威濟廣佑聖王] and Lady Chen and Lady Li were bestowed the titles of the Ladies of Sincerity and Benevolence [Fuhui furen 孚惠夫人].

The stele claims explicitly that Zougong was Zou Yinglong and that he was a zhuangyuan of the mid-Tang. It mentions that Zougong’s ancestors moved to Shangbao from Taining County in northwestern Fujian, which implies that Zougong himself was born in Shangbao. It also tells us that imperial titles were granted to Zougong and his wives because after his death he displayed divine efficacy to intervene in human affairs by defending the weak Southern Song from “barbarian” invasion of the Jin. Li Yujian claims that this information was drawn from the genealogy of the Zous of Huangshikeng. This is not surprising, for he was acquainted with Zou Hui 徽, a government student, who solicited a preface from him in 1652, when the second edition of the Zou Family Genealogy of this village was in preparation. Of course, the information in the genealogy may have been drawn from oral tradition. What is surprising is that the dates were explicitly given in the inscription. This implies that before the information was given to Li Yujian, it may have been manipulated by certain gentry who had some knowledge of history. In any case, the account given in the inscription was the first extant systematic effort to document Zougong’s life story.

In the early Qing, the image of Zougong did not undergo dramatic change in Wuge. In the preface to the 1706 edition of the Zou Family Genealogy, Zou Zhengguo claims that “the name of our founding ancestor, Lord Zou, is Yinglong, style name Zhonggong, with the literary name of Jingchu. He moved from Liangtian 良田, Shaxian, to the Zou Family Mountain in Shangbao. Since our ancestor did meritorious service to help the state at the time of rebellious barbarian invasions in the late Tang, from the Tang throughout the Song, [he] received successive titles. A magnificent temple

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65 The Record of the Zougong Temple (Stone inscription, 1639, Zougong Temple, Huangshikeng).
was dedicated to him, and offerings [were made to him]. They will last for a thousand years.”

However, in the late Ming or the early Qing, some members of the gentry in Shuangquan began to make a connection between Zougong and Zou Yinglong of Taining. Zou Yinglong (1173–1245) was a native of Taining County, Shaowu Prefecture. He ranked first in the metropolitan civil service examination of 1196 and was appointed to several important positions before his retirement. The first member of the Shuangquan gentry who made this connection was Zou Zhili, a government student of the seventeenth generation. In the preface that he wrote for the Shuangquan genealogy, he claims that “our lineage is probably the descendants of Lord Jingchu of Shaowu. [Lord Jingchu] retired from a meritorious Song official position to be a commoner. His sons, Balang and his brothers, moved from Taining to Sibao.” Another preface written by Zou Bin, a government student of the eighteenth generation, also reports that “our lineage had its origin in Fanyang. It branched out from Taining of Shaowu only in the late Song. It has long history and is the most prosperous [lineage].”

In 1676, when the Zous in Shuangquan began to update their genealogy, Zou Dinghuang (b. 1645), a prefectural government student, wrote two essays to clarify the life of Zougong. In the first essay, “An Evidential Study of Lord Jingchu,” he explains why he wanted to write the two essays.

I examined the fragments of texts on [my] bookshelf and found the gazetteer of this prefecture. I picked up the book and read it. [It] records that our earliest ancestor [bizu 鼻祖], Lord Jingchu, was a metropolitan graduate in the Yuanhe [806–820] era of the Tang. It relates that he was upright in his life and helped the country until his death and was thus granted imperial titles. I have read the Veritable Record of Tang Xianzong [Tang Xianzong shilu 唐憲宗實錄]. Only scholars attended the civil service examination, but was there ever one that got the title of zhuangyuan? And was there ever a man known as Yingling? Actually, our ancestor was a man in the Qingyuan 慶元 era [1195–1200] of the Song. [He] ranked first in the palace exams [dianshi 殿試] and was appointed to several important positions and

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67 ZSZP (1947, Wuge), juan shou, 13a–13b.
68 A biography of Zou Yinglong can be found in Tuotuo et al., Song shi, 419/ 12550–12551.
69 “Yuan xu” 原序 (Original Preface), in ZSZP (1901, Shuangquan), juan shou, 2a.
70 Fanyang is the junwang 郡望 (choronym) of the Zous.
71 Ibid., 3a.
72 Ibid., 30b–31a.
73 This is probably the 1637 edition of Tingzhou Prefecture Gazetteer, since the information discussed here cannot be found in the 1527 edition. See TZFZ (1637), 6/2a–b.
frequently participated in [the making of] great policy [屢修大政]. After retirement, Lizong 理宗 [r. 1225–1264] wrote the two characters “Nangu 南谷 [the Southern Valley] and granted this [calligraphy] [to him] and bestowed [on him] the title of junior guardian of the heir apparent [太子少保]. [He was] granted the posthumous title wenjing 文靖 (Cultured and Tranquil). [This was] clearly written in the historical records and can be verified. In addition, Qingyuan is the name of the first year of [the] Song [emperor] Ningzong 宁宗 [r. 1195–1224]. From Qingyuan to Yuanhe, [one proceeded] from the Tang to the Five Dynasties, and from the Northern Song to the age that followed the dynasty’s crossing [the Yangzi River] to the South and further to the reign of Ningzong. [The period lasted] several tens of generations and over three hundred years. [They are] as far apart as the sky and sea.74

In his second essay, “The Biographical Facts of Lord Jingchu,” Dinghuang provides a life story of Zou Yinguo that resembled his biography in the Song shi (History of the Song Dynasty). But at the end of the essay, he adds that Zou Yinguo’s sons, Liulang, Qilang, and Balang, “moved to the Zou Family Mountain of Sibao of Changting and settled there in order to flee social turmoil. Liulang was the ancestor of Longzu 龍足 [Dragon’s foot], Qilang was the ancestor of Shangbao, and Balang settled in Shuangquan and was our founding ancestor.”75

Zou Dinghuang’s reconstruction of the genealogy of the early Zou ancestors is noteworthy in that it made an explicit connection between the Zous in Sibao and Zou Yinguo, the zhuangyuan of Taining. It claims that Zou Yinguo was a zhuangyuan from Taining in the Southern Song rather than in the Tang and that Liulang, Qilang, and Balang, the first ancestors who settled in Wuge, Shangbao, and Shuangquan, were his sons. At the same time, Dinghuang did not mention the divine intervention of Zougong and the imperial titles granted to him. Dinghuang may have avoided this issue because it contradicted the “facts” that he gave in his essays. Now that he equated Zougong with Zou Yinguo of Taining, it would have been anachronistic if he maintained that Zougong provided divine intervention in the late Tang or the early Southern Song.

Another question concerns how Dinghuang learned of the biography of Zou Yinguo. One possible channel would have been to send a lineage

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74 “Jingchu gong kao” 景初公考 (An Evidential Study of Lord Jinchu), in ZSZP (1901, Shuangquan), juan shou, la–lb.
75 Longzu is another name for Wuge.
76 “Jingchu gong shishi” 景初公事實 (The Biographical Facts of Lord Jinchu), in ibid., la–lb.
member to Taining to check the genealogy of Zou Yinglong’s lineage. This is what was done when the Zous in Shangbao compiled their genealogy for the first time in 1794. The information may have “traveled” to Sibao through merchants and artisans. The silversmiths and tinsmiths of Sibao were active in northwestern Fujian. They may have copied some texts from their supposed kinsmen in Taining. Alternatively, Dinghuang may have learned this through his own reading or hearing it from his fellow government students. (He owned or had read a copy of the Tang Xianzong shilu, which was not readily found in ordinary government libraries.)

When the Zous in Yangzibian 洋子邊, Shangbao, compiled their first genealogy in 1794, Zou Danyan 丹嚴 of the eighteenth generation wrote an essay titled “A Preface on the Origin and Development of the Zous.” Not surprisingly, he made an explicit claim that his ancestor was Zou Yinglong. He probably learned this from the Zous in Taining, because four lineage members from Shangbao were sent to Taining to check the Taining genealogy. The reconstruction of early genealogy did not stop there. In a short note written in the late Qing, a man named Sixin 斯馨 of the twenty-first generation made the following remarks.

Our lineage moved from Taining to the Zou Family Mountain in Sibao, Tingzhou, in the early Yuan. In the jiayin 甲寅 year of the Qianlong era [1794], the genealogy [of our lineage] was first compiled. . . . [Because it was] distant [in time] from the Yuan and it was impossible to verify [the facts], nothing was recorded of the founding ancestor, Yongfu 勇夫. Later in the Xianfeng era [1851–1861], a lineage member brought back from Nanfeng 南豐 [a county in eastern Jiangxi] the genealogy [shixi 世系] [see below] written by He Daomin 何道旻, the provincial surveillance vice commissioner [anchasi fushi 按察副使] of Jiangxi, in the thirtieth year of the Hongwu era [1397]. The time [when He Daomin wrote the text] was not distant [in time] from the Yuan. A careful and detailed analysis had been made of the deeds of every generation and [the latter provided with] indisputable proof. However, it is not the same as in the text mentioned above [i.e., the essay written by Danyan].

Sixin found it wise to keep both texts in the genealogy in the hope that one of the descendants would be able to clarify the facts in these texts.

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77 “Yuan xu,” in ibid. (1894, Zhenbian), juan 1, 3b.
78 An oral tradition says that some texts of the Shangbao genealogy were copied from the genealogies of the Zous in Jiangxi by a tinsmith.
79 “Zou shi yuanliu xu” 鄒氏源流序 (Preface to the Origin of the Zou Family), in ibid. (1946, Yangzibian), juan shou, 1b–2a.
80 “Yuan xu,” in ibid. (1946, Yangzibian), juan shou, 4a.
The “genealogy” mentioned in Sixin’s note is actually a preface to the Taining genealogy.\(^81\) The author of this preface, He Daomin, was a native of Taining in the early Ming. In addition to serving as a provincial surveillance vice commissioner of Jiangxi (4a), the post he held when he wrote the preface, he had been appointed to the positions of the case reviewer (\textit{pingshi} 評事) of the Court of Judicial Review (\textit{dalisi} 大理寺), investigating censor, assistant commissioner (\textit{qianshi} 僉事) of the Guangdong Provincial Surveillance Commission, Prefect, and so forth.\(^82\) The preface summarizes the genealogy of Zou Yinglong. He first mentions the life of Zou Yongfu and then the success of Yongfu’s descendants in the civil service examinations. From there he proceeds to the life of Yongfu’s tenth-generation descendant, Zou Yinglong. At the end of the preface, he relates that he wrote it at the request of Longqin 隆欽, the great-great-grandson of Yinglong.\(^83\)

This is the main content of the version given in the Taining genealogy, which I call version A. The version given in the Shangbao genealogy,\(^84\) which I call version B, is different from version A in some important ways. First, version B has information on Zou Yinglong’s wives, while version A does not. Second, while version A does not mention any of Zou Yinglong’s titles, version B has a passage enumerating the imperial honors and titles that Zou Yinglong received at the time of his retirement and funeral. Third, while version A does not mention that any of Zou Yinglong’s sons ever moved to Sibao, version B adds a passage to introduce the sons of Zou Yinglong, claiming that Yinglong had four sons and the first three “moved to Tingzhou, and later settled and set up house there.”\(^85\) Finally, while version A explains why the author wrote the preface, the passage disappears in version B. In view of these differences, it is likely that version B was based on version A. The manipulation of the text was meant to make a connection between the ancestors of the Zous in Sibao and Zou Yinglong and between Zougong the god and Zou Yinglong. As a result, Zougong became Zou Yinglong, and Liulang and his brothers became the sons of Zou Yinglong.

\(^81\) The preface can be found in \textit{Houfang Zou shi zupu} 厚坊鄒氏族譜 (Zou Family Genealogy of Houfang) (1920, Taining), \textit{juan shou, xu}, 1a–4a.
\(^82\) He, \textit{Minshu}, 3504; \textit{Shaowu fuzhi} (1900), 19/73b–74a.
\(^83\) \textit{Houfang Zou shi zupu, juan shou, xu}, 1a–4a.
\(^84\) “Zou shi zupu yuan xu” (Original Preface to Zou Family Genealogy), in \textit{ZSZP} (1946, Yangzibian), \textit{juan shou}, 3a.
\(^85\) Ibid.
The earlier image of Zougong also changed gradually in the eighteenth century. In 1764, the Upper Shrine and Lower Shrine branches compiled the first and only genealogy that included all the Zous in Wuge in their history. Two prefaces related to this edition. One of them was written by Sun Gongji 孫拱極, a bachelor (shujishi 庶吉士) of the Hanlin Academy from Lianjiang 連江, Fujian. The preface mentions that the ancestor of the Zous was granted imperial titles because he “defended the country and protected the people.”86 The other preface was written by a group of editors of the genealogy and does not mention Zougong at all.87 The editors of the 1764 edition of the Wuge genealogy were apparently unaware of the important texts written by Zou Dinghuang.

The problem of Zougong continued to trouble the Zous in Wuge in the twentieth century. The 1947 edition of their genealogy includes an essay called “A New Evidential Study of the Origin and Development” written by Zou Wenjun 文峻. In this essay, Wenjun summarizes the history of his surname and the genealogy and life of Zou Yinglong. What bothered him is the hagiography of Zougong, which does not, as we have seen, fit very well with the biography of Zou Yinglong. Wenjun calls into question the information given by Zou Zhengguo for the same reason. He maintains that if Zougong had ever been a god, the divine intervention must have happened in the late Song rather than in the earlier periods.88

It was not until in the 1990s, when a lineage member with academic historical training compiled an updated genealogy, that the question was settled temporarily, if not permanently. The editor of the new genealogy, Zou Risheng 日昇, was also the editor of the new Liancheng County Gazetteer.89 As a local historian of some note, he is familiar with the history of China in general and the history of western Fujian in particular. He visited the Zous in Taining and checked their genealogy, from which he copied some texts into the genealogy that he compiled, including the important preface written by He Daomin. He tried to clarify the life story of Zou Yinglong and, like Zou Wenjun, called into question the hagiography of Zougong. As one might expect, he did not cast doubt on the relationship between his ancestor, Liulang, and Zou Yinglong. On the

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86 ZSZP (1947, Wuge), juan shou, 14a–14b.
87 Ibid., 15a–15b.
88 Ibid., 6a–8b.
89 Zou Risheng, ed., Liancheng xianzhi (Beijing: Qunzhong chubanshe, 1993).
contrary, his manipulation of the sources and events ensured that there was little room for debating this issue.90

From the late Ming to the 1990s, the editors of almost every edition of the Zou genealogy took pains to document their founding ancestor and (re)compile the early history of their lineage. The connection was first made between the early ancestors and a local patron god, Zougong. Then this supposed founding ancestor, Zougong, was transformed from a patron god dating back to the late Tang to a high official who ranked first in the civil service examination and received considerable imperial honors in the Southern Song. The question that thus arises is not whether these statements are true or false but when and why they were made: The reconstructions of the life story of the early ancestors given by successive generations of the Zous, whether they conformed to or were distant from “historical fact” in its ordinary sense, are themselves interesting historical facts that need to be interpreted by social historians.

The compilation and recompilation of the early genealogies are closely related to the process of the lineage building of the Zous. This process involved a shift of lineage members’ focus from their immediate ancestors to the distant ancestors who were the common ancestors of all lineage members. It also involved bridging the gap between immediate ancestors and distant ancestors. The genealogy of these ancestors should be put in order and changed into written form. However, while this explains why the genealogies were compiled, it does not explain why the process took the form described here—that is, why was Zougong chosen as the founding ancestor? Why was it necessary to draw a connection between Zougong and Zou Yinglong? To answer this question, we need to review local politics in Sibao from the mid-Ming through the Qing.

Thanks to the initiatives of Ma Hetu and Ma Xun, the Mas must have become a relatively powerful kinship organization in the second half of the fifteenth century, while the Zous had not yet become powerful. In 1550, a land dispute broke out between Zou Linmao 林茂, the father of Zou Lichong, and Ma Tianxi 天錫, a member of the Ma family of Mawu. The case was brought to the yamen and cost Linmao more than 80 taels of silver.91 Twenty-two years later, the Zous of Wuge had some trouble with their household registration allegedly due to the intervention of a member

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91 Ibid. (1947, Wuge), 1/6a.
of the Ma family. These episodes show that confrontations between the Mas and the Zous began in the mid-Ming, if not earlier, and that the Zous were at a disadvantage. In view of this, by adopting an important patron god as their founding ancestor, the Zous attempted to counteract the power of the Mas in symbolic terms.

If the adoption of Zougong into their genealogy was due to the Zous’ disadvantaged position in their confrontation with the Mas, the connection between Zougong and Zou Yingling was probably due to the relative lack of success of the Zous in the civil service examinations. After the Ming-Qing transition, the rise of the printing industry benefited not only the Mas but also the Zous. With the wealth accumulated from the book business and other commercial activities, the Zous, especially those in Wuge, became a prosperous and powerful descent group. In 1778, the Zous in Wuge opened a new market in their village, which adopted the same schedules as the Laijiaxu market (see Chapter 9). This was an affront not only to the Mas’ monopoly over the Laijiaxu market but also to their authority in local society. The rivalry of the Zous and the Mas continued into the late Qing and culminated in a series of feuds in the Daoguang era (1821–1850), 1900, 1938, and even 1963. While the Zous managed to become a relatively strong descent group in the Qing period, they were only able to produce a few juren (most of them military juren), and none of them became jinshi (see Table 5.2). Making a connection between Zougong and Zou Yinglong, a member of the gentry par excellence, may thus have been an important social strategy for the Zous, who were struggling not only to contest the power of the Mas but also to build their own power base in Sibao.

The case of the Zous provides rich information on the meanings of lineage building and genealogy compilation in late imperial and modern Sibao. It shows that the compilation of genealogies was an indispensable aspect of lineage building. As a sociocultural process, it was essentially “a shrewd interweaving of genealogical principles and literati culture to create, maintain, and transform local political and economic

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92 Ibid., 34/4a.
93 MSZP (1993, Mawu), 3 ji, 61–62; 4 ji, 80; 5 ji, 130–131, 141, 204–205; Ma Chuanyong 馬傳永, “Liancheng xian Sibao xiang Mawu cun minjian xisu” 連城縣四堡鄉馬屋村民間習俗 (The Customs of Ma Village of Sibao Township in Liancheng County), in Yang Yanjie, ed., Minxi de chengxiang miaohui yu cunluo wenhua, 314. All the feuds were triggered by acts of destruction or the protection of the geomancy of the grave of one of the most important ancestors of the Mas, Qianwulang (G6), which is located at a strategic point between Wuge and Mawu.
environments.” It was, that is, an important social and cultural strategy in the contest over local control and the pursuit of authority.

Table 5.2  Number of degree and title holders and officials of the Mas and the Zous in Sibao.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period/Era</th>
<th>Jinshi</th>
<th>Juren</th>
<th>Wuju</th>
<th>Gongsheng</th>
<th>Liyuan</th>
<th>Lishi</th>
<th>Fengzeng</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>0/0</td>
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<td>1/4</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>2/0</td>
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<td>0/0</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>2/0</td>
</tr>
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<td>0/0</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>0/0</td>
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<td>1/12</td>
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<td>0/0</td>
<td>0/0</td>
<td>2/0</td>
<td>9/12</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>4/1</td>
<td>1/16</td>
<td>25/3</td>
<td>2/4</td>
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<td>4/0</td>
<td>37/24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CTXZ (1940), 14/3a–16b.

Note: Lishi 例仕: official by purchase. [M = Ma; Z = Zou].

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95 The number of degree and title holders in this table are sometimes different from those in Table 2.1. These discrepancies are due to two factors. First, Table 2.1 counts the number of degree and title holders among the Lower Shrine of the Zous, while Table 5.2 counts those of the Zous of Wuge as a whole. Second, Table 2.1 is based on the genealogy of the Lower Shrine Zous, while Table 5.2 is based on the Changting County Gazetteer.
The building of lineages was a complex sociocultural process that involves not only the search for an appropriate founding ancestor but also the introduction of a new symbolic system and modification of the socioeconomic structure. After ornate ancestral halls were built, local cultural elites introduced a new form of ritual practice, which had a distinctive structure, texts, and specialists. Meanwhile, lineage building also introduced corporate ownership of property and, in this way, led to a redistribution of socioeconomic resources.

Ancestral Rites

In *Family Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian*, Zheng Zhenman shows how late imperial Fujian society was transformed by lineage building. This transformation had at least three aspects: descent-line ideology, social control, and property relations. First, building a lineage is a process in which Neo-Confucian ideology, especially the ethics of the descent line, was popularized in the sense that lineage ideology, originally prescribed only for elites, now permeated society. Second, the localized lineage developed in a period when state-society relations were being transformed. Because of fiscal and administrative problems, it became more and more difficult for the late imperial state to exert effective control over society. The development of the lineage was one result of the growing autonomy of local society that followed. Finally, the process of lineage building was accompanied by the corporatization of property relations. By means of donation and special arrangements at the time of family division, more and more property became corporately owned by the lineage.\(^1\) These aspects provide the basic framework for studying the complicated relations between gentry, the state, lineage formation, and local society. Zheng has provided a detailed analysis of these aspects,

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\(^1\) Zheng, *Family Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian*, 268–324.
which I will not repeat here. Instead, I focus on two issues that have not received sufficient attention: the rituals introduced by lineage building and the implications of the corporatization of lineage property.

When they had ancestral halls erected for their ancestors, Ma Hetu and Ma Xun not only enshrined the tablets of their ancestors in the hall but also introduced a series of ancestral rites. The lineage regulations drafted by Ma Xun listed seven requirements. First, it specified that the ancestral rites were to be performed in accordance with the *Family Rituals* of Zhu Xi. Second, they outlined who could participate. Third, they required that whenever the rites were performed in the ancestral hall, every participant had to be in appropriate attire. Those in mourning dress could not participate in the rites, but if they had to, they had to do it in “auspicious suits” (*jifu* 吉服). Fourth, the rites of sweeping the graves of immediate ancestors were not permitted until rites of sacrifice had been performed in the hall and at the graves of early ancestors—which was meant to emphasize the importance of collective sacrifices performed at the ancestral hall. Fifth, the junior members were required to pay respect to senior members, who would have seats of honor when attending the banquet held in the hall. Sixth, a bride was required to be introduced to the ancestors in the hall three days after the wedding, unless she is the daughter of a bondservant. The groom risked being sent to the county *yamen* for punishment if he insisted on doing so. By drawing up these regulations, Ma Xun was clearly attempting to enshrine the orthodox style of performing rituals, though they did not mention the role of *lisheng* in the rituals.

Later, the descendants of Ma Xun systematized the ancestral rites and set up what they called the “Sacrificial Rites of the Ancestral Hall” (*zongci sidian* 宗祠祀典). They attempted to regulate everything related to the ancestral hall, from the maintenance of the hall to the management of corporate property, from the installation of the tablets to the procedures of the ancestral rites, which I discuss here. According to the “Sacrificial Rites,” the rites should be performed in the ancestral hall five times a year: on Yuandan 元旦 (the lunar New Year’s Day), Qingming, the first day of the eighth month, the winter solstice, and Chuxi (the lunar New Year’s Eve)—of which the rite performed on Qingming was the most important.

Ten days before Qingming, the lineage branch on duty—that is, the branch in charge of taking care of the hall—put up a notice declaring

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the schedule of the ancestral rite. It invited the elders who were over sixty years old and the head of every branch to participate in the rite and assigned the roles of chief sacrifier, assistant sacrifiers, and other participants, probably including *lisheng*. On the day before Qingming, the branch on duty cleaned the hall and slaughtered the sacrificial animals there after burning incense. At midnight on Qingming, the branch on duty hired someone to notify every branch of the schedule of the rites by beating a gong. This was repeated an hour later. Upon hearing the sound of the gongs, the descendants of every branch went to the hall in full attire. The sacrificial rites were performed between 1:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m. to the accompaniment of music. Afterward, the sacrificial pork was portioned out to all of the participants. Except for the musicians, cooks, the persons in charge of laying out the offerings, and the persons in charge of watching over the rites (*jiuyi* 糾儀), all of those who played an important part in the rite, sacrifiers for example, were students and scholars (see below). Only if there were no students or scholars could the virtuous lineage members who were neither students nor scholars be invited to perform the rite. At noon, the lineage members performed the rite of sweeping the graves of their early ancestors.

The rites performed on the first day of the eighth month and winter solstice were more or less similar to those on Qingming. The rites on Chuxi were performed only by the branch on duty. After the rites finished, over ten members selected from the branch stayed in the hall until the next morning, in a practice called “seeing the old year out and the new year in” (*shousui* 守歲). The next day, the lunar New Year’s Day, the descendants of the branch on duty went to the hall to turn over their duties to the next branch. At 7:00 a.m., they performed the rites of sacrifice. The members of other branches thereafter went to pay their respects to the ancestors and were offered tea, and afterward the hall was closed.³

The sacrificial rites performed on Qingming were conducted by a chief sacrifier—selected from among lineage members who were degree or title holders and lived in a household of three or more generations—and several assistant sacrifiers—who were also degree or title holders—under the guidance of four *lisheng*. The rites were similar to the ritual format discussed in Chapter 4. At the beginning of the rites, the chief sacrifier presented incense and lit candles. After the drum was beaten three times and music was played, the sacrifices were presented. Then the sacrificial

text was recited, which was followed by the second and third presentation of sacrifices. Then, the ancestors were urged to eat. The rites lasted about half an hour. After the rites, the assistant sacrifier, the elders, and the holders of degrees or titles performed the Three Kowtows Ritual before their ancestors.⁴

In addition to these sacrificial rites, every month on the first (shuo 朔) and the fifteenth day (wang 望), the branch on duty would clean the hall, light the oil lamp inside, burn incense, and present tea and rice to the ancestors.⁵ The difference between this regular rites and the sacrificial rites is that the former were performed by the caretakers alone, while the latter were performed by the chief sacrifier under the guidance of the lisheng.

Ma Xun claimed that his contemporaries cared only about their deceased parents and grandparents and did not have much interest in distant ancestors. If this is true, the construction of ancestral halls and the worship of distant and early ancestors introduced a new way of performing ancestral rites, for ancestor worship of this form mandated the existence of lisheng, who were usually not necessary when offerings were to one’s deceased parents and grandparents. Therefore, through the popularization of Neo-Confucian descent-line ethics, a new way of performing rites and thus the inclusion of lisheng and their texts were introduced and added to the existing ritual corpus.

Finally, the rites of sacrificing to ancestors became such an integral part of lineage affairs that ritual regulations, ritual formats, and key sacrificial texts were often included in genealogies. The Ma Family Genealogy of the Lower Shrine, for example, includes five sacrificial essays dedicated to Ma Xun, probably written at the time of his death. Also included in the genealogy are eight sacrificial essays dedicated to other Ma ancestors.⁶ Similarly, the Wu Family Genealogy of Jiantou includes an “illustration on offering sacrifices” (jisi tu 祭祀圖) and several tables of the system of mourning dresses (fuzhi 服制) in the first volume, as well as regulations on offering sacrifices that specify the timing, fees, offerings, feast, and participants in the sacrifices performed at the new year, Qingming, and on the winter solstice, to which two lisheng were to be invited. They could feast with other participants, including government students, national university students, elders, and sacrifiers.⁷

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⁵ MSZP (1993, Mawu), 2 ji, 14.
⁷ WSZP (1899, Upper Shrine branch), juan shou, 7bff; 8/1a–2a.
The Zou Family Genealogy of Yangzibian Village includes two interesting documents. The first document specifies the ritual services that a Buddhist temple next to the village, the Jifu Temple (積福庵), should provide for the Zous. The temple received economic benefits from the Zous and, in return, was responsible for taking care of the tablets of seven Zou ancestors. The second document lists the tablets, portraits, and ritual utensils in the lineage's ancestral hall and explains when and how they were produced.8

Other lineages also include ritual formats in their genealogy. The genealogy of the Upper Shrine Mas includes two ritual formats prescribed respectively for the sacrifice performed in the lineage's ancestral hall and at ancestors’ graves. It specifies that the rite in the ancestral hall be directed by four lisheng and the one at the graves by two lisheng. The genealogy also includes a ritual format for the rite performed when ancestor’s tablets are installed in the ancestral hall as well as a model sacrificial essay prepared for the rite. We also find the “the model beginning of a sacrificial essay” (jiwen tou 祭文頭) in the genealogy, which claims the date of sacrifice and lists the people or lineage who present offerings and is meant to be added at the beginning of a sacrificial essay.9

The inclusion of all these texts in a genealogy testifies to the crucial role of the ancestral rites in the process of lineage building. It suggests that these texts—either as seen in a genealogy or in lisheng’s ritual manuals—and the rites within which those texts were used, like the ancestral halls where the rites were performed, were actually the products of the lineage-building process beginning in the mid-Ming period. But the rites performed by lisheng and their textual tradition also facilitated the creation and perpetuation of lineage organization.

Land, Lineage, and Local Elite

In late imperial Sibao, the building of a lineage was not only a process in which a new form of ritual tradition was introduced to the countryside; it was also a process during which property, especially landed property, was increasingly passed from the hands of individuals or families to larger

8 “Jifu an fancha ji” 積福庵梵剎記 (Record of the Buddhist Temple of Accumulating Blessings), in ZSZP (1946, Yangzibian), juan shou, 1a–1b; “Chongjing tang xu zhi qimin ji” 崇敬堂續置器皿記 (Record of Utensils Bought Additionally of the Chongjing Tang), in ibid., 1a–2b.

9 MSDZZP, 1/16a–16b.
collectivities. This corporatization of property had a great impact on late imperial Sibao society by modifying the class structure, community relations, and the local elite’s pattern of dominance.

Scholars of pre-land reform South Chinese society are often impressed by the high percentage of cooperatively owned land. On the eve of land reform in 1951, 6,789 mu or over 51 percent of all arable land in the Sibao District (qu 区) of Liancheng County was “collectively rotated land” (gong-gluntian 公輪田)—the land held by lineage organizations, temples, and other local institutions. In contrast, only 1.75 percent belonged to twelve landlord households. Most of the corporate land fell into the category of lineage estates. The situation in the Fifth District (present-day Changxiao Town and Litian Township) of Qingliu County, which, as mentioned in Chapter 2, is part of the Sibao region, was similar (see Table 6.1). Of about 23,000 mu of arable land of this district, 46 percent belonged to lineage estates, and less than 9 percent belonged to individual landlords.

Given the high percentage of corporately owned land in Sibao, it is not surprising that there was also a high tenancy rate. On the eve of land reform, a total of 7,787 mu of land was rented out, either by individual landlords or by corporate organizations. Middle and poor peasants rented 2,794.72 mu and 4,732.26 mu, respectively. In other words, 83.98 percent of the Sibao population (29.8% of middle peasants and 54.18% of poor peasants) rented 96.66 percent of the land available to them for cultivation.
Although the precise rate of tenancy cannot be calculated, the rate was certainly high. What is noteworthy about the high tenancy rate is that most of the tenants dealt with corporate rather than individual owners.

The high percentage of corporately owned land was the result of social and economic transformations in the Ming and Qing period. It was principally the result of the rise of the handicraft industry and commercial activities, especially the printing industry, which provided the necessary capital to purchase land, and was closely related to lineage building. The ancestral rites performed regularly at ancestral halls and graves necessitated the gathering of collective reserve funds that the members of the lineage or branch could draw upon at the time of performing rites. Thus from the late Ming onward, if not earlier, the setting aside of some property to serve this function at the time of family division became a custom.

Table 6.1 Ownership of arable land in the fifth districts of Qingliu County on the eve of land reform (1952).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative village</th>
<th>Total arable land (mu)</th>
<th>Land owned by individual landlords</th>
<th>Land owned by lineage estates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In mu</td>
<td>In percentage</td>
<td>In mu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liliao 李廖</td>
<td>2,545.85</td>
<td>452.72</td>
<td>17.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liuxi 留西</td>
<td>2,536.25</td>
<td>103.95</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tianping 田坪</td>
<td>2,235.59</td>
<td>304.52</td>
<td>13.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shahe 沙河</td>
<td>2,319.13</td>
<td>410.49</td>
<td>17.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litian</td>
<td>4,690.50</td>
<td>253.00</td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changxiao</td>
<td>3,323.70</td>
<td>174.24</td>
<td>5.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiangfang</td>
<td>2,869.58</td>
<td>233.98</td>
<td>8.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huangshikeng</td>
<td>2,397.47</td>
<td>37.71</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22,918.07</td>
<td>1,970.61</td>
<td>8.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Diwu qu gexiang youguan tugai chengguo tongji biao” (Statistical Table of Achievements of Land Reform in Each Village of the Fifth District), in Qingliu xian tugai dang’an (Qingliu County Land Reform Archives) (Qingliu xian dang’an guan, 1952), 15–67, n.p.

Notes: (a) The figures given here include land in other villages owned by individuals or corporate groups of the village concerned. Land in the village owned by individuals or corporate groups in other villages is not included in these figures.
(b) The figures for lineage estates given here include a little “reserved land” (jidong tian 機動田), that is, the land set aside for specific purposes such as the maintenance of bridges and irrigation works.
The percentage of land set aside could be fairly high, sometimes over 70 percent. The land was used for a variety of purposes but its basic function was to, by renting it out, serve as a collective reserve fund for the performance of ancestral rites.

Rent resistance, which regularly recurred in Tingzhou since the late Ming, may also have contributed to the high amount of corporate land. A group would be better able to deal with rebellious tenants than an individual. Thus at the time of family division, two Zou brothers from Wuge decided not to break up their estate in Ninghua and Qing Counties, from which they earned annual rent of 3,000 dan, or around 150,000 kilograms, of rice. Their decision was made on the grounds that “the land was distant and the tenants obstinate [wangen 頑梗] and that it would be difficult to collect the rent.” During the Ming-Qing transition, Ninghua and Qingliu were among centers of rent resistance in South China. Apparently, if the land had been divided, it would have been impossible to collect the rent because of the tenants’ “obstinacy.” So this exemplifies why owners were motivated to keep their land undivided. The corporatization of land happened gradually, and at the beginning, the amount was negligible. Gradually, it accumulated to the point that by the eve of land reform in the early 1950s the amount of land in corporate hands was very high.

How, then, did the corporatization of landed property affect the condition of peasants in Sibao? First, because of the social, economic, and political power of the two large lineages, it would have been very difficult for tenants to launch any kind of collective action such as rent resistance even if they had wanted to do so. But it is likely that many peasants did not want to because as members of the lineage, they were given the first opportunity to rent from the lineage estates, where rent was lower than it was on private land. While rent on private land was usually 50 percent or

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13 When Zou Ximeng’s property was divided, a large amount of land was set aside for collective purposes. See ZSZP (1947, Wuge), 36/1b–12a.
14 Of the five documents of family division collected from Sibao, the size of property set-aside out of the total property ranges from 17% to 73%. The high percentage is not surprising. For similar custom in northern Fujian, see Zheng Zhenman, “Qing zhi Min-guo Minbei liujian fenguan de fenxi” 清至民國閩北六件分關的分析 (An Analysis of Six Family Division Documents from Qing and Republican Northern Fujian), Zhongguo shehui jingji shi yanjiu (1984) 3, 32–36.
15 ZSZP (1911, Wuge), 22/4a–4b.
more of the annual output of the land, rental of corporately owned land was usually 30 percent or less of annual output.

This rate was confirmed by Zou Guangjin 光錦, a retired teacher in Wuge who rented 5 mu of lineage-estate land before 1949, and Zou Hengshan 恆善, a Wuge peasant who rented a little more than 5 mu. Rent could be even lower, as indicated by Ma Xuyu 马序育, a Mawu villager who rented land from two different lineage estates: The first plot, of 9 tiao 挑, rented for 2.2 tiao of rice per year; the second plot, of 12 tiao, was rented for 6 tiao a year. If the annual output for each tiao of land was 1.6 tiao of rice (the average output of middle-grade land), then the rental rate for the first plot was 15 percent, and the rate for the second plot was 31 percent. Zou Hengfu 恆撫, a Wuge villager who regularly rented about 50 tiao of land from a lineage estate, states that the rental rate for corporate land was usually 0.3 silver dollar for each tiao of land. According to his estimate, the rent was less than 10 percent of the annual output. Zou Jinfu 金福 of Wuge supports this account, giving the normal rental rate for lineage land as 10 percent of the harvest.

Under these circumstances, it is perhaps not surprising that peasants were eager to rent lineage land. Ma Jiashu 家樹, a retired teacher in Mawu, reports that his father told him, “it is more profitable to rent from the lineage estate than to cultivate one’s own land, because tenants do not have to pay taxes on the land they rent. Once one is able to rent some plots of the lineage estate, one should never give up the tenancy rights to other people.” Indeed, because of the low rental rates, some villagers preferred to rent out their privately owned land and, at the same time, rent lineage land for cultivation. Zou Risheng’s family, for example, rented out 80 to 90 tiao of its 120 to 130 tiao of land, while cultivating several plots rented from the lineage estate.

Furthermore, during times of crop failure or drought, the rent on lineage-estate land would almost certainly be reduced. As Zou Guangjin notes, “if there was a bad harvest, the kinsmen-tenants could pay less rent, because the managers of the lineage estates were generous.” Here clearly the lineage context worked to the advantage of the tenants. Zou Hengshan

17 A tiao equals to 0.33 to 0.5 mu of land.
18 Interview with Zou Hengshan, November 11, 1995; interview with Ma Xuyu, November 29, 1995; interview with Zou Hengfu, November 13, 1995; interview with Zou Jinfu, November 13, 1995.
19 Interview with Ma Jiashu, November 25, 1995; interview with Zou Risheng, November 12, 1995.
explains, “Whenever there was a crop failure, everyone would discuss how much the rent should be reduced. They did so because they were all descendants of the same ancestor. They were all brothers.”

The low rental rate on corporately owned land should not be surprising. The relative advantages for those who rented lineage land in Sibao was not unique in south China. In Nanching, a village close to Guangzhou, C.K. Yang tells us at the turn of the twentieth century the Wong clan possessed a sizable amount of lineage land. At that time, “the clan demanded no deposit from the tenant, the rent of the clan land was less than 10 per cent of the yield, and the right of renting the clan land was shared equally among all males of the clan.”20 This system was still in effect in 1949 in Po Tsun (Baocun), a neighboring village about 4 miles from Nanjing. There, the collective land of the Wu clan comprised about half of that village’s total cultivated area, and each male descendant was entitled to rent 1.5 mu of land from the lineage’s land at the nominal annual rent of 40 catties of unhusked rice per mu, “the equivalent of about 7 per cent of the average yield of the irrigated fields there.”21 When reading this passage, we should keep in mind that the rent on private land was usually 40 to 50 percent of the yield.22

Similarly, in Luts’un (Lucun), Yunnan, Hsiao-tung Fei (Fei Xiaotong) and Chih-i Chang (Zhang Zhiyi) found that 27 percent of all land owned by members of the village was owned by social groups such as clans, clubs, and temples. According to them, the “tenants of clan lands are in a particularly fortunate situation, for, insomuch as they are members of the owning group, it is virtually impossible to alienate them from their farms.” The poorer households “have a traditional right of occupancy” and, though they are theoretically bound to pay the fees fixed for that privilege, the manager of clan land would have difficulty in dispossessing them for delinquency in payment or for any other reasons. His freedom of action was “limited both by the sanctity of kinship ties and by his fear that incurring the hostility of members of his clan will result in the loss of his job.”23 Therefore, lineage members not only could rent lineage land at a lower

21 Ibid. A catty equals to 0.5 kilogram.
22 Ibid., 49.
price but also enjoyed greater security in terms of their rental contract. It is no wonder that lineage land was attractive to lineage members.

I do not want to exaggerate the benefits of corporate land for the peasants. Not all kinsmen had equal access to the rental of this land; a few informants complained that “lineage land was hard to rent,” doubtless because their was great demand for it. In the absence of benevolent lineage leadership, poorer branches of a lineage might not be able to enjoy the advantages of rental from lineage estates. And unscrupulous estate managers apparently did occasionally exact fees from some of the lineage tenants. Finally, economic dependency on the lineage often entailed acceptance of the social and moral authority of the lineage branch leaders. Both the Zou and Ma leaders had the power to reprimand and even to evict members who violated the family rules from the lineage village.

There is also evidence that non-lineage members could also take advantage of the benefits of renting lineage land. In a report on western Fujian lineage estates in the 1940s, Zhong Qisheng 鍾其生 explains that when land was rented to non-lineage members, the terms of tenancy could be either fixed or unfixed, including the possibility of permanent tenancy. “As for an unfixed tenancy agreement,” Zhong points out, “although it could be terminated at any time, tenants rarely canceled the arrangement because the rent in such cases was usually relatively low.” Moreover, “because the land was owned collectively by the lineage, it was not managed as closely as privately owned land; as long as the tenant did not get behind in his rent payments, it was easy to extend the term of tenancy.” Although evidence from Sibao does not describe this difference between non-lineage members’ rental of lineage land and their rental from private landlords, it does nonetheless suggest circumstances like those summarized by Zhong. Zou Hengshan, for example, explained that because lineage land was public, the rent rate for both lineage members and non-lineage members was open to negotiation; when rent payments were due, the amount of rent could be discussed between the rent collector and tenants.

If such cases did exist, they were rare. Generally speaking, when tenants were not members of the lineage, they paid the same rate for corporately owned land as for land owned by individuals. Thus a differentiation was created between those who benefited from access to the corporately

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24 Zhong Qisheng, “Lun Fujian zongzu tudi” 論福建宗族土地 (On Lineage Estates in Fujian), Shehui kexue 社會科學 5.2 (Fuzhou, 1949), n.p.
owned land and those who did not. Since almost all Sibao lineages were local lineages, most of the beneficiaries were fellow villagers, while the nonbeneficiaries were usually members of other villages. So, the corporatization of landed property led to the differentiation of villages. In this process, large localized lineages that were able to accumulate a large amount of land, such as the Mas of Mawu and the Zous of Wuge, became dominant lineages, while the land of small lineage villages, such as Yanwu, found its way into the hands of larger lineage communities. For example, statistics show that on the eve of land reform, about 922 mu or 47 percent of all arable land in Shuangquan was owned by corporate entities and individuals of its neighboring villages.25

Another implication of this finding is that the corporatization of landed property affected the pattern of dominance of the local elite. Because more and more land found its way into the lineage estates, the percentage of land owned by individual landholders consequently became lower, so that on the eve of the land reform it became very difficult to find a non-corporate landlord in even the large villages. This implies that while landed property was still an important criterion for social status, many people had to look for other paths to social advancement. For example, lending of money and grain may have started to play a more important role when land was increasingly corporatized because it became an important means of social dominance. In Sibao District in Liancheng, where twelve landlord households together owned only 266 mu of land,26 quite a few people were able to become rich through lending grain and money. The most popular lending and borrowing method was participation in a loan society (hui 会). Space limitations prevent a full explanation here of how these societies worked.27 Suffice it to say here that borrowers from the society usually paid 20 to 40 percent interest a year, which made it profitable for lenders to invest grain or money in the society.

26 “Liancheng xian Sibao qu ge jieceng tugai qian tudi zhanyou ji shiyong jiben qingkuang tongji biao” 連城縣四堡區各階層土改前土地占有及使用基本情况統計表 (Statistical Table of the Basic Facts of Land Ownership and Usage of Each Class before Land Reform in Sibao District in Liancheng County), in Liancheng tugai dang’an (1951), 1–29, n.p.
According to a survey from the early 1950s, two Wuge villagers made considerable profits from this business. One villager participated in ten “grain societies” (guhui 穀會). He invested 100 dan of grain in those societies and received 40 dan of grain in interest a year (an annual interest rate of 40 percent). Another villager invested 40 dan of grain and received 12 dan of grain in interest. Although most investors may not have been able to invest as much grain as the first person, the number of persons involved in loan societies was strikingly high. The survey reports that more than 90 percent of residents of Sibao District were involved in these societies. The survey also mentioned that the investors included individual investors such as “landlords,” “local bosses,” “rich peasants,” and “those who managed lineage estates” and institutional investors such as lineage estates, god worshipping societies (shenhui 神會), a Christian church, the Society of Forestry Industries (linyehui 林業會), and so forth.28 As an institution that was so deeply embedded in the rural life of Sibao, it undoubtedly provided an important means of social dominance.

Finally, the corporatization of land created a new means of dominance by necessitating managers of lineage estates. An ancestral hall was usually called a “public hall” (gongtang), so the managers of lineage estates were called “the managers of public halls” (guan gongtang de 管公堂的). Not all lineage estates needed managers—only those with a large amount of land. A survey conducted in 1952 reports that two forms of management of lineage estates existed in Liukeng, Chitugang, and Xikeng before land reform. Large estates were managed by “landlords” and “big households” (dahu 大戶), who collected rents from tenants. Small estates did not need managers. They rotated among the beneficiaries of the estates, who could either cultivate the land or lease the land to other people.29 One of the lineage estate managers was classified as a “landlord” in the land reform, and it was reported that he had 20 mu of land (including the corporate land that he had allegedly “dominated”).30 In Changxiao, the manager of the village’s largest lineage estate was Li Tongfang 李桐芳, who, on the eve of land reform, lived with his wife, two sons and their wives and owned

30 “Liuxi xiang tudi gaige fang’an” 留茜鄉土地改革方案 (Plan for Land Reform in Liuxi Village) (March 4, 1952), in ibid., 15/75.
about 21 mu of land and collected rent of about 14 mu of corporate land. He rented out 19 mu and farmed the remaining 2 mu. He received about 15 dan of rice in rent from his tenants. The lineage estate, on which he “paid an extremely small amount of grain rent,” had an annual output of 1,508 kg of rice. In addition, Li Tongfang also “practiced usury.” On a loan of over 10 dan of grain, he received 6 dan of interest annually. Even for such a well-to-do family corporate land was important.

Zhong Qisheng provides more detailed information on managers and their responsibilities. He contends that since lineage estates were owned corporately, the position of manager was necessary and it was usually occupied by lineage heads or branch heads. Managers were either elected by lineage members at the time of the performance of ancestral rites or appointed by lineage elders. No matter who occupied the position, the incumbent was usually a member of the gentry or a wealthy individual from the lineage branch with the greatest number of members. After taking the position, the incumbent would manage the estate for the rest of his life and was “not only in charge of renting out the estate, changing tenants [qidian 起佃], collecting and storing rent grain, but also was routinely in charge of carrying out the task of spending the income.” These responsibilities allowed a manager access to resources that were inaccessible to most of his fellow villagers. Zhong reports that “few [of the managers] could be said to have been faultless. Graft and embezzlement were widespread.”

Most of these reports suggest that lineage estates were managed by landlords and rich people. Access to collective resources not only provided the manager with a new means of dominance but left him open to being condemned as a “landlord” in the land reform movement. So it is important to understand not only how a landlord obtained the position of manager of a lineage estate but also how management of a lineage estate made the man a landlord. However, what I want to emphasize here is not that the social structure in pre-revolutionary Sibao was unique but, rather, that the rise of this structure was a result of the complex sociocultural process of lineage building, in particular the introduction of the new method of ancestor worship.

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31 “Qingliu xian tudi gaige jieji chengfen pizhun dengji biao: Li Tongfang” 清流縣土地改革階級成份批准登記表: 李桐芳 (Registration Table of Class Element Certification in Land Reform in Qingliu County: Li Tongfang), in ibid., 15/70.
32 Zhong, “Lun Fujian zongzu tudi.”
The Limits of Lineage Building

In their lineage building projects, Ma Hetu and Ma Xun attempted to construct a kinship organization that instilled harmony and affection among its members. By employing several illuminating metaphors, they emphasized the importance of unity and corporation for their relatives' welfare. Their ideas were inherited by their Sibao followers in lineage building, and most of those who compiled genealogy and constructed ancestral hall repeated their rhetoric. However, under this popular rhetoric, we can detect social practices that reveal different mentalities toward lineage and show limits of lineage building projects initiated by Ma Hetu and Ma Xun.

Before visiting Sibao again in the summer of 2001, I was told that a villager in Wuge had made an accusation against Zou Sheng (pseudonym), one of my most important informants. He claimed that Zou Sheng, taking advantage of his position as the chief editor of the *Zou Family Genealogy*, slandered him by mischaracterizing his status in the lineage. An adopted son of a descendant of the ninth son of Zou Ximeng, the villager lodged the charges against Zou Sheng because his demand to change his entry in the genealogy from “adopted son” to “son” had been refused. During my visit, I learned that the case had “broken up” the lineage. The adopted man, together with several dozen households of his own branch, compiled a separate genealogy of their own. But not every household in his branch followed him. Some still had the patriline of their ancestors included in the genealogy edited by Zou Sheng.

This was not an isolated occurrence. The first time I visited Sibao, I found that a similar incidence had already occurred earlier. The descendants of Liheng (禮衡) (G11), one of the brothers of Lichong, decided to compile a genealogy of their own branch after a dispute with Lichong’s branch.33 Earlier in the 1990s, when the Zous of Wuge planned to compile a genealogy of the entire lineage, the Lower Shrine withdrew from the project on the ground that the disputes within the Upper Shrine could not be settled.34 As a result, the project to update the genealogy of a single descent group ended in the compilation of four separate genealogies. This result could have been predicted based on the history of the Zous and

34 Ibid. (1994, Wuge, Lower Shrine). This source, however, does mention what disputes they are.
other descent groups of Sibao, as it was only an extreme expression of age-old conflicts between different branches. Indeed, ever since the Zous of Wuge began to compile genealogies in the late Ming, only once had a complete genealogy that included all of the Zous been compiled.

The Mas were even worse. Throughout their history the two branches of the Upper Shrine and the Lower Shrine have never produced an overall genealogy that included both branches.

The reluctance to compile a comprehensive genealogy is one area of conflict. Worse still, some villagers regarded the compilation of genealogy as an unimportant, if not unnecessary, project. Zou Shengmai, when he was updating his branch’s genealogy, complained that “the stupid among [our] kinsmen, preoccupied [themselves] with their immediate interests [niu yu muqian zhi li 獭于目前之利],” “saw the [compilation of] the genealogy as a business of no urgency” and “thought that it was useless to waste money on the carving [of the blocks of a genealogy] and placed various obstacles in the way.”35 We do not know exactly whom Shengmai blamed here, but his problem seems clear. Compiling and printing a genealogy are expensive, and they would be complicated further if many people did not consider doing so urgent. Shengmai may have exaggerated his troubles, but it is clear that not all his kinsmen were as interested as he was in updating the genealogy.

This situation was not limited to genealogies. Lineage estates reveal the same dilemma. The case of the Upper Shrine branch of Wuge is an example. The ancestors of the first ten generations of this agnatic group received much smaller estates than some ancestors of the later generations from their descendants. Thus 7.39 mu of land was dedicated to the founding ancestor, Zougong. Qingfu received 0.81 mu. His son, Dingfu, received 4.86 mu. Dingfu’s grandson, Linmao, received 1.28 mu.36 In contrast, Ximeng of the fourteenth generation had about 100 mu.37 Some distant ancestors of certain lineages did receive large amounts of land. Wulang 伍郎, the founding ancestor of the Lis of Changxiao, is reported to have received an estate of over 200 mu of land. The early ancestors (of the first eleven generations) of the lineages in Liuxi xiang received 102.50 mu of land, in contrast to the 160 mu of land dedicated to later ancestors.38 But even there the distribution was unbalanced.

35 Ibid. (1911, Wuge), 21/19a–19b.
37 Ibid., 36/1a–13a. Thirteen plots of land are not given precise acreage.
38 “Liuxi xiang gongzuozu di si ci gongzuo huibao.”
Early ancestors not only often received smaller estates, they seldom received sufficient important place in ancestral worship, to the extent that the majority of lineages in Sibao appear very fragmented. In Wuge, no ancestral hall was dedicated to Liulang, the ancestor who first settled in the village. His tablets were placed in the hall dedicated to the seventh-generation ancestor, Qingfu. And this hall was by no means the most splendid one in Wuge. Rather, the most splendid halls were the Upper Shrine Hall and the Lower Shrine Hall dedicated respectively to Qingfu and Yesheng, the ancestors who started respectively the Upper Shrine branch and the Lower Shrine branch. Within the Upper Shrine branch, to each of the eleventh-generation ancestors, Lichong and Liheng, was dedicated an ancestral hall. Within the branch of Liheng, an ancestral hall was dedicated to a fourteenth-generation ancestor, Huazhong 華中, and another to a nineteenth-generation ancestor, Longchuan. Similarly, within the branch of the Lower Shrine, an ancestral hall was dedicated to a seventeenth generation, Maoheng and to two ancestors of the subsequent eighteenth generation, Zhouzhen 周楨 and Mingsheng 明勝. Another hall was dedicated to a nineteenth-generation ancestor, Rensheng 仁聲.

For Ma Xun, the establishment of the ancestral hall was meant to instill harmony and affection by means of ancestral rites among kinsmen, but many people did not agree. For Zou Xiong, for example, the erection of a hall was meant to bring good luck to the descendants by employing geomantic influence. The benefits may not have been intended to be shared by all the descendants involved, only by some of them. A legend has it that, for example, the reason for the termination of the line of Zou Jun 俊, one of Zou Xiong’s brothers, in Wuge was that Zou Xiong had made some special arrangements with the hall, which allegedly benefited his own descendants at the expense of those of his brothers. Ancestral hall such as this created conflict rather than harmony among lineage members.

Therefore, with respect to genealogy, ancestral halls, and ancestral estates, lineages in Sibao showed an internal structure that differ from what Ma Hetu and Ma Xun had attempted to achieve. For them, the compilation of a genealogy and the erection of an ancestral hall were meant to

40 “Maoheng gong ci tu” 茂亨公祠圖 (Plan of the Ancestral Hall of Maoheng), in ibid. (1911 edition, Wuge), juan shou, 1a–1b; “Zhouzhen gong ci tu” 周楨公祠圖 (Plan of the Ancestral Hall of Zhouzhen), in ibid., 1a–1b; “Mingsheng gong ci tu” 明勝公祠圖 (Plan of the Ancestral Hall of Mingsheng), in ibid., 1a–1b. The ancestral hall of Mingsheng was erected in 1776. The hall of Zhouzhen was restored in 1899. No information is given when the halls of Maoheng and Rensheng were erected.
hold the agnatic kinsmen together. In contrast, if we ignore the intervention of Neo-Confucian-oriented gentry, the actual development of lineage organizations in Sibao followed the path discussed by Maurice Freedman, namely, segmentation. The result was considerably segmented lineages that emphasized the interests of the intermediate branches involved, rather than those of the whole kinship group. The reality is thus far from the ideal.

We must still assess the impact of lineage building upon the thinking of degree holders, who were expected to conform to Neo-Confucian teachings more than were other social groups. But how can we know what they thought? One way is to analyze the social classifications that they used. Lineage building was not merely a process of reorganizing society; it was also a redefinition of agnate kinship. When the ritual focus shifted from immediate ancestors to early, distant ancestors, the meaning of agnatic kinship also changed, becoming more inclusive. Did this change affect gentry in Sibao? Or, to be more precise, did the gentry take seriously the more inclusive definition of agnatic kinship? A careful study of an account book collected in Sibao provides some answers to these questions.

The account book belonged to a Wuge printing shop called Wanjuan Lou 萬卷樓 (Chamber of Ten Thousand Volumes), so we call it the “Account Book of Wanjuan Lou.” From the preface we know that the account book started to be kept in 1822. It recorded the land that the owners of the account book purchased from 1776 to 1843. The man who kept the accounts was Zou Ming 明 (1732–1819), a government student and a book merchant in Wuge. With the profits from the shop and interest from the money that he had lent out, he and his sons were able to purchase over 150 mu of land, one plot at a time. In the account book, we are given detailed information on the dates of purchase, locations, acreage, and tax on the land purchased, the amount of money paid for each plot of land, the names and residences of the seller, and, in most cases, their relationship to Zou Ming.

The terms appearing in the account book fall into six categories: benjia 本家 (one’s own family), benfang 本房 (one’s own branch), benxiang 本鄉 (one’s own village), bentu 本圖 (one’s own administrative unit, or tu), surnames, and villages. “Surname” comprises people whose surname

41 “Xu,” in Account Book of Wanjuan Lou (Wuge, 1822–1843), n.p. The account book is collected in the China Sibao Woodblock Printing Exhibition Center, Sibao. After his death, Zou Ming’s sons continued to purchase land.
was something other than Zou, which implies that they were not agnatic relatives of Zou Ming. “Villages” comprises people from villages other than Wuge, including the Zous in Shuangquan and Shangbao. The category bentu appeared only once. A xiang meant a village in the late imperial Sibao literature. Thus benxiang means that the person involved was a fellow villager of Zou Ming. The meaning of benfang is a bit more complex. The genealogy of the Lower Shrine branch shows that the common ancestor of the person involved and Zou Ming was an ancestor six generations earlier, Zou Binghua (G16). Thus what Zou Ming meant by benfang was the common descendants of Binghua. In general use, the term benjia means people of the same surname. But here it is used in a specific sense. In six of the nine cases, the common ancestor of Zou Ming and the person involved was an ancestor four generations earlier, Zou Zhouzhen (G18). Only in one case was the common ancestor six generations earlier. The genealogical relation between Zou Ming and the other two persons is unknown.42 This shows that the benjia is used here most of the time in a more exclusive sense than benfang, covering mostly the descendants of an ancestor four generations back.

The meaning of each category clarifies the world of Zou Ming, a concentric circle, not unlike what Fei Xiaotong calls the “differential mode of association” (chaxu geju 差序格局),43 with Zou Ming at the center. The innermost circle, the circle of benjia, included descendants of his great-great-grandfather (similar to Ma Xu’s lineage in terms of inclusiveness). The second-innermost circle, the circle of benfang, included descendants of the father of his great-great-grandfather. The middle circle, the circle of benxiang, included all his fellow villagers of the same surname. Outside this circle was the circle of villagers from other villages or with other surnames. The outermost circle, the circle of bentu, includes all people in the same tu. Most noteworthy is the leap from the second-innermost circle (benfang) to the middle circle (benxiang). Every Zous in Wuge, if he was outside the circle of benfang, was included in the category of benxiang.

42 Genealogical information on Zou Ming is in ZSZP (1911, Wuge), 8.2/1a. The nine persons listed under the category of benjia were Zou Zhengde 鄒徵德, Zou Chuanfang 鄒傳芳, Zou Zheng’en 鄒徵恩, Zou Zuguang 鄒祖光, Zou Wenshi 鄒文士, Zou Chuanjie 鄒傳傑, Zou Liangguan 鄒良官, Zou Guozu 鄒果祖, and Zou Sizong 鄒嗣宗. Genealogical information on the first seven persons can be found respectively in ibid., 9.2/31a, 8.1/60a, 9.2/103a, 9.1/23a, 10/125b, 9.1/13a, 13/35a.

That is, the category of *benxiang* included not only all members of the Upper Shrine branch but also all members of the Lower Shrine branch who were not *benjia* or *benfang*. What is missing in Zou Ming’s classification was the category of *benzu* (common lineage).

What does this tell us? Lineage building was followed by a shift in focus from immediate ancestors to early ancestors and a more inclusive definition of the agnatic kinship. The gentry, as their status implied, were expected to take on this more inclusive definition. But the case of Zou Ming shows the limit of Neo-Confucians’ kinship discourse: as a member of the gentry living in the eighteenth century, when lineage building reached its climax, he seemed to be free from the influence of the process of lineage building.

What about the legacy of Ma Xun? Records from 1574 mention that the ancestral hall he established in 1485 “fell into ruin a long time ago.” Only when the record was written was the hall restored.44 Today, two ancestral halls stand side by side in Mawu. Both are known as the “Hall of the Great Descent Line” (*dazong ci* 大宗祠), and both are dedicated to the same founding ancestor, Qilang. One belongs to the Upper Shrine, and the other, to the Lower Shrine. Every year the two branches perform the rites of sacrifice in their own hall. Members of both branches think that their own hall is legitimate while the other is not.45

Several models have been put forward by the anthropologists and social historians alike to analyze the development of the Chinese lineage. Maurice Freedman, for example, believes that Chinese lineage developed through segmentation—that is, when a branch set aside corporate property, erected an ancestral hall, or migrated elsewhere.46 Other scholars argue that in addition to segmentation, which they call “fission,” there was another model of lineage development, fusion. According to this model, the lineage emerged when previously separate kinship units amalgamated into a unified organization.47 Later studies show that both models may have coexisted. In Taiwan, Chinese lineages emerged either through setting aside property for collective purposes when a family was divided or

45 See, for example, ibid., 1–2.
through the amalgamation of previously separate units. Zheng Zhen-man’s study suggests three models of lineage development. His first model, the “inheritance lineage,” is somewhat similar to fission. His third model, the “contractual lineage,” operated by fusion. The “control-subordination lineage,” his second model, developed through either fission or fusion.

The case of Sibao supports these recent findings. It shows that gentry with a Neo-Confucian orientation such as Ma Xun placed importance upon fusion, stressing the importance of taking a more inclusive definition of agnatic kinship by focusing on more distant ancestors. In contrast, the case of Zou Xiong falls into the category of fission because the ancestral hall was erected to benefit the descendants of his father. In addition, the rhetoric of fusion had its strongest expression in genealogy, while the practice of fission could be seen most readily in the erection of ancestral halls and setting aside corporate land.

No matter which model predominated, the case of Sibao shows that lineages in the area were historical creations. Contrary to what is implied in Freedman’s works, each lineage had its own history. The lineages of Sibao emerged in the mid-Ming, and the process did not end until the late Qing. Lineage building had its origins in Neo-Confucian ideology, although lineages emerged through a violation of the limits set by that ideology. But the dynamism of lineage building lay in local society. Lineage building was closely related to the pursuit of power and a contest for local control. The Zous’ persistent search for a “proper” founding ancestor becomes understandable only when the power structure of Sibao society is taken into account.

Therefore, the influence of Neo-Confucian kinship ideology should not be overstated. Although by the end of the Qing, Sibao had been transformed into a lineage society, the lineage was often perceived in different ways from those intended by Ma Xun. In some extreme cases, the teachings of Ma Xun were disregarded completely. Establishing ancestral halls and setting aside corporate land often implied consideration of the


49 Zheng, Family Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian, chap. 3.
welfare of one's own group rather than that of larger group—a tendency criticized by Ma Xun. Therefore, the development of lineages in Sibao should be seen as a selective process in which the symbols closely related to the gentry lifestyle were appropriated to serve local purposes and the new ways of organizing agnatic kinship and performing ancestral rites were incorporated into the previous ritual tradition and social structure rather than replacing them.

The case of Sibao also shows the extent of the impact left by lineage building on society there. The most important consequences of this process of lineage building were on landed property and ancestral rites. The landed property set aside basically for the performance of ancestral rites and the welfare of lineage members had several unintended consequences for the social structure. The means of dominance changed after the ownership of landed property was in corporate hands, such that ownership of the land became less important than the lending of grain and money. Thereafter came the rise of the local elite who managed corporate properties, which also affected community relations. When the land of one village fell into the hands of another, it became increasingly dependent economically on the village that took ownership, leading eventually to a process of what we may call community differentiation: The socio-economic status of lineage/villages in a locality became increasingly differentiated and this situation paves the way for social dominance of one community upon the other.

One of the most important aspects of lineage building is the introduction of a new method of ancestor worship. With its emphasis on the cult of distant, rather than proximate, ancestors and on the rites of sacrifice, lineage building greatly modified the earlier forms of ancestor worship in Sibao. The rites of sacrifice and the role of their directors, the lisheng of the rites, as well as the formation of the lisheng’s liturgical tradition all seem to have resulted in part from this process.
PART FOUR

A STRANGE COMMUNITY COMPACT?
CHAPTER SEVEN

COMMUNITY COMPACTS, VILLAGE RITUALS, AND LOCAL SOCIETY

Of the fifty jiwenben I collected in Sibao, the one from Shangbao, Manual 0401, is crucial for understanding the scope of lisheng activities, either ritual or socioeconomic. This manual includes not only contract forms for family division of property, adoption of sons, leasing and sale of land, business partnership, and a number of amulets and incarnations, but also a series of documents related to the community compact, explained below. Included in the manual are several prohibition pacts (jinyue 禁约) published by a community compact called Shangbao yue 上保约 and three formulas for inviting the head of the compact (see below).

A xiangyue, or community compact, was an organization that originated in the Song whose original purpose was to promote social harmony in a community.¹ The first community compact, known as the Lü Family Community Compact (Lü shi xiangyue 呂氏鄉約) or Lantian Community Compact (Lantian xiangyue 藍田鄉約), named after a compact document drawn for initiating the organization, was established in Lantian, Shaanxi, in 1077 by the Neo-Confucian Lü Dajun 呂大均 (1031–1082) as a device for regulating the social life of the educated elite. It became famous as described by Zhu Xi, Zeng sun Lü shi xiangyue 贈損呂氏鄉約 (Lü Family Community Compact, with Additions and Deletions by Zhu Xi). In it, a community compact was redefined as “a voluntary association of unspecified members [rather than educated elite] of a local community, presumably the size of a village [lì].”²

Recent studies suggest that the community compact was first formed in Fujian in the second quarter of the fifteenth century at the latest. In the Zhengtong era (1436–1449), Wang Yuan 王源, a retired prefect, initiated community compacts in his hometown, Longyan 龍岩 County, southeast

¹ On community compacts in the late imperial period, see Zhu Honglin [Chu Hung-lam], “Ershi shiji de Ming-Qing xiangyue yanjiu” 二十世紀的明清鄉約研究 (Studies in Community Compacts in Ming and Qing Periods in the Twentieth Century), Lishi renleixue xuekan 歷史人類學學刊 2.1 (2006): 175–196.

of Tingzhou. At the same time, several gentry in Longyan spoke publicly on the *Lantian xiangyue* in their community. Around 1473, two local gentry also initiated a community compact in Shanghang. A magistrate of Guihua printed and implemented the *Lantian xiangyue* in Guihua. Only a few community compacts were initiated in the fifteenth century, and they were usually small and short-lived and had little influence on social life.

After the rising social crisis in the sixteenth century, the community compact was transformed from its original design to maintain the “rule of ritual” into a program to maintain the “rule of law.” The breakdown of social order was followed by the spread of community compacts throughout the empire. Gentry and officials alike initiated community compacts either in their hometowns or in the locations to which they were appointed. The most influential among them was probably the *Nangan xiangyue* 南贛鄉約 (Nangan Community Compact) of Wang Yangming. The *Nangan xiangyue*, implemented in Jiangxi, Fujian, and Guangdong after rebellions in the region were suppressed in the early sixteenth century, was meant not only to promote morality but also to facilitate the rural population’s relationships with the state, particularly in the payment of taxes. In the Jiajing 嘉靖 era (1522–1566), the court ordered that community compacts be implemented in every county.

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3 Zhang et al., *Mingshi*, 281/7196.
4 Wang Yifu 汪毅夫, “Shi lun Ming-Qing shiqi de Min-Tai xiangyue” 試論明清時期的閩台鄉約 (On Community Compacts in Fujian and Taiwan in Ming and Qing Periods), *Zhongguo shi yanjiu* 中國史研究 1 (2002), 132.
5 *SHXZ* (1939), 23/1b–2a; Wang, “Shi lun Ming-Qing shiqi de Min-Tai xiangyue,” 132–133.
6 Wang, “Shi lun Ming-Qing shiqi de Min-Tai xiangyue,” 133.
The combination of the community compact and the baojia policing system became increasingly common in late Ming Fujian and spread throughout China. The result of this combination was the emergence of the “system of the community compact and baojia” (xiangyue baojia fa 鄉約保甲法). At the provincial level, at least three governors, Zhao Canlu 趙參魯 (jinshi of 1571), Xu Fuyuan 許孚遠 (1535–1604), and Huang Chengxuan 黃承玄 (d. 1619), implemented this system in Fujian. The system established by Xu Fuyuan was based on previous existing territorial units, usually villages, and took the form of associations (hui 會). The territorial unit, organized into the decimal baojia system (1 bao = 10 jia = 100 households), was at the same time the basis for an association of one or more community compacts. The obligations of the associations included providing relief to poor members, praising good deeds and criticizing bad deeds, investigating crimes, and settling civil disputes. Characterized by its close connection to the government, the xiangyue became a semiofficial organization.

The practice of the community compact continued in the Qing and increasingly became a tool for ideological and administrative control. It was ordered to be established in every locality, and lectures on the Sacred Edicts were ordered to be delivered at fixed intervals. During the late Qing, because of the mounting social crisis, the community compact became increasingly merged with institutions set up to provide police services, such as the baojia system, and local defense, such as local militia (tuanlian 團練), to become a tool for ideological as well as administrative purposes. In the nineteenth century, in some extreme cases the “original” function of the community compact, the delivering of lectures on the

12 Zheng Zhenman, “Ming houqi Fujian difang xingzheng de yanbian” 明後期福建地方行政的演變 (The Evolution of Fujian Local Administration during the Late Ming), Zhongguo shi yanjiu 1 (1998), 155; Miki Satoshi 三木聰, Min-Shin Fukken nōson shakai no kenkyū 明清福建農村社會の研究 (Studies in Rural Society in Fujian during the Ming and Qing Periods) (Sapporo: Hokkaido daigaku tosho shuppankai, 2002), 296–302.
Sacred Edict, was completely forgotten, and it became an institution of the baojia system or it was “metamorphosed” into the local defense system.14

The community compact was organized around the performance of rituals, including the recitation of texts, oaths, and maxims. The specific rituals performed by the members of community compacts in different regions may have differed, but ritual itself was an integral part of the organization. Even as the community compact organization added a number of additional functions over time, from social control to local defense, ritual performance remained a crucial part of the activities of the institution. And the performance of rituals necessitated the role of ritual directors, the lisheng.

For example, rituals were performed under the guidance of lisheng in the community compact initiated by Zhan Ruoshui 湛若水 (1466–1560) and his student, Wu Kegang 伍克剛, in a village in the Pearl River Delta in 1544.15 Or, when he drafted the regulations of a community compact in 1566, He Dongxu 何東序, the prefect of Huizhou Prefecture, ordered that lisheng be appointed when the rituals were performed.16 What follows is a description of the community compact ritual as performed in sixteenth-century Wuyuan 婺源 County, Huizhou.

The rituals related to the community compact usually were performed in appointed places on fixed days. Beforehand, the sites were swept clean. Everything needed for the ritual, including a table, incense, candles, drums, bells, a lectern, and a wooden tablet bearing the imperial Instructions or Sacred Edicts of the Ming emperor Taizu, were prepared in advance. When people arrived at these sites, they either knelt or stood facing north in assigned locations within the temple or hall.

The ritual began with a formal reading of the Instructions on the wooden tablet. Then, they performed a specific number of bows and kowtows. After the last kowtow, they stood erect, at times declaring in unison the Imperial Instructions themselves. Next, they took their designated seat or standing place to the south of the Imperial Instructions tablet and the table with incense and candles. This was followed by “the recitation of poems, the singing of songs by a choir of ten or more boys, and the beating of gongs and drums, all leading up to a full-scale sermon

14 Hsiao, Rural China, 201–205.
on filial piety and the Imperial Instructions.” Then all these men reviewed everyone’s recent behavior. Their good deeds were “declared, praised, and recorded in a Good Deed Register,” and their bad deeds were “revealed, criticized, and recorded in a separate register.” The ritual ended by “rising and following their leaders out of the ritual’s building in the same order that they had entered one to two hours earlier.”

Although the term lisheng is not used in the text, it is clear that ritual specialists, in this case called yuezan, were guiding the ritual. The text clearly states that they “stood by two sides of the table, face to face,” when they guided the ritual. They announced every ritual act, from bows and kowtows to starting the declaration of the Imperial Instructions, from declaring the beginning of reviewing one's recent behavior to announcing the end of the ritual. Although they are called “[ritual] assistants of the compact” (yuezan 约赞) in the text, undoubtedly their role is similar to that of lisheng.

Likewise, the texts related to the community compact were probably collected in the Sibao manuals because lisheng played an important role in the symbolic life of these organizations, just as they were indispensable in the sacrifices to the recently deceased, the ancestors, and the gods. Indeed, we know that in late imperial Shangbao, lisheng were invited to attend the assembly that took place three times a year, probably to direct the rituals performed in the compact office. The major question here, however, is not whether lisheng were involved in the rituals of community compacts but when, how, and why those rituals were introduced to Sibao. To answer this question, we need to reconstruct the history of community compacts in Sibao.

COMMUNITY COMPACTS IN LATE IMPERIAL SIBAO

The first community compact of Sibao was initiated by Ma Xun in the fourth quarter of the fifteenth century. One of his essays mentions that he drafted a community compact, and his biography claims that Ma Xun

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17 “Xiangyue,” in Wuyuan Tuochuan Yu shi zongpu 婺源沱川余氏宗譜 (Yu Family Genealogy of Tuochuan, Wuyuan) (1906), 40/1a–3a; McDermott, “Emperor, Élites, and Commoners,” 299–300.
18 “Xiangyue,” in Wuyuan Tuochuan Yu shi zongpu, 40/1a–3a.
19 “Ju kai ji zuci guili” (a detailed list of regulations), in Wu shi zupu (1899, Upper Shrine branch), juan 8, 2b.
20 MSZP (1993, Mawu), 2 ji, 4.
often encouraged “villagers” (xiangren 鄉人) to reform their morality.\(^{21}\) Neither of these discuss the contents of the compact text and its audience, however. Judging from the lineage rules that he drew up, it is likely that he may have included the Sacred Edict of the Ming emperor Taizu in his compact and that the compact may not have differed much from lineage rules. Indeed, the content of his lineage rules was similar to community compacts drafted elsewhere. Furthermore, if xiangren means his fellow villagers, the compact may have been written for and implemented in Mawu village alone.

The community compact of Ma Xun did not last. Like the ancestral hall that he had ordered to be built, the compact may have ceased functioning after he died. When a new community compact was drafted in Mawu about a century later, the initiators did not mention the compact of Ma Xun. The new compact was initiated by nine local notables of Mawu in 1583. The compact’s major architect was Ma Mengfu 孟復 (1545–1619) of the sixteenth generation. Mengfu, usually known by his literary name Nanlu 南陸, was a member of the gentry with a relatively strong local orientation. He was a stipend government student before he became a tribute student at the age of fifty-one. He was then appointed to the position of the vice-magistrate of Wuyuan 婺源 County, Huizhou,\(^{22}\) and it is likely that he developed the idea for his community compact when he was serving in Wuyuan. It was under his advocacy that the ancestral hall erected by Ma Xun was reconstructed and the genealogy of the Lower Shrine branch was updated.\(^{23}\)

In the preface that he wrote for this compact, Mengfu claims that “nowadays the village customs are getting less and less pure and have one thousand lesions and a hundred holes.” The situation is, he believes, not unlike flood prevention: When an embankment is constructed in one place, the embankments somewhere else break. “To stop a leak is very difficult.” The correct way of preventing flood, Mengfu maintains, is to “dredge the source and stream [of a river].” Similarly, to reform evil customs, the correct way is not to combat an evil custom but to “make an attack upon [one’s] mind/heart” (gōng xīn 攻心)—not the hearts of other people but the hearts of “ourselves.” Only when “we,” Mengfu claims, have rid our hearts of “selfishness” (sīxīn 私心), “anger” (fēnxīn

\(^{21}\) Ibid., 5 ji, 5.

\(^{22}\) Ibid., 3/1–2; 5 ji, 16–17.

\(^{23}\) Ibid. (1993, Wuge), shou juan, 15; 2 ji, 6–7.
忿心), “partiality” (jiejie xin 子子心), and “narrow-mindedness” (xuxu xin 存存心) and when “our hearts . . . unify to become one heart” could the villagers follow and reform their hearts. In the end, “the customs become pure and refined without having to construct any embankment.” This compact is not extant. But from this preface we learn that its major purpose was to reform evil customs or promote the “rule of rituals.”

The preface does not mention how the compact was put into practice. The following evidence suggests that a compact head may have been selected to manage the compact organization. A member of the Lower Shrine branch called Ma Wencai 文才 had reportedly been selected to such a position because he “was straightforward by nature.” According to his biography, “whenever the villagers who were involved in disputes brought their cases before him,” asking him “to judge who was correct and who was wrong,” Wencai “would never practice favoritism.” Therefore, “all people obeyed” his verdict. Ma Wencai was of the same generation as Ma Mengfu, but Mengfu’s essay does not mention him. It is thus probable that he participated in the activities of the community compact after it had been in force for some time. Judging from the fact that all those involved in initiating the compact were from the Ma family of Mawu, it may have been in effect only in Mawu.

Finally, the oral tradition of Mawu suggests that the compact may have used the Zougong Temple of this village as its office because the temple is also known as the “sixth compact office” (liu yue suo 六約所). Some Mawu elders claim further that not only did the Ma family participate in the management of the compact, but the Lai family of Laijiaxu and the Yan family of Yanwu participated in compact activities as well. These two small descent groups were under the control of the Ma family from earlier periods and the Zougong Temple was erected with contributions from not merely the Ma family but also from the Lai and Yan families. It is thus not surprising that they were involved in the Mawu compact. However, given the discussion above, the involvement of these two descent groups in the Mawu compact cannot date back to the time of Mengfu but must have been a later development.

The community compact of Mengfu was initiated privately without the endorsement of the government. In contrast, the community compact of Changxiao shows how such an organization could be linked to the

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24 Ibid. (1993, Mawu), 8 ji, 145.
25 Ibid., 5 ji, 17.
government during the same period. As mentioned above, several Fujian governors in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries ordered the establishment of community compacts in each county. The community compact of Changxiao may have been initiated in the Wanli era following this order. Evidence shows that a local notable called Li Shoujing was elected to the position of vice-compact head (yuefu) when Fujian governor Zhao Canlu ordered that the compact be established. According to his biography, Shoujing was “easy-going, straightforward, generous, and mild” by nature. The temple of a local god/ancestor was restored, and a bridge was constructed under his leadership. The Changxiao compact may have kept registers of good deeds (shance 善册, i.e., zhangshance 彰善冊) and bad deeds, including the deeds of a man called Li Changmao 李常茂. Changmao was rewarded with a plaque inscribed with the honor "esteeming righteousness" (shangyi 尚義) by the provincial government. His good deeds included raising his young nephew, supporting his widowed sister-in-law, returning to its owner some silver that he had found, and glorifying honest poverty. Another man, Li Changde 常德, was praised in the register of good deeds for his filial duties to his parents and kindness to his orphaned nephew and received a plaque inscribed with the term “charitable person” (shanren 善人) from the county government. This not only shows the close connection between the Changxiao compact and the government but suggests that the compact head did not have to be a member of the gentry and may have been selected from among wealthy people such as Shoujing. We do not know how long this compact was in effect. An essay dated 1838 mentions that an office of the community compact stood to the left of an important village temple (see Image 7.1). But no evidence shows that this compact had any connection to the one initiated in the late Ming.

A third community compact was established in Nanchai 南柴 village (also known as Nanchaikeng 南柴坑) in western Sibao during the same period. This compact was known as the “compact of the Eight Generals” (bajiangyue 八將約) because its head office was located in the Eight

26 See Changxiao Li shi zupu 長校李氏族譜 (Changxiao Li Family Genealogy) (hereafter CXLSZP, 1945), juan zhi shou 卷之首 (The starter volume), 3a.
27 Ibid., 4b.
28 Ibid.
29 “Zumiao ji” 祖廟記 (A Record of the Ancestral Temple), in ibid. (1909), juan zhi shou, 2b.
Generals Temple (bajiang miao 八將廟) of Nanchai. A genealogy of the Ma family of this village provides the following description of this compact.

A temple was formerly established in Xia'an 下庵, Zaixiagangwu 再下岡屋. At the time of spring prayer and autumn thanksgiving, the two gates [men 門, i.e., branches] [of the Mas] performed the jiao communal offerings [there]. In the fortieth year of the Wanli era [1612], considering that the temple stood too close to the settlement and this caused some inconvenience to the monks [of the temple], my grandfather’s elder brothers Wantai 萬泰, Wenbao 文寶, Xinqing 新慶, and other people from the two branches moved the temple to the water exit [from the village] and used it to guarantee [the geomantic influence] over the whole village. [This temple was given] the general name “the compact of the Eight Generals.” Yunwo 雲窩 was the compact head [yuezheng 约正], Zhuyuan 竹園 and Xibei 溪背, the vice-compact head [yuefu 约副], Weijiafang 魏家坊, the assistant compact head [yuezan 约贊], and Lukeng 蘆坑 and Huangjiankeng 黃梘坑, the compact notifier [yuetong 約通]. The expenditures, ranging from the yamen [runners’] visit to check the [yellow] register [diance 點冊, i.e., to assign corvée labor] and the gathering for [discussing] public affairs, to the spring praying and autumn thanksgiving, were paid for by four [groups of]
compact members as [they] assembled in the public office [i.e., the Eight Generals Temple]. As for the old site of the Eight Generals compact at Xia’an, Wantai and Xinqin decided that the two branches would set up a school [there] and masters would be hired to favor the future [descendants].

The Eight Generals compact seemed to have been a village alliance. Its major village, Nanchai, is a small village whose major residents are the Ma and the Lai families. The Ma family moved to this village in the early Ming from Majiawei 馬家圍, Ninghua. They claim that their ancestor, Wulang 五郎, was a brother of Qilang of Mawu. Later, the founding ancestor of the Lai family, a hunting friend of one of the Mas, settled there and was accepted by the Mas. The Mas are composed of two major branches (the two “gates” mentioned above). One is the descendants of Wulang, while the other is allegedly the descendants of the former husband of Wulang’s wife. Yunwo, Zhuyuan, and Xibei are three hamlets in Nanchai village. Weijiafang (also known as Yijia 義家) is a small village southeast of Nanchai. Its residents are the Mas and the Wangs 王. The former moved to this village from Mawu, the latter from Yongding County in 1583. Lukeng is a small village next to Nanchai. Huangjiankeng, also known as Wangjian or Wangjiankeng 王梘坑, is a small village east of Nanchai. The majority of its residents are the Lis. The Eight Generals Temple, where the compact’s office was located, was dedicated to the Yang Family Generals (Yangjiajiang 楊家將). When I visited Naichai in the summer of 2002, this temple was still there.

30 “Lao pu yi yu” 老譜遺語 (Extant Documents from the Old Genealogy), in MSZP (2000, Nanchai), n.p.
31 MSZP (Nanchai), n.p.
34 The cult of this group of gods can also be found in Wuge. The Eight Generals are Yang Ye 楊業 and his seven sons. But it is not unlikely that the Eight Generals were the Eight Generals (Bajiajiang 八家將) discussed by Donald S. Sutton (Steps of Perfection: Exorcistic Performers and Chinese Religion in Twentieth-Century Taiwan [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003]) or the eight subordinates of the God of Eastern Peak (Dongyue Taishan shen 東岳泰山神), who seem to be widely worshipped in Fujian, discussed by Ye Mingsheng (“Lun ‘Bajiang’ zai Fujian de liubu bianyi ji nuo wenhua yiyi” 論“八將”在福建的流布、變異及儺文化意義 [On the Spread and Change of the “Eight Generals” Cult in Fujian and Its Significance in Nuo Exorcist Culture], Minsu quyi 85 [September 1993], 74).
During the Ming dynasty, the positions mentioned in the passage—yuezheng, yuefu, yuezan, and yuetong—were usually given to individuals, but in this case they were assigned to specific villages. Although the community compact used the organizational framework of the community compact, its major activity was not the explanation of laws and decrees or any specific village regulations. It grew out of the need to deal with the government and public affairs. As mentioned above, the major functions of this compact included meeting the demands of the state and dealing with state agents, conducting public affairs, and performing the biennial worship of local gods. The first function is relatively similar to one of the major responsibilities of the lijia system, “the conducting of public business” (goushe gongshi). The third function is part of a religious tradition with a long history usually centered on the altar of the soil (see Chapter 8).

How long did this compact last? No later written source mentions this compact. But a stele standing at the water exit of Yijia shows that it may have continued to exist or have been revived in the mid-eighteenth century. This stele was erected in 1753 and quite a few of the characters on it have worn away over the years. The stele is meant to prohibit the practice of cutting trees in the “dragon mountains,” crucial geomantic sites, which would affect the channeling of life-renewing geomantic power to the benefits of a specific family or village, of Huangjiankeng and Weijiafang without permission from the local residents and the poisoning of fish in the village streams on the ground that these activities would destroy the geomantic influence over these villages. It indicates explicitly that the organization that implemented the prohibition was the Eight Generals compact. The two villages mentioned in the stele, as I have pointed out, were party to the compact. In view of this evidence, it is not unlikely that this compact was the one initiated in the Ming over a century earlier or a revival of it.

A community compact can also be found in Shuangquan and Wuge (although in both cases no information is available on when the compacts

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35 The first three terms were widespread in the Ming, the fourth one seems to be rare. See Cao, “Mingdai xiangyue yanjiu,” 205–206.  
were initiated). The existence of community compacts can be seen in the biographies of two Zous in Shuangquan. The first, Zou Yizhu 一柱 (style name Wenzheng 文正), was reportedly “upright and outspoken.” When an irrigation dispute led to the Shuangquan-Wuge feud of 1684, as the compact head, he was involved in the lawsuit that followed. He eventually died in Fuzhou before the lawsuit was settled.37 Yizhu did not receive any degree or title of any kind. The second person, Zou Wenfang 文芳, was a merchant. He did business in Nanchang, the capital of Jiangxi Province, when he was young and was able to make a good deal of money. With the profits from business he put up a splendid building, bought a lot of land, and purchased the title of national university student. After he returned to Shuangquan, it is reported that the vice magistrate of Changting appointed him “the bao head of the whole compact.”38

According to the two biographies, a community compact was established in Shuangquan no later than 1684. The offices of the compact included the compact head and bao head, which implies that in Shuangquan the community compact and the baojia system may have merged into one institution. These positions were probably open to people without degree or title (such as Yizhu), but someone who had some wealth or held a degree or title (such as Wenfang) was perhaps preferable. The biography of Wenfang also tells us that he was appointed by the government. This suggests that the heads of the community compact, though probably nominated by villagers, would have to be approved by the local magistrate. In a third biography, a Zou in Shuangquan, a wealthy merchant, contributed to and erected an office for the community compact.39 The existence of a community compact in Shuangquan can be further supported by oral tradition. Zou Jiangrui 降瑞, a retired headmaster from this village, told me that the position of compact head existed until the early Republican period. The compact head was selected by local notables from among those who were “honest and tolerant.” The community compact system turned into a buffer between the state and the village’s natural political structure, not unlike the xiangbao and xiangdi in North China during the Qing dynasty.40

37 ZSZP (1900, Shuangquan Village), juan shou, 35b.
38 Ibid., 14a–14b.
39 Ibid., 9a–9b.
The oral tradition also indicates the existence of a community compact in Wuge. According to a Wuge elder well-versed in local history, the last compact head of this village was Zou Xinshou 新壽, who was appointed to this position in the early Republican period. He was a peasant who received an elementary education. He was probably appointed to the position because he was not only upright and outspoken but also capable. His major responsibility was settling local disputes. When a villager was involved in a dispute, he could bring the case to this man in a practice known as “the presenting of a complaint to the compact head” (tou xiangyue 投鄉約). The compact head then invited several local notables to settle the dispute. The party who brought the case to the compact head had to give him and the local notables some gifts or money. In this case, again, the position as head of the community compact was occupied not by a local notable but by an ordinary peasant. This was closer to the head of the baojia than to the compact head in the Ming community compact system. The fact that the written sources of Wuge do not mention this position suggests that it did not perform important functions in the social life of this village. In contrast, we have much more information on the community compact of Shangbao, which played a relatively important role in the economic, social, and religious life of the villages that belonged to it. We now turn to the history of this compact.

Villages and Descent Groups around Shangbao

As mentioned in Chapter 2, in the southern end of the Sibao Basin lie a group of small villages: Shangbao, Jiantou, Shexiaqian, and Huangkeng. Settled in each of these villages is one small descent group. Starting in the late sixteenth century, they either initiated or later joined the community compact of Shangbao (Shangbao yue 上保約) and remained in the institution until the early twentieth century. Before proceeding to the history of the Shangbao compact, we provide a brief history of these villages and their residents.

The residents of Shangbao, the biggest of the four small villages, are the Zous. Like the Zous of other villages, they trace their descent to Zougong. Local legend has it that when Zougong moved to Sibao he first settled in the Zou Family Mountain of Shangbao. Two of his sons moved to Wuge
and Shuangquan and thus became the pioneer ancestors of these two villages respectively. The second son of Zougong, Qilang (G2), stayed in Shangbao and became the ancestor of all of the Zous of Shangbao. Qilang had seven sons. His first, third, and sixth sons, Shelang 社郎 (G3), Zhenlang 禕郎, and Youlang 祐郎, settled in Yangzibian (also known as Yangzixuan 阳紫轩). His second son, Fulang 福郎, settled in Dapingtou 大坪頭. Xianglang 祥郎, the fourth son, settled in Zhenbei 圳背. His fifth and seventh sons, Lilang 礼郎 and Lulang 禄郎, settled in Zhenbian 圳邊. Of the seven sons, the descendants of Shelang, Fulang, and Lilang are the most prosperous and still live in Shangbao. The descendants of the other four sons moved out of Shangbao or their lines were simply terminated due to a failure to have heirs.

The second biggest village, Jiantou, is also a single-surname village. Its residents, the Wus, traced their settlement history to a Southern Song ancestor called Dalang 大郎 (G1). The genealogy of the Wus has it that Dalang moved to Sibao from Nanfeng 南豐, Jiangxi. Dalang’s great grandson, Nianqilang 念七郎 (G4), had two sons, Boyi 伯益 and Xiaoba 小八 (G5). They became the focal ancestors of the two major branches of the Wus of Jiantou. The branch of Boyi was known as the “Upper Gate” (shangmen 上門) or the “Upper Shrine”, while that of Xiaoba, the “Middle Gate” (zhongmen 中門), the “Lower Gate” (Xiamen 下門), or the “Lower Shrine.”

Shexiaqian 社下前 is actually the name of two settlements, Old Shexiaqian and New Shexiaqian. The former lies northwest of Shangbao, while the latter lies to the south. The settlement was called Shexiaqian, literally “the front of the altar of the soil,” probably because it was located in front of one of the two altars of the soil of Shangbao that lies at the water exit of this village. The residents of this village are the Yangs. The founding ancestor of the Yangs, Liusanlang 六三郎, is claimed to have been a descendant of the famous Southern Song Neo-Confucian, Yang Shi 楊時 (1053–1135). Liusanlang lived in Longhu 龍湖 village, Jiangle 將樂 County, but with his brothers fled social turmoil, moving to Shexiage 社下閣 in Tingzhou. He did business in Sibao and eventually decided to settle in Shexiaqian.

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41 Yangzibian, Dapingtou, Zhenbei, and Zhenbian are hamlets of Shangbao.
42 See “Yangzixuan Zou shi zupu xu” 陽紫軒鄒氏族譜序 (Preface to the Zou Family Genealogy of Yangzixuan Hamlet), in ZSZP (1946, Yangzibian Village), juan shou, 1a–1b, 1/1a–5a.
43 WSZP (1899, Upper Shrine branch), 1a–1b.
44 Hongnong Yang shi zupu 宏農楊氏族譜 (Yang Family Genealogy of Hongnong) (hereafter HNYSZP, 1996), 1/6b, 8a–9a.
We do not know when the Yangs moved to New Shexiaqian. When I visited Sibao, only a few Yangs still lived in Old Shexiaqian.

The Lais of Huangkeng used to live in Gaowukeng 高屋坑, a village south of New Shexiaqian. Most of them have since moved to Huangkeng, a village close to the old Liancheng-Changting border. According to the genealogy of the Lais, their founding ancestor, Lai Chuanlu 傅禄, moved to Sibao from Gutian subcanton 古田 in Shanghang County, probably in the late sixteenth century.45

Like other small descent groups such as the Yans of Yanwu, the Zous, the Wus, the Yangs, and the Lais made a conscious effort to build their lineage at the end of the eighteenth century, two centuries after they had formed a territorial unit in the form of a community compact. Their history thus provides support to the hypothesis of Burton Pasternak that under certain circumstances, such as in frontier society, nonkin alignment was first practiced, and lineage building was only the second phase of social development.46 Even when the conscious efforts of lineage building transformed these kinship organizations into descent groups, the impact of the territorial bond can still be clearly observed. The most obvious impact is probably that all these kinship organizations were committed to the compilation of genealogies around the same time.

All three major branches of the Zous compiled their first genealogies in 1794. The branch of Lilang (Zhenbian) completed its first genealogy in the spring of 1794. The branch of Shelang (Yangzibian) did so in the summer and the branch of Fulang (Dapingtou) in the autumn.47 The two branches of the Wus in Jiantou, the Yangs in Shexiaqian, and the Lais in Huangkeng all compiled their first genealogies the next year.48 Similarly, when the first editions of the genealogies were updated, they did so at roughly the

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45 According to a preface to a genealogy of the Lais written in 1795, the Lais moved to Huangkeng two hundred years ago. This means that the Lais’ settlement history in Huangkeng dates back to the end of the sixteenth century. See Songyang jun Lai shi zu pu 松陽賴氏族譜 (Lai Family Genealogy of Songyang) (hereafter SYJLSZP, 1995), juan shou, 4.


47 “Zou shi zu pu xu” 鄒氏族譜序 (Preface to the Zou Family Genealogy), in ZSZP (1946, Yangzibian hamlet), juan shou, 1a–1b.

48 “Bohai jun Wu shi zu pu xu” 渤海郡吳氏族譜序 (Preface to the Wu Family Genealogy of Bohai Prefecture), in WSZP (1899, Upper Shrine branch), juan zhi shou, 1a–1b; “Wu shi Xiaoab gong fangpu ju shu” 吳氏小八公房譜舊序 (Previous Preface to the Genealogy of the Xiaoba Branch of the Wu Family), in ibid. (Lower Shrine branch), juan 1, 1a–1b; “Chongxiu zu pu jiu xu” 重修族譜舊序 (Preface to the Updated Edition of the Genealogy), in HNYSZP, juan shou, 1a–1b; SYJLSZP, juan shou, 4.
same time: the Zous of Yangzibian and Zhenbian, the Yangs, and the Lais in 1851, and the two branches of the Wus the next year. 49 When these genealogies were updated the third time, all the descent groups except the Lais, who updated their genealogy later, in the Republican period, did it within five years one another. The Zous in Yangzibian and Zhenbian edited their genealogies in 1894. The Zous of Dapingtou did so in 1895, the Yangs, two years later, in 1897, and the Wu branches in 1899. 50 These events cannot be seen as a coincidence. Rather, they are an indication that the territorial bond—a community compact in this case—influenced kinship organizations. The lineage building of these small descent groups thus shows a relatively different mode of development than that of major lineages, such as the Mas of Mawu and the Zous of Wuge.

**The Making of a Community Compact**

The genealogy of the Zous of Zhenbian includes a brief introduction to the early history of Shangbao community compact:

The office of the community compact shown on the left [page] is located in front of the Zougong Temple, just in front of the hill. . . [Its] eastern boundary is a hill; its west boundary, the Wine-Drinking Pavilion [yinfuting 飲福亭] of Shuangquan village and the courtyard of the temple; its southern boundary are the fields; its northern boundary, the courtyard [of the temple]. In the spring of the seventeenth year of the Chongzhen era of the Great


Ming [1644], under the direction of Zongyao 宗堯 and other descendants of Lord [Zou] Qilang, the office of the Shangbao compact was erected. The five rooms [of the office] were adjacent to each other. In the middle hall, [a board with] the Sacred Edict was placed and the plaque of “the Office of Community Compact” [xiangyuesuo] was hung up. On the left side [of the office] was erected a big stone stele of “the Office of Community Compact of Shangbao” to put an end to confusion. In the three seasons of the first, third, and seventh month, gentry and elders [jingqi] went to the compact office to discuss the compact rules [yuegui]. On the twelfth, thirteenth, and fifteenth day of the first month and the twentieth, twenty-first, and twenty-third day of the sixth month of every year, Shangbao celebrated the god’s [i.e., Zougong] birthday. The gentry and elders drank wine inside [the office]. And may [this] continue generation after generation . . .

In the first month of the spring of the fourth year of the Kangxi era of our Dynasty [1665], the four surnames, the Wus, the Yangs, the Lis, and the Lais, all decided to initiate a compact, but [they] did not have compact office. [They] earnestly requested the [descendants of] Lord Zou Qilang to permit [them] to use the compact office to discuss compact rules. Later on, the five surnames of the Zous, the Wus, the Yangs, the Lis, and the Lais constituted the fivefold association with the names of ren 仁 [humanity], yi 義 [righteousness], li 禮 [propriety], zhi 智 [wisdom], and xin 信 [sincerity]. [They] decided the order of rotation of conducting compact affairs by drawing lots.51

Several points made in this extract need to be clarified here. First, although the office of the Shangbao compact was erected in 1644, this does not mean that the community compact itself was initiated in that year. Actually, the Yangzibian genealogy claims clearly that Shangbao compact was initiated in the Wanli era (1573–1619), though it does not give the exact year. Second, when the Shangbao compact was initiated, its members included no villagers other than the Zous in Shangbao. That is perhaps the way the compact got its name. Then, in 1665, the Wus, the Yangs, the Lis, and the Lais decided to establish another compact.53 They joined the Shangbao compact some years later. Finally, the two events, the merging of the two compact organizations and the decision on the order of rotation, may not happen in the same year. The first event may have happened some time after 1665. The second event should have happened between the second

52 “Shangbao yue gongchan” 上保約公産 (Public Property of Shangbao Compact), in ibid. (1946, Yangzibian hamlet), 19/1a.
53 There was no villager with the surname of Li and Shangbao villagers have no idea how the Lis disappeared.
and the fourth decades of the Kangxi era (1662–1772) because the first time that the Yangs conducted compact affairs was in 1704 (see below).

Why did the villages such as those around Shangbao as well as Mawu, Changxiao, and Nanchai initiate community compacts in the Wanli era? Social historians of Fujian history have offered several explanations. The Japanese scholar Miki Satoshi sees the emergence of the community compact and baojia system as a result of the breakdown of the lijia system. In contrast, Zheng Zhenman argues that the emergence of the community compact and baojia system was due to financial difficulties of the late Ming local government, which was impoverished by military actions against the wo pirates who roamed China’s southeast coast, and financial reforms at the time. Both Miki Satoshi and Zheng Zhenman have drawn their conclusions based on an investigation of overall Fujian history in the Ming. Their explanations provide the basic historical background for our understanding of Sibao community compacts.

Indeed, some evidence implies a correlation between the lijia system and the Shangbao community compact. Recent scholarship has made it clear that beginning in the mid-Ming, the hu 戶 (households) in the household registration system often had nothing to do with actual households but were transformed into fiscal units that could include social groups ranging from several small lineages to a branch of a big lineage. Shangbao was no exception. Each of the descent groups around Shangbao or their major branches was registered in the official registration system by a single hu. Thus in the genealogical records of Shangbao we find Zou Qitai 啓太 hu, Wu Tongren 通仁 hu, Wu Deqi 德其 hu, and so forth. The first two hu, together with another hu called Zeng Taichang 曾太長, were known as “the old three hu” (lao san hu 老三戶) or “the old subcanton

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54 HNYSPZ, juan shou, 4a–5a.
55 Miki, Min-Shin Fukken nōson shakai no kenkyū, 278–288.
56 Zheng, “Ming houqi Fujian difang xingzheng de yanbian,” 147–156.
57 Katayama Tsuyoshi 片山剛, “Shindai Kanton-shō Shukō deruta no zukōsei ni tsuite-zeiryō, koseiki, dōzoku” (On the Tujia System of the Pearl River Delta in Guangdong During the Qing Period: Grain Tax, Household Registration, and Lineage), Tōyō gakuhō 東洋學報 63.3–4 (March 1982), 1–34; Zheng Zhenman, “Ming-Qing Fujian de lijia huji yu jiazu zuzhi” (The Household Registration of the Lijia System and Family Lineage Organization in Fujian During the Ming and Qing Periods), Zhongguo shehui jingji shi yanjiu 2 (1989), 38–44; Liu Zhiwei, Zai guojia yu shehui zhijian-Ming-Qing Guangdong lijia fuyi zhidu yanjiu.
58 My Shangbao informants claim they never heard of the Zengs around Shangbao, which means that they must have moved out of the area at least two or three generations ago.
heads” (*lao lizhang* 老里長). They were the three subcanton heads that took the responsibility in rotation over the fifth *jia* of the fifth *tu* of Sibao subcanton of Changting County. Wu Deqi and two other *hu*, Zou Huangguan 煌觀 and Zou Guangfa 廣發, joined them in 1695 and 1757 respectively. These six *hu* took joint responsibility for various services that the government imposed upon the subcanton head of the fifth *jia* of the fifth *tu*. They then rotated that responsibility among themselves in the collectively decided, celestial stem order, which was thus:

- Zou Qitai: *wu, jia, ji, yi, geng, bing, xin, ding, ren*;
- Wu Tongren: *ji, yi, geng, bing, xin, ding, ren, wu, gui*;
- Zeng Taichang: *geng, xin, ren, gui, jia*;
- Wu Deqi: *xin, bing, ren, ding, gui, wu, jia, ji, yi*;
- Zou Huangguan: *ren, ding, gui, wu, jia, ji, yi, geng, bing*;
- Zou Guangfa: *gui, wu, jia, ji, yi, geng, bing, xin, ding*.

Every *hu* was on duty every other four or five years except Zeng Qitai *hu*, which was on duty every ten years. Their joint responsibility may have paved the way for cooperation between the Zous and the Wus and other agnate groups in the later period. More importantly, the fact that the *lijia* organization continued to exist suggests that the *lijia* system may have been greatly transformed in Sibao but did not completely break down. The *lijia* system still provided necessary services imposed by the government. But some functions that the *lijia* system assumed, such as promoting social order and moral education, may have been performed by other institutions, such as the community compact and the *baojia* system.

As for the evolution of local government's financial system, Tingzhou was no exception to the conclusion drawn by Zheng Zhenman. Indeed, some important evidence he cites in his study has been drawn from Tingzhou. The withdrawal of the state from public affairs resulted in the rise of local autonomy. To deal with public affairs, villages, especially small villages, sought one another’s cooperation, which led to the emergence of new social groups and networks. Thus, before the Wus, the Yangs, and the Lis joined the Shangbao compact, they had worked with the Zous of Shangbao to construct an irrigation system in the late Ming (see below).

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59 “Zhao geng tianpian” 招耕田片 (Land for Leasing), in *WSZP* (1899, Lower Shrine branch), 1/1a–4b. The celestial stem is connected to Chinese calendar system and its order is: *jia, yi, bing, ding, wu, ji, geng, xin, ren*, and *gui*.

60 Ibid., 3a–3b.

61 One of the important sources that Zheng Zhenman relies on is the *Ninghua County Gazetteer* compiled by Li Shixiong in the early Qing.
It is likely that this cooperation might have influence on their later cooperation in the community compact.

If the transformation of the *lijia* system and the local government's financial system provides the basic historical context for the creation of the community compact, what were the direct reasons for that creation? Ma Mengfu, the architect of the Mawu compact, claims that the compact was initiated to reform a society on the edge of disintegration, a society whose “customs are getting less and less pure” and a society that “has one thousand lesions and a hundred holes.” Therefore, his compact was basically a device for reforming evil customs and renewing public morality. The motivation behind the establishment of the Shangbao compact is more difficult to determine. A local legend has it that the compact was initiated to combat the harassment of bandit gangs and the encroachment of the nearby dominant lineages. As we know, the villages around Shangbao were relatively small and were close to the mountainous Changting-Liancheng border. The bandit gangs that roamed this border area harassed these villages from time to time. These villages were also reportedly bullied by big lineages that had settled in the southern center of the narrow Sibao Basin. As pointed out in Chapter 5, those agnate groups started the process of lineage building in the mid-Ming. By the turn of the seventeenth century, several of them had been transformed into lineages with ancestral halls, genealogies, and some plots of corporate land, whereas the residents of the villages around Shangbao would not start the process of lineage building for about two more centuries.

One legend circulated among the Wus of Jiantou explains why the Wus did not marry the girls from the Mas in Mawu. One Wu married a woman from Mawu, and she died a natural death past the age of eighty. Upon hearing of her death, a number of people from her *niangjia* (her parents’ home) marched to Jiatou and robbed everything valuable from her husband’s house on the pretext that her death was due to mistreatment by her husband’s family.62 The Wus were only a small agnate group and did not dare to fight with the Mas. To avoid any similar trouble, they ordered their descendants never to marry Ma girls. The Zous of Shangbao, seemed to have had trouble with the Zous of Shuangquan for some time concerning the sacrifices performed in the Zougong Temple before a dispute took place and a lawsuit was brought to the Changting

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yamen in the Chongzhen era (1628–1644). The Zous of Shuangquan, though no match for the power of the Mas, were stronger than the Zous of Shangbao, then still a group of agnates without much solidarity.

In view of the evidence mentioned above, the establishment of the Shangbao compact probably provided a way for these small villages to defend themselves against the harassment of bandit gangs and the encroachment of the dominant lineages. A legend circulated in Shangbao shows this point clearly. A member of the Shangbao compact was once bullied by a member of a dominant lineage. After he reported this to the compact head, the latter gathered a group of compact members and marched to the house of that member. They carried off every valuable item from the house without meeting any resistance. Therefore, for large or medium-size villages such as Mawu, Wuge, and Shuangquan, the community compact may have been initiated principally to maintain moral and ritual order or to carry out the responsibilities that this institution assumed in the Qing period. For smaller villages, such as Shangbao and Jiantou, in addition to promoting social order, the community compact also assumed additional functions, including guaranteeing local security (see below). But both were in a certain sense the results of the evolution of the local administrative system starting in the mid-Ming.

A lack of data makes it impossible to reconstruct the early history of the Shangbao compact. We do know that, at the turn of the eighteenth century, after the Wus, the Yangs, the Lis, and the Lais joined the Shangbao compact, a system of rotation was set up and it continued without much modification until it ceased working in the early Republican period. According to this system, each of the five surname groups or their branches was organized into a group and named after each of the five constant values in Confucianism—ren (humanity), yi (righteousness), li (etiquette), zhi (wisdom), and xin (sincerity):

Ren-character group: the Lower Gate of the Wus, the Yangs, and the Lais;
Yi-character group: the Upper Gate of the Wus;
Li-character group: the Zous of Zhenbian;
Zhi-character group: the Zous of Dapingtou;
Xin-character group: the Zous of Yangzibian.

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63 "San xiang fending zhi riqi guili" 三鄉分定致祭日期規例 (Regulations for Assigning the Dates of Sacrifice [to Zougong] for Three Villages [of Wuge, Shuangquan, and Shangbao]), in ZSZP (1946, Yangzibian hamlet), juan shou, 1a.
64 "Citu ji" 祠圖記 (Record of the Plan of the Ancestral Hall), in WSZP (1899, Lower Shrine branch), 1/5a; “Zougong miao yuesuo” 鄒公廟約所 (Office of the Community Compact at the Zougong Temple), in HNYSZP, juan shou, 5a.
These groups took charge of the affairs related to the compact on a rotating basis. As for the groups that included more than one surname group, they rotated responsibility. The frequency of the duties was decided according to the size of the group. Thus the Yangs were on duty once every twenty-five years, according to the following passage from their genealogy.

On the second day of the first month of every year, sacrificial animals were slaughtered in the compact office and [the responsibility of] the compact was taken over [by the group that was to be on duty that year]. The two surnames of Lower Gate Wus of Jiantou and the Yangs drew lots and [were assigned to] the Ren-character group. It was collectively decided on this day that the Lower Gate Wus and [the Lais of] Gaowukeng were jointly on duty. In [a cycle of] twenty-five years [they] took turns to be on duty five times. The Yangs were on duty once every [twenty-five] years. The Yangs took over the compact duty from the Xin-character group of Yangzibian and shifted the duty to the [following] Yi-character group of the Upper Gate of the Wus. The person who finishes his compact duty should hold a banquet and send a letter to invite the next compact head to attend the banquet. [He] also has to invite another two persons from his own agnates [benjia] to attend the banquet. [He] should hold a banquet for the two persons when [he] pays respect to the saint 65 and transfers his duties in the Zougong Temple. On the second day of the seventh month of every year, the compact holds an assembly. The Six Maxims of the Sacred Edicts is explained for the sake of transforming commoners and making them honest and pure. 66

The passage goes on to say that the Yangs began duty in 1704. Thereafter they were on duty once every twenty-five years, in 1729, 1754, 1779, 1804, 1829, 1854, 1879. The Gaowukeng mentioned in the passage was probably a reference to the Lais, for they used to live in the settlement before most of them moved to the present-day Huangkeng. The passage shows that the Lais and the Wus were on duty in the same year. But we do not know how these two agnates divided their duties, nor do we know to which group the Lis belonged. They seem to have disappeared after the mid-Qing. This passage also reveals that the Shangbao compact functioned continuously from at least the early eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century.

According to the passage, each of the five groups of the Shangbao compact was on duty once every five years and each tour of duty lasted one year. These groups began their tour of duty on the second day of the first month, which was called “taking over compact duty” (jieyue 接約).

65 Since this took place in the Zougong Temple, the “saint” here probably refers to Zougong.
66 Ibid., 4a–5a.
They handed over duties to the next group on the same day of the next year, which was called “shifting compact duty” (tuoyue 脫約). Before the day of shifting compact duty, the compact head on duty sent a card to notify the next compact head as well as gentry and elders, inviting them to attend the assembly that was to take place that day. Two such invitation cards can be found in the manual of sacrificial texts (Manual 0401) collected in Shangbao. The first card is addressed to the compact head of the succeeding group and declares that because winter was over it was time to hand over compact duty to the next group. The compact head on duty sent this card to his successor, inviting him to go to the compact office to “receive the Amplified Instructions of the Sacred Edict” and take over compact duty on the second day of the first month.67 The second card is addressed to gentry and elders of the compact and is used for the two compact assemblies, which were held on the second day of the first month and the third day of the third and seventh months and whose major function was to settle compact affairs. It declares that sacrificial animals would be slaughtered on such-and-such a day according to the compact rules. All “gentry, elders, and eminently talented persons of the compact” were invited to the assembly in the compact office to “discuss the compact rules” (yilun yuegui 議論約規) so that the “customs will be purified and refined and [all] will enjoy great peace.”68 The date given at the end of the card was the Republican period, which shows that the Shangbao compact continued to exist in the early Republican period.

To each group in the Shangbao compact, the tour of duty every five years was an important responsibility involving the honor and fame of the group. Some groups set up rules concerning how they should take on these duties and recorded them in their genealogies. According to the rules set up by the Upper Gate of the Wus (the Yi-character group),

In the years of yi and geng, it is this [ancestral] hall's turn to [take on the duty of] the community compact. [It] transfers the compact duty in the years of bing and xin. There are compact assemblies and the recitation of the text of the compact [xingyue 行約]. The persons on month duty or on year duty should invite those who are talented in management skills (you zhi shi cai zhe 有值事才者) to handle these affairs collectively, and [they] should not shift responsibilities to others or shrink from them. When the [yellow] register is checked [i.e., labor services were imposed by the government], every household should pay no less than twenty-five copper coins.

68 Ibid., 23a–23b.
[We] should not depend upon [proceeds from] the pine trees alone.\textsuperscript{69} With a joint effort, it can easily be raised.

In the year of the transfer of the compact duty, carry the pig that [our ancestral] hall prepares to the compact office and slaughter [it there]. Government students, national university students, \textit{lisheng}, and those who are entitled to drink wine should go to the compact office to attend the reception. There is no wine feast in the morning, when sacrifices are presented to [ancestors in] the hall, except for the musicians, to whom a reception will be offered.\textsuperscript{70}

These rules show that the Upper-Gate Wus were on duty in the years with the celestial stem characters \textit{yi} and \textit{geng} and that they handed over those duties in the subsequent years of the cycle. The first rule orders persons with management skills to conduct compact affairs. It also indicates that the Shangbao compact, like the Eight Generals compact of Naichai, had to provide services or taxes to the local government. The second rule reveals the involvement of \textit{lisheng} in the community compact. Unfortunately, we are not given any detailed information about the rituals they performed.

Who were the people who assumed the position of compact head? How were gentry involved in the compact affairs? These questions are important for understanding the nature of the community compact. Lack of evidence, however, makes it possible to provide only some clues to these questions.

We have biographical information on only four compact heads. The first person was Wu Dashun 大順 (1572–1648), style name Ruochu 若初. His elder brother, Wu Dahang 大行, was a tribute student. When he was young, Dashun went into business and made some money, with which he supported his brother’s preparation for the civil service examination. He was appointed community head because he was a man of “straightforwardness and self-control.” He was good at handling compact affairs. After his term of office ended, he was invited to continue to supervise compact affairs. He was recommended to be one of the honorable guests of the community wine-drinking ceremony probably due to his excellent services on behalf of the compact.\textsuperscript{71}

The second person, Yang Jiugong 九公, was a man who “had never bullied widowers and widows and defied excessive force throughout his life.”

\textsuperscript{69} The pine trees were in the corporate mountains of the Upper Gate branch.

\textsuperscript{70} “Ju kai ji zuci guili” 具開祭祖祠規例 (A Detailed List of Regulations for Presenting Sacrifice at the Ancestral Hall), in \textit{WSZP} (1899, Upper Shrine branch), 8/2b.

\textsuperscript{71} “Ruochu gong zhuan” 若初公傳 (Biography of Ruochu), in ibid., 1a.
When he “decided what was right and wrong, [he treated as] right those who were right and [treated as] wrong those who were wrong. [He] never compromised with other people.” He tried his best to deal with compact affairs and “once making a promise [he] would never change his mind even if [he was offered] a thousand taels [of silver].” We know he had been appointed as the compact head because his biography tells us that:

The Society of Village Prohibitions [xiangjinhui 鄉禁會] of our compact had set up quite harsh regulations, to the point that some [regulation breakers] were sent to the yamen to receive punishment. Never did [Jiugong] hesitate to put [these regulations] into practice. If up to now in [our] compact the evil custom of stealing has not become rampant, and residents have been able to lay their heads on their pillows and just drop off to sleep, that was bestowed by [our] brother [i.e., Jiugong].72

The Society of Village Prohibitions (xiangzhengshe 鄉正社)73 was an organization that belonged to the Shangbao compact that usually dealt with public affairs. The biography of Jiugong mentions in conclusion that he was killed in collective violence between the Yangs and the Lower-Gate Wus.

Yang Jianzhong 楊儉忠,74 the third compact head, did not seem to be wealthy. It was said that he was “thrifty and simple in his life and supported himself by cultivation.” When the family was divided, his father did not leave him any valuable property. In addition to farming, he also supported his family by peddling rice from Ninghua to Liancheng, engaging in a trade that was widespread in Sibao before 1949. Probably because the Yangs were a poor descent group, the humble situation of Jianzhong did not influence his status in his village. He managed the corporate land of an ancestor of the twelfth generation. He was able to accumulate some wealth for his branch by lending money. He also accumulated some wealth to support the sacrifices to a sixteenth-generation ancestor

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72 “Yang Jiugong zhuan” 楊九公傳 (Biography of Yang Jiugong), in HNYSZP, juan shou, lb.
73 In Sibao dialect xiangjin 鄉禁 is pronounced the same as xiangzheng 鄉正.
74 A note in the Wu Family Genealogy from the Upper Gate branch says that Yang Jianzhong and Zou Yongyuan (see below) had been appointed the compact head. To the left of the note was written xiangyuegong 鄉約公 (literally, “the lord of compact head”). Listed below were the names Wu Zhiying 志英, Zou Yongyuan, Yang Jianzhong, Wu Fengyou 豐有, and [Wu] Chuabing 傳炳. Unfortunately, I was not able to find the biographies of Wu Zhiying, Wu Fengyou, and Wu Chuabing. But it is clear that none of them received any titles and degrees because their names are not found in the list of holders of degrees and titles in the genealogies of the Zous and the Wus.
whose line was terminated. This evidence suggests that he was relatively capable of managing wealth.

The fourth person, Zou Yongyuan 永遠, was born into a well-to-do family. It is reported that a title of national university student was purchased for him when he was only twelve years old. Yongyuan was “sincere, kindly, faithful, and honest” and “treated people modestly.” He played an important role in a variety of public affairs, including the repairing of bridges and roads, the management of corporate funds for ancestor worship, the construction of the stage of the Datong Bridge 大桐橋 market, the renovation of the Hall of Tianhou (Empress of Heaven), the management of the Society of Birthday Celebration of Lord Jingchu (Jingchu gong shengdan hui 景初公聖誕會; Jingchu was the zi of Zou Yinglong), and the updating of the genealogy of his own descent group.

The four compact heads mentioned above came from families of different economic and social backgrounds. The fourth one belonged to the lower cohort of the gentry group, the first one had received a certain imperial honor, and the other two were commoners. But none of them were government students. The fourth one and probably the first one came from a well-to-do family, while the other two were from ordinary families. The family background and economic and social status were, therefore, not necessarily the criteria for the position of the compact head. This was due in part to the fact that not all of the agnate groups of the Shangbao compact were able to produce gentry continuously. More important, unlike the building of a lineage, in which degree holders seemed to be indispensable, talent and experience in management of public affairs and corporate funds were more desirable for the position of the compact head. All four of these men seem to have had this talent and experience. This is not surprising if we remember that the establishment of the community compact was meant to deal with public affairs and to settle local disputes. A person without this talent and experience would not be competent to take this position even if he were a degree holder. This is probably why the Wus of Jiantou put so much emphasis on “those who have management talent.”

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75 “Jianzhong weng zhuan” 儉忠翁傳 (Biography of Jianzhong the Elder), in HNYSZP, juan shou, 1a.
76 “Yongyuan xian zhi xingshu” 永遠賢侄行述 (Biography of My Virtuous Nephew Yongyuan), in ZSZP (1930, Zhenbian hamlet), juan 7, 1a.
The office of the Shangbao compact was next to the Zougong Temple in Shangbao. As shown in Chapter 8, this temple was built in the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368) and was one of the most important temples in southern Sibao. The compact office, whose major function was to settle public affairs, was probably erected there because it was the community and ceremonial center. The office had five rooms. The *Sacred Edict* was placed in the middle room.

The routine activities of the compact took place three times a year. On the second day of the first month, a banquet was held in the office and gentry, elders, and compact heads were invited to attend. The transfer of compact duty also happened on this occasion. The assembly that took place on the third day of the third month was meant to “discuss compact rules”—that is, the settling of local disputes and the discussion of public affairs. The recitation and expounding of the *Sacred Edict* and the *Amplified Instructions of the Sacred Edict* after 1724 were made on the third day of the seventh month. Moreover, when a local dispute occurred, it would be brought to the compact head right away. For example, when the geomancy of the grave of one of the Yangs’ ancestors was endangered by a Zou, the Yangs brought their complaint to the compact head and the bao head. The dispute was eventually resolved through the mediation of the latter.

In addition to these routine activities, the Shangbao compact played an important role in the economic, social, and religious life of its members—a role seldom expected of community compacts. The involvement of the compact in the maintenance of irrigation works dated back to the late Ming. With the exception of Gaowukeng and Huangkeng, the villages of the compact have a common irrigation system, whose water comes from the Aofeng Mountains east of the Sibao basin and goes through Shangbao and then reaches Jiantou and Shexiaqian. In the Wanli era, before they joined the Shangbao compact, the Wus, the Yangs, and the Lis, together with the Zous of Shangbao, constructed an embankment across the stream at Youhangqian 油杭前 to channel water into the major ditch of the irrigation system. They also worked some plots of land, the rent for which was used to pay for the maintenance of the embankment. During the

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77 “Citu ji”, 5a; ZSZP (1995, Zhenbian hamlet), juan 1, 117.
78 “Xiangtu” 鄉圖 (Plan of the Village), in HNYSZP, juan shou, 3b.
mid-eighteenth century, the land was reportedly “dominated” by someone who intended to “embezzle corporate property.” Thus, in the fourth month of 1762, the entire compact held a meeting, taking back the land and leasing it to Zou Xinde 新德, who was to pay the rent of six hundred copper coins a year to the compact head on duty. The rent was reserved to pay for maintenance of the irrigation system. A land deed of leasing was also drafted on the same day.79

The Shangbao compact also played an active role in a jiao festival that takes place every year on the first day of the ninth month and lasts for two days. The festival was organized to celebrate the birthday of the Immortal Lai (Lai xiangong 賴仙公). A temple was dedicated to this god along with the Immortal Ouyang (Ouyang zhenxian 歐陽真仙) and the Immortal Luo (Luogong zhenxian 羅公真仙) on the top of a steep mountain, Gufeng Mountain 古峰山 or the Peak of the Immortal Lai (Laixiandong 賴仙崠), southeast of Shangbao.80 The Immortal Lai, the Immortal Ouyang, and the Immortal Luo was the immortals of the six well-known local deities called the “three immortals, two Buddhas, and one marquis” (san xian er fo yi houwang 三仙二佛一侯王) of old Tingzhou. The Immortal Lai, a native of Qingliu, was named Xuan 玄. He lived in the Song dynasty and became perfect and entered nirvana on Yuanfeng 員峰 Mountain in Gutian, Liancheng.81 We do not know when the temple was established on Gufeng Mountain. Judging from two stone inscriptions in the temple, the Immortal Lai had a widespread following in Changting, Liancheng, and Qingliu in the late Qing,82 and pilgrims from

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79 “Citu ji,” 5b.
80 “Jifu an fansha ji” 积福庵梵刹记 (Record of the Buddhist Temple, the Convent of Accumulating Blessings), in ZSZP (1995, Zhenbian hamlet), juan shou, 1.
81 Hua Qinjin, “Yuanfeng shan de Lai xiangong ji qi daoshi”; QLXZ (1947), 27/12b. The other gods were Dingguang gufo 定光古佛, Fuhu chanshi 伏虎禪師, and Gehu gongwang 蛤蝴公王. Like Lai Xiangong, the Immortal Ouyang was also a native of Qingliu. He lived in the late Yuan and became an immortal at the Shunzhen Daoist Convent (Shunzhen daoyuan 順貞道院) on Fengshan 豐山 Mountain in southern Qingliu. See QLXZ (1545), 3/16b–17a. See also Jiang Chunfu 江椿福, “Dafeng shan yu Ouyang zhenxian” 大豐山與歐陽真仙 (Dafeng Mountain and the True Immortal Ouyang), in Yang, ed., Tingzhou fu de zongzu miaohui yu jingji, 416–440. On the other hand, the Immortal Luo was a native of Liancheng in the Northern Song. It is reported that he became perfect at the Yingshan Convent 盈山 of the later Qingliu. See LCXZ (1939), 31/2a–2b. Another source cited in this book claims that the Immortal Luo was a man of the Tang period.
82 Both stone inscriptions record the contributions made to the restoration of the temple. One stele, with jiang fu kong jie 降福孔皆 (may abundant blessings be sent down) carved on its upper section, has no date. The other, with yong chui buxiu 永垂不朽 (to be transmitted forever without corruption) carved on it, was erected in 1894. On the second stele, below the list of contributors, the names of the twelve managers (dongli 董理) were
those counties would visit the temple on his birthday. Daoist priests from Gechuan, Liancheng, would perform rituals in the temple. Then the pilgrims would visit the Convent of Accumulating Blessings (Jifu An) located at the foot the Gufeng shan and present offerings to the gods inside the temple. All these activities were organized by the Shangbao compact, which also purchased land to cover the expenses of the ritual, such as the salary paid to musicians, incense sticks, and candles. As the Zou Family Genealogy of Zhenbian hamlet says,

On the top of the South Peak [nanzhang 南嶂, i.e., Gufeng Mountain], the members of the Shangbao compact erected a temple, which was known as [the temple of] Gufeng Mountain. The golden statue [of the Immortal Lai] was placed inside and sacrifices were offered there. Each of those good men and faithful women from the four directions [i.e., from everywhere] should fast wholeheartedly and climb the mountain to pay respects. Then the Immortal will surely display divine efficacy. Unfortunately, since our community constructed [the temple], no sacrificial land [was purchased] previously. [We] had to gather fellow members. Money was contributed and deposited for [accumulating] interest. Eventually three plots of arable land were purchased. The five groups Ren, Yi, Li, Zhi, and Xin of the community compact take turns [managing the land]. On the first day of the ninth month [every year], the group on duty buys with the money generated by the fields such things as saltpeter, incense sticks and candles, and caiyi 彩儀 [a special flag decorated with ribbons prepared for pilgrimage], hires suona players, and climbs the mountain to pay religious homage. It celebrates [the birthday of] the Immortal in the temple. This will not be discontinued for one thousand years.

After it opened a new market at Datong Bridge in 1866 (see below), the Shangbao compact also sponsored plays performed at the marketplace on the Immortal’s birthday. For the performance of plays, it also built a stage there. The birthday celebration thus took place both in the temple and at

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83 “Jifu an fancha ji,” 1. I discuss this convent in detail in Chapter 8.
84 ZSZP (1995, Zhenbian hamlet), 1/124. The Zou Family Genealogy of Yangzibian mentions two plots of land whose rent belonged to the Shangbao compact. It also mentions a plot of land belonging to the Society of the Immortal (Xian’gong she 仙公社) and two plots of land belonging to the Society of Pilgrimage (Chaoshan hui 朝山會), which belonged to the two god-worshipping societies rather than Shangbao compact. See “Shetian pian” 社田片 (Land for [Sacrificing] the God of the Soil), in ZSZP (1946, Yangzibian hamlet), 19/2a, 4a.
the marketplace. To coordinate both activities, the compact also set up a series of ways of communication and regulations. No written materials mention the birthday celebration in the temple. When I visited this temple on October 17, 2001 (the first day of the ninth month according to the lunar calendar), two Daoist priests from Gechuan, Liancheng, had been hired to perform rituals there. Although *lisheng* are no longer involved in the rituals, this may not have been the case before 1949. A manual of sacrificial texts from Shangbao includes a text prepared for the *jiao* festival that took place in the temple. This implies that *lisheng* may well have been involved in the sacrifices to the Immortal Lai.85

In 1866, under the sponsorship of the Shangbao compact, a new market was opened at Datong Bridge or Daqu 大衢 Bridge near Shangbao, Jiantou, and Old Shexiaqian, before the altar of the soil of Shangbao. The market was known as the Datong Bridge market. The *Wu Family Genealogy* of the Lower Gate provides a brief description of how this market was opened.

The Fair Market [*gongping xu* 公平墟] of this area was opened at Daqu Bridge, where the public highway from the north to the south [passes through]. The [Pagoda of the] Netted Star [*luoxingta* 羅星塔] can be found there. It is the [geomantic] key point [*suoyue* 鎖鑰, literally “lock and key”] of the Zous [of Shangbao]. Because the new market of Longzu [i.e., Wuge], whose marketing days are the fifth and ninth,86 is relatively far away, and this creates difficulty for buying and selling, and fear that young people would make trouble, the four surnames of the Zous, the Wus, the Yangs, and the Lais, that is, the members of the five groups of *Ren*, *Yi*, *Li*, *Zhi*, *Xin*, and others, assembled and collectively discussed opening another market. This matter was decided long before, but without result. In the fifth year of the Tongzhi era [1866], this matter was picked up again, and a decision was made collectively to open a new fair market at Daqu Bridge in this area. [However,] a single bridge does not have sufficient space to accommodate villagers. Therefore, twenty thousand copper cash was levied upon each of the five groups of *Ren*, *Yi*, *Li*, *Zhi*, and *Xin* to put up a hall on the top of the pagoda so that the buying and selling [of rice] would not be affected by wind and rain. Neither deities nor Buddhas are placed [in the pagoda]. On every third and eighth day [of the month],87 people come and go to do business, and this will not change after generations and years. In the eleventh year of the Guangxu era [1885], a stage was constructed before the pavilion.

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85 Manual 0401, 11a.
86 This means the marketing times were the fifth, ninth, fifteenth, nineteenth, twenty-fifth, and twenty-ninth day of each month.
87 This means the marketing times were the third, eighth, thirteenth, eighteenth, twenty-third, and twenty-eighth day of the each month.
community compacts, village rituals, and local society

for selling rice [tiaomi ting 靡米亭, i.e., the pagoda]. [This] was not only to provide a place for performing plays on the first day of the ninth month, when respects are paid to Gufeng Mountain, but also to make the marketplace look more splendid. As for the expenses for erecting this stage, the Society of Village Prohibitions actually contributed several hundred taels [of silver] to cover the cost of construction and materials.88

The description makes it clear when and how the Datong Bridge market was opened. The suggestion to open a new market had come up before 1866, but it was not acted on until that year. The passage claims that the market was opened principally for two reasons. First, the Wuge market was “relatively far way.” Second, there was a fear that young people of the Shangbao compact would make trouble in the market. The first reason is less convincing. The market was only 5 kilometers from Shangbao, less than one hour’s walk. The major concern of the Shangbao compact was the second reason. Troubles made by young people, fighting for example, might increase the chances of conflict and rivalry between the major lineages such as the Zous of Wuge and the descent groups of the Shangbao compact. By opening a new market, not only would the chance of conflict be reduced but the small villages of the Shangbao compact would be able to avoid being controlled by the dominant major lineages.

To grasp the significance of this event, we need to understand the importance of having a market within the boundaries of a community and the complicated relationship between markets and the local society. This is one of the major topics of Chapter 9, so I will not discuss it here in any detail except to mention the basic implications. In brief, control of the marketplace was of critical importance in challenging, contesting, and constructing local power. Before the mid-Ming, there was only one market, Laijiaxu, in Sibao, located roughly in the middle of the narrow Sibao basin. Based on its name, this market was probably opened by the Lais. But by the mid-Ming it was probably controlled by the Mas of Mawu. Beginning in the late Ming, following their involvement in the printing industry, the Zous of Wuge became a relatively wealthy lineage. The profits from the book business also created a group of title holders who bought their titles. The Zous of Wuge gathered strength slowly but steadily, and in 1778 they were able to open a new market outside their village. This market did business on the same days as the Laijiaxu market.

88 “Daqu qiao guji” 大衢橋古迹 (Ancient Remains of Daqu Bridge), in WSZP (1899, Lower Shrine branch), 1/1a–1b.
A third market was opened near Jiangfang by the Jiangs in the Republican period. It, too, had the same marketing days as the Laijiaxu and Wuge markets (see Chapter 9 for documentation). This arrangement clearly shows the motivation behind the opening of markets: by holding their different markets on the same days, the major lineages were competing with one another. In contrast, the Datong Bridge market held its marketing days on the third and eighth days. This arrangement implies that, unlike the Zous of Wuge and the Jiangs of Jiangfang, the Shangbao compact had the less confrontational purpose of defending its members from the encroachment of the dominant lineages. The establishment of a separate market, for the villages around the Zougong Temple, aimed to avoid control by, rather than to challenge and contest the power of, the dominant lineages of Wuge and Mawu.

Like the Eight Generals compact, the Shangbao compact sought to regulate social and economic life by installing a series of prohibitions. These prohibitions were meant to decrease local disputes and promote social security. Five of the prohibitions are recorded in the *lisheng* manual of sacrificial texts found in Shangbao (see Appendix 5). They show the extent of the influence of the Shangbao compact. The major concern of these five prohibitions is the protection of private property. The first and third prohibitions attempted to protect crops from encroachment by animals and thieves. The second and fifth prohibitions addressed stealing, robbery, and banditry. The fourth was a general prohibition against all kinds of wrongdoing and an attempt to renew local customs. The prohibitions suggest that the Shangbao compact was not only a social institution that organized local economic, social, and religious life but also, as was the case for other community compacts, had the function of policing.  

Compared with community compacts discussed in recent scholarship, the Shangbao compact is unique in at least two ways. The compact seems...
to have existed almost uninterrupted from the late Ming to the early twentieth century, about three centuries. None of the compacts known so far existed for such a long time. The Nangang compact of Wang Yang-ming ceased functioning after a few years. Other examples include the Haizhou compact of Neo-Confucian Lü Ran initiated in 1525, the Hedong compact of Yu Guangxing, a student of Lü Ran, initiated in 1534, the Xuchang compact of Zhang Liangzhi, another student of Lü Ran, initiated in 1539, and the community compacts initiated in Ji’an by Wang Yangming’s followers in the mid-sixteenth century. All these compacts ceased working only a few years after they were initiated. In contrast, the Huanggang compact of Raoping County, Chaozhou, initiated around 1438 lasted over thirty years. The community compact that lasted the longest was the Xiongshan compact of Luzhou, Shanxi, initiated in 1511, which lasted over sixty years. But none of them lasted longer than the Shangbao compact.

The Shangbao compact was also involved in a number of unexpected activities. The community compacts as described by Cao Guoqing were not involved in activities other than the settlement of local disputes, the handling of public affairs, and routine functions such as the expounding of compacts, the Sacred Edict, and laws and decrees, praising good deeds, and correcting bad deeds. Similarly, the Shadi compact of Zengcheng was involved in activities from the expounding of the Sacred Edict, the Classics, and the compacts, holding banquets, to performing related rituals at each compact assembly. Although little evidence indicates the routine activities of the Shangbao compact, we have no reason to doubt that it conducted these activities, too. More interesting is the involvement of this compact in a series of other activities: the maintenance of irrigation works, the opening of a new market, the organization of birthday celebration of a local patron god, and the promulgation

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93 Cao, “Mingdai xiangyue yanjiu,” 205–207.
of some prohibitions, as well as revenge against those who bullied its members.

During its three-century-long existence, the Shangbao compact experienced changes, as was the case with compacts initiated by the government and the gentry. As mentioned above, compacts initiated by the government and gentry tended to be combined with the baojia policing system and tuanlian local militia organization, first in the late Ming and then again beginning in the mid-Qing. The five prohibitions indicate that the Shangbao compact experienced the same changes, increasingly changing from being the guardian of ritual order to policing of social order. The existence of “braves” (that is, local militia) mentioned in the first prohibition implies that the Shangbao compact was most likely involved in local defense of some form. In this sense, the Shangbao compact was not unlike community compacts found in Guangdong in the late Qing.95

The Shangbao compact appears to be unique because it was involved in a broader range of activities than one might expect based on recent scholarship. Recent studies are based upon source materials provided by officials and gentry and deal with community compacts initiated by them. Zhu Honglin even claimed that wherever a community compact was initiated by the government or by local society, participation by the gentry was the norm and the gentry group was the “important factor that brought it about.”96 It is true that without the influence and participation of officials and gentry, the Shangbao compact would not have come about. But as in the cases of lineage building and temple construction beginning in the late Ming, these gentry were more often than not national university students, who bought their titles. Moreover, the compact was managed by local elites who often did not hold titles and degrees of any kind. How can we expect them to behave and think in the same way as those who had received classical training and spent much of their time in preparation for civil service examination? This is probably the reason that the Shangbao compact moved away from the model designed by Neo-Confucian gentry.

Finally, a few words on the implications of the introduction of compact rituals to the countryside. Like the introduction of a new type of ancestral rite among Chinese villagers in late imperial period, the introduction of community compact and its rituals in the countryside in the sixteenth century should be regarded as an important moment for the diffusion of Confucian rituals in the countryside. David Johnson, in his search for the origins of yinyang masters’ ritual tradition, does not overlook this point. “This very simple, officially sanctioned ritual, devised by the educated elite and led by the local she head,” he comments after introducing compact ritual as described in Joseph McDermott’s essay, “was performed in villages across China and thus must have been witnessed by any number of young yinyang masters [read lisheng here] with ambitions to lead important, and lucrative, local rituals.” “They could have used it,” he continues, “as the basis of more elaborate rituals of their own devising that eventually were written down in manuals and passed on to heirs or disciples.”97 But what is at steak here is more than diffusion of Confucian rituals. The case of the Shangbao compact shows that Chinese villagers, including degree-holding gentry, “gentry” with purchased degrees, titleless local elites, and peasants, were not passive recipients of “Confucian” ritual forms imposed upon them by the state or scholar-officials but, rather, active interpreters and adapters of state-approved practices to local conditions.

97 Johnson, Spectacle and Sacrifice, 311.
PART FIVE

THE WORSHIP OF GODS
In the spring of 2004, I had the great fortune to observe an important ritual event in Xuanhe 宣和 Township, Liancheng—an area that was part of Changting County before the land reform in the early 1950s. The ritual event was organized to celebrate the birthday of an important local patron god, Gehu gongwang. It involved more than ten villages, home to a total population of about thirty thousand, and has been a local tradition for over four hundred years. Although Xuanhe is not in Sibao, the ritual format is roughly similar.

Much as in traditional times, today the villages involved in the worship of the deity are divided into thirteen “neighborhoods” (fang 坊). Every year on the second day of the second lunar month, one of the neighborhoods is responsible for organizing a procession and carrying the image of the deity from his temple in a village called Mapu 馬埔 to their own village and for taking care of him until his next birthday. The responsibility rotated among the thirteen neighborhoods. In the ensuing procession, thousands of people are involved, and the procession line can stretch for more than a kilometer. The procession can last a whole day.

Whenever the procession passes through a village on its way from the temple at Mapu to its destination, this village invites the deity to its major ancestral hall or village temple. There, villagers set up a temporary offering platform, and all families of the village are obliged to present offerings to the deity. A pig, usually bought with public funds or levies collected from each family in the village, is slaughtered and presented to the deity as a sacrifice by the village elders. The entire ritual takes place under the guidance of two lisheng. Meanwhile, lisheng are also sent to the nearby altars of the soil to perform the rite of sacrifice. In both cases, they direct the chief sacrifier(s) through the procedures of the ritual and recite a sacrificial essay prepared in advance. ¹ Throughout the ritual event, except

¹ The preceding description is based on my own fieldwork, as well as Yang Yanjie, “Hehu gongwang: Yige kua zongzu de difang tushen” 蛤蝴公王: 一個跨宗族的地方土神 (Prince Gehu: A Local God Worshipped by Multi-Lineage), in Yang, Minxi Kejia zongzu shehui yanjiu, 237–273. Zheng Zhenman and Zhang Kan 張侃, Peitian 培田 (Peitian) (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2005), 132–137, also includes a brief description of the procession and some photos of this ritual event I took during the ritual event.
for the presence of a spirit medium, *lisheng* are the only ritual specialists who play an active role.

A manual of sacrificial texts provided by a *lisheng* of Peitian village also testifies to the involvement of *lisheng* in the celebration and procession. The manual includes six sacrificial texts and eleven pairs of couplets dedicated to this deity. Three of the sacrificial texts and all the couplets are dedicated specifically to the ritual mentioned above. As the titles of the texts indicate, one text is used when the village receives the deity on the seventh day of the fourth month; another is used on the next day, when the deity is invited to participate in a ritual procession; and the third text is used on the same day, when the deity is set up in the village’s ancestral hall. The manual also includes a ritual format that is supposed to be used in different rituals, including the sacrifice to Gehu gongwang, which is guided by two *lisheng.*

This ritual event gives us an opportunity to observe the rite of sacrifice performed by *lisheng* and is instrumental to our understanding of their liturgical texts and their role in the rite of sacrifice to local deities. It is true that the *lisheng* of Sibao are now seldom found performing rituals to gods. However, their involvement in such rituals before 1949 is undisputable. The fifty *lisheng* manuals testify to the fact that the *lisheng* not only played an important role in the sacrifices to ancestors, and may have been indispensable in the community compact rituals, but were also deeply involved in the sacrifices to local patron gods. The manuals contain tens of hundreds of sacrificial texts prepared for the rituals performed before gods. The texts number more than fifteen hundred, second only to that of the texts prepared for funerals, almost as many as those prepared for ancestral rites (see Appendix 4).

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2 The manual was produced probably in 1980s and 1990s and was provided to me by Wu Laixing, an elder and *lisheng* of Peitian, when I visited in the spring of 2004.

3 To my knowledge, Yangzibian is probably the only village where *lisheng* still have a role to play in the sacrifice to local deities. When I visited an ancestral hall in 2001, I noticed a poster pasted on the wall. It lists all the names of those who have provided services to the celebration of Guandi’s birthday in early 2001 (see below). The names of one sacrifier and two *lisheng* are found on the poster. The withdrawal of *lisheng* from the sacrifice to deities is itself an interesting phenomenon. It has a close connection with the “suppressing superstitions”（破除迷信）campaigns launched by late Qing and Republican political elites. For a vivid description of the campaign in Sibao in 1920s and 1930s, see Hu Shidu 胡師杜, *Minguo shiliu nian zhi niansan nian Changting feiluan shi* (A History of Banditry in Changting, 1927–1934) (Taizhong: Renwen chubanshe, 1973), 103–104.
To give readers a concrete idea of these texts, I list the deities and the number of essays dedicated to each of them in three Sibao jiwenben, manuals 0102, 0103, and 0401. Manual 0102 includes fifty-nine texts for gods; Manual 0103, sixty-two; and Manual 0401, seventy-seven (see Appendix 8). If repetitions are omitted, texts are dedicated to twenty-four gods—which is the number of gods worshiped in only two villages. The gods to whom most texts are dedicated include Guandi (40), Shegong (25), and Zougong and Tianhou (21 each). At the other extreme, only one text in each manual was addressed to one group of gods. Between the two extremes are such gods as Houtu, Longshen, Xuantian shangdi, Sanjiang gongwang, and Yushi, to whom were addressed more than one text. Although the number of texts dedicated to a particular god does not reflect the status of that god in the said village, it does show the degree of attention given to each of these gods. In this sense, as the gods to whom the most dedicated texts were dedicated, Guandi, Shegong, Zougong, and Tianhou are closely embedded in the social, economic, and religious life of the Sibao people and are thus give particular attention.

In addition to general texts used on different occasions to worship these gods, there were also texts prepared for specific occasions. Thus texts dedicated to Guandi include those prepared for the sacrifices to the deity in the second and fifth months, praying for the god to provide protection to men and the six domestic animals (liu chu 六畜), and sacrifices to the flag performed by the local militia. Similarly, texts dedicated to Tianhou include those prepared for unspecified occasions, rites for welcoming the god, birthday celebrations, or theatrical performances on the god’s birthday. Again, texts dedicated to Zougong include those prepared for the rites of sacrifice performed on the fourteenth day of the first month, the birthday celebration performed on the twenty-first day of the sixth month, and the rite of dotting the eyes and animating the god’s statue.

The rites of sacrifice that lisheng performed in temples was relatively similar to those performed in ancestral halls. The ritual format translated in Chapter 4 was used not only when sacrifices were presented to ancestors but also when they were presented to gods. Of course, a few changes were necessary in the latter case, when the chief sacrifier, for example, was addressed as “disciple” (dizi 弟子 or xinshi 信士) rather than “descendant”

4 Manual 0401, 1a–2b, 7b–8a.
(yisun 裔孫). But the rest of the ritual actions were almost the same. The rites were often performed in the presence of four lisheng, a chief sacrifier, and several assistant sacrificers. The ritual procedures were the same as those performed in front of the ancestors. The major difference lies in the fact that while the sacrifices to ancestors were usually led by lisheng alone, sacrifices to gods were performed by lisheng along with ritual specialists from other religious traditions (such as Daoist priests).

To give the reader a better understanding of the evolution of territorial cults, I have listed all temples, shrines, and altars of major villages in the Sibao basin in Appendix 7. I have given information on temple names, locations, gods worshiped in the temples, and dates of construction. In the 25 villages in the Sibao basin, there were 165 temples, altars, and shrines. So, on average each village had 6.6 temples, altars, and shrines. Omitting small altars and shrines leaves 74 temples, making the average amount of temples in each village 2.96, a little lower than the average number of temples in the region around Xuanhua 宣化 (4.2) and much less than that in Wanquan 萬全 (6.5) in North China, but pretty close to that in the Putian Plain in southern Fujian (3.25).⁸

Of the sixty-seven temples, altars, and shrines whose dates of construction are known, six were built before the Ming, one in the early Ming, seven in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, five in the seventeenth century, eight in the eighteenth century, nineteen in the nineteenth century (most of them in the first half of the nineteenth century), four in the Republican period, and twenty since 1949. In view of this, the first peak of temple construction took place in the mid-Ming; the second peak, in the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. The period after 1949, particularly since 1983, is the third peak of temple construction as well as reconstruction.

The major concern of this chapter and the next is to reconstruct the historical processes in which these gods and their rituals were introduced to Sibao: when, how, and why were these gods introduced to Sibao? It is my contention that the introduction and spread of these gods was related to different historical processes. Zougong, Shegong, Guandi, and Tianhou

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⁸ Willem Grootaers finds that there were 4.2 and 6.5 temples per village respectively in Xuanhua and Wanquan regions. See Willem Grootaers, “Rural Temples Around Hsüan-hua (South Chahar), Their Iconography and Their History,” Folklore Studies 10.2 (1951), 9; idem, “Temples and History of Wanch’üan 萬全 (Chahar): The Geographical Method Applied to Folklore,” Monumenta Serica 13 (1948), 217. On the average number of temples in villages in the Putian Plain, see Dean and Zheng, Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plain, 31.
were the four most popular deities in Sibao. Zougong represents the gods that were created or introduced to Sibao in the Song and Yuan periods. Shegong represents gods that were introduced before the Ming but were standardized and reintroduced in the early Ming principally under official auspices. Guandi and Tianhou were introduced after the mid-Ming, when the population rapidly increased and the rural economy was increasingly commercialized. These three categories of gods thus represent historical processes that are related to different socioeconomic and cultural agendas and thus had different relationships to Confucian or state-sanctioned rituals.

Zougong: A God Becoming an Ancestor

**Gods and Temples in Pre-Ming Sibao**

Early sources present conflicting images of local religion in Tingzhou. The section on “Shrines and Temples” in the *Liting zhi* (Tingzhou Prefecture Gazetteer), the earliest extant gazetteer of Tingzhou, compiled in 1259, claims that “nowadays many [of the gods] worshiped by [the people] of this prefecture are in agreement with the [classical] ritual [order], and it is not correct to say that the customs of Fujian is to serve ghosts.” Other evidence suggests that Tingzhou was a place in which licentious cults were widely practiced, however.

When he was appointed to a position of minor official in the mid-Tang, Lin Pi 林披 found Tingzhou a region with “many mountain ghosts and licentious cults (*shan’gui yinci* 山鬼淫祠).” He wrote an essay titled “Wu gui lun” （On the Non-existence of Ghosts) and proclaimed the essay to the public, obviously attempting to eliminate these undesirable practices. But this effort did not change the situation. When Prefect Chen Ye 陳曄 came to Tingzhou in 1196, the same problem troubled him. He found a place in which “the local custom was to honor ghosts and trust spirit mediums.” Some “wealthy people and wicked *zhushi* 祝史 (temple keepers),” committed “to the pursuit of illegal gains (*wei jian li* 爲奸利)

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9 Cited in *YLDD*, 7892/1a.
10 *CTXZ* (1879), 23/1b.
11 Zhu and shi are translated by James Legge from the *Li ji* as “prayer-makers” and “writers” respectively. However, in this context *zhushi* appears to be a single word, meaning probably “temple keepers.” See Legge, trans., *Li Chi [Li Ki], Book of Rites: An Encyclopedia of Ancient Ceremonial Usages, Religious Creeds, and Social Institutions* (New Hyde Park, N. Y.: University Books, 1967), 235.
by means of the God of Five Manifestations (Wuxian), ... cheated people and befuddled the masses.” Chen Ye took action to “expel temple-keepers, flog the leaders, and pull down the temples.” The gazetteer goes on to mention that a local literati called Wu Xiong 呉雄 wrote an essay, “Zheng su lun” 正俗論 (On Correcting Customs), attempting in vain to put an end to these practices.12

What is noteworthy in these accounts is the cult of “mountain ghosts” and the widespread existence of spirit mediums. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Yue peoples populated Fujian before the large-scale Han immigration from north and central China. They reportedly “esteemed ghosts” and “believed in shamans.”13 Even in the later periods, when indigenous culture had intermingled with Han Chinese culture, shamanism still had a relatively strong presence in Tingzhou. A mid-sixteenth-century gazetteer of Qingliu mentions that local people were involved in a series of evil customs including “the belief in spirit mediums, licentious cults, and being given over to geomancy.”14 Similarly, in Wuping, it is reported that “when [people] get sick they do not take medicine but esteem ghosts”15 and that local people “serve [ritual] masters and spirit mediums and do not trust medicines of doctors.”16 Although Yue people and the She were not the only practitioners of shamanism,17 the presence of their cultures in Tingzhou must have made it more difficult to be modified, let alone eliminated.

Several religious centers were in Sibao before the Ming. The most important was the Temple of Vast Blessings (Guangfu Yuan 廣福院) at Pingyuan Shan 平原山 in western Sibao. This temple was established around 945 and was dedicated to the well-known Buddhist monk Tiger-Taming Chan Master (Fuhu chanshi 伏虎禪師 or Fuhu zushi 伏虎祖師), a Buddhist monk who was canonized and granted several honorable titles by the court in the Southern Song Period.18

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12 LTZ, cited in YLDD, 7894/1b.
13 Lin Guoping 林國平 and Peng Wenyu 彭文宇, Fujian minjian xinyang 福建民間信仰 (Popular Belief in Fujian) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1993), 4.
14 QLXZ (1545), 2/20a; TZFZ (1527), 1/17a.
15 TZFZ (1752), 6/4b.
16 Ibid., 6/5a.
17 Spirit mediums were popular among Han Chinese in ancient times. See Kwang-chi Chang, Art, Myth and Ritual: The Path to Political Authority in Ancient China (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983); Lin Fushi 林富士, Handai de wuzhe 漢代的巫者 (Shamans in the Han Period) (Taipei: Daoxiang chubanshe, 1999).
The Temple of Vast Blessings was located at the western border of Sibao. Its influence can readily be observed in the nearby mountainous villages of western Sibao. They were organized into a ten-village rotating worship network of this god. Most of these villages, including Pengfang, Dapu, Longtoufang, Yijia (Weijiafang), Shankeng, Xiaowuling, Nanchai, lay within the boundaries of the Sibao subcanton of Changting. We do not know when this network appeared, but in all likelihood these villages, or at least some of them, had been involved in the cult of the god from the time when Fuhu decided to erect a temple there. Outside the environs of Pingyuan Mountain, the influence of Fuhu is more evident to the west of the temple than to the east—the Sibao basin. Fuhu had a strong presence in Tingzhou, but in most of Sibao, its influence was curbed by other local patron gods such as Zougong.

In the Sibao basin, the Temple of Great Buddha (Dafo An) has the longest history. It was said to have been established in the Northern Song, though no written source supports this. The major deity of this temple was Maitreya. The Temple of Loyalty and Martial Power (Zhongwu Miao) was also reportedly established in Changxiao in the Song. The cult of Shegong most likely began in the Song and Yuan (see below). The temple at the top of the Peak of the Nobleman (Guiren Feng), the Guiren Temple, east of Jiangfang was erected in the Yuan. And the cult of Zougong dated back no later than the Yuan dynasty.

**When a God Became an Ancestor**

On the eve of land reform, Zougong was one of the most popular gods in Sibao. The majority of villages in the Sibao Basin were involved in the worship of this god. They either dedicated a temple or a section of a temple to this god or participated in sacrifices to him. These villages—Wuge, Mawu, Shangbao, Shuangquan, Jiantou, Shexiaqian, Huangkeng, Yangbei, Yanwu, Liukeng, Jiangfang, Xikeng, Xiaixie, Changxiao, Huangshikeng, and

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20 The list of villages that belonged to the Sibao subcanton of Changting is in *CTXZ* (1879), 2/3a–3b.

21 *MSZP* (1993, Mawu village), 2 ji, 68.

22 *JYJSZP* (1990), 27/13b–14a.
Daliankeng—included all the biggest villages and many of the medium-size villages.

The cult of Zougong must have appeared in Sibao sometime before the late Yuan, for during the late Yuan this god had already achieved a level of popularity. Two temples were dedicated to him in Shangbao and Mawu, respectively, in this period. The first temple was erected in 1341 and was restored or reconstructed in 1467, 1611, 1644, 1732, and 1850. We are not told who established the temple. The reconstruction in 1467 was managed by Zou Deliang 鄒得良, a wealthy villager from Shangbao. The temple was reconstructed in 1644 by Shangbao, Shuangquan, and Wuge. This indicates that the temple was controlled by the three Sibao villages inhabited by the Zous. But the other small villages around Shangbao, such

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23 “Jingchu gong miao tu” 景初公廟圖 (Plan of the Zougong Temple), in ZSZP (1900, Shuangquan village), 12/1b; “Shangbao Zougong miao tu” 上保鄒公廟圖 (Plan of the Zougong Temple at Shangbao), in ibid. (1994, Yangzibian hamlet), juan shou, 1; CTXZ (1879), 13/6a.
24 “Shangbao Zougong miao tu,” 1.
25 “Jingchu gong miao tu,” 1b.
as Jiantou and Shexiaqian, also participated in worship of the god in the temple.

The second temple of Zougong was also established in the Yuan. The temple was called the Temple of Responses (Ganying miao 感應廟), and its foundation was endowed by Chen Youxin 陳有信, a resident of the Left Ward (zuoxiang 左厢) in Tingzhou. Unfortunately, we are not told why this man endowed a plot of land for the erection of a temple far from his home. It was renovated around 1713 under the management of a book merchant in Mawu with contributions from the Mas of Mawu, the Lais, and the Yans. Inside the temple were four statues of Zougong, belonging respectively to the Mas, Lais, Yans, and the village of Xitou 溪頭. The one belonging to the Mas occupied the most prestigious position: the middle.

We know little about Zougong's life. A legend told recently by Li Qiu-sheng 李秋生, a sixty-five-year-old villager in Shaping 沙坪 village, Changxiao Township, suggests that Zougong was a ritual master who taught exorcism rites to the founding ancestor of the Lis of Changxiao, Ligong 李公. Although this story is impossible to verify, it does explain why people worshiped Zougong and implies that Zougong was relatively similar to a group of local gods who were actually ritual masters in their life (see below). Some evidence suggests that formerly Zougong as a god with the title of gongwang 公王 (prince). Thus when the Zou Family Genealogy of Yangzibian, Shangbao, mentions Zougong, the latter is often called gongwang. Even nowadays the Zous of Shangbao usually call Zougong gongwang as sacrifices are offered to the god. Similarly, in Jiangfang, Zougong is also known as gongwang or fuzhu 福主 (lord of blessings).

In Tingzhou, gongwang and fuzhu were a type of minor god, not unlike tudigong (the Earth God) or Bogong that had close connection to Shegong. As Lagerwey points out, fuzhu, which he calls “the Lord of

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26 MSZP (1993, Mawu), 2 ji, 28.
27 Ibid.; “Xiang sheng tu” 鄉勝圖 (Plan of the Village), in YSZP (1913), 4/5b.
28 “Xiang sheng tu,” in YSZP (1913), 4/5b. I have not been able to locate the village Xitou.
29 ZSZP (1994, Yangzibian hamlet), juan shou, 2.
30 Jiyang Jiangshi zupu 濟陽江氏族譜 (Jiang Family Gazetteer of Jiyang) (hereafter JYJSZP, 1990), 27/4a–4b.
31 In 1643, an altar of the soil (shetan) was erected in Xiyang 西洋, Baisha 白沙, in Shanghang County. The god was Minzhu gongwang 民主公王 (the Prince of Commoners). Another altar of the soil erected at the water exit of Foling 佛嶺, Shanghang, was dedicated to Lüshe daguan fuzhu 呂社大官福主 (Lord of Blessings of Great Official of Lüshe). See SHXZ (1864), 2/16a.
Fortune,” among the Hakka of Tingzhou’s neighboring region, southern Jiangxi, “is a quintessentially local god: an earth god in charge of a territory, not a national or even a regional god. . . . He is not infrequently a former Taoist shaman priest. . . . Not surprisingly, because during his life the Taoist performs the rituals addressed to these gods and has the bag of magic tricks and roster of spirit-soldiers needed to fend off the very invaders against which the Lord of Fortune stands guard.”

Although Lagerwey discussed a case in southern Jiangxi, he supports the point made above that Zougong had a very close connection to Daoist exorcists, usually known as ritual masters, who became active in South China in the Song dynasty. The limitations of my sources do not allow me to elaborate the details of this connection. But one thing is clear: Before the process of lineage building in the mid-Ming, Zougong was basically a god, not an ancestor, for villagers in most Sibao villages.

Then an important change happened in the Ming. From a local god, Zougong became an ancestor, the founding ancestor of the Zous of Sibao. The process behind this shift began soon after the Zous started the process of lineage building in the late Ming and continues to the present. The attempt was first made to adopt Zougong into the genealogy of the Zous of Sibao. The second step was to make a connection between Zougong and Zou Yinglong, the zhuangyuan of Taining. During a process that lasted several centuries, Zougong was appropriated by the Zous as an ancestor (see Chapter 5). This process can be called the (attempted) privatization of public symbolic capital.

The Zous’ appropriation of a god did not stop here. To legitimize their claims, they needed to put their version of Zougong into official records such as gazetteers. This was an effort that lasted over two centuries. In the mid-Ming, before the Zous had launched their project of lineage building, the gazetteers of Tingzhou did not mention Zougong. In 1612, Prefect Chen Yide 陈以德 passed through Sibao and paid a visit to the Zougong Temple in Shangbao. He “claimed that [Zougong] was a well-known official and should be listed in the Register of Sacrifices together with the Zous.”

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32 John Lagerwey, “Introduction,” in Liu Jingfeng 刘劲峰, Gannan zongzu shehui yu daojiao wenhua yanjiu 赣南宗族社會與道教文化研究 (Studies in Lineage Society and Daoist Culture in Southern Jiangxi) (Hong Kong: International Hakka Studies Association, Overseas Chinese Archives and Ecole Francaise d’Extrême-Orient, 2000), 31–32. Lagerwey is here summarizing the findings of Liu Jingfeng in his study of society and religion in southern Jiangxi. 33 TZFZ (1527), one of the earliest extant gazetteers of Tingzhou, does not have any record of Zougong or Zou Yinglong.
with Fangong of Qingliu.” He also ordered a stele record written for the temple.\textsuperscript{34} Although this source does not tell us how Prefect Chen learned the hagiography of Zougong, it is not unlikely that he learned it from the Zous he met in Sibao. It was probably at this time that the early version of Zougong legend was known to local officials of Tingzhou. Thus, when the 	extit{Tingzhou Prefecture Gazetteer} was updated in 1637, the legend of Zougong began to appear in the gazetteer. According to this gazetteer,

The Zougong Temple is located in Shangbao village to the east of the county seat [of Changting]. The god’s name was Yinglong. [He] passed the metropolitan examination in the year renchen of the Yuanhe era of the Tang [812] and was granted the title of marquis of the state of Lu. He was buried here after [he] died. The villagers erected a temple to worship him. [When] prayed to, [he] immediately responded. During the Shaoxing and Shaoding eras [1131–1162; 1208–1224] of the Song, [when there were] warfare and military conflicts, Lord [Zou] secretly helped [the Song troops] with spirit soldiers. The victories in Jingxiang, Hongxian, Lianghuai, Nanjing, Lingbi, and Jiangzhou were all reported [to the throne]. [He was thus] granted the title of the Saintly Prince of Manifested Benevolence, Expressed Brightness, Majestic Relief, and Broad Protection.\textsuperscript{35}

According to this passage, Zougong was a 	extit{jinshi} of the Tang. He was granted the imperial title because of his divine intervention beginning in the early Southern Song. The similarity between this record and the inscription written by Li Yujian (see Chapter 5) is obvious, and they must have been based on a common source. That is, the similarity may be attributed to the fact that both had their origins in early oral traditions that circulated in the Sibao region. This description of Zougong was repeated without any change in the 1752 edition of 	extit{Tingzhou Prefecture Gazetteer}.\textsuperscript{36} The record of Zougong Temple in the 1684 edition of the 	extit{Fujian tongzhi} (Fujian General Gazetteer) is much shorter. It only mentions the location of the temple and claims that it was established in the Tang.\textsuperscript{37} It appears that it only summarizes the record in the 1637 edition of 	extit{Tingzhou Prefecture Gazetteer}.

In the mid-eighteenth century, the transformation of Zougong was well under way in Sibao. A new version of Zougong’s legend had emerged after more than a century’s construction. A connection had already been

\textsuperscript{34} CTXZ (1879), 13/6a. The text of the stele is, unfortunately, not extant.
\textsuperscript{35} TZFZ (1637), 6/2a–b.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid. (1752), 13/3a–3b.
\textsuperscript{37} Fujian tongzhi (1684) (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1988, reprint), 11/11a.
made between Zougong and Zou Yinglong of Taining. Zougong became a zhuangyuan of the Southern Song rather than the Tang. But, surprisingly, the information on Zougong in the gazetteers did not change. Why? At least part of the reason lies in the fact that none of the Zous participated in the updating of the prefectoral gazetteer, while at least two members of the Mas of Mawu were involved in it.\footnote{TZFZ (1752), juan zhi shou, 4a. The two members of the Mas were Ma Zaiguan and Ma Lüduan. Both were government students.} Given their attitude toward Zougong it is not surprising that the Mas did not want to change the information on Zougong.

When the Changting County Gazetteer was updated in 1782, an important change was made in the information on Zougong. Here Zougong remained a man of the Tang. He was granted imperial titles because of his divine interventions starting in the early Southern Song. The major difference between this account and earlier ones is that here it is explicitly claimed that Zougong was the ancestor of the Zous of Sibao. “Zougong had three sons,” as the gazetteer reports, “Qilang settled in Shangbao village. Liulang settled in Longzu village. And Balang settled in Shuangquan village. [His] descendants are numerous and now there are a thousand [members].”\footnote{CTXZ (1782), 12/61b–62a.} This gazetteer makes a clear connection between Zougong and the Zous of Wuge, Shuangquan, and Shangbao. Furthermore, the name of Zou Yinglong began to be included in the section of “Fengyin” 封蔭 (title-holders) and that of “Renwu” 人物 (biographies of local worthies) in the gazetteer, although in both sections he was still a historical figure of the Tang.\footnote{CTXZ (1782), 1749b, 18/2a.}

When the Changting County Gazetteer was once more updated in 1879, a “standard” version of the Zougong legend was eventually enshrined in the gazetteer. In this edition, Zougong was no longer a man of the Tang. Instead, he became Zou Yinglong, a zhuangyuan of the Southern Song. Although his divine intervention was still intact, the time when it took place was eliminated for it contradicted the claim that he was Zou Yinglong of the Southern Song. Moreover, after a connection was made between Zougong and Zou Yinglong in the gazetteer, Zou Yinglong was no longer a man of the Tang but became a zhuangyuan and “well-known official” of Changting.\footnote{ibid. (1879), 13/6a; ibid. (1879), 21/7b; 24/1b–2a.} Not surprisingly, a Zou of Sibao is found in the list

\footnote{\textit{TZFZ} (1752), \textit{juan zhi shou}, 4a. The two members of the Mas were Ma Zaiguan and Ma Lüduan. Both were government students.}
\footnote{\textit{CTXZ} (1782), 12/61b–62a.}
\footnote{\textit{CTXZ} (1782), 1749b, 18/2a.}
\footnote{Ibid. (1879), 13/6a; ibid. (1879), 21/7b; 24/1b–2a.}
of those who participated in the updating of the gazetteer. He was Zou Licheng 鄒勵成, a *jureh* from Shangbao.42

As a popular deity of Sibao, Zougong was worshiped by almost every village in the area. It goes without saying that the attempted privatization of Zougong brought about a series of responses from other villages of Sibao. The privatization and the responses to it reveal the symbolic dimension of Sibao as a meaningful community. Not surprisingly, the most straightforward response to privatization emerged in Mawu. In the eighteenth century, when the Mas established a temple to Magong 馬公 (see the next chapter), an author from Mawu wrote an essay full of contempt for what the Zous did:

Recently, sacrifices have been offered to gods for the sake of either inducing [blessings] or paying court. Otherwise [it is meant to] pretend that a god with a great title is an ancestor. When asked his name, [they] would answer that [he was] the founding ancestor. When asked in which dynasty he began [to live there] and where [he] was from, [they] know nothing. This is not merely rude treatment of the gods but also cheating [their own] ancestors. This is not the case for our lineage’s worship of the Prince of Loyalty and Manifestation [Zhongxian wanggong 忠顯王公, i.e., Magong]. The ages are distant and the years lost. There is no way to examine [the facts]. [We] do not dare to think [he] was [our ancestor]. Nor do we dare think [he] was not [our ancestor]. Now that [he] is a god, [we] treat [him] as a god. Furthermore, the god is worshiped not because [he] would produce instant miracles, and bring blessings to this area. If so, why do [we] worship him? [We] worship him because [it] enhances teachings of the sages.43

The author of this passage differentiates two kinds of god worshiping activity. In the first type, the god was worshiped for immediate gains and private purposes. Even worse, the god was worshiped while pretending that he was an ancestor, because an ancestor would provide protection only to his descendants. Although the author did not mention whom he was criticizing, it is clear from our preceding discussion that his target was actually the Zous. The author claims that the Mas’ worship of Magong falls into the second type. The god was worshiped to “enhance teachings of the sages” rather than to obtain immediate gains.

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42 CTXZ (1879), *juan zhi shou*, 4b.
The author criticizes those who adopted a god to be an ancestor because “[they] know nothing” about their ancestor’s origins. Indeed, genealogies compiled by different descent groups of the Zous and genealogies compiled in different ages include contradictory information about their founding ancestor, Zougong. The Mas called into question the claim that Zougong was the Zous’ ancestor not only because different editions of the Zou Family Genealogy failed to provide consistent information but also because the information was different from what was circulated among the Mas. Commenting on the identity of Zougong, an anonymous author reports that “some say that [he] was Zou Yinglong of Shaowu [Prefecture], zhuangyuan and the academician of Dragon Diagram Hall (Longtuge 龍圖閣) of the Song [dynasty established by] the Zhaos, while others say that [he] was Zou Zhonggong of Tang times.” His view is different. “When Lord Leqiu [i.e., Ma Xun] returned after retirement,” he claims, “he rewarded it [i.e., the temple] by writing the plaque inscribed ‘Wise and upright’ and a couplet: ‘The mountains and rivers are unified, the present is no longer [ruled by] the Lis; the statue within the temple is still a Zou after one thousand years.’” In view of this evidence, “the god is obviously a man living in the Tang.”44 Here the author quotes the couplet written by Ma Xun and points out that the connection made between Zougong and Zou Yinglong is baseless.

Another response was to accept what the Zous claimed and to fabricate a connection between one’s ancestors and Zougong in order to justify the legitimacy of the cult of this god. The legend of Ma Xun and Zougong is one example. Legend has it that when he crossed the Yangzi River on his way to Beijing, Ma Xun met with a typhoon, and his ship was in the danger of capsizing. He prayed to Zougong and was rescued. To give thanks for the god’s protection, he dedicated a temple to him in Tingzhou city.45 My interpretation of the legend is that it was a defensive device to explain why the Mas worshiped “another lineage’s” ancestor. Another legend has it that Magong was the husband of Zougong’s daughter (in some versions, Magong was the husband of Zougong’s sister). Similar legends also circulate in Changxiao. In one legend, the Lis of Changxiao worshiped Zougong because their founding ancestor, Ligong, was the husband of Zougong’s daughter. Another legend explains that this is because Ligong studied

44 Ibid., 2/2, 28.
magical arts with Zougong, and it is natural for a disciple to worship his master.

Recent studies of the relationship between the state and popular cults have developed two lines of analysis. James Watson maintains that the “genius” of the premodern Chinese government’s approach to cultural integration consisted of the way in which the state imposed a structure but not the content. The legitimacy of the state was established simply through the process of representation.\(^46\) Prasenjit Duara pushes this presumption further, arguing that the imperial Chinese state not only promoted key symbols but also established its legitimacy by “superscribing” its own version of interpretation upon the symbols.\(^47\) However, Michael Szonyi challenges Watson’s hypothesis, arguing instead that the imperial state often failed to control structure or symbols and that sometimes its efforts to standardize gods turned out to be an “illusion.”\(^48\) Thus, while Watson and Duara emphasize the “genius” of the imperial state, Szonyi stresses the agency of local society. The case of Zougong provides an example that differs from both. Here the god was neither a state-approved deity nor a deity with a close, though fabricated, relation to a state-approved deity. In Zougong, at the initiative of local elite, a local patron god was transformed into a god/ancestor, then was connected to a famous official, and finally was listed in official gazetteers. Although both the state and the lineage benefited from their interlocking claims to the god/ancestor, this is a case in which local society pushed its symbols and inserted its interpretation of those symbols into the official records.

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Compared with Zougong, Shegong (She) was an empire-wide deity that had a close relationship to the imperial court. The cult of She, or more precisely, the cult of sheji (gods of the soil and grain) dated back to the Western Zhou dynasty (1050–770 B.C.E.).\(^49\) In the Tang and Song periods, the cult of She not only became an integral part of official religion but also became a popular cult. In the spring and fall, peasants offered foods and liquor to the deity, often represented by a tiny statue or an image rather than a plaque and prayed as well as gave thanks for good harvests. Music was played, and shamans were hired to dance before the deity. This practice seemed to have continued well in the Yuan.\(^50\)

In Song-dynasty Tingzhou, an altar of the soil and grain was established in every county. The sheji altar of Tingzhou Prefecture was located 1 lǐ west of Tingzhou, next to the altar of the Masters of Wind, Rain, and Thunder (feng yu lei shi tan 風雨雷師壇). In the Southern Song, a hall was established in front of the altar, and a wall was constructed around the altar. The altar fell into disuse and remained so before it was reconstructed twice in the early thirteenth century. The sheji altar of Wuping

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\(^{50}\) Kanai, “Shessen he Daojiao,” 134–136, 140.
had also fallen into such disrepair in the Southern Song that the spring and fall sacrifices to the God of the Soil and Grain had to be performed in a nearby Buddhist temple.\textsuperscript{51} As for the sheji altar in the rural area, I have only been able to find one piece of evidence. The Linting zhi claims that the Litian 李田 Temple, located in northern Qingliu, was originally a she altar (lishe李社) converted into a temple during the early Southern Song.\textsuperscript{52} The fact that no other evidence is mentioned in the Southern Song gazetteer suggests that sheji altars may have been rare in rural areas in the Song.

Hu Bingwen 胡炳文 (1250–1333), a scholar in Huizhou, wrote about how Shegong was worshiped during the Yuan in an essay praising his friend Zhang Taiyu 張太宇 for his accomplishments.

The altar of the soil is part of the ancient li [official rites]. It consists of an [earthen] altar with no building covering it. The tablet [of Shegong] is made of wood that grows in the place concerned. Nowadays, in the she altars of the common people, they usually paint things inside the rooms of a house and do not set up [outdoor] altars. [This] is not the ancient way. They paint an old white haired man with long eyebrows, and reverently refer to him as the Lord of the She Altar of the Soil. Moreover, they provided him with an old wife. All this is not in accordance with ancient ways. Because Zhang Taiyu, who came to Tingzhou [as an official], had read the Duke of Letters’ [i.e., Zhu Xi] Zhenghe liyi政和禮儀 Rites Composed in the Zhenghe era (1111–1117),\textsuperscript{53} [he] seized the statues that were previously painted and burned them. Thereupon, at Yindun 印墩 in Tingzhou, he built an [outdoor] altar facing north, furnished with a tablet made of stone, and surrounded it with trees. In front he built a four pillar shelter in case of wind and rain. He bequeathed two mu of a forest to cover the costs of sacrificial wine. Then ancient regulations of the altar of the soil could still be seen in this day.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{51} LTZ, cited in YLDD, 7892/12b–13a.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 7894/1b.
\textsuperscript{53} Zhenghe liyi is probably Zhenghe wuli xinyi (New Forms for the Five Categories of Rites of the Zhenghe era), the first government manual to include liturgies for commoners for cappings, weddings, and funerals issued in 1113. Zhu Xi had made use of this manual when he wrote Family Rituals. See Ebrey, Confucianism and Family Rituals in Imperial China, 102, 105–107; idem, “Education Through Ritual,” 293–296.
\textsuperscript{54} Hu Bingwen, Yunfeng ji 雲峰集 (Collected Works of Hu Bingwen) (Siku quanshu zhenben edition), 2/4b–5a. The English translation is based on Kenneth Dean, “Transformations of the She (Altars of the Soil) in Fujian,” Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie 10 (1998), 25–26. I am not able to locate Zhang Taiyu because the list of officials of Tingzhou in the Yuan was lost sometime before the mid-Ming.
This source reveals the fact that in Tingzhou in the Yuan, even the official altar of the soil was transformed from an outdoor altar installed with a wooden tablet into an indoor altar furnished with anthropomorphic statues.

**Lishe Altars and Xiangli Altars Since the Ming**

As previously mentioned, each subcanton comprising a hundred households was ordered to erect a *lishe tan* 里社壇 (altar of the soil of the subcanton) and a *xiangli tan* 鄉厲壇 (altar of orphan souls of villages) in the early Ming. In Ming Tingzhou, the number of *lishe* and *xiangli* altars was close to the number of subcants (see Table 8.1). Since Sibao belonged to four different subcants in four different counties in the Ming, villagers must have been involved in sacrifices to four different altars of the soil and altars of orphan souls. At least two altars of the soil and altars of orphan souls were in subcants of Sibao: Changting and Qingliu.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the transformation of the altars of the soil and of orphan souls in the mid-Ming, let us pause for the moment to reflect on the meaning of promoting these altars in the countryside. To be sure, Ming emperor Taizu was not the first in Chinese history to attempt to promote an official cult and state-approved ritual among commoners. As I mentioned in the preceding chapters, the attempt to create rituals for the commoners started in the Tang, if not earlier, and prescribing rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number of subcants in the early Ming</th>
<th>Number of subcants in 1473</th>
<th>Number of <em>lishe</em> and <em>xiangli</em> in 1472</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changting</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninghua</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qingliu</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanghang</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wuping</td>
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<td>Liancheng</td>
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<td>Guilhua</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yongding</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The number of *lishe* and *xiangli* altars of Guilhua County given in the *Bamin tongzhi* is 45, while the *Tingzhou fuzhi* says 7.
for commoners had become almost a customary practice since the Song. Emperor Huizong even ordered that the ritual performed by commoners follow a state-approved ritual format. But none of the rulers before Emperor Taizu promoted the state-approved ritual to such an extent. The promotion of the altars in the countryside, therefore, was the first time in Chinese history that the peasantry had close contact with and long-lasting involvement in state-approved ritual. Through this promotion residents of the village began to familiarize themselves with the rituals performed and liturgical texts recited by lisheng, and lisheng as ritual specialists became involved in village rituals such as funeral and ancestral rites.

Like the lijia system, the altars of the soil and the altars of orphan souls changed dramatically starting in the mid-Ming. In some areas, they were even abandoned and replaced by other local patron gods, but in Sibao this was unusual. In most cases, the altars of the soil were divided among a number of villages. The history of altars of the orphan souls is less clear. Some evidence shows that they did not experience any dramatic transformation until the mid-Qing.

The first evidence of change can be found in Mawu. An old altar of the soil still stands on a hill at the back of this village. The altar is similar to a tomb and is represented by a stele. In the middle of the stele, we find this inscription: “The God of the Soil and Grain of Fufeng” (Fufeng sheji zhi shen 扶風社稷之神). Since Fufeng is the choronym of the Mas of Mawu, this is clearly the sheji altar of Mawu. On the left part of the stele is written “the Zhengtong era (1436–1449) of the Great Ming, Ma Hetu, the tenth generation, prefect of Cizhou; . . ., the eleventh generation, governor of Huxiang (i.e., Hunan and Hubei).” Obviously, the missing text is Ma Xun’s name. On the right part of the stele is written “established by Ma Qilang, the founding ancestor . . . of the Great Song; Qianwu, Qianliu, and Qianqi with imperial title of General of Military Strategies, the sixth generation of the Zhizhi era (1321–1323) of the Great Yuan.” It appears that this sheji altar was established by Ma Hetu and Ma Xun or their sons in the name of their founding ancestor, Qilang, and their sixth-generation ancestors, Qianwu, Qianliu, and Qianqi. The Zhengtong era

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55 For example, the Xinghua Prefecture Gazetteer edited in 1503 lamented that the rites of the lishe of Putian “have long been abandoned.” See Dean, “Transformations of the She,” 34. The same thing happened in Changle, Hui’an, and Fuzhou, too. See Szonyi, Practicing Kinship, 175–176.

56 The stele of the sheji altar of Mawu (established in the hill at the back of Mawu village).
on the stele is when Ma Hetu was appointed to the position of prefect of Cizhou rather than when this altar was built. Ma Xun was appointed to the position of governor of Huxiang/Huguang in the fourth quarter of the fifteenth century. The altar should have been erected during this period or a little later. (Or it may have been erected by the Mas of later generations in the name of Ma Hetu and Ma Xun.) Next to this stele lies another, which is a little smaller and has no inscription. We do not know when this stele was erected, although it appears to be an older sheji altar. From the above discussion, we can say that the subcanton-level lishe altar may have begun to be replaced by village-level altars in Sibao no later than the end of the fifteenth century.

Another piece of evidence comes from Jiangfang. According to the Jiyang Jiang Family Genealogy of this village, the altar of the soil of this village was known as “the altar of the soil of Jiyang Prefecture” (Jiyang jun shetan 濟陽郡社壇), Jiyang being the choronym of the Jiangs. The genealogy says that this altar was restored in 1638, which implies that the altar must have been constructed in the late sixteenth century or earlier.
More village-level altars of the soil were constructed during the Qing period. Shangbao has two altars of the soil, the old altar and the new altar. The former is located in Hebeipai 河背排, southwest of the village, next to a stream. The stele of the altar claims that this is “Shegong of this area, erected corporately by the descendants of Qilang in the twenty-first year of the Daoguang era [1841].”\(^{57}\) The new one lies at the water exit of the village, just under Datong Bridge. We do not know when it was erected. The Zous of Shangbao had corporate land for biannual sacrifices to both altars.\(^{58}\) The altar of the soil of Yanwu was “erected in the \(ji\)_\(xu\) 甲戌 year of the Great Qing,”\(^{59}\) that is to say, before 1874. By the end of Qing, the altar of the soil had become a familiar part of the landscape of Sibao. Even today, the altars of the soil can be readily found in villages of Sibao, and many villages have more than one such altar.

As for the evolution of the altar of orphan souls, our knowledge is confined to the Sibao subcanton of Qingliu. The subcanton-level altar of the orphan souls seems to have been erected at the water exit of Changxiao village\(^{60}\) and, in at least some villages, the village-level altar of the orphan souls was not built until the mid-Qing. A source from Jiangfang village claims that the villages of Sibao subcanton took turns in presenting sacrifices to the altar of orphan souls, located at the water exit of Changxiao. The Jians began to build the altars of orphan souls in the village probably starting at the end of the eighteenth century.\(^{61}\) Another source dated 1838 from the mountain village Huangshikeng also claims that villagers went to the water exit of Changxiao to present sacrifices to the altar of orphan souls, but this practice was discontinued many years ago.\(^{62}\) When I visited Huangshikeng, I found its earliest altar of orphan souls, erected in 1801.\(^{63}\)

By the end of the Qing, the establishment of the altars of orphan souls, like that of the soil, had become a common practice in Sibao. The worship of the altar was organized in two ways. It could be organized on the basis of a village or its sections or a lineage or its branches, or it could be

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57 The stele of the altar of the soil of Shangbao (erected in 1841).
58 “Shetian pian” 社田片 (Land for [Sacrifice to] the God of the Soil), ZSZP (1946, Yangzibian hamlet), 19/2b.
59 The she altar of Yanwu (erected in 1874 or earlier).
60 This location is not surprising for in the early Ming both the Pavilion for Extending Illumination and the Pavilion for Revering Goodness of Sibao subcanton, Qingliu County, were established in Changxiao. See QLXZ (1545), 3/19a.
61 JYJSZP (1990), juan shou, 5.
62 GCZSZP, 1/21a.
63 The stele of the altar was located in the back of the village.
Source: Photo taken by Yonghua Liu.

Image 8.3  Altar of Orphan Souls, Jiantou.
organized as a voluntary association. Thus, one of the altars of orphan souls of Mawu, erected in 1817, seems to have been erected in the name of the whole village, because the stele claims that it was worshiped by the whole village.64 There were two altars of orphan souls in Shankeng: one erected by the whole village in 1817 and the other by the Qius in 1946.65 The altar of orphan souls of Xikeng was also erected by the whole village.66 There were at least five altars of orphan souls in Jiangfang, four of them erected by neighborhoods of the village no later than 1802.67 The altar of orphan souls erected at the back of Shangbao was constructed in 1872 by descendants of Zou Guozhu 国柱. Shangbao.68 Similarly, the altar of orphan souls of Jiantou was erected by descendants of Wu Qihua 其化, a seventeenth-generation ancestor, in 1843.69

Altars of orphan souls erected on a voluntary basis were also widespread in Sibao. In the second half of the eighteenth century, Ma Lüzhi 履智 (1724–1788), a book merchant, organized an association of orphan souls (wusi shenhui 無祀神會). It was reported that in Xufang 許坊, a village on the way from Sibao to the county seat of Liancheng, “those who died of drowning frequently caused calamities,” in order probably to extort sacrifices, because it was supposed that people died in this way would not receive sacrifices from their relatives. As a merchant who often traveled the route, Lüzhi initiated the association to pacify the hunger ghosts by presenting sacrifices on the bank of the river every year on the fourteenth day of the seventh month.70 This association is the earliest one I have found in Sibao. More such associations were established in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The altar of orphan souls of Yijiafang was erected by a group of villagers in 1876.71 One of Jiangfang’s altars of orphan souls was erected by thirteen villagers in 1885.72 A similar altar of Yunfeng village in western Sibao was erected by ten villagers in 1929.73 Last, an altar of orphan souls of Mawu was erected by eight villagers in 1939.74

64 The stele can still be seen in the back of Mawu.
65 The steles of the both altars are located at the water exit of Shankeng.
66 The stele of the altar is located at the back of the family temple of the Wangs.
67 JYJSZP (1990), 27/5b.
68 The altar was erected at the back of Shangbao village.
69 The stele of the altar is located at the back of Jiantou.
70 MSZP (1993, Mawu), 5 jì, 83.
71 The stele is located at the water exit of Yijiafang.
72 The stele of the altar is north of Jiangfang.
73 The stele is at the water exit of Yunfeng.
74 The stele is at the water exit of Mawu.
Altars of orphan souls in the mid-Qing were usually built at the back of a village or a village’s water exit. In the early Ming, the court ordered that villagers present sacrifices to the altar of orphan souls three times a year: Qingming, the fifteenth day of the seventh month, and the first day of the tenth month. But in the late Qing, Sibao villagers presented sacrifice to the altar once a year, around *lixia* 立夏 (literally “beginning of summer,” about May 5–18). It was a common practice for some villagers to organize a society, usually called “the society of orphan souls” (*wusi hui* 無祀會), to make this presentation every year. An account book from Mawu shows that one of these organizations, known simply as “the *lixia* god celebration society” (*lixia qingshen she* 立夏慶神社), presented sacrifices to the altar continuously for over a century. The society was established in 1826 by about ten villagers. They were divided into three groups, each of which was responsible for presenting sacrifices to the altar once every three years. The society purchased land, and the rent earned from it was used to cover expenses for performing the rite. The society still existed in 1930, which is the date of the last record in the account book.\(^75\) After the Cultural Revolution, old altars of orphan souls were recovered, and new ones were erected in Sibao. It is said that people who offer sacrifices to the altar will receive blessings from the spirits because this is tantamount to doing good deeds. This shows that the villagers did not treat orphan souls as merely undesirable spirits to be satisfied but, more importantly, as spirits who could bring about desirable results.

*Legends of Shegong and Ritual Masters*

So far I have discussed how the early Ming subcanton level altar of the soil and grain and the altar of orphan souls were transformed during the Ming and Qing periods. In this process, the subcanton level altars were separated into many village-level altars. This process is not unlike the division of incense, a ritual process in which the cult of a deity is branched off from a “root” temple.\(^76\) Unlike the latter, however, after the “branch” altars were established, the “root” altar itself was relegated to an ordinary altar in the sense that no branch altar needed to renew its magical power from

\(^{75}\) *Lixia qingshen she bu* 立夏慶神社簿 (1826–1930, Mawu).

the root altar. At the same time, a group of legends about Shegong that circulate in Changting, Qingliu, Wuping, Ninghua, and Yongding reveals another kind of transformation. In these legends, Shegong was replaced by local gods/ancestors and was no longer worshiped by villagers. They provide a rare opportunity for learning about the complex relationships between the official religion, Daoism, and local religions. But to interpret these legends, we need to resort to the approach of morphological analysis, paying special attention to their narrative structure and key elements.77

There are nine legends. Five of them circulate in villages in and around Sibao. The first legend circulates in Changxiao, Sibao. The legend begins with a human-eating God of the Soil.78 His altar was once besides the river surrounding the village. Every year he ordered villagers to present male and female virgins to him, otherwise he would wreak disasters. Many years passed. One year it was the turn of Li Wulang, who was the founding ancestor of the Lis, to present virgins to Shegong. Wulang had only a son and a daughter, who loved them very much, to the point that he would rather die than give them up. So he kowtowed and prayed all the time. One day he met an old man with white whiskers. The man told him that the god was simply a man-eating spirit and promised to help him. He brought him to “the magical hall (fating 法廳) of Maoshan 茅山” and taught him magic. Wulang followed the man’s teachings and practiced every day. Eventually he mastered what he was taught and successfully expelled Shegong from his village. That is why, the legend explains, Changxiao villagers do not worship Shegong.79

John Lagerwey mentions a similar legend called “Ligong dou shegong” 李公鬥社公 (Mister Li Fights Shegong), told in Anjie 廩傑, Changting, a township northeast of Sibao. The hero of the story is called Ligong, although his relation to Ligong of Changxiao is difficult to identify. Similarly, Shegong asked for a male and female virgin every year. If they were not presented to him, he would send epidemics. So Li went to Lishan

77 Morphology is used in folklore studies and has been introduced into cultural history in the last two decades. An excellent example is Carlo Ginzburg, Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches’ Sabbath, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991).

78 Another version of this legend mentions that the god was not Shegong, but was an incarnation of a demon. See CXLSZP (1909, Shiyilang branch), juan zhi shou, 1a–1b.

A third legend is told by the Xiaos of Dongshan 東山, Sibao. The hero of the legend was an ancestor of the Xiaos called Xiao Bida 蕭必達. The legend begins with Bida on his way to Tingzhou with his kinsmen. They found a mountain, Maoshan, “opening its gate.” Bida approached the gate and was suddenly sucked into the mountain. Three years later, Bida returned, telling his wife that he had been studying magic on Maoshan for the previous three years, and now he was able to ascend to heaven and enter into earth. The news of Bida rapidly spread among the villagers. Even Shegong of this village knew about it. On the fifth day of the fifth month, when Bida walked to his fields, Shegong turned into a big snake and blocked the way, telling him that he wanted to fight him. He counted out the cosmic correlations and was aware that it was Shegong. He had heard of this “human-eating spirit” (chirenjing 吃人精) and decided to kill him. In the fight that ensued, he killed Shegong with the Rites of Five Thunder Gods (wulei fa 五雷法). After Bida died, villagers buried him in what had been the altar of the soil.81

A fourth legend circulates among residents of Sidu 四都, Changting. In the legend, the protagonist is Chen Mali, the founding ancestor of the Chens of this town who was capable of “bringing ghosts and gods under his control by talismans.”82 Again, Shegong of this community ordered that male and female virgins be offered to him, otherwise he would harm the villagers. At this time Chen Mali was studying magic in Lishan 驪山. After he came back and learned what Shegong had done to the villagers, he was very angry. So he rode on an earthen horse to Sidu with his disciple. Before the fight, he had ordered his disciple to immerse his “lash for driving away mountains” (ganshanbian 趕山鞭) in water for six hours. Having heard of this order, Shegong turned himself into an old man,

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81 Tong Jingen, "Qingliu xian dongshan Xiao shi de zongzu chuanshuo jiqi miaohui" 清流縣東山蕭氏的宗族傳說及其廟會 (The Festivals and Myths of the Tong Lineage of Dongshan, Qingliu County), in Yang Yanjie, ed., Minxi de chengxiang miaohui yu cunluo wenhua, 212–213.

82 Lai Guangyao, "Sidu zhen de zongzu yu miaohui" 四都鎮的宗族與廟會 (The Lineage and Festivals of Sidu Town), in Yang Yanjie, ed., Changting xian de zongzu jingji yu minsu, 452.
standing in the disciple’s way and inviting him to play chess with him. So they played chess for about six hours. Suddenly, the disciple heard the voice of his master. Following his master’s orders, he drove away Shegong with one lash. As a result, villagers of Sidu did not worship Shegong.

The last legend is told in Tufang, Changting. According to the legend, Nengshi, the founding ancestor of the Tus, moved from Jiangxi to Changting, where there was a God of the Soil living in the village. Every year the villagers had to offer him special sacrifices, male and female virgins. After the Tu brothers moved to Tufang, the Tus and the Lais had to offer the special sacrifices. They decided to drive away Shegong and made a vow before Ancestral Master of Three Buddhas (Sanfo zushi): If the Ancestral Master offered them divine protection so that they could study magic, they would thank him with “one thousand years of theater and ten thousand years of decorated lanterns.” Then they set out to find a master. After one day and night, they met an old man. The man asked them to suck out a pustule on his back, and they did. The man also asked them to follow his ducks, which would lead the way, and gave them a bamboo lash and a chicken egg. “If you hear that the chicken is coming out of the egg, flog it with bamboo lash,” he added before they left. Lord Tu and Lord Lai followed the ducks and suddenly found themselves at home. With the lash, they drove away Shegong. This is why Tufang has no God of the Soil.

These kinds of legends are not confined to Sibao. Similar legends have circulated in other counties of Tingzhou, too. In one of them in Xianghu, northern Wuping, Shegong is replaced by Prince Black Dog (Heigou gongwang). As in other versions, he asked for human sacrifice, in this case the sole child of the villagers. To defend his own family, a villager named Liu Qianbalang went to Lushan to study magic. When he returned to his village, Qianbalang finally defeated the gongwang and drove him out of the village. Prince Black Dog also appears in a legend in Zhongtuan, also in northern Wuping.

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83 Ibid., 468–169.
85 Lao Gewen 劳格文 (John Lagerwey) and Zhang Hongxiang, "Tufang de jingji, zongzu yu jieqing" (Economy, Lineage, and Festivals in Tufang), in Yang, ed., Changting xian de zongzu, jingji yu minsu, 606–608.
86 Recall that Gongwang is a deity with a great similarity to Shegong.
88 Ibid., 25.
In a legend in Quanshang 泉上, Ninghua, Shegong asked for a small sacrifice every year and a big one every three years. Pigs, lambs, and wine were to be presented to him annually and male and female virgins triennially. The hero in this legend is Xie Chao’an 謝朝安, a common villager who, together with one of his friends, learned magic though it is not clear from where (the legend provides no information on what kind of magic). His weapons include a book on magic and a lash. He finally caught Shegong, who was allowed to stay in the village only if he did not ask for sacrifices of animals or people.89

In the legend in Jinsha 金沙, Yongding, Shegong asked for a human sacrifice. A man surnamed Qiu sold off all his property and decided to study “the immortal arts” (xiōnɡfa 仙法) of the Nine Carp Immortals (jiuli xiàn 九鯉仙).90 He traveled to Guangzhou via Chaozhou and was eventually able to find the immortals. They granted him a sword, a seal, and a lash and told him that Shegong was actually “five dog demons” (wu gōu yāo 五狗妖). With these weapons, he killed four of the five dog demons and allowed the other one to stay on the pretext of receiving only a pot of wine, a pair of chicken eggs, a dish of fish and shrimp, and a bundle of paper money.91

These legends have many similarities. They all feature an evil God of the Soil or its metamorphosis, gōnwānɡ. This god asked for human sacrifice and created disasters when it was not satisfied. In three cases, the god was an incarnation of a demon or demons. Most of the men fighting Shegong had mastered Daoist exorcism of some kind. Most of them were the founding gods/ancestors (the legends of Tufang, Sidu, Changxiao, and Xianghu) or an ancestor who later replaced Shegong (the legend of Dongshan). At the end of the story, these gods/ancestors either killed Shegong in the community concerned (the legend of Dongshan), allowed him to stay under the conditions proposed by them or the god (the legends of

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90 The cult of Jiuli xian has its origin in Xianyou 仙游, Fujian.
91 Yongding xianzhi (1830), 31/1b–3a; also cited in Yang Yanjie, "minxi dongshan Xiao shi de zongzu wenhua ji qi tezhi" 闽西東山蕭氏的宗族文化及其特質 (Lineage Culture of the Xiaos in Dongshan, Western Fujian, and Its Nature), in Jiang Bin 蒋斌 and He Cuiping 何翠萍, eds., Di san jie guoji hanxue huiyi lunwenji, renleixue zu 第三屆國際漢學會議論文集, 人類學組 (Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Sinology: Section of Anthropology) (Taipei: The Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, 2003), 125–126.
Quanshang and Jinsha), or drove him away (the other three legends). To sum up, the basic plot of the legends is how Shegong (sometimes the incarnation of a demon) was exorcised by a specific god/ancestor cum ritual master.

The relationship between these ritual masters and Daois needs to be discussed further. Several details of the legends are noteworthy. First, the places where they learned exorcism range from Lishan 驪山, Lishan 梨山, Lüshan, to Maoshan 茅山. Maoshan has been a sacred mountain of Daoism since the medieval period and is also the name of an important school of the religion. But Maoshan as represented in Tingzhou and other parts of South China was less a center of esoteric Daoist meditation than a center where many Daoist exorcists allegedly received their training in magic. Lishan 驪山 and Lishan 梨山 are probably the same as Lüshan because they sound similar in Hakka dialect, and Lüshan was one of the most important schools active in the Fujian region and exorcism of this school continues to be widely practiced in western Fujian.92

Furthermore, some details in this legend can also be found in a late Ming novel, *Haiyou ji* (Journey to the Sea 海游記), published in Jianyang in northwestern Fujian between the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century and reprinted in 1753.93 The most obvious example is pus-sucking, which also appears in the section “Jinggu studied magic and rescued Fatong” in the first volume of the novel.94 And the protagonist of this novel, Chen Jinggu 陳靖姑 or Linshui furen 臨水夫人, is the most important goddess of the Lüshan lineage.95 The lash present in several

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95 On Chen Jinggu, see Brigitte Baptandier, *The Lady of Linshui: A Chinese Female Cult*, trans. Kristin Ingrid Fryklund (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Lin and Peng, *Fujian minjian xinyang*, 162–180. A similar episode can be found in the legend of Gao Xianyilang 高仙一郎, Tong Nian'erlang 童念二郎, and Ma Xiansanlang 馬仙三郎 that circulated in northern Wuping. They were sworn brothers and went to Lüshan to study magical arts. But here the god/ritual master was the three Huang Xing immortals (Huang
legends is also an important weapon of Chen Jinggu, who with her two sworn sisters received from their master a “golden lash” (jinbian 金鞭) before they left to rescue Jinggu’s brother.⁹⁶ The practice of human sacrifice is an integral episode of the Lushan Daoist liturgical drama, “Jumping Haiqing” (tiao Haiqing 跳海青), which is still performed in Changting. As in the legend, a boy and girl were sacrificed to the demonic white snake every year in this episode.⁹⁷ The thematic similarities between this legend and the story of Chen Jinggu convince John Lagerwey that this legend is clearly “a variant of the story of Chen Jinggu and her fight with the white serpent of Gutian 古田.”⁹⁸

In addition, the Five Thunder or the Rites of Five Thunder Gods mentioned in the legends is closely related to the ritual masters. In the rites, Thunder Gods were summoned to bring rain and to exorcise demons.⁹⁹ All the evidence suggests that these ritual masters who were closely related to the new Daoist lineages that started to be active in South China in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries were concerned principally with therapeutic and exorcistic practices and were active in Southeast China thereafter.¹⁰⁰ They make it possible to look afresh at Zougong, who, like Ligong and other protagonists in the legends, had a close connection to the Daoist ritual tradition.

If those who defeated Shegong in the legend were Daoist ritual masters, how should we understand their relationship to their rival, Shegong? Basing his reading principally on the legend of Tufang, Lagerwey argues that this “constitutes a symbolic account of a very physical fact, to wit, the displacement of the She by the Hakkas.”¹⁰¹ For Lagerwey, the legend tells the story of how the god of a group of people, presumably the She, was demonized and exorcised by another group, presumably the Han Chinese

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Xing san xianshi (黃倖三仙師), an important local god popular among Shanghang and the surrounding counties. Note also the character lang in their names. See Liu, “Chuantong Kejia cunluo de shenming xianghuo yuanqi leixing-Yi Minxi Wuping xian beibu cunluo wei li,” 24–27.

⁹⁶ Wugenzhi, Haiyou ji, 75.


among whom Daoism was practiced. Similarly, Ken Dean suggests that the Han colonization of Fujian may have advanced on two fronts. The first front is the familiar one of military conquest. On the other front, “Buddhist and Daoist ritual specialists competed with, and perhaps absorbed elements of, local ritual traditions, in a magical conquest of the region.”

Seen in this light, the legends of Shegong circulating in southern Tingzhou are not unique. They are simply a tiny group of legends belonging to a popular narrative circulating throughout Fujian.

But how do we make sense of one important element in the legend—that the god that was demonized and exorcised was Shegong? Why was Shegong singled out as a target? Shegong is, of course, a complicated supernatural being. It could mean different things to different people. In Chinese texts, it could mean the officially approved cult of Shegong or local cults whose legitimacy was in doubt. Therefore, an overall discussion of his meanings will be too general to be useful. In his writings, Lagerwey seems to have taken an ambiguous attitude toward the god. He is well aware of the connection of this god to official religion. The altar of Shegong and the temple of imperial ancestors were, as he points out, two of the most important religious symbols in the Chinese empire since the Zhou dynasty. But he also claims that Shegong was and is the symbol of the territorial bond in his ideal-typical Chinese village. In his interpretation of the Tufang legend, he goes further to suggest that the god was actually a symbolic representation of the She. This interpretation seems to fit well with the sinification hypothesis proposed by Michel Strickmann—although it is difficult to prove or deny.

What I want to discuss here is less the historical origins of the legends than the social context for and the implications of its continuing presence.
in Tingzhou during the Ming and Qing dynasties. It may be hard to prove the major message of the legends: sinification of the She by Daoism and Shegong as the symbolic representation of the She ethnic group. But we have further evidence on how Ming and Qing literati and villagers alike responded to the legends. By examining how the legends were told and retold in the Ming and Qing periods, we can identify what changes have or have not been made to the legends and thus uncover an important aspect of the villagers’ attitudes.

Consider the case of the Ligong legend. As we have seen, the legend recounts the battle between Ligong and Shegong. The available evidence shows that the legend first appeared in written sources probably in 1589, when a local temple was reconstructed and an essay was written to record the event. The essay briefly mentions the legend of Ligong.106 Another essay, explaining why the Lis were justified in expelling Shegong, was written in 1601 (see below).107 A third essay, recounting the legend in detail, was written down in the late 1580s.108

Now let us examine the written legend itself. The most notable fact is its claim that the spirit that occupied the altar of the soil was actually not Shegong, but a demon. When Ligong was worried that he had to present his children to Shegong, he met an old man with yellow hair who told him: “Shegong is in charge of the five soils [i.e., the soil in all directions] and [responsible for] raising the five grains. [His] responsibility is to rear people. The one who rears people never does harm to people. It must be a demon who extorts food in the name of Shegong.”109 With the help of the old man, Ligong pulled down the altar of the soil, just as an official “threw a shaman [and drowned him/her in the river] or destroyed licentious [cults] (tou wu hui yin 投巫毁淫).”110

Similarly, Li Chengzhou 承周, a literati member of the Lis, also elaborated this point. In an essay he wrote in 1601, Li points out that the reason that only Changxiao did not have an altar of the soil is that Shegong in Changxiao was a demon. When he expelled this spirit, Ligong was just following the example of Ximen Bao 西門豹 and Di Renjie 狄仁杰.

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106 “Chongxiu zumiao xin jian yuelong qiao ji” 重修祖廟新建躍龍橋記 (Record of Reconstructing Ancestral Temple and Establishing Yuelong Bridge), in CXLSZP (1909, Shiyilang branch), juan zhi shou, 1a–2a.
107 “Lingyi ji” 靈異記 (Record of Miracles), in ibid., 2a–2b.
108 “Wulang zu chu yao lingyi ji” 五郎祖除妖靈異記 (Record of the Miraculous Action of Wulang Who Eliminated Demon), in ibid., 1a–2a.
109 Ibid., 1a–1b.
110 Ibid.
The former, an official under the Wei 魏 in the Warring States period (475–221 B.C.E.), threw shamans into the river and drowned them, while the latter, an eminent official of the Tang, ordered hundreds of licentious temples to be pulled down.

Chengzhou’s claim that Changxiao was the “only” place without an altar of the soil is, as we have seen, not correct. Actually, the existence of the group of similar legends in several Tingzhou counties suggests that this case may not have been exceptional. Interestingly, some versions of the legend of Tufang and the legend recorded in *Yongding County Gazetteer* both make a similar claim: The supernatural being inhabiting the altar of the soil was not the god itself, but a sinister demon. The question thus arises as to why the cannibalistic supernatural being should be a demon rather than Shegong himself. Given the institutional arrangements of the Ming dynasty mentioned above, this question is not difficult to answer.

Recall that the altar of the soil and grain, like the altar of orphan souls, was expected to be erected in every subcanton in the early Ming, and we have no reason to think that Sibao subcanton was an exception. Furthermore, given Changxiao’s central place in the Sibao subcanton of Qingliu, the altar may have been erected in or near this village. Indeed, as I pointed out earlier, the altar of orphan souls of this subcanton seems to have been erected in Changxiao. Therefore, when the legend was told in Changxiao, literati could not have missed the implications of the legend. The cannibalistic being could not be Shegong—it had to be someone else. This was their response to the somewhat heterodox element in the legend.

What is notable here is that while the written versions of the legends attempted to find an excuse for Shegong, almost all the legends orally transmitted did not bother to find an “excuse” for the god. This fact shows villagers’ attitude toward the god when they told and retold the legends, albeit in a somewhat indirect way. By representing Shegong—an important god in official religion and the supernatural bureaucracy—as an evil god asking for human sacrifices and then driving it away or killing it, the villagers introduced some ambiguous elements in the legends. Is it possible that this representation, or rather the villagers’ response to this representation, shows their ambiguous, even heterodox views toward the state as being is less humane than exploitative? It also shows the extent of the transformation of the She. Demonized as such, the She had to be

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111 “Lingyi ji,” 2a–2b.
removed.\textsuperscript{112} This representation facilitated the enshrining of another god, a god with a strong Daoist background that may have established himself in the village long before lishe and xiangli altars were instituted in the early Ming. As for the strong presence of Daoist elements in lisheng’s liturgical texts, and the rather unusual form of community compacts, the existence of illegitimate or even subversive elements in the legends reveals that both the court’s efforts to regulate popular cults and gentry’s efforts to promote Confucian orthodoxy were not very successful. This is understandable in a region where the political power and gentry culture had never gained a strong presence.

\textsuperscript{112} Interesting enough, the 1491 edition of Fujian General Gazetter shows that while around 1472 there were seven subcantons in Qingliu, this county only contained six altars of the soil and grain. See Table 8.1. It is not unlikely that Sibao was the one subcanton without the altar. Unfortunately, lack of sources prevents us from knowing the situation of the early Ming.
CHAPTER NINE

TEMPLES, MARKETS, AND VILLAGE IDENTITY

Originating in the medieval period, the cults of Guandi and Tianhou became extremely popular during the late imperial period. As a complex sociocultural process, their popularization, which is beyond the scope of this book, is the result of complicity between the court, officials, and local elites. The major concern of this chapter is how the two cults were introduced in Sibao and how they were connected to major social processes in the region.

Temple Building and Village Identity

In the mid-Ming, not only were village-level altars of the soil erected but so were temples. The Fengrao temple, located outside the village of Chitugang 赤土岡 north of Mawu, was put up by residents of the nearby villages of Liukeng, Mawu, and Jiangfang. At least two members of the gentry were involved in the establishment of the temple.¹ The Zhonglie 忠烈 (“loyal until death”) temple, reportedly established in Jiangfang in the Hongzhi era (1488–1505), was dedicated to a god/ancestor of the Jiangs, Jianggong 江公, and Zougong.² The Zougong temple in Huangshikeng was, as mentioned elsewhere, erected in the same era. Another temple established in this village, the Hall of Awakening to the Truth (Wuzhen Tang 悟真堂) dedicated to Immortal Ouyang, Immortal Luo, Immortal Lai, and Ancestor Master Zhenwu (Zhenwu zushi 真武祖師), was probably built around 1474.³ The Convent of Accumulating Blessings (Jifu An) east of Shangbao was erected in the Hongzhi era.⁴ Wuge did not seem to have its own village temple until the late Ming, when an abandoned academy on the hill east of the village was converted into a Buddhist temple.⁵

¹ JYJSZP (1990), 27/1a.
² Ibid., 27/26a.
³ A tablet of Immortal Ouyang still exists in the temple.
⁴ WSZP (1899, Lower-Gate branch), 1/4b.
⁵ ZSZP (1947, Wuge), 29/7b.
Some of these temples were close to an aggregate of temple sections and statues that belonged to different villages or lineages or their branches. Thus a statue of Puxian in the Fengrao temple was erected by Jiang Guanzheng of Jiangfang and later became the property of his descendants, who also took care of repairing the statue. A statue of Dizangwang and those of Jintong 金童 and Yunü 玉女 (the Golden Lad and Jade Maiden) were donated by Jiang Wentong and later also became the property of his descendants. This arrangement is similar to the Zougong temple in Mawu, where the four statues of Zougong belonged to four descent groups.

The Convent of Accumulating Blessings was another example. The major Buddhist statues, Immortal Ouyang, Immortal Luo, and Immortal Lai in the temple were erected by the Zous of Shangbao. The Old Lady Great Buddha (Taifo guo 太佛姑婆) was erected by the descendants of Zou Wenxue 文學 of Shangbao. The three statues of the Three Great Ancestor Masters (San da zushi or Santai zushi 三太祖師) were erected by the Wus of Jiantou. A Shangbao genealogy reports that the statues of the Wus were placed in the temple of their own village, but two fires caused the temple to burn down so they placed the statues in the Temple of Accumulating Blessings at the consent of the Zous.

Because the statues belonged to different villages or lineages or their branches, offerings presented to specific deities and the maintenance of the statues were the responsibility of the groups that had them erected. The groups were also responsible for donating estates to the convents so that monks there could look after the temples. In some rare cases, owners of statues even took them back. Three statues, those of Primordial Emperor Ancestor Master (Yuandi zuzhi 元帝祖師), Marshal Zhao 趙, and Marshal Yin 殷 in the Fengrao temple, belonged to a branch of the Jiangs. Then the branch took back the statues and worshipped them in a public hall in their own village. Later the branch erected another three statues in the temple.

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6 JYJSZP (1990), 27/1a.
7 ZSZP (1994, Yangzibian hamlet), 15/4.
8 WSZP (1899, Lower Gate branch), 1/4b. The Three Great Ancestor Masters were a group of gods of some popularity in Changting. Their major temple is located in Chifeng-zhang 赤峰嶂 to the west of Sibao. See Lai Jian 賴建, “Changting Santai zuzhi shenming xinyang” (The Cult of Three Great Ancestral Masters in Changting), in Yang, ed., Changting xian de zongzu, jingji yu minsu, 741–778.
10 JYJSZP (1990), 27/2a–2b.
In return for economic support from villagers, monks in these temples were responsible for providing villagers with religious services. Their responsibility included surveillance of temple properties, burning incense and candles to deities, writing “auspicious contracts” for adoptions (jiqi 吉契), performing rituals at the funerals of villagers and the jiao communal offering festivals, and sometimes maintenance of the tablets of villagers’ early ancestors. The monks of the Temple of Accumulating Blessings, for example, were responsible for maintaining the tablets of the seven third-generation ancestors, Shelang, Fulang, Zhenlang, Xianglang, Lilang, Youlang, and Lulang of the Zous of Shangbao. The monks of the Fengrao temple were also responsible for providing religious services to villages that helped establish the temple. According to the Ma Family Genealogy of the Lower Shrine,

Two or three li from the village is the Fengrao Temple, located in Qingliu. But the temple was established by our lineage together [with other villages]. In the past, Mr. Ziren 子仁, styled Fushou 福壽, donated such-and-such [sic.] mu of land [to the temple] to cover his everyday living expenses [in the temple]…. The temple has several dozen monks. All of them [belong to] the Order of Fragrant Flowers [xianghua jiao 香花教]. Frequently [they] rendered services to our village. In the past, Master Zhu [i.e., Zhu Xi] said, “Today’s monks are like the spirit mediums in ancient times.” If so, they who pray to gods and expel plague for us are indispensable to our village.

It is likely that monks at the temple provided services to villagers not only of Mawu but also of Liukeng, Jiangfang, and other villages that helped construct the temple. In rare cases, monks also needed to provide other services. The monks at the Temple of Accumulating Blessings, for example, were asked to hold banquets for the villagers of Shangbao three times a year.

How were these temples related to villages? For temples erected by one single village, the relationship is clear. The Zougong temple of Huangshikeng and the Zhonglie temple of Jiangfang, for example, were undoubtedly village temples. As for the temples established by several villages,

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11 It used to be a common practice to “give” one’s child to the god as an adopted child in Sibao. A contract needed to be drafted for this purpose and it was usually put up on walls of the temple. It is said that the child would be protected by the god in this way. But this practice does not turn him into a monk.
12 ZSZP (1994, Yangzibian hamlet), 15/4; WSZP (1899, Lower Gate branch), 1/4b.
14 MSZP (1994, Mawu), 2 ji, 28.
such as the Fengrao temple, the situation is more complicated. They were not village temples in the strictest sense because they were collectively owned. Under this circumstance, village identity was created by specific statues rather than by the temple itself. That is to say, villages were closely connected to the specific gods whose statues were erected in the temples. The statues were a temple’s property in that they were placed in the temple. But the village or lineage or its branches were entitled to take them back, which suggests that temples of this kind not only facilitated cooperation between villages but also fostered village identity. Because the focus that created village identity was on a specific statue rather than a temple, this mode of god-village relation may properly called statue-village mode. In contrast to this mode, the introduction of Guandi, especially his enshrinement in the “water exits,” in the late Ming provided another mode of god-village relation, that of temple-village, and is therefore worthy of our attention.

Guandi and Village Identity

Temples constructed in and before the mid-Ming were principally dedicated to local deities, such as Zougong, Jianggong, the Three Great Ancestral Masters, and gods with strong Buddhist and Daoist affiliations, such as Puxian and Dizang. Beginning in the late Ming, a group of popular deities of empire-wide or regional popularity was introduced to Sibao, for example, Guandi and Tianhou. Their introduction to Sibao was the result of complicated interplay between imperial, regional, and local factors and shows the subtle relationship between openness and closeness of the village community in an increasingly commercialized age.

Guandi, the Chinese god of war, was one of the most popular gods in late imperial China. His statue was found in every corner of the empire.\(^\text{16}\) He was adopted by the official Military Temple (Wumiao) in the eighth century. But his golden age did not come until the mid-Ming, when his rise to prominence was linked to the wide circulation of the popular novel *Sanguo yanyi* 三國演義 (Romance of the Three Kingdoms), which Confucianized Guan and molded him into a symbol of loyalty. In the eighteenth

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\(^\text{16}\) On the cult of Guan Yu in the late imperial period, see Masami Harada 原田正巳, “Kanu shiko no nisan yoso ni tsuite” 關羽信仰の二三の要素について (Two or Three Elements of Guan Yu Cult), *Tōhō shūkyō*, 8–9 (March 1955), 29–40; Duara, “Superscribing Symbols”; Guo Songyi 郭松義, “Lun Ming-Qing shiqi de Guan Yu chongbai” 論明清時期的關羽崇拜 (The Cult of Guan Yu in the Ming and Qing Periods), *Zhongguo shi yanjiu* 3 (1990).
Temples, markets, and village identity

Source: Photograph provided by Cynthia Brokaw.

Image 9.1  Guandi, the god of war, Wuge.
century, Guan was promoted as the main god of the Military Temple and enjoyed a status similar to that of Confucius in official religion. Guan also became a popular deity of local religion thanks to the promotion of the imperial state, institutional religions, and the spread of plays adapted from the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

The cult of Guan Yu was first introduced to Sibao in the late Ming. The first statue of him was installed on the Wanshou 萬壽 Bridge of Mawu in 1557. It is reported that Ma Liangju 良舉 (1517–1608), a government student usually known by his literary name Liequan 列泉, dreamed that Guan Yu appeared on the bridge on the lunar New Year’s Eve of 1556. He thus advocated the construction of a roof over the bridge and the installation of a statue of the god. In the Wanli era, the statue of Guan was moved to a pavilion in the village and a statue of Beidi 北帝 (or Xuantian shangdi, North Emperor) was erected there instead. As for the location of Guan Yu’s statue in Sibao, the bridge was not only a means of transportation but also a means of drawing boundaries. The bridge was constructed at a strategic point in order to overcome geomantic disadvantages, say, to prevent outflow of a village’s “treasure” and entrance to the village by undesirable spirits. The installation of a god on the bridge reinforces this function. In this sense, the bridge and the god enshrined on it marked the boundaries of the village.

More temples were dedicated to Guandi in the Qing dynasty. The Guandi temple of Shuangquan, the largest temple in the village, was constructed in the early eighteenth century. Installed in the main hall of the temple were statues of Guandi and two of his subordinates: Guan Ping 關平 and Zhou Cang 周倉. The statues of Liu Bei 劉備 and Zhang Fei 張飛 were placed on the right-hand and left-hand sides of the temple respectively. A stage was erected in front of the main hall. The annual jiao 祭 communal offering ceremony was performed in the temple, and the birthday of Zougong was also usually celebrated there around the twenty-third day of the sixth month.

This temple was constructed under the management of Zou Guoyi 國儀, who was a merchant with a relatively strong local orientation. Guoyi’s

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18 MSZP (1994, Mawu), 2 ji, 27. A brief biography of Ma Liangju is in ibid., 1/55–56.
19 Chunyou, *Shuangquan cun shi*, 177.
biography mentions that he managed the establishment not only of the Zougong Temple in Shangbao and the Convent of Heart Field (Xintian An 心田庵), but also of the compact office of the village, the Pagoda of the Netted Starring, and the Guandi Temple.20 The Guandi temple and the tower reportedly were constructed for geomantic reasons: To the north of the village there is no “protecting” hill, thus making the village vulnerable to spiritual attack. The temple and tower function as a geomantic “lock” that prevents undesirable elements from invading the village territory.

The small Guandi temple of Wuge, still extant, was probably erected in the eighteenth century.21 The gods of this temple include Guandi, Guan Ping, Zhou Cang, Tianhou, and Guanyin. The jiao communal offering festival of Wuge, which was performed in ancestral halls or the Tianhou Temple, is now performed in the temple around the seventh day of the seventh month each year. Standing next to a stream surrounding the village in the south, this temple was also constructed for geomantic reasons: Together with a dam that was constructed across the stream before the temple was built, it aims to prevent the outflow of village “treasures.” Thus the geomantic boundaries of the village are marked by both the dam and the temple.

Yangzibian and Zhenbian each had a Guandi Temple, but only the one in Zhenbian still stands. Inside the single-room temple are statues of Guandi, Guan Ping, and Zhou Cang. However, we do not know when they were placed there. The Zou Family Genealogy of Yangzibian mentions that its temple was restored under the management of Zou Longdian 隆殿 (1789–1863), a villager without title or degree, probably in the first half of the nineteenth century.22 Every year, on Guandi’s birthday (the second day of the second month), the Zous of Yangzibian organize a procession in his honor, followed by puppet shows. The rites of sacrifice are also performed by a sacrifier under the guidance of two lisheng in

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20 ZSZP (1900, Shuangquan village), juan shou, 9a–9b.

21 The recently compiled Zou Family Genealogy of the Upper Shrine claims that the Guandi Temple was established in 1592 and restored in 1632. See ZSZP (1996, Wuge), 3/100–101. This seems to be baseless. No written sources and legends mention the date of construction. The only dated source is a picture of the temple drawn in 1765. This means that the temple was erected no later than this date. See “Guandi Miao tu” 關帝廟圖 (Plan of the Guandi Temple) ZSZP (1911, Wuge), juan shou, la.

22 “Shijiu shi Jiren gong zhuan” 十九世繼仁公傳 (Biography of Jiren of the Nineteenth Generation) ZSZP (1946, Yangzibian hamlet), 15/1a–1b. Genealogical information on Jiren, style name Longdian, is in ibid., 5/13a–14a.
their ancestral hall. Whether these temples were also constructed for geomantic reasons is not clear, but the fact that each of the two major hamlets of Shangbao established its own temple dedicated to the same deity implies that absent another reason, they may have been constructed to distinguish them from each other—that is, they functioned as the foci of village identity.

What is remarkable about these Guandi Temples? First, several of them were constructed for geomantic reasons to overcome shortcomings of the villages' geomantic location. It is noteworthy that Guandi (and Beidi in the case of Mawu) rather than another god was selected to perform this function. This is probably because Guandi was not only a symbol of loyalty but also a deity closely related to the military and to bravery, which were indispensable requirements as a guardian of the welfare of villagers. Furthermore, by guarding the villages, the god also demarcated their boundaries. In sum, the god and the temples were the symbols of village identity.

**Temples and Commerce**

*Construction of the Tianhou Temple at the Laijiaxu Market*

In the eighteenth century, two Tianhou temples were constructed in Sibao, both of them in marketplaces. This is not a coincidence. Their location and their introduction to Sibao were historical events that call for historical explanation. This section gives an overview of the relationship between this god, merchants, and commercial activities.

Tianhou, or the Empress of Heaven, was said to be a former shaman who lived in the early Northern Song on Meizhou Island in Putian, Fujian. She was adopted into official pantheon in the late Northern Song. The deity was promoted to the rank of “imperial concubine” (fei妃) in 1190. At this point, she became one of the most important gods for seafarers. The cult of the deity was promoted in the Yuan and Ming, reaching a height in the Qing period. The state granted titles to the deity seven

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23 This is based on a poster on the wall of the ancestral hall of the Zous of Yangzibian. The rite was performed in the spring of 2001.

times during the dynasty. In 1680, at the request of General Shi Lang 施琅 (1621–1696), a native of Quanzhou, Fujian, the deity was promoted to the rank of empress.25

James Watson argues that the transformation of the deity from a god of local importance to the nationally prominent “Empress of Heaven” is principally the result of “the intervention of the state.”26 But while the state’s role was undeniable, we should also note the efforts of Fujian natives to promote the god. As in the case of Xu Zhenjun 許真君 (Perfected Master Xu) for Jiangxi residents and Liuzu 六祖 (Sixth Patriarch) for Guangdong residents, Tainhou became the symbol of Fujian merchants and migrants in the late imperial period. The guildhalls (huiguan 會館) erected by Fujian merchants and migrants, such as those in Beijing, Chaozhou, Shanghai, and Sichuan had a section dedicated to this deity almost without exception.27

Judging from the sources I collected from Sibao, no temple was dedicated to Tainhou in Sibao during the Ming. The first temple dedicated to Tainhou was probably the one established at the Laijiaxu market in the mid eighteenth century. The temple, one mu in area, was one of the largest temples in Mawu. It was composed of a bedchamber and a main hall measuring about 250 square meters where the statue of Tainhou was placed. In front of the hall was a stage about 40 square meters. On Tainhou’s birthday (the twenty-third day of the third month) and on jiao communal offering festivals, theatrical troupes were hired to perform plays in the temple—performances that sometimes lasted more than a month.28

Construction of the temple was managed by Ma Long 龍 (1702–1781) of the Mas of the Lower Shrine. Ma Long, style name Sijian 斯見 and literary name of Wentian 文田, came from a family with close connections to the printing industry. His grandfather, Ma Quanheng 權亨, was one of the earliest Sibao residents involved in the printing industry. His father, Ma Dingbang 定邦 (1672–1743), usually known by his literary name, Yi’an 怡庵, was an outstanding book merchant in the early Qing.29 Dingbang had two sons, Ma Long and his younger brother, Ma Jiu 就. Following Dingbang’s arrangement, the elder brother studied for the civil service examination,
While the younger brother continued the book business. Probably in compensation for the Ma Jiu’s contribution to the family, Dingbang purchased the title of national university student for him. Ma Jiu transported books published in Sibao to Guangdong every year and brought money back with him in the winter to purchase more books. His biography reports that he made considerable profits from the business.\(^3^0\) Ma Long was a government student and later became a tribute student. He was not appointed to any government position, although he received the title of Gentleman for Good Service (修職郎, 8a). With money that his father and brother made from the book business, Ma Long did not have to worry about his livelihood (their family did not divide until later) and could donate money to construct public works.

Dingbang himself seems to have been involved in overseeing the construction of some public buildings. When he was forty-two, he contributed funds to reconstruct the Zougong Temple in Mawu. Six years later, the ancestral hall of the Lower Shrine was restored at his urging. Dingbang was also one of the managers for the reconstruction of two bridges that linked Mawu to Ninghua and Changting.\(^3^1\) Like his father, Ma Long also played an active role in the public affairs of his own community. He advocated the construction of two temples in Mawu. As his biography, written by one of his grandsons, recounts, many members of the Ma family went to Guangxi to sell books. They “found that the temples dedicated to Lord Ma, General Fubo 伏波, were erected in every place,” and it was claimed that the deity was “efficacious and responsive to the masses.” So they “also prayed to the Lord to protect [them] secretly,” and they had “peace on land and sea.” After returning to Mawu, they “immediately put up a spirit tablet for the Lord, and performed the jiao to thank [his] favor.” Later they also sculpted a small statue of the deity and brought it home. Eventually they erected a temple, usually called the Magong Temple, next to the Laijiaxu market. Half the funding came from Ma Long. Principally due to Ma Long’s donations and advocacy, the Mas also established a Tianhou Temple to the right of the temple of Fubo. In his response to his kinsmen’s suggestion to erect the Tianhou Temple, Ma Long emphasized the popularity of Tianhou, claiming that “she is reverently worshipped from

\(^{30}\) MSZP (1993, Mawu), 5 ji, 68–69.
\(^{31}\) Ibid., 55–58.
the court down to prefectures and counties, from mountain villages to the edges of the sea.\textsuperscript{32}

Although Ma Long himself was not a merchant, the relationship between book merchants and the two temples, Magong Temple in particular, is obvious. The cult of General Fubo, for example, was introduced by book merchants. Furthermore, the temples were located in a marketplace. The construction of the temples in the marketplace, especially the Tianhou Temple, not only would protect book merchants but also was meant to provide a venue for people from different areas to exchange goods. The significance of the Tianhou Temple for the marketplace can be seen more clearly in the case of the market of Wuge. But before turning to this problem, we have to examine an important local event, the opening of a new market.

\textit{Opening a Market in the Eighteenth Century}

In 1778, the Zous of Wuge opened a new market in front of their village. This event is unusual for several reasons. On the one hand, the village of Wuge is next to Mawu. It took at most a half an hour to walk from this village to the Laijiaxu market. Why was this market opened so close to another market? Moreover, the new market adopted a marketing schedule similar to that of the Laijiaxu market, contrary to what we would expect from a rational economic perspective. To this, we need to consider not only rational calculation but also the social dynamism of Sibao—that is, from the perspective of local politics.

As mentioned in Chapter 7, in the mid-Ming Sibao had only one market. Laijiaxu had the only market because of its strategic location, on the Changting-Qingliu border in the middle of the Sibao basin. As the name Laijiaxu (the market of the Lai family) indicates, the Lai family that lived there likely played an important role in the opening of the market. But as the Mas of Mawu started to dominate the social life of the Sibao basin, in the mid-Ming at the latest the market gradually found its way into the hands of that lineage. Lineage rules drafted by Ma Xun provide some clue to this process. In the lineage rules, Ma Xun forbade his fellow kinsmen to commit several misdemeanors. According to the last injunction of the rules, the kinsmen were forbidden to bully villagers, trade forcefully, and use counterfeit silver in the marketplace (see Chapter 5).

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 80–81.
The inclusion of these prohibitions in lineage rules not only indicates that this kind of wrongdoing existed in the Laijiaxu market but also implies that the Mas may have dominated the market by the end of the fifteenth century.

Two markets arose in and around Changxiao village in the early sixteenth century. The 1545 edition of the *Qingliu County Gazetteer* mentions the existence, as well as a fair about 4 li north of this village, of the Changxiao Market (Changxiao shi 長校市), which was probably a small market with a few shops that did business every day rather than one that opened periodically. In contrast, the fair, known as the Fair of Turning Water (*Zhuanshui hui* 轉水會), was the same as a temple fair, although there was probably no temple there. The fair took place around the Double Ninth Festival every year, right after the conclusion of the Fangong Fair of the county seat of Qingliu, a large-scale temple fair in the area that was organized to celebrate the birthday of Fangong, an important local deity.33 In addition to these three markets, those who lived in western Sibao could go to the Guiren 帶仁 market in Changting, while those who lived in southern Sibao could go to the Beituan 北團 market, both of which had existed since the mid-Ming. These two markets were not within the Sibao region, but they were not far from Sibao.34 This situation did not change until the Zous of Wuge opened a new market. Because the opening of the new market is a crucial event in the social history of Sibao, it seems appropriate to examine it in some detail.

Why did the Zous want to open a new market? An essay in the *Zou Family Genealogy* of the Lower Shrine of Wuge gives a brief explanation. This essay claims that the new market was opened on the ground that the old one was “relatively distant.”35 This is not true. The Laijiaxu market was only a half an hour’s walk from Wuge. Moreover, even if we accept this explanation, why should the new market adopt the same marketing schedule as the Laijiaxu market? Obviously, the real considerations lay elsewhere. A tale that circulates among the villagers of Wuge seems to provide a more reasonable explanation: The new market was opened because the Mas traded aggressively. The members of the Mas, as the tale goes, often went to the market and told peddlers: “I want to buy your goods.” Then they would go away and not show up again until later in the

33 *QLXZ* (1545), 1/12b.
34 *TZFZ* (1527), 3/5b, 25b.
35 “Gongping xu” 公平墟序, in *ZSZP* (1911), juan shou, 2a. See also Zheng, *Family Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian*, 124–127.
evening. The peddlers, fearful of the Mas, did not dare to sell what they brought to the market. When the Mas came back, it was in the evening, and most of traders had already left the market. The remaining peddlers did not want to take their goods home and had to sell them to the Mas at considerably lower prices. The truth of this story is difficult to verify. The Zous may have used it as a pretext for their activities. But the new market was called “Gongping xu” or the Fair Market at all events probably to distinguish it from the Laijiaxu market.

Nonetheless, we have to explain why the Zous adopted the same marketing schedule. This action must be considered against the background of the Zou-Ma relationship. As discussed in Chapter 5, when the Mas became a prominent descent group in the mid-Ming, the Zous were only a weak agnatic group with very low-level integration among its members. The involvement of the Zous in the printing industry and their efforts at lineage building may not have changed this situation, but it did make it possible for them to challenge the power of the Mas. This was especially true by the mid-eighteenth century. The opening of a new market, like the compilation of a genealogy, the construction of an ancestral hall, and the transformation of a god into an ancestor, was one of the important strategies adopted by the Zous to compete in local power with the Mas. By opening a new market, the Zous meant not only to cripple the Mas economically but also to expand their own influence to other villages in the Sibao region. After the new market was opened, many villagers in southern Sibao no longer went to the Laijiaxu market.

The importance of local politics for understanding this action can be further demonstrated by the Longguang 龍光 market (literally, “the market of dragon light”). The Longguang market was located outside the village of Jiangfang, roughly between Mawu and Changxiao, about 15 li away from Mawu to the south and Changxiao to the north. This market was opened by the Jianges probably in the 1930s. What was remarkable about this market was that it adopted the same marketing schedule as the Laijiaxu market and the Gongping market of Wuge. Again, this decision should be interpreted from the perspective of intercommunity relations and local politics. This market was opened under the direction of Jiang Ruisheng 瑞聲 (1899–1947) and his brother, Jiang Xiongsheng 雄生 (1916–1951). The Jianges of Jiangfang were one of the most important lineages in Sibao. The Jiang brothers came from a prominent family. Their father, Jiang Letian

36 QLXZ (1947), 3/7b.
樂天，had been a high-ranking officer under Guo Jintang 郭錦堂, a local warlord in western Fujian in the early Republican period, and magistrate of Yong'an 永安 County. Ruisheng also held some important positions in the army of Guo Jintang before he was wiped out by the Red Army in 1934. After hiding in Fuzhou for three years, Ruisheng went back to Jiangfang in 1937. Over years, in a turbulent world in which petty warlords competed for military control, he gradually built up his own troops with the help of Xionghsheng. In the last decade of his life he was not only active in Sibao, but also in the county politics of Qingliu. His brother, Xionghsheng, was appointed the head of Baoli 堡里 Township (the former Sibao subcanton of Qingliu) in 1940. He continued to expand the troops that his brother had helped build. It is reported that at the height of his power his troops had over four hundred guns. Clearly, the opening of the Longguang market was meant to diminish the influence of the Mas and the Zous and to expand the influence of the Jiangs.

In the case of the Changxiao market, the reconstruction of an old market led to a lineage conflict. The market was located in Niulanli 牛欄里 in Changxiao. In 1928, it was moved to Laogangshang 老崗上 on the ground that the former location was too narrow. The marketing days were also shifted from the fourth and eighth days of the month to the third and the eighth days. The project was managed by Li Darong 大榮 of the Lis of Changxiao, who was elected to be the market head (xuzhang 場長) after the reconstruction of the market was completed. The new market reportedly drew many outside villagers, to the point that the prosperity of the Laijiaxu market was affected. The head of Laijiaxu market, Ma Xiankang 賢康, became angry and wanted to take action against Li Darong, who was forced to leave his hometown. Unlike the Gongping market of Wuge and the Longguang market of Jiangfang, the Changxiao market was not reconstructed specifically to challenge the power of the Mas, although it did undermine the prosperity of the Laijiaxu market. However, it still led to the intervention of the Mas.

Historians of the late imperial Chinese economy have long regarded the increase in markets as evidence of the growth of commercialization of the Chinese rural economy. In some sense, this is justifiable. Clearly,
if peasants had nothing to sell and nothing to buy, a rural market would not be necessary. And the increase in markets may have been the result of relative increase in volume and frequency of trade. But the cases discussed here show that the increase of markets, undoubtedly made possible by increasingly active commercial activities, may not always be a direct expression of the commercialization of the rural economy, but may have been the result of local politics. From the point of view of local society, the market was not only a place to trade but also a means of challenging, contesting, and expanding the influence of the local groups concerned. This means that when examining the increase of markets, we should not explain it only in terms of economic logic. Rather, it is important to bring into consideration the social context and historical background within which markets were opened.

Returning to the Gongping market of Wuge. In 1792, fifteen years after Gongping market opened, a temple dedicated to Tianhou was established in the market. This temple of Wuge was put up corporately by the Zous (hezu 闔族) of this village. It was reportedly constructed under the direction of Danxuan 淡軒, a printing shop manager.40 A stage was constructed in front of the temple. On the birthday of Tianhou, theater troupes were hired to perform plays to entertain the god and villagers. This annual celebration was organized by an association called the Soaring Dragon Society (Longxiang hui 龍翔會), composed of forty-eight shares occupied by forty-six members (one member, Yuanchao, held three shares; see Table 9.1) and was divided into four groups who took charge of organizing the annual celebration in rotation. It was set up shortly after the temple was erected. The members contributed two silver dollars when they joined the society. They lent the money to earn interest. By 1812, their capital had grown to 506 silver dollars. The society then spent 495 silver dollars to purchase three plots of land. The rent from the land was used to cover the cost for sacrifices to Tianhou and a banquet.41 Of the forty-six members of the society, I was able to determine the social background of twenty-three members (see Table 9.1), all of them surnamed Zou.

Zhuang Jinghui 莊景輝 (Taipei: Daohe chubanshe, 1997), 338–380; Rawski, Agricultural Change and the Peasant Economy of South China, 8–9, 69–71.
40 ZSZP (1911, Wuge), 20/65b.
41 Ibid. (1947, Wuge), 29/3a–4b; Zheng, Family Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian, 127.
Table 9.1  The social background of the members of the Soaring Dragon Society.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Social background</th>
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<td>Guanhuí 觀輝</td>
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<td>Guest of Community Wine Drinking Ceremony</td>
<td>ZSZP (1947), <em>juan mo</em>, 1b</td>
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</table>

*Sources: ZSZP (1911, Wuge); ZSZP (1947, Wuge).*
From Table 9.1 we see that merchants played an important role in the society. Of twenty-three members in the table, at least eight members were merchants, and most of them book merchants. The other members were provincial graduates, government students, national university students, managers of lineage estates, great guests of community wine drinking ceremony, and peasants. Although they were not involved in the commerce, many of them had close connections to it. Renkuan and Ren-sheng, for example, belonged to a family some of whose members were involved in commercial activities.\textsuperscript{42} Yuanxuan (1795–1857) belonged to an agnatic group that was deeply involved in the book business. His great-grandfather, Shuwen 達文 (1692–1756), was a book merchant. He opened a bookstore in Zhangshu 樟樹 Town, Jiangxi, and sold books there for several decades.\textsuperscript{43} Yuanxuan’s grandfather, Hongyou 鉴猷 (1723–1772), and the latter’s brothers, Hongqi 鉴起 (1726–1762) and Hongxing 鉴興 (Shiyun in Group A, 1732–1816), managed the bookstore in Zhangshu and sold books in Jiangxia 江夏 and Hanchuan 漢川 of Hubei, Chong’an 崇安 of Fujian, Suzhou, and Hangzhou.\textsuperscript{44} Yuanxuan’s father, Kongchang 孔昌 (1770–1834), and his uncle, Kong’ai 孔愛 (1755–1827), were also involved in the book business. They published books and sold them in Jiangxia of Hubei, Ganzhou, Zhangshu, and Wucheng 吳城 of Jiangxi, and Yunnan.\textsuperscript{45} Similarly, Qingguan, Zhenguan, and Zongguan were the brothers of Yunguan, who was a book merchant.\textsuperscript{46} Another noteworthy phenomenon is that nine of the members listed in the table gained their titles through purchase. Four or half of merchants in the table gained their titles in this way.

The fact that the temple was dedicated to Tianhou may not surprise us. As I pointed out earlier, Tianhou was the deity most Fujian merchants worshiped, and statues of her were installed in most of the huiguan established by Fujian merchants. Tianhou’s close relationship to commercial activity and the inclusiveness of her worshipers made her one of the best choices for a temple erected in a marketplace. Like the stage at the Datong Bridge market, the stage in the Gongping market was also constructed probably to “make the marketplace look more splendid.” The

\textsuperscript{42} ZSZP (1947, Wuge), 33/35b.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 33/30b–31a.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., 33/43a–43b, 44a–44b, 45a–45b.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., 33/60a–60b, 61a–61b.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid. (1911, Wuge), 20/56a–56b.
performance of plays in the market could draw the attention of villagers from villages other than Wuge.

*The Tianhou Temple of Shangbao*

A third temple dedicated to Tianhou was built in Shangbao in 1844. The temple, located northwest of the village and close to the Datong bridge market, was funded by the three major branches of the Zous of Shangbao. According to Zou Wenzuan 文軒, a government student from Shangbao, the Zous decided to construct the temple after some of their members watched the plays performed at the Temple of Lord Wu (Wugong Miao 吳公廟). The Wugong Temple, the only village temple of Jiantou, was probably erected around 1827 by the Wus and was dedicated to Wu Tao 吳夲 or Baosheng dadi 保生大帝 (the Great Emperor Who Protects Life), a well-known popular cult in southern Fujian.47 It was constructed under the direction of Wu Yuanwang 源旺 (1766–1840), a book merchant of Jiantou, in 1827.48 We do not know who introduced the cult to Jiantou, although it is possible that it was introduced by merchants who did business in southern Fujian. It is not difficult to understand the reason for constructing a temple dedicated to this god. The Wus worshiped Wugong in a way not unlike how the Zous worshiped Zougong, or the Mas worshiped Magong, or the Lis worshiped Ligong. All the gods were represented as gods/ancestors.

The Zous who watched the plays were probably impressed by the Wugong Temple. After leaving the temple, four members of the Zous—Mingzhang 明章, Hualin 華林, Shibensheng 世本, and Chaomei 朝梅—had a discussion on their way back home. The descendants of Zou Qilang, they said, were not poor that they could not afford constructing a temple. They displayed their reverence to gods and ancestors by constructing the Temple of Accumulating Blessings and the Zougong Temple. “The only temple [we] do not yet have,” they claimed, “is one dedicated to Tianhou.” So they talked to other kinsmen after returning to their village:

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48 “Wangsheng zongweng lao xiansheng daren zhuan,” 1a.
Although the Saintly Mother was born in Fujian, temples have been constructed and dedicated to her all over—from great places such as Beijing, provincial capitals, and prefectural and county cities, down to small localities such as market towns, countryside villages, mountain hamlets, and distant places. Although [the god] is a woman, everyone burns incense and worships [her]—from the son of Heaven, marquises, and great and low officials, down to gentry, commoners, and so forth. Furthermore, all of us receive the protection of the Saintly Mother. Whenever there are dangers as [we] travel by water, we call out [the name] either of [our] great ancestor [i.e., Zougong] or of the Saintly Mother. And the Saintly Mother is extremely efficacious. Whenever [she] is called, [she] will go [to provide protection].

So they contributed funds toward the construction of a temple to Tianhou in Shangbao. Zou explained that the Tianhou Temple was erected in Shangbao for two reasons. First, because the god was worshipped by people of different strata in a variety of different places, which emphasizes Tianhou's popularity. Second, because Tianhou helped “all of us,” presumably those who traveled outside Sibao, especially merchants. This is an indication of the relationship between Tianhou and long-distance trade. Therefore, although this temple was not established in the marketplace, its connection to commercial activities is undeniable.

The construction of the Tianhou Temple in Shangbao proceeded in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the arch built in 1906. A stele records the contributors to its construction, showing the variety and number of different associations involved—the Association of Offering Reverence (Fengjing she 奉敬社), Association of Unified Reverence (Tongjing she 同敬社), Association of Peaceful Waves (Botian she 波恬社), Association of Perpetual Celebration (Yongqing she 永慶社), Association of Pure Waves (Qinglan she 清瀾社), Association of Sincere Reverence (Chengjing she 誠敬社), Association of Tranquility (Shengping she 昇平社), Association of Perpetual Purity (Yongqing she 永清社), Association of Luxuriant Spring (Senchun she 森春社), Association of Birthday Celebration (Nuanshou she 暖壽社), and one whose name is not clear. The stele does not tell us the nature of these societies, but judging from their names, they were god-worshipping societies, and many of them, for example, the Association of Peaceful Waves and the Association of Pure

50 Ibid.
51 “Zao Tianhou gong menlou bei” 造天后宮門樓碑 (Stele of Establishing the Arch of the Tianhou Temple) (erected in 1906, Shangbao).
Waves, were likely organized for the purpose of worshiping Tianhou and for praying for a peaceful tour outside one’s hometown.

Sources from other villages of Sibao also testify that associations of this nature were widespread in the late Qing and in the Republican period, although it is not clear when these associations started to spread across the region. For example, the Soaring Dragon Association of Wuge was organized in the 1790s. A document of family division dated 1909 collected in Changxiao shows that the family, surnamed Li, had shares in nineteen associations. About half of these associations—including the Ligong Association (Ligong hui 李公會), Tianhou Association (Tianhou hui 天后會), Guandi Association (Guandi hui 關帝會), New Lixia Association (Xin lixia hui 新立夏會), Zhenwu Association (Zhenwu hui 真武會), the Altar of Orphan Souls Association (Litan hui 厲壇會), Immortals Association (Xiangong hui 仙公會), Association of the Eighth Day of the Fourth Month (Siyou ba hui 四月八會), and Taibao Association (Taibao hui 太保會)—were clearly god-worshipping associations. A survey of corporate land in Huangshikeng carried out in 1952 indicates more than twenty god-worshiping societies in this small mountain village. The widespread existence of these societies implies that lineage organization was not the only choice of social grouping and that one alternative was the voluntary association based on non-kin relationships.

After the mid-Ming, particularly in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, several gods, such as Guandi, Tianhou, Magong, and Wugong, were thus introduced to Sibao. Temples for worshiping them were closely connected to both village identity and the commercialization of the rural economy. The Guandi temples were constructed to mark villages off from other villages, while the Tianhou temples were closely linked to merchants and commercial activities. Because she was one of the most important gods of Fujian, Tianhou was critical to Sibao merchants and her cult’s

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52 Fenguan no. 15 (Changxiao, 1909).
54 Another interesting fact of these associations is that the shares of them could be bought and sold. This brings to mind what Myron L. Cohen calls the “commoditization” of late imperial Chinese economy and society (“Shared Beliefs: Corporations, Community and Religion among the South Taiwan Hakka during the Ch’ing,” Late Imperial China 14.1 [1993], 1–33; idem, “Commodity Creation in Late Imperial China: Corporations, Shares, and Contracts in One Rural Community,” in David Nugent, ed., Locating Capitalism in Time and Space: Global Restructurings, Politics, and Identity [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002], 80–112).
inclusiveness also made that temple one of the best choices for a deity in a marketplace. The case of Tianhou temples in Sibao also indicates the close relationship between temples and marketplaces. An informant in Anyuan county, southern Jiangxi, quoted a saying to Liu Jingfeng that “a market without a temple cannot last.” While this saying was not found in Sibao, the development of temples in the marketplaces of Sibao shows that temples are an integral part of marketplaces.

Historians studying south Chinese history have developed several competing models of societal transformation in the Ming and Qing periods. Based on their research in the Pearl River Delta, David Faure and Liu Zhiwei argue that social transformation in the region principally comprised how the official-style lineage was introduced to the region and how this process shaped the whole regional society. The introduction of ancestral halls and the compilation of genealogies in that region not only modified the principle of social organization, but also had a great impact upon the region’s temple networks. As a result, the temple networks, which used to be “the foci of local organization,” were competed against, suppressed, relegated to a lesser role, and sometimes even eliminated by the ancestral halls. They were placed under “the shadow of the dominant lineages” and were only “second place” in local society.

Kenneth Dean, however, offers a different interpretation of the socio-cultural process based on his own research on Putian. He acknowledges that lineages in the Putian Plain, although declining in the waves of pirate invasions and forced coastal evacuations in the late sixteenth to mid-seventeenth centuries, “continued to transform and mutate throughout the Qing and Republican periods” and “continue to play powerful roles today in local society.” At the same time, Dean finds that in the Putian Plain the rise of ritual alliances took place since the mid-Ming rather than

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56 Liu, *Gannan zongzu shehui yu daojiao wenhua yanjiu*, 168.
58 Dean, “Transformation of the She,” 70–71.
during the Song, as Faure's model implies. The village temples, and the ritual alliances that they formed, “generate a ‘second government’ which addressed certain local concerns more effectively than the state and its local government officials.” They organized celebrations of the birthdays and festivals of the gods and villagers' processions, held training sessions for spirit mediums, and invited ritual specialists to perform rites in the temples and were “important centers of local political, economic, social and moral power.” As Dean writes, over time, “the she-altar and the local temple system gradually replaced lineage centered domination of local space.”

The case of Sibao provides an example of a path of social transformation that differs from those of both the Pearl River Delta and the Putian Plain. The process of lineage building in Sibao did not lead to the suppression of the temple system, relegating it to the second place, in contrast to what Faure and Liu say, nor did the development of the temple system there challenge and replace the dominant role of lineage in local society. Rather, the spread of lineages in Sibao took place almost at the same time that more temples were being constructed in villages. In the eighteenth century, for example, not only did lineages spread but several important local cults were initiated. The spread of lineage organization and the expansion of the temple system are, therefore, not two mutually exclusive processes in Sibao. This mode of development is in a certain sense not unlike what Michael Szonyi observed in Fuzhou, where “the history of lineage organization remained inseparable from that of local cult organization.”

Why did social transformation proceed differently in Sibao than in the Pearl River Delta and the Putian Plain? To answer this question, we first return to the history of Tingzhou and Sibao. The imperial presence in Tingzhou was weak and indirect because it was a peripheral region, which created some latitude for the survival and development of local religions. In addition, Tingzhou experienced social disorder from the mid-Ming to the early Qing, but, unlike Putian, recovered from it beginning in the late seventeenth century. The commercialization of the rural economy not only provided a sufficient economic basis for lineage building but also

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59 Dean and Zheng, *Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plain*, 3.
60 Dean, “Transformation of the She,” 70–71; Dean and Zheng, *Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plain*, 53–150.
intensified the building of village temples. Moreover, the Tingzhou region lacks the kind of geography that promotes powerful lineage organizations in the Pearl River Delta or large-scale ritual alliances in the Putian Plain: It does not have the extensive alluvial sands of the Pearl River Delta, and it does not need to coordinate the complex, intervillage irrigation system of the Putian Plain.

Second, the lineage organization and the temple system may have provided different functions to local population. It is true that, as shown in the case of Zougong, gods and ancestors in Sibao were not easily differentiated. But from the villagers’ point of view, these gods/ancestors may have been different from such gods as Guandi and Tianhou. Why did they establish the Guandi temples at the water exits of their villages? Why did they establish the temples to Tianhou when they had temples to their gods/ancestors? After some descent groups transformed a god into an ancestor, that god was no longer suitable for demarcating social boundaries. This in turn explains why deities from different religious traditions and related to different historical agendas have been able to coexist in such a small area as Sibao.

The case of Sibao also illustrates how the temple system evolved in the late imperial period. The evolution of the temple system there is not so much a process of the suppression and replacement of the early gods as that of a process of accumulation. The early cults, such as those of Zougong and the god of the soil, were modified rather than eliminated in the Ming and Qing periods, and then new cults were added alongside early cults rather than replacing them. In the end, a group of deities results from different historical processes that parallel the development of ritual traditions, lineage organizations, and territorial cults.

The introduction of different gods in Sibao not only developed out of different historical processes but also was connected to Confucian rituals and ideology. With respect to his origin, Zougong was not directly connected to Confucian rituals (the claim that he was promoted by the court cannot be verified). Rather, his cult was linked to popular Daoist religion. In contrast, Shegong, Guandi, and Tianhou were officially approved deities. But as shown in the manuals introduced in Chapter 8, villagers offered sacrifices to Zougong, through a ritual master in the same Confucian-style ritual formats as other gods. Similarly, Guandi and Tianhou, although officially sanctioned deities, were invited to watch operas and inspect territories during the jiao ceremonies. What we have here is a situation in which deities of different religious origins and rituals of different traditions were
interwoven. As with the ritual corpus of *lisheng*, the development of territo-rial cults also suggests a cultural history that is characterized more often than not by accumulation and synthesis, or hybridization, rather than displacement and suppression.62

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In 1916, Lu Xun published the story "Kuangren riji" (Diary of a Madman). The central message of this story is well known: Four thousand years of Chinese civilization was simply the unfolding of a cannibalistic culture. "This daring accusation by the Madman," Leo Ou-fan Lee comments, "is of course quite in line with the prevailing anti-traditionalism of the May Fourth intellectual stance."\(^1\) For Lu Xun and many other radical intellectuals, Chinese traditional culture was no more than long-established rituals and moral doctrine that had the effect of cannibalizing the Chinese people. Like other polemicists for the New Culture movement, Lu Xun helped popularize the expression *lijiao chiren* (ritual teaching devours people). This message "signals the first stance of Lu Xun’s radical epistemology—a kind of purposeful reversal of values: what had been viewed in official history as civilized could, in fact, be barbaric; and what had been disdained or ignored would prove, on the contrary, to be of more enduring value."\(^2\)

For a socio-cultural historian, what is interesting in this "radical epistemology," however, is not the anti-traditionalist stance itself, but the fact that in reifying Chinese cultural heritage as a world of Confucian moral doctrine and ritual, Lu Xun actually took a position that resembled the very cultural heritage he was attacking—namely, the Neo-Confucianism of the scholar-officials. In doing so, he was repeating a grand narrative that had been proclaimed by Neo-Confucian scholar-officials time and again. The history of Chinese civilization is interpreted in this sense as a historical process of transforming or, more precisely, civilizing (*hua* or *jiaohua* 教化) Chinese people through Neo-Confucian rituals and moral tenets. These two narratives have only one major difference: While Lu

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2. Ibid., 54.
Xun reified traditional Chinese culture in order to destroy it, the Neo-Confucian scholar-officials did so in the hope of enacting it.

The attempt to civilize Chinese people and the narrative that was related to it are, of course, nothing new. They date back to Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.), who took pains to reorient a world in which “rituals are ruined and music destroyed” (li beng yue huai 禮崩樂壞), or Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824), who desperately attempted to “save Confucianism from its imminent annihilation by Taoism and Buddhism.” But it was not until the Song dynasty that the intellectuals that are now called Neo-Confucians took a more radical step. Neo-Confucian texts and practices that the imperial courts and scholar-officials promoted, such as Lü Dajun’s Community Compact, Zhu Xi’s Family Rituals, or orthodox rites to approach divinities as prescribed in the Ledger of Sacrifices, all aimed to civilize the Chinese people. Responding to Neo-Confucian emphasis on “correct” ways of performing rituals, the late imperial court was also more vigilant with regard to how the common people behaved than their ancestors had been. Although ritual manuals such as the Rituals of the Kaiyuan Era of the Tang and the New Forms for the Five Categories of Rites of the Zhenghe Era of the Northern Song included only a few ritual prescriptions for ordinary people, the Collected Statutes of the Great Ming prescribed systematic ritual formats for them.

During the Ming and Qing periods, an increasing number of scholar-officials practiced and ordered the practice of the Family Rituals and initiated community compacts to promote orthodox styles of social intercourse. Some of them, such as Ling Tingkan 涼廷堪 (1757–1809), even claimed that “The Way of the sages is only ritual propriety” and thus

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proposed to replace “principle” (li 理) with “ritual” (li).\footnote{Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China*, 191–197; Zhang Shou’an 張壽安, *Yì lì dài lì: Líng Tíngkān yu Qing zhòngyue sìxiàng zhì zhuanbian* 以禮代理: 淵廷堪與清代中葉儒學思想之轉變 (Replacing Principle with Ritual: Ling Tingkan and the Changes of Neo-Confucian Thought in the Mid-Qing) (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2001), 32–34.} If the expression “Ceremonial rules do not extend to the common people” was more or less the case in pre-Song society,\footnote{Mizoguchi Yūzō, “Lijiao yu geming Zhongguo” 禮教與革命中國 (Ritual Teaching and Revolutionary China), in *Xueren 學人*, vol. 10 (Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi chubanshe, 1996), 121–139.} it no longer held true after the Song, especially after the mid-Ming, because the common people became increasingly involved in and were expected to behave in accordance with li. The history of *lijiao chiren* that Lu Xun condemned began in the Song period, if not earlier, and *lijiao* had an increasingly strong presence among the peasantry perhaps only after the sixteenth century.\footnote{See Yang Zhigang, “‘Li xia shuren’ de lishi kaocha” 禮下庶人的歷史考察 (A Historical Investigation of the Extension of Ceremonial Rules to the Common People), *Shehui kexue zhexue* 社會科學戰線 6 (1994): 118–125; idem, *Zhongguo liyi zhidu yanjiu* 中國禮制學研究, 195–204. However, in an article dealing with the relationship between *lijiao* and modern Chinese revolution, Japanese scholar Mizoguchi Yūzō argues that the rise of *lijiao* started in the late Ming and not earlier. He relates this to the rise of Yangming thought (*Yangmingxue*), which was popular during this period. See Mizoguchi, “*Lijiao yu geming Zhongguo*” 礼教與革命中國, 121–139.} The increasing interest in ritual in the late imperial period is the result of commercialization and social transformations that began in the Song and accelerated in the sixteenth century. Although in the earlier periods scholar-officials could maintain their status on the basis of gentry culture that essentially was not open to commoners, doing so was made more difficult by changes in the post-Song period, particularly the commercialization of the economy and the blurring of social boundaries.\footnote{Robert Hymes and Hilary Beattie show the strategies that scholar-officials took to maintain their social status in respectively the Song and the Ming and Qing periods. See Robert P. Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen: The Elite of Fu-chou, Chiang-hsi, in Northern and Southern Sung* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Hilary Beattie, *Land and Lineage in China: A Study of T‘ung-ch‘eng County, Anhwei, in the Ming and Ch‘ing Dynasties* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).} Thus they had to find new ways of establishing their hold on society. “It was in this context,” as Timothy Brook points out, “that ritual was taken up as a way of redressing the decline of paternalism in social relations.” The scholar-officials, therefore, “looked to ritualized rules of conduct to bolster a world they feared was being lost.”\footnote{Brook, “Funerary Ritual and the Building of Lineages in Late Imperial China,” 470–471.}
However, ritual was used not only by scholar-officials to bolster their status. Newly emerging elites, especially those who benefited from commercialization, engaged in the same strategy to advance their own status and the welfare of their communities. In the contests for local power, it was considered “politically correct” and important for all these individuals and social groups to claim to have followed orthodox rituals, *li*. *Li* was less often imposed by the court than appropriated by local communities.

In light of the foregoing an explanation is still needed as to why Neo-Confucians, along with the imperial court, took an increasing interest in promoting carefully outlined orthodox rituals for commoners. It may be worth recalling that “statecraft” (*jingshi* 經世) was a core idea of Confucianism and that many Neo-Confucians attempted to reorder the world. It was especially true when the self-interest of Neo-Confucian scholar-officials coincided with that of the imperial court.

Starting in the Song, changes in political structure and the composition of political elites were the major incentive for developing new ways to maintain social order in what Edward L. Davis calls the “agrarian bureaucratic empire.” *Li*, which had been prescribed only for scholar-officials and above, was now prescribed for the common people in order to model more compliant and obedient son-subjects (*zimin* 子民). In the same vein, the increasing interest in ritual was closely related to the changing structure of the state in the late imperial period. Whatever the reasons behind these societal shifts, the Chinese people became increasingly involved in the practice of *li*, which was previously only for the elite. They were expected to follow these ritual prescriptions even though those rituals were often not performed as expected. In its breadth and influence, this process is comparable to what Norbert Elias calls the “civilizing process.”

This process of transformation of the Chinese people through *li* is everywhere and nowhere. More often than not, it existed between the lines and was thus elusive and difficult to pin down, often existing pri-
primarily at a formal level (at the stylistic or rhetorical level of recounting the narrative) rather than in its contents. In such cases, the form is itself the content. For example, in the genealogies of Sibao (the same can be said of similar sources from other areas), we often fail to find biographies that include messages about what people actually did and said in the past and how the society worked—the very concrete historical facts on which historical writing would seem to depend. What we find instead is that lineage genealogy biographies use stereotypes to tell identical stories, of how people spoke and acted in accordance with li. These stylistic similarities in how biographies were written and life histories were represented are among the most noteworthy characteristics of these texts and among the most important ways that the Neo-Confucian grand narrative was perpetuated.

Another kind of story whose form and content are similar is the biographies of scholar-officials who were disciples or followers of Neo-Confucianism. Not only did they practice Neo-Confucian rituals, but they also attempted to transform their fellow villagers or the population under their governance by destroying licentious cults, practicing the *Family Rituals*, initiating community compacts, or promoting orthodox cults. A biographer would often end a biography with the comment that “evil customs were transformed.” Thus in the biography of the Song Tingzhou prefect, Chen Ye, after Chen tore down licentious temples in Ninghua, “the prevalent customs changed dramatically.” Similarly, it is reported that after Guangdong Assistant Education Intendant (ti xue fu shi 提學副使) Wei Xiao 魏校 (1483–1543) ordered that Buddhist and licentious temples be torn down or converted into academies and public offices in 1522, “spirit-mediums and ghosts were eliminated” (wu gui dun ge 巫鬼頓革) and “customs were thus transformed” (fengsu wei zhi pi bian 風俗為之丕變). It is this kind of account/content of the Neo-Confucian grand narrative that Lu Xun critiques.

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15 *LTZ*, cited in *YLDD*, 7894/lb.

16 Ke Dawei (David Faure), "Ming Jiajing chunjian Guangdong tixue Wei Xiao hui ‘yinci’ zhi qianyin houguo ji qi dui Zhujiang sanjiaozhou de yingxiang" 明嘉靖初年廣東提學魏校毀淫祠之前因後果及其對珠江三角洲的影響 (Reasons for and Effects of Guangdong Assistant Education Intendent Wei Xiao’s Movement to Tear Down ‘Licentious Temples’ in the Early Jiajing Era in the Ming and Its Influence Upon the Pearl River Delta), in Zhou, ed., *Diyu shehui yu chuantong Zhongguo*, 129. For more examples, see Brook, “Funerary Ritual and the Building of Lineages in Late Imperial China,” 469.
Instead of seeing late imperial culture principally in terms of cultural homogenization, this book suggests that what occurred should more properly be understood as cultural hybridization.\textsuperscript{17} The main characteristic of this process is not how cultural, and often local, traditions were suppressed by another cultural tradition—whether it was Neo-Confucianism or Daoist religion—but how elements from different ritual traditions were incorporated or synthesized into a new, constantly changing, and not necessarily coherent cultural mosaic. Gentrification and cultural integration represent two important aspects of this process, although neither comprises the full range of complexity involved, and both imply that the process is bilayered and unidirectional.

To address the interplay between cultural traditions more fully, I propose to replace these approaches with the term “cultural hybridization” to describe a process that is, to quote French historian Jean-Claude Schmitt, “multipolar (and not dual), interactional (and not subordinate to univocal currents), and attentive to both mediations and mediators.”\textsuperscript{18} Cultural hybridization is not bipolar but “multipolar,” involving not only high and low cultures, but court rituals, Neo-Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoist religion, and other cultural corpuses considered “local” or “indigenous.” Rather than imply that each of these cultures was itself a coherent system, this term allows that they could be dissonant and even contradictory.

The process of cultural hybridization in Sibao began before Tingzhou was incorporated into the Chinese empire. Chinese colonization of South China almost universally involved an encounter of different cultures, and this encounter facilitated cultural hybridization. The introduction of different schools of Daoist religion, as Michel Strickmann points out, may also have provided a rare opportunity for local residents to familiarize

\textsuperscript{17} “Hybridity” as a conceptual tool is used by Homi K. Bhabha and Robert J.C. Young to describe the creative and destabilizing situation of postcolonial culture. See Bhabha, \textit{The Location of Culture} (New York: Routledge, 1994); Young, \textit{Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race} (New York: Routledge, 1994). I think that this concept can also be utilized to analyze local cultures in late imperial China. However, anticipating the objection that the term “hybridity” may imply a static “thing,” I replace it with the term “hybridization” in order to emphasize the sense of fluidity, flexibility, and ongoing transformation, which is the nature of the major cultural processes explored in this book.

themselves with orthodox and not-so-orthodox Chinese religious culture before the Ming period. However, the pace of cultural hybridization did not accelerate until the Ming and Qing dynasties. The establishment of more direct political and military control over Tingzhou, the more radical steps taken to “civilize” local residents, and the increasingly commercialized economy all facilitated the encounters between Sibao cultural traditions and other regional and transregional cultures. The discussion here identifies three sites of the most important encounters: the ancestral cult, the community compact, and deity worship in Sibao during the Ming and the Qing. All these encounters were related to \( li \), in that each negotiated the proper ways to worship one’s ancestors, to communicate with gods, or to behave in different social circumstances. This study shows how cultural hybridization took place in these three fields.

The new ways of worshipping ancestors were introduced in the process of lineage building, which can be divided into three waves. First, starting in the mid-fifteenth century, a few Neo-Confucian scholar-officials began to build lineage organizations in Sibao through the compilation of genealogies and the erection of ancestral halls. They were followed by a second wave of low officials, government students, and local elites without degrees and titles from the end of the sixteenth century to the seventeenth century, who continued their program of lineage building. The third wave of lineage building did not come until the end of the eighteenth century, when a group of small descent groups eventually built their ancestral halls and had their genealogies compiled. During this process, new ways of performing ancestral rites were introduced and local society was greatly transformed.

But lineage building also had its limits. Although by the end of the eighteenth century, ancestral halls were erected by almost every descent group in Sibao, the lineage was perceived in ways different from those intended by Neo-Confucian officials. The establishment of ancestral halls and the sequestering of corporate land, for example, implied the consideration of the welfare of one’s own small group rather than that of the overall kinship organization. While Neo-Confucian officials emphasized going beyond one’s immediate kinsmen and taking a more inclusive definition of the kinship group, sometimes even government students failed to follow these practices.

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19 Strickmann, “The Tao Amongst the Yao.”
If the history of lineage building in Sibao indicates the limits of a Neo-Confucian “civilizing” program, the history of the Shangbao community compact shows how far a Neo-Confucian device had moved from the conception of its original designers and initiators. As an important Neo-Confucian institution, the community compact was designed to promote desirable ethics and morality among Chinese peasants. Established in the late sixteenth or the early seventeenth century when social order was in flux, the Shangbao compact was transformed into a *de facto* village alliance that played an important role in the maintenance of the local irrigation system, the sponsoring of religious festivals, the organization of local defense, and the opening of new markets. It had taken a form far different from one that conceived by its initiators. This was a case in which a Neo-Confucian program was appropriated by a rural population to serve its own purposes.

The cult of local deities shows the complexity of the relationship between different cultures to the greatest extent. Local deities in late imperial Sibao were related to different religious traditions and had different historical agendas. Through careful examination, we can still find traces of their earlier forms before they were recoded by Neo-Confucian scholar-officials or the imperial court. Zougong, the first of the three layers of local deities in Sibao, was probably a ritual master who was later transformed into a local deity. In this altered form, he became the most important patron god in Sibao. Shegong was introduced before the Ming but was regulated and standardized in the early Ming, leading to considerable symbolic conflict and distortion at the local level. Guandi and Tianhou represented the gods introduced in the late imperial period and were closely related to village identity and commerce respectively. The development of local deities suggests that the cultural process did not take the form of replacement and suppression. Rather, more often than not, new elements were added to earlier elements while earlier elements were modified.

Nor did the new ways of performing rituals and organizing society replace the old ones. The cultural process in late imperial Sibao suggests that it was not a zero-sum game in which the rise of one institution meant the decline of another. Rather, they made up a complex process in which both were interlinked and transformed. The development of ancestral halls took place at the same time as the growth in temple networks. Zougong maintained his status as a god, but he also became an ancestor. Moreover, *lisheng* performed rituals dedicated not only to ancestors but
also to different kinds of local deities, and they often did so along with Buddhist and Daoist ritual specialists.

Another aspect of cultural hybridization must also be underscored: the necessity of addressing the late imperial cultural process as the interaction of cultures, rather than that of a one-way transformation. Rather than focusing on the “center” of culture, this study emphasizes the importance of considering marginality and boundaries: boundary making and boundary crossing. This approach leads us to consider mediation and mediators. Cultural hybridization takes place only in interactions and through mediators: It is at the level of mediations and mediators, that elements of different cultural traditions become a more or less meaningfully coherent, if ever-changing whole.

Therefore, this book is a study of cultural mediation and mediators. The discussion concerns, on the one hand, how rituals mediated social and cultural transformations but at the same time this means of mediation was transformed when it was introduced into a rural world in the late imperial period, and, on the other hand, how cultural mediators—lineage founders, genealogy compilers, the managers of community compacts, temple builders, and lisheng—were created when they introduced new ritual elements. In the process of mediation, new ritual elements, such as new ways of practicing ancestor worship, direct contact with the words of the emperors, and “correct” ways of approaching divinity, were added to a ritual corpus composed of other ritual traditions, such as utilitarian modes of ancestor worship and “unorthodox” representations of imperial symbols. In other words, mediation comprised the process of cultural hybridization, which took place nowhere other than the syncretic field of Chinese culture. Lineage organizations, community compacts, and territorial cults were integrally connected and constituted meaningful entities in this field. The interactions between different religious traditions and the interplay between different social factors both shaped the field and

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21 I have in mind what Fredrik Barth calls the “construction”: “read as a verb, not as a substantive”—of cultural knowledge (Balinese Worlds [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993], 7).
were shaped by it. In this sense, cultural hybridization can be properly seen as a function of this field.

Moreover, mediators were the products of cultural hybridization, as seen in the ritual corpuses they drew upon and performed. Although different from other ritual specialists, *lisheng* performed rituals that were closely related to those of Daoist priests. *Lisheng cum* national university students recurred in different contexts. Often they performed the rites of sacrifice along with ritual specialists from other ritual traditions, such as Daoist priests and Buddhist monks. The fact that *lisheng* became the embodiment of cultural hybridization is not surprising. In a country without a central and transregional ecclesiastical institution to “rule on the interpretation of canonical texts, to enforce adherence to Confucian liturgical schedules, or to provide trained experts to officiate,” it is no wonder that the government students and national university students that comprised *lisheng*, who lacked much training in or deep understanding of Neo-Confucianism, showed great interest both in Neo-Confucian rituals and those of other religious traditions and took a syncretic rather than a purist or fundamentalist approach to Chinese religious culture. In this sense, they interpreted Confucianism in very much the same way as the miller Menocchio, the protagonist of Carlo Ginzburg’s classic *The Cheese and the Worms*, interpreted Christian doctrine, who mixed ancient agrarian magic with contemporary Reformation elements.

The study of *lisheng*, their rituals, and their history in a local context, therefore, provides a rare opportunity for deconstructing the Confucian Grand Narrative and deepening our understanding of cultural transformation in late imperial China. The penetration of Confucian rituals and morality in late imperial period does not recount how official culture conquered and eliminated local culture. Rather, its message is of how different cultural traditions interacted with and were cross-fertilized by other cultural traditions. The relationship between official culture and other cultural traditions destabilized, and the boundary between them blurred to the point that “small voices” from such social strata as *lisheng* were heard and the Confucian Grand Narrative lost its pre-eminence.

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22 This point has by now become a sinological truism. See, for example, Ebrey, *Confucianism and Family Ritual in Imperial China*, 7.
APPENDICES
### APPENDIX ONE

**JINSHI (METROPOLITAN GRADUATES) IN LATE IMPERIAL TINGZHOU**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Chang-</th>
<th>Shang-</th>
<th>Yong-</th>
<th>Wu-</th>
<th>Lian-</th>
<th>Ning-</th>
<th>Qing-</th>
<th>Gui-</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>ting</td>
<td>hang</td>
<td>ding</td>
<td>ping</td>
<td>cheng</td>
<td>huang</td>
<td>liu</td>
<td>hua</td>
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<td>1719–1768</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1769–1818</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
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*Source: Zhu Baojiong 朱保炯 and Xie Pelin 謝沛霖, eds., *Ming-Qing jinshi timing beilu suoyin* 明清進士題名碑錄索引 (Index to Ming-Qing Stele Lists of Metropolitan Degree Holders) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1980).*
### APPENDIX TWO

**LISHENG AND THE RITUALS PERFORMED BY THEM IN TINGZHOU**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Dates (lunar calendar)</th>
<th>Rituals performed</th>
<th>Numbers of lisheng</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>9/16</td>
<td>Offering sacrifices to ancestor</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Zhang Hongxiang 1997: 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tingzhou city</td>
<td>Spring and fall</td>
<td>Offering sacrifices to Confucius</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Zhang Hongxiang 2003: 233–236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tingzhou city</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>Offering sacrifices to the head and tail of dragon boat</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Zhang Hongxiang 2003: 325–326</td>
</tr>
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<td>Tingdong, Changting</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Pilgrimage</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Zhang Chunrong 2002: 216–217</td>
</tr>
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<td>Xinqiao, Changting</td>
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<td>God procession</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Li Zhixuan 2002: 274–275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongfang, Changting</td>
<td>8/13</td>
<td>Pilgrimage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lai Jian 2002: 306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongfang, Changting</td>
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<td>God procession</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Lai Jian 2002: 311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanzhou, Changting</td>
<td>1/15; 6/15</td>
<td>Temple fair</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Zhang Laihe 2002: 439</td>
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<td>jiao festival</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Zhong Jinlan 2002: 683</td>
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<td>jiao festival</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lai Jian 2002: 763–764; 766</td>
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<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Lai Jian 2002: 767</td>
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<td>Tong Jingen 1997: 215</td>
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<td>“Bohuan” ritual performed in a village temple</td>
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<td>Jiang Chunfu and Chen Lizhong 1997: 373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liukeng, Qingliu</td>
<td>Qingming festival</td>
<td>Offering sacrifices to ancestors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tong Jingen 1998: 237–238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places</td>
<td>Dates (lunar calendar)</td>
<td>Rituals performed</td>
<td>Numbers of lisheng</td>
<td>Sources</td>
</tr>
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<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Changxiao,</td>
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<td>Offering sacrifices to ancestors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Li Shengbao 1998: 282–283</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qingliu</td>
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<td>Offering sacrifices to ancestors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Huang Yuwan 1998: 309</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qingliu</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Peitian,</td>
<td>2/2</td>
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<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Yang Yanjie 1996: 258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liancheng</td>
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<td>Offering sacrifices to ancestors</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ma Chuanyong 1997: 320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gutian,</td>
<td>1/15</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Hua Qinjin 1997: 123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liancheng</td>
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<td>Gutian,</td>
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<td>Offering sacrifices to patron god</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hua Qinjin 1997: 131</td>
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<td>Wedding</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Yi Qilie et al. 2005: 335</td>
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<td>Funeral</td>
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<td>Yi Qilie et al. 2005: 343–344</td>
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<td>4–5</td>
<td>Huang Chengli 2005: 696</td>
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<td>Jiuzhaitang,</td>
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<td>Liao Shiyao 2005: 733–734</td>
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<td>Xiangcun, Wuping</td>
<td>Qingming festival</td>
<td>Offering sacrifices to ancestors</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Liu Dake and Liu Wenbo 1997: 275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiangcun,</td>
<td></td>
<td>Funeral</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Liu Dake and Liu Wenbo 1997: 295</td>
</tr>
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<td>Wuping,</td>
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<td>Yanqian,</td>
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<td>Temple fair</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Li Tansheng and Lin Shanke 1998: 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuping,</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Wuping,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laixi, Shanghang</td>
<td>Chongyang festival</td>
<td>God procession</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Lin Fengnian 1998: 140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County seat,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mingxi (Guilhua)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Offering sacrifices to patron god</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Lin Huadong 2000: 107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chendong,</td>
<td>4/7–9</td>
<td>jiao festival</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Tu Xiangsheng and Lu Zhenfu 1998: 19–21</td>
</tr>
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<td>Yongding,</td>
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### APPENDIX THREE

**FIFTY SIBAO *JIWENBEN* (I): BASIC FACTS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Village</th>
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<th>Producer</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Other important information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0101</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
<td>Zou Qunwen/Lisheng</td>
<td>Zou Zhongmei</td>
<td>Late Qing</td>
<td>“Wuge Yuying shushi Zou Zhongmei chao <em>jiwen guanyi</em>” 霧閣育英書室鄭種梅抄祭文廣集 inscribed on the cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0102</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
<td>Zou Qunwen/Lisheng</td>
<td>Unknown/Jiansheng</td>
<td>Late Qing</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0103</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
<td>Zou Hengyan/Teacher/Lisheng</td>
<td>Zou Guoguang/Teacher</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>“Jiwenben” inscribed on the cover, it was produced when Zou Guoguang graduated from primary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0104</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
<td>Zou Shanbao/Lisheng</td>
<td>Zou Lianhui/Lisheng</td>
<td>Guangxu Era</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0105</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
<td>Zou Hongming/Lisheng</td>
<td>Zou Jincheng</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>“Bianyong jiwen” 便用祭文 inscribed on the cover, Jincheng was Hongming's grandfather</td>
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<td>0106</td>
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<td>Zou Jincheng</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
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<td>0107</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
<td>Zou Dongsheng</td>
<td>Zou Xinjin/Jiansheng</td>
<td>Late Qing</td>
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<tr>
<td>0108</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
<td>Zou Shenghua</td>
<td>Zou Weijian/Jiansheng</td>
<td>Late Qing</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0109</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
<td>Zou Qingqing/Zou Hongkang/Lisheng</td>
<td>Zou Weizhu</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>“Jiwen xuani” 祭文選集 inscribed on the photocopy of it</td>
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<tr>
<td>0110</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
<td>Zou Hongtao/Lisheng</td>
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<td>Reproduced based on the <em>jiwenben of Zou Chunbiao</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>0111</td>
<td>Wuge</td>
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<td>“Jiwenben” inscribed on the cover. Reproduced from the <em>jiwenben of Zou Hongtao</em> based on Zou Chuntai’s copy</td>
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<td>Producer</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Other important information</td>
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Sources: Fifty jiwenben collected in Sibao.
## APPENDIX FOUR

**FIFTY SIBAO JIWENBEN (II): BREAKDOWN OF CONTENTS**

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### APPENDIX FOUR

(Cont.)

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*Note: The table does not include jiwenben 0402 because it is not produced in Sibao.*
APPENDIX FIVE

FIVE PROHIBITIONS OF THE SHANGBAO COMPACT

A. Prohibition Pact concerning Chicken and Ducks

With reference to stealing and also to letting chicken and ducks go their own way (fangzong ji ya 放縱鶏鴨), the compact head of such-and-such group of the Shangbao compact and others promulgates this prohibition. Be it known that now is the time when autumn is coming to an end, and when rice is ripening and yam, ginger, and taro are going to be harvested. The harvest can be guaranteed only when [they] are protected properly. Recently, there are a class of thieves and a group of those who are greedy for gain. [They] do not know the hardship and difficulty of ploughing and sowing, stealing yam, ginger, and taro at night and letting chickens and ducks have their own way to devour rice. [This] is utterly detestable. This severe prohibition is promulgated and everybody should be cautious. If one is caught stealing yam, ginger, and taro, his house will be pulled down. If chicken and ducks are caught devouring rice in the fields, braves (yiyong 義勇) will kill the [chicken and] ducks. [We] will never be lenient. Let this special notice be known in advance.

1. It is prohibited to lead a buffalo along field ridges, and those who are found doing so will be fined a certain amount of cash;
2. If [one] insists on redeeming his captured ducks, [he has to] pay a certain amount of cash as a fine for each duck;
3. It is prohibited to steal straw. Those who do so will be fined a certain amount of cash for each bundle of hay. Those who steal at night will be fined a certain amount of cash;
4. It is prohibited to steal by cutting ripened rice and those who are caught will be severely punished by pulling down their house;
5. It is prohibited to steal by cutting maize and those who are caught will be fined a certain amount of money;
6. It is prohibited to waylay and steal buffalo and those who are caught will be severely punished by pulling down their house.
B. Prohibition Pact

With reference to prohibiting robbers and bandits, and allowing commoners to be contented with their businesses and to keeping the area quiet, the Shangbao compact lay forth this prohibition pact. It is said that if bandits are not purged, an area will have no means to become beautiful; if robbers are not exterminated, commoners will not be contented with their businesses. The prevailing customs of our Shangbao are good and honest. Everybody is content with his business and no one dares to transgress the law. [However,] there is the fear that if the compact rules relax slightly, robbers and bandits will rise again. It is on this ground that the whole compact decided to set up prohibitions after discussion. After the prohibition [is promulgated], every one should reform thoroughly, conduct legitimate business (zhengye 正業), and become good commoners of this prosperous age. Make sure not to violate the prohibition. If [you] internally keep intact a greedy and dirty heart and externally insist on robbery and banditry, once caught, if [your case is] severe, [we] will bring [you] to the yamen to be investigated and punished accordingly, or, if [your case is] light, will punish you severely in accordance with the village [prohibitions]. [We] will never be lenient. Of all the members of the compact must adhere to the following: the father should admonish his sons, and the elder brother should admonish their younger brothers. Admonition should be given to each other so that the village prohibition (xiangjin 鄉禁) will not be violated. Let this notice be widely known.

C. Prohibition Concerning Rice in the Fields

With reference to the prohibition concerning rice in the fields, such-and-such of the Shangbao compact and others draft this prohibition. We have thought that the state regards agriculture as the basis and commoners see foodstuff as Heaven. Therefore, all year long [people] work hard to cultivate in a timely fashion, plant rice seedlings, pay taxes to the court, and support parents, wives, and children. [This is because] the lives of the whole family rely upon [rice]. Recently there are fellows who have no sense of shame. They do not know the hardship and difficulty of ploughing and sowing, and only care about having their private desires satisfied. [They] either let [their] buffalo and goats go their own ways to trample, or let [their] chicken and geese go their own way to devour [rice], to the point that everywhere there is waste land and the sorrowful sight can be
found whenever [you] raise your eyes. Now [we] assemble villagers, smear the blood of a sacrifice on the mouth, and prohibit all of these. All residents and others should be understanding and comply with [the prohibition]. Every household should strengthen their fences and fasten their pens, and stop these malpractices. The people who have entered into the covenant (?) will take turns to watch day and night, one by one. No matter whose field it is, whenever buffaloes, goats, chicken, and geese are found trampling and devouring rice, they will be caught right away, and a gathering will be held and compensation be paid. If there is one who refuses to obey by show of force, [the case will be] assuredly reported to the government. Those who screen the fault and do not report will be punished jointly. [This prohibition is meant to] prevent things from creating harm and to let people be contented with their business; to make sure taxes have a means to be paid, and the mouths of [each] household have something to feed. [For this reason] the special prohibition [is promulgated].

D. Prohibition Pact

The surnames of Shangbao compact, Sibao li, Changting County, promulgate this severe prohibition to standardize customs. We have thought that a community’s setting up of prohibitions is not originally a private action. When events have clear evidence, the law will not allow private pardon. Furthermore, if the strong rely on his powerful position and acts in an overbearing manner, and the weak keeps his mouth shut and shrinks, or if faults are screened because of favoritism, or partial treatment is given because of being greedy for gain, prohibitions will be ruined and customs will be depraved. Men and beast will create countless troubles simultaneously. If this evil is not corrected, how will it be stopped? Now a wine banquet is held and everybody is gathered; prohibitions are drafted to prevent [the evil] from being continued. Those who violate them will be brought to the compact office publicly. Fines will be imposed upon those who do minor harm, and severe punishment be given to those who make serious harm. If [they] insist on refusing to obey, [they] will be surely brought to the yamen to be investigated and punished accordingly. Those who are in charge of disciplinary investigation should not practice favoritism nor accept bribes to let [wrong-doers] go. [They] are also not allowed to bully the good and fear the wicked and implicate [others] to carry out their selfish plans. If [they] are found to be involved in these cases, [they] will share the same crime [as those who do evil]. All those who have entered
into our compact should be of absolute public-spirited and free from selfishness, so that fellow villagers will not be hurt and customs will be pure and honest hereafter.

E. Prohibition Pact

With reference to promulgating prohibition to eliminate robbers and bandits, and to quiet the area’s affairs, the such-and-such character group of Shangbao compact and others draft this prohibition. Formerly, when he governed the Zheng 鄭, Taishu 太叔 did not follow the suggestion of taking serious action (menglie zhi yan 猛烈之言) of Zichan 子産.1 As a result, many bandits rose in Huanfu 蘆苻. This is because the way [of eliminating bandits] lies in severity rather than leniency. For the past several decades, because the prohibitions were strict, those who transgressed the law have been gradually put a stop to in our community. If orthodoxy (shijiao 世教) declines and commoners will not behave in accord with it, it is feared that when prohibitions relax a little, the people who know small tricks will again appear repeatedly. Therefore, the whole compact met and discussed and drafted the severe prohibition. If there is one who cares for nobody else and violates the prohibition pact, he will be punished severely and no pardon will be granted to him, no matter whether what he has done be a severe crime, such as stealing at night or robbery, or whether it be any kind of minor theft. All of you ruffians should reform thoroughly and do not bring sorrow to yourself (zi yi yi qi 自貽伊戚). In this way, the customs will be pure and refined and [we] can sit and enjoy peace and tranquility, and the pure customs of the former age are not impossible to be seen in the present. Let this special notice be known in advance.


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1 For details see Kong Yingda 孔穎達, Chunqiu Zuo zhuang zhengyi 春秋左傳正義 (Shisanjing zhushu edition), 49/392–393, “Zhaogong ershi nian” 昭公二十年.
APPENDIX SIX

VILLAGES AND SURNAMES IN SIBAO

A=Changting; B=Qingliu; C=Liancheng; D=Ninghua

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages</th>
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<th>Surnames</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Surnames</th>
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<td>Dapu</td>
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<td>Xiayangbei 下洋背</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Lin 林</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songfang</td>
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<td>Linwu 林屋</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Lin 林</td>
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<td>Shexia 社下</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Yang 楊</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>Zhenbian 龙足乡</td>
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<td>Dapingtou 大坪頭</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Zou 鄒</td>
</tr>
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<td>Pengfang</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Peng 彭; Wei 魏</td>
<td>Huangkeng 黃坑</td>
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<td>Shuangjing 雙井</td>
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<td>Xiaxie 下謝</td>
<td>B Xie 謝</td>
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<td>B Xie 謝</td>
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<td>Liukeng 劉坑</td>
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<td>Hengkeng 橫坑</td>
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<td>C ?</td>
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<td>Dakengyuan 大坑源</td>
<td>C Zou 鄒</td>
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<td>Zhubeiling 助背嶺</td>
<td>D ?</td>
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</table>

**Source:** CTXZ (1879 edition), 2/3a–3b; QLXZ (1829 edition), 36; the author's field notes.

**Notes:**

(a) Jingtou is usually written as Jiantou.
(b) This Huangkeng (Changting) should not be confused with the Huangkeng (Qingliu) mentioned below.
(c) Nanchakeng is usually known as Nanchaikeng.
(d) Shankeng 山坑 is now usually written as Shankeng 珊坑.
(e) Longzuxiang is another name of Wuge.
(f) Datiankeng is usually known as Daliankeng 大連坑.
### APPENDIX SEVEN

### TEMPLES AND GODS IN THE SIBAO BASIN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temple name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Gods</th>
<th>Date of construction</th>
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<td>Zougong Temple</td>
<td>Shangbao</td>
<td>Zougong</td>
<td>1341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guandi Temple*</td>
<td>Shangbao</td>
<td>Guandi, Guan Ping, Zhou Cang</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altar of the Soil</td>
<td>Shangbao</td>
<td>God of the Soil (shegong)</td>
<td>1841</td>
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<td>God of the Soil</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tianhou Temple</td>
<td>Shangbao</td>
<td>Tianhou</td>
<td>1844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altar of Orphan Souls</td>
<td>Shangbao</td>
<td>Orphan Souls (li)</td>
<td>1872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guandi Temple*</td>
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<td>?</td>
</tr>
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<td>Laixian Temple</td>
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<td>Bogong Convent</td>
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<td>Shangbao</td>
<td>Wugu zhengxian</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td>Shangbao</td>
<td>Orphan Souls</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altar of Orphan Souls*</td>
<td>Shangbao</td>
<td>Orphan Souls</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wugong Temple</td>
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<td>1827</td>
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<td>Hekeng</td>
<td>Shijia, Guanyin, Yaowang pusa, Mile, Weituo, Hufa, Wugu</td>
<td>Ming Period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taibao Temple</td>
<td>Hekeng</td>
<td>Li taibao 李太保, Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝, Tudi gong</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furen Temple</td>
<td>Hekeng</td>
<td>Chen furen 陳夫人, Lin furen 林夫人, Lifuren 李夫人</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altar of the Soil</td>
<td>Hekeng</td>
<td>God of the Soil</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td>Hekeng</td>
<td>God of the Soil</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altar of Orphan Souls</td>
<td>Hekeng</td>
<td>Orphan Souls</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altar of Orphan Souls*</td>
<td>Hekeng</td>
<td>Orphan Souls</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiaogong Temple</td>
<td>Dongshan</td>
<td>Xiaogong</td>
<td>1406?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baiyun Temple</td>
<td>Dongshan</td>
<td>Sanbao, Guanyin, Jixiangzi 吉祥子, Tudi</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuguxian Temple</td>
<td>Dongshan</td>
<td>Wugu zhenxian</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altar of the Soil*</td>
<td>Dongshan</td>
<td>God of the Soil</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Gods</td>
<td>Date of construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Dongshan</td>
<td>Orphan Souls</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuzhen Hall</td>
<td>Huangshikeng</td>
<td>Ouyang zhenxian, Luo xiangong, Lai xiangong, Zhenwu zushi</td>
<td>1474?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zougong Temple</td>
<td>Huangshikeng</td>
<td>Zougong</td>
<td>1639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altar of Orphan Souls</td>
<td>Huangshikeng</td>
<td>Orphan Souls</td>
<td>1801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wugu Temple</td>
<td>Huangshikeng</td>
<td>Wugu zhenxian</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Huangshikeng</td>
<td>God of the Soil</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogong Altar</td>
<td>Huangshikeng</td>
<td>Bogong</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dingkeng</td>
<td>Fuwei 富尾</td>
<td>Guanyin, Wugu, Ouyang zhenxian</td>
<td>Late Qing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convent 碓坑庵</td>
<td>Fuwei</td>
<td>Minzhu zunwang</td>
<td>1980s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zougong Temple</td>
<td>Fuwei</td>
<td>Zougong, Chen furen, Li furen</td>
<td>1991</td>
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<td>Zougong Temple</td>
<td>Jixia 岚下</td>
<td>Zougong</td>
<td>Early Republcan Period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wugu Temple</td>
<td>Jixia</td>
<td>Wugu zhenxian</td>
<td>1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altar of the Soil</td>
<td>Jixia</td>
<td>God of the Soil</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Based on the author's fieldwork.

*Note:* The symbol * means the temples, altars, and shrines that do not exist any longer.
## APPENDIX EIGHT

### GODS AND TEXTS DEDICATED TO THEM IN THREE SIBAO JIWENBEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manual number</th>
<th>Gods</th>
<th>Number of texts dedicated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manual 0102</td>
<td>Zougong 鄒公</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tianhou 天后</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guandi 關帝</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shegong 社公</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yushi 雨師</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sanjiang gongwang 三將公王</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Li 厲 (a)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kuixing 魁星</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zhao dayuanshuai 趙大元帥</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jingshen 井神</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wenchang dijun 文昌帝君</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wugu xian 五穀仙</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guanyin pusa 觀音菩薩</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Menshen 門神</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zaoshen 灶神</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shuikou zunshen 水口尊神</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unspecified gods</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual 0103</td>
<td>Guansheng dijun/Guandi 關聖帝君 (b)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tianhou</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zougong</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sheji/Shegong/Tudigong 社稷/土地公</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wenchang</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zaojun/Zaoshen 灶君</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Longshen 龍神 (c)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Menshen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dakui 大魁 (d)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guanyin dashi 觀音大士 (e)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fohu 佛虎 (f)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Xuandi 玄帝 (g)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HouTu 后土</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jingshen</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qiaoshen 橋神</td>
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<td>Li</td>
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<td></td>
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<th>Number of texts dedicated</th>
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<tr>
<td>Manual 0401</td>
<td>Guandi</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shegong/Tudi/Bogong 伯公</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guangyou shengwang 廣佑聖王 (h)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Houfu</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tianhou</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Xuandi</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Longshen</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lai xiangong 賴仙公</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wenchang dijun</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zhu Fuzi 朱夫子 (i)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guanyin dashi</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unspecified gods</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>77</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Manual 0102 (Manuscript, Wuge), Manual 0103 (Manuscript, Wuge), Manual 0401 (Manuscript, Shangbao).

Notes:
(a) Li is included here because it is addressed in the text as the "reverent god of the altar of orphan souls" (litan zunshen).
(b) I have included texts dedicated to the three immediate ancestors of Guandi.
(c) Longshen is different from Longwang (Master Dragon). He is the god of the dragon vein (longmai) of a mountain.
(d) Dakui is another name of Kuixing.
(e) Guanyin dashi is another name of Guanyin or Guanyin pusa.
(f) Fohu should have been Fuhu 伏虎.
(g) Xuandi is a simplified name of Xuantian shangdi.
(h) Guangyou shengwang is the state-granted title of Zougong.
(i) Zhu fuzi is Zhu Xi.
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Stele of the li altar. 1876. Yijiafang.
Stele of the li altar. 1885. Jiangfang.
Stele of the li altar. 1929. Yunfeng.
Stele of the li altar. 1939. Mawu.
Stele of the li altar. 1946. Shankeng.
Stele of the li altar. N. D. Xikeng.
Stele of the she altar. 1841. Shangbao.
Stele of the she altar. ca. 1874. Yanwu.
Stele of the sheji altar. Late 15th century. Mawu.
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——. See also Chu Hung-lam.


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