Neither Dust nor Gold:
A Comprehensive Study of the Dadao School from 1115-1398

by

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ABSTRACT

During the twelfth century, three new schools of Daoism were founded in North China: Quanzhen (Complete Perfection), Taiyi (Supreme Unity), and Dadao (Great Way). While Quanzhen has received much scholarly attention, the others have been largely ignored. By focusing on just one school—Dadao—as in depth as possible and within the historical context, I hope to elucidate the flourishing state of Daoism in North China during the twelfth through fourteenth centuries beyond just the activity of the Quanzhen school. To that end, I have amassed sixteen inscriptions and records, as well as reconstructed one inscription previously incomplete, and added them to the eleven inscriptions and records published in the Daojia jinshi lüe and the three pieces of Yuan-dynasty poetry and prose contained in the Nan Song chu Hebei xin Daojiao kao. This has doubled the available source material. Most of these have been previously published individually, but have never been studied in conjunction with the other known Dadao texts. The result is the most comprehensive study of the school in over seventy-five years, in which I also present a new understanding of the school’s founder, how the lineages developed, and the school’s ultimate fate. The portrait of the school which emerges from this dissertation challenges the notion that Dadao was nothing more than a minor variation of the Quanzhen school or is otherwise unworthy of scholarly attention.
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INTRODUCTION

When I originally conceived of this dissertation, it was a comparative study of the origins, practices, and early history of the three Northern schools that were founded during the Jurchen Jin dynasty (1115-1234): Taiyi, Dadao, and Quanzhen. I was particularly interested in the historical circumstances that lead to three schools of Daoism being started in such proximity to each other, both geographically and chronologically.¹ What was going on in North China that drew people to Daoist ideas and practices, but not to any existing school? As I began my research, I quickly realized how little information there was on the Taiyi and Dadao schools, especially in Western languages, and resolved to bridge the gap. My project then shifted to current form. By focusing on just one school--Dadao--as in depth as possible and within the historical context, I hope to elucidate the flourishing state of Daoism in North China during the twelfth through fourteenth centuries beyond just the activity of the Quanzhen school. More broadly, I also seek to examine how Chinese religions, specifically Daoism, respond to times of political and social turmoil, which North China during the twelfth through fourteenth centuries experienced in abundance.

The venerable Chinese scholar Chen Yuan (陳垣, 1880-1971) produced the first study on Dadao in 1941 in his seminal work, Nan Song chu Hebei xin Daojiao kao (南宋初河北新道敎考).

¹ The Taiyi school was founded first in 1138 by Xiao Baozhen in Henan. Dadao was founded next in 1142 by Liu Deren in Hebei, and finally Wang Chongyang began attracting disciples in the early 1160s in southern Shaanxi before proselytizing in Shandong.
Chen’s work is systematic, focusing first on establishing the reliability of the few surviving sources by carefully comparing stele inscriptions with handed-down texts such as Song Lian’s *Record of Events in the Life of the Perfected Liu* (*Shu Liu zhenren shi*, 書劉真人事) and the *Yuan History*, before trying to fit them together in a narrative. He also includes Yuan-dynasty poetry and prose that relates to the school, such as works from Wang Yun, Yu Ji, and Na Yan. Chen Yuan was the first to gather the surviving primary source materials on Dadao and it is a testament to his thoroughness that no additional materials were discovered for some thirty years. He established the basic timeline, identified major figures and institutions in the school’s history, and suggested its basic doctrinal framework. Chen believed that Dadao was originally a Buddho-Daoist movement whose monastics begged for alms like Buddhists, which later developed into a more elite, purely Daoist entity. These claims will be considered in Chapter Three. Chen is also unique in his assertion that the Dadao temples functioned as quasi-legal local courts, with the senior members of the temple judging local conflicts in the temple halls. Chen believed the practice began at the end of the Jin when the civil government was in disarray. This is a fascinating speculation, but his evidence is based on an odd reading of the twelfth Tianbao patriarch’s hagiography.

Chen Yuan’s grandson, Chen Zhichao 陳智超, carried on his grandfather’s study of the Dadao school in three works, the most significant of which is “A Supplement to the History of the Zhen dadao school during the Jin and Yuan 金元真大道教史补” published in *Historical Research of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences* 中国社会科

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The work of the two Chens, as well as Qing Xitai’s history (discussed below), form the core for all scholarship, Western and Eastern, until the present. Divided into seven sections, the younger Chen’s work covers the school’s founding, patriarchate including the lineage split, government relations, spread and its network of temples, organizational structure, relations with Confucians, Buddhists and other schools of Daoism, and finally its decline. Chen Zhichao’s major contribution to the field is often considered to be the revelation of the lineage split, but his research on Dadao temple networks and organizational structure was also novel and has yet to be surpassed. He provides additional evidence that Zhang Qingzhi was the twelfth patriarch, not the ninth as some inscriptions claim. His grandfather had suggested this, but it was Chen Zhichao who was able to permanently settle the dispute by finding an inscription for the tenth patriarch, Zhao Desong. Chen heavily relies on stele inscriptions, most collected by his grandfather Chen Yuan, as his source material, lightly supplementing them with the History of the Yuan dynasty (Yuanshi 元史, henceforth referred to by its Chinese title and the Unified Comprehensive Gazetteer of the Yuan (Yuan yitong zhi 元一統志, henceforth referred to by its Chinese title).

Qing Xitai 卿希泰 covers Dadao in three books, 1988’s Zhongguo daojiao shi 中國道教史, and Zhongguo daojiao 中國道教 and Daojiao shi 道教史, both released in 1994. Of the latter two, Zhongguo daojiao has more information on Dadao, but the two works are nearly identical. Far more substantial are the sections on the Dadao school in Zhongguo daojiao shi. Qing relies heavily on Chen Zhichao’s articles and Chen Yuan’s Daojia jinshi lue 道家金石略, published posthumously by Chen Zhichao in the

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3 Chen Zhichao 陈志超, “Jin Yuan Zhen dadaojiao shibu 金元真大道教史补,” Lishi yanjiu 历史研究 1986, no. 6: 129-144.
intervening years for his primary source material. But he is much more prone to speculation and his conclusions are less circumspect than Chen Zhichao’s, such as when Qing states the two Dadao lineages merged under the leadership of the eighth patriarch or that the school ultimately merged with Quanzhen sometime after the twelfth Tianbao patriarch. Neither of these statements are particularly well-supported (or even supported at all) by the historical record. Qing’s willingness to speculate, however, does have its advantages as when he considers the consequences of both lineages claiming to have received the Law from the Fourth Patriarch and tackles the trouble with dates raised by the Yuxu lineage inscriptions. He also tends to read the surviving Dadao texts less than critically, when it suits his purposes. For example, he treats the late-Ming biography of the third patriarch as mostly reliable, when it is an amalgam of the lives of multiple Daoists surnamed Zhang. Of the main Chinese works, Qing Xitai’s seems to be much better known in the West than Chen Zhichao’s, probably because it combines several works into one. This reliance on Qing Xitai, however, is to the detriment of latter scholars, as his works have significant drawbacks over their source material.

Within the last ten years, there are only two scholars publishing on the Dadao school who merit attention. The first is Liu Xiao, who has done much to illuminate the Yuxu lineage, though his attention has turned to Yuan military matters. Liu published two articles, “Yuandai Dadaojiao Yuxu guan xi de zai tantao--cong liang tong shike mopian shuo qi 元代大道教玉虚观系的再探讨一从两通石刻拓片说起” in 2005 and “Yuandai Dadaojiao shibu zhu--yi Beijing diqu san tong beiwen wei zhongxin 元代大道教史補注一以北京地區三通碑文為中心” in 2010, which contained previously unknown

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4 Qing Xitai, Zhongguo daojiao 中国道教, (Shanghai: Zhizhi chubanshe, 1994), vol. 1, 167 and 169 respectively.
references to Yuxu patriarchs culled from Yuan stele inscriptions. Liu has used these new references to argue that the Yuxu lineage was neither reabsorbed into the Tianbao lineage or the Quanzhen school, but continued to operate as a northern branch of the Zhengyi school. This argument will be considered in Chapter Four.

The second is Zhao Jianyong 赵建勇, who is probably the most important scholar working on the Dadao school since Chen Zhichao in the late 1980s. In the last three years, Zhao has published three articles on Dadao, with another slated for publication later this year (2017). Zhao’s work is unique because he focuses on documenting the school’s activities in Shaanxi. Because of this limited geographic focus, he has tried to bring more attention to regional sources such as gazetteers or collections of stele inscriptions by local literati. He has also published lineage charts or list of signatories from the backs of several steles. Such charts or lists commonly graced the back of temple steles, but traditionally they have not been considered of interest and thus have usually been omitted when copies of stele inscriptions are made. However, lineage charts or lists of signatories are of great interest to modern scholars, who can use the charts or lists to reveal the Dadao school’s temple network and try to identify potential sites of new source material.

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The first English-language scholarship on Dadao did not appear until 1995, when Yao Tao-chung published a chapter on Buddhism and Daoism during the Jurchen Jin in *China under Jurchen Rule: Essays on Chin Intellectual and Cultural History*. Yao devotes less than two pages in the chapter to Dadao, but the work provides a straightforward retelling of the school’s early history up to the lineage split. Yao appears to have based his work entirely on Chen Zhichao, as well as the materials gathered by Chen Yuan cited by Chen Zhichao. Perhaps of most interest in Yao’s chapter is his assessment of the school’s ultimate failure. Declaring that religious Daoism can be divided into two major traditions, which he identifies as the alchemical and talismans/spells or the “magical and ritual,” he then argues that since Dadao fits into neither category, offered nothing not also preached by Quanzhen, and received no high patronage, it was doomed to fail sooner rather than later. This outlook is incredibly problematic. Dadao did receive high patronage and was distinct in its beliefs and practices from Quanzhen. More importantly, Yao seems to see the modern scenario of just two schools, Quanzhen and Zhengyi, each representing the alchemical and magico-ritual traditions respectfully, and assumes that is the only possible outcome. Thus, all the schools of Daoism within the traditions he described must be in competition with each other.

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8 Yao, 155-156. Yao singles out Genghis Khan’s decree recognizing Qiu Chuji and the Quanzhen school as an example of high patronage.

9 For examples of the Dadao school receiving support from Mongol prince Shigdīr (Sidor) and his family, see the *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei*, line 42, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 823 and the *Zheng zhenren bei*, line 10, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 826. For Dadao beliefs and practices and how they differed from those of the Quanzhen school, please see chapter three.
other until a single survivor emerges victorious. It should also be noted that while Yao, who was highly respected in the field of Chinese language pedagogy, wrote his dissertation on Quanzhen Daoism, he did not keep up with religious studies after his dissertation. Aside from the chapter mentioned here, he only published a single article in the field after completing his dissertation.10

The most recent mention of the Dadao school is Pierre Marsone’s three-page summary of the school’s history and teachings in Modern Chinese Religion I: Song-Liao-Jin-Yuan (960-1368 AD). As it is intended to merely summarize the school and not present new research, no new ground is covered. Curiously, he cites Yuan Guofan 袁國藩’s seriously flawed “Yuandai Zhen Dadao jiao kao 元代真大道教考,” published in 1971, as the best study on Dadao to date. This is particularly strange since Yuan was not working with nearly as many Yuan-dynasty source materials as even Chen Yuan was thirty years earlier, despite Yuan Guofan’s overly broad approach to what qualifies as material on Dadao.11 Yuan also bungles key facts such as the original name of the school, where it began, and the names and order of the patriarchs, likely due to working with such limited sources of a late date. Yuan did, however, discover the two Yuxu lineage inscriptions, although he failed to grasp their significance.

As the reader has probably noted, the main source of material for all studies of the Dadao school are stele inscriptions. Steles have been used since the earliest times in China as ritual objects and funerary markers, but it wasn’t until the Han dynasty that


11 In addition to including dubious late-Ming biographies of the patriarchs, he also includes two inscriptions from Baiyun Abbey 白雲觀, which was never a Dadao institution.
steles with inscriptions were commonly used for religious or commemorative purposes. Dorothy Wong has argued that this is a natural extension of their earliest function as sources of identity and community.12 By the Han, steles had acquired multiple layers of meaning -- religious, political, social, cultural and, depending on the nature of the inscription, moral. In the period of disunion following the dissolution of the Han, rival dynasties strove to gather the material expressions of political legitimacy: imperial seals belonging to previous dynasties, certain ritual vessels, and steles inscribed with Confucian classics.

These same layers of meaning are present in the Dadao steles some thousand years after the Han. All of the inscriptions were originally placed at temples by members of the Dadao community. All give the name of the abbot or circuit officials who commissioned the monument. The names of area officials are often also included, as are the scholars or officials who wrote the inscriptions and did the calligraphy. Some even include the stonemason; others include lineage records or record the names of all the leaders of neighboring temples who had participated in some way in the temple’s activities. Above all, these steles are sources of a collective Dadao identity. Additionally, hagiographies of the patriarchs carved on steles provided moral examples while publicly affirming their unique spiritual status. In the case of the twelfth patriarch, these hagiographical steles also had a strong political component within the Dadao community.

From a historical perspective, steles are an excellent source for research material. Stone inscriptions are the hardiest kind of records, far less susceptible to the vagaries of time than paper records, so it is not surprising that they would be the last surviving

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12 See Dorothy Wong, Chinese Steles: Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist Use of a Symbolic Form (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 36-41.
evidence for a school long-disappeared. Steles are also difficult to alter without recarving the entire inscription, making them reliable snapshots of Dadao’s public message and emphasis at the time of stone’s erection. Finally, due to their weight, steles are less likely to be removed from their original placement than other objects of material culture. Some of the steles referred to in this dissertation are massive: *The Stele of the Account of the Speech and Conduct of the Perfected [Zhang] of the Zhen dadao [School] at the Yanshou Palace of Emperor Yao* (*Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadaozhenren daoxing bei* 堯帝延壽宮真大道真人道行碑) stands an impressive seven feet tall and is almost three feet wide. 

*The Record of the Reconstruction of the Xiantian Palace on Mt. Gou in Loujing* (*Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji* 落京緱山改建先天宮記) is an imposing eleven feet eight inches tall and over four feet wide!

However, there are drawbacks to relying on stele inscriptions. The inscriptions are commemorative, meaning they provide information in great detail on a specific person, place, or event. Unfortunately, that means that matters of doctrine, theology, and liturgy rarely appear in the steles. While scriptures or records of a specific rite were occasionally copied onto steles, that doesn’t seem to have happened with the Dadao school. Since stele inscriptions are the only extant sources for Dadao, modern scholars are placed in the unusual position of having a very limited view of a religion’s teachings and practices.

Sadly, steles do not stand beyond the events of history. Our understanding of the Dadao school might have been much better and source material more numerous had the stele garden at Tianbao Palace in Xuzhou and the institution itself not been decimated.
during the anti-Rightist campaigns of the 1950s and the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and 70s.\textsuperscript{13}

My aim in this dissertation three-fold. First, to produce the most comprehensive study of the Dadao school in any language since Chen Yuan’s 1941 work, \textit{Nan Song chu Hebei xin Daojiao kao}. In addition to the eleven inscriptions and records published in the \textit{Daojia jinshi lue} and the three pieces of Yuan-dynasty poetry and prose contained in the \textit{Nan Song chu Hebei xin Daojiao kao}, I have amassed sixteen additional inscriptions and records, as well as reconstructed one inscription previously incomplete, thus doubling the available source material. Most of these have been previously published individually, but have never been studied in conjunction with the other known Dadao texts. I have not included materials I consider spurious, such as late-Qing biographies of Dadao patriarchs, or that are inferior to other contemporary records, such as the brief summary of the school given in the \textit{Yuanshi}. Instead, I have tried to include records--and inscriptions where possible--from Dadao institutions included in Yuan and Ming gazetteers. In doing so, I have always given preference to the earliest gazetteers for the area in question, unless that gazetteer is only partially preserved and the preserved portion(s) contain no information on local temples or abbeys. Additionally, I also present a new understanding of the school’s founder, how the lineages developed, and the school’s ultimate fate based on these materials.

My second aim in writing this dissertation is to challenge the notion that the Dadao school was nothing more than a minor variation of the Quanzhen school or that it is otherwise unworthy of scholarly attention. This is particularly apparent in Chapter

Three where I delve deep into the school’s beliefs, praxis, and organization to provide numerous points of contrast between the Dadao and Quanzhen schools. However, the idea that Dadao is an independent and distinct form of Daoism should resonate throughout Part I of this dissertation.

An outline of the dissertation is as follows. In chapter one, I provide the historical context for the period, which covers the rise and fall of both the Jurchen Jin and Yuan dynasties. The relationship between the imperial court and Daoism is also reviewed, with special attention being given to the reigns of Shizong and Zhangzong during the Jin and Khubilai Khan during the Yuan.

In chapter two, I discuss the lives of Liu Deren, the progenitor of the Dadao school of Daoism, and Zhang Xinzhen, its third patriarch. As different versions of Liu’s biography are examined, I pay special attention to why Liu’s image might have shifted over time, which I suggest reveals more about the nature of the school when the biographies were composed, rather than Liu Deren himself. Additionally, the shift in the image of Liu Deren from a popular healer to an elect chosen, and finally to a moral paragon of asceticism and filial piety, reveals the increasing importance of asceticism, physical labor, and filiality in the Dadao school. In contrast, Zhang Xinzhen, who was probably the school’s real founder, is virtually un-memorialized.

In chapter three, I explore how Dadao developed from the lone, itinerant, charismatic healer it claimed descent from into an institution complete with hierarchy, bureaucracy, and broad geographic range. The beliefs, praxis, and organization that bound together the Dadao school are discussed before I address the “muddiness” of the school’s beliefs and praxis. Such syncretism caused Chen Yuan, Qing Xitai and others to
speculate on Dadao’s beginnings as a popular religious movement, but I conclude that any popular origins for the school are highly unlikely.

In chapter four, I trace the development of the Tianbao and Yuxu lineages within the school, where I seek to explain their formation, relations with each other and relations with the imperial court. I also address the questions surrounding the ultimate fate of the Yuxu lineage, including theories proposed by previous scholars that the lineages merged under the Tianbao name or that the Yuxu lineage was absorbed into the Zhengyi school.

In chapter five, I examine the succession struggles within the Tianbao lineage, focusing on the reigns of the eleventh and twelfth patriarchs. The elevation of Zheng Jinyuan, a southerner, as the eleventh patriarch broke with the school’s traditional practice of lateral succession, which caused his brief reign to be tumultuous. The twelfth patriarch, Zhang Qingzhi, failed to restore the line of succession and his attempts to justify his claim to the patriarchate nearly erased the preceding three patriarchs from Zhen dadao history.

Chapter six reviews the school’s sudden demise and attempts to explain it by examining the environmental, political, social, and internal factors that likely contributed to the school’s total collapse as an institution by 1368. I conclude that reasons the school disappeared so suddenly are likely tied to the same reasons the Yuan dynasty collapsed. The prolonged environmental disasters of the 1340s, the political disintegration of the Yuan empire, the destruction of abbeys during the fall of the Yuan and the rise of the Ming, and unsettled line of succession within the school all contributed to its rapid fall.

In the concluding chapter, I return to the questions I posed in at the beginning of this introduction: what was the state of Daoism--beyond the Quanzhen school--in North
China during the twelfth through fourteenth centuries and how Chinese religions, specifically Daoism, respond to times of political and social turmoil. I also address future avenues of inquiry that might prove fruitful for further study of the Dadao school.
CHAPTER 1: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

At the beginning of the twelfth century, China was split between two states. The ethnically Han Song dynasty held most of the core areas formerly controlled by the Tang dynasty. The sixteen northernmost prefectures, however, were held by the ethnically Khitan Liao dynasty. The Khitan were a nomadic people from the Mongolian steppe. During the Tang, they had been vassals of the Uighur empire before splitting off to found their own state, which Chinese sources called Liao. In 1115, sensing military weakness among the Liao and citing excessive tribute demands, a vassal confederation called the Jurchen challenged the Khitan for steppe supremacy. The Jurchen were aided by the Song, who were hoping to recover the so-called “Sixteen Prefectures 十六州.” However, once the Liao dynasty was defeated, the Jurchens continued to sweep south into the Yellow River valley. By 1127, the Jurchens had sacked the Song capital of Kaifeng, capturing the retired Emperor Huizong, the present Emperor Qinzong, and most of the court. This would have toppled the Song dynasty, had one of the emperor’s sons not been away from the capital. This son, Gaozong, succeeded in re-establishing the dynasty in Hangzhou.

The two sides then continued to war with only brief cessations in hostilities until the Treaty of Shaoxing (ratified 1142) fixed the border at the Huai river. However, the Jin accused the Southern Song of having violated the treaty in 1159 and the war flared up again before the two states negotiated the more lasting Treaty of Longxing in 1164. This

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14 The sixteen prefectures were Yanzhou 燕州, Shunzhou 順州, Tanchou 檀州, Ruzhou 儒州, Jizhou 蒽州, Yingzhou 瀛洲, Mozhou 莫州, Zhuzhou 瀋州, Xinzhou 新州, Guizhou 媙州, Wuzhou 武州, Yuzhou 蔚州, Yunzhou 雲州, Yingzhou 應州, Huanzhou 襄州, and Shuozhou 朔州.
treaty ushered in the one period of sustained peace for Northern China under Jurchen rule, which lasted until the Mongols began invading in 1211.

This period of peace coincides with the rule of emperors Shizong (世宗, r. 1161-1189) and Zhangzong (章宗, r. 1189-1208). The two were nicknamed the “miniature Yao and Shun,” referring the great sage-kings of antiquity, for their able administrations. The two emperors formed a kind of dyad with Shizong representing the archetypal martial (wu, 武) style of rulership and Zhangzong representing the archetypal literary (wen, 文) style. Shizong came to power in a military coup, in which he overthrew his unpopular cousin, the Prince of Hailang. The Prince of Hailang had both resumed hostilities and promoted Chinese customs that were unpopular with the senior generation of Jurchen nobles. Shizong, in contrast, quickly settled the boundary issue with the Southern Song and began a program of cultural revitalization among the Jurchen, who he worried were becoming distant from their steppe roots.

Despite his emphasis on Jurchen identity, Shizong had been well-versed in Chinese culture from birth and comfortably acted the role of Chinese emperor in religious matters. He restored the venerable Daoist institution, Tianchang Abbey 天長觀, after it had been destroyed by a fire, even paying for the repairs out of the money allotted for his personal expenditures. He also ordered the compilation of a new version of the Daoist canon. Towards the end of Shizong’s life, he increasingly invited Daoists to the capital,

15 This title represents a posthumous demotion from emperor, but it is what is traditionally used to refer to him as he received no temple name.

16 See the Record of the Stele of the Renovation of the Publicly-funded Great Heavenly Longevity Abbey in the Central Capital (Zhongdu shifang Da Tianchang guan chongxiu beiji 中都十方大天長觀重修碑記) in Inscribed Records at Palaces and Abbeys (Gongguan beizhi 宮觀碑志) in the Zhonghua daozang 48:655a1-3.
particularly Quanzhen masters. Much has been made of the emperor’s deathbed request for Wu Yuyang, but it is likely that the emperor was seeking to delay death rather than expressing his religious belief in Quanzhen.\textsuperscript{17} Shizong’s overall treatment of Daoism suggests a cordial, but not close, relationship. The \textit{Jinshi} portrays him as providing patronage to both Buddhism and Daoism, but this should be viewed as the editors of the \textit{Jinshi} emphasizing how Shizong fulfilling the role of a proper Chinese emperor, rather than a record of the emperor’s personal devotion to either of the religions.

Zhangzong, Shizong’s successor and grandson, is best-known for series of restrictions on Daoists. These restrictions began with a total ban on Quanzhen, advanced to with a ban on any religious figures visiting members of the imperial family or officials of the third rank and above, and culminated in a ban on the activities of Taiyi and Hunyuan (混元).\textsuperscript{18} These broad bans have generally been taken as a sign of Zhangzong’s hostility towards either the new Daoist schools or Daoism in general.\textsuperscript{19} But the emperor also was a regular visitor at Tianchang Abbey, twice expanded that abbey, funded the compilation of the new canon ordered by Shizong, and sponsored multiple large-scale sacrifices both before and after the ban.

Zhangzong appears to have had a greater interest in Daoism than his grandfather and, while I am hesitant to judge the depth or sincerity of his belief, he seems to have at least considered certain Daoist rites to be efficacious (\textit{ling}, 灵) and been aggrieved when


\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Jinshi}, 9:216-219. Hunyuan is the name of a virtually unknown school of Daoism during the Jin dynasty.

the rites failed to deliver the desired results. For example, in 1190, when Zhangzong’s mother, Lady Tudan, was seriously ill, he ordered a Great Sacrifice for Universal Salvation (putian dajiao, 普天大醮) to be held at Tianchang Abbey in the capital. After the sacrifice, Lady Tudan recovered and the Abbey was lavishly rewarded. However, her recovery was only temporary. Subsequent rites failed to heal her and she died on February 7, 1191. One month later, Zhangzong forbid any religious figures, male or female, Daoist or Buddhist, from visiting members of the imperial family or officials of the third rank and above. Seven months later, Taiyi and Hunyuan were forbidden from ordaining priests or establishing hermitages. Although Zhangzong had favored Tianchang Abbey twice during the first two years of his reign, there is no record of him returning to the abbey for five years after his mother’s death.

The peace of Shizong’s and Zhangzong’s reigns was shattered by the Mongol invasions, which began in 1211 and continued irregularly until 1232. Sensing the Jin dynasty’s weakness following an ill-advised reopening of hostilities during a lull in fighting with the Mongols, the Southern Song allied with the Mongols, which forced the Jin into a multi-front war. Ögedei, the son of Genghis Khan, launched a sustained

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20 See the Record of the Propitious Response to the Great Sacrifice for Universal Salvation at the Publicly-funded Great Tianchang Abbey (Shifang da Tianchang guan putian dajiao ruiying ji 十方大天長觀普天大醮瑞應記) and the Stele of the Response to the Great Sacrifice for Universal Salvation at the Publicly-funded Great Tianchang Abbey in Zhongdu (Zhongdu shifang da Tianchang guan putian dajiao ganying bei 中都十方大天長觀普天大醮感應碑) both in Inscribed Records at Palaces and Abbeys (Gongguan beizhi 宮觀碑志) in the Zhonghua daozang 48:657-659.


23 Ibid, 239.
offensive against the Jin in 1232. Having already lost the central capital, Zhongdu (modern Beijing), in 1215, the dynasty was forced from its southern capital of Bianliang (now Kaifeng) in spring of 1233. The Mongols succeeded in completely destroying the last remaining vestiges of its imperial court at Caizhou the following year. During the interregnum between the fall of the two capitals, much of the former Jin territory in the north was controlled by warlords of varying and highly changeable loyalties.

The Mongols, however, were unable to completely conquer the Southern Song until 1279. Despite frequent assaults, they had difficulty consolidating their territorial gains and maintaining momentum. The sheer size of the Mongol empire forged by Ögedei and his nephew, Möngke, created serious challenges for ruling which had to be dealt with more immediately. The issue of succession was rarely settled and the relative strength of the Southern Song dynasty, coupled with its geographical advantages, meant it wasn’t until Kublai Khan had firmly established his rule that the Mongols could really focus on crushing the last remnants of the Song dynasty, only succeeding in 1279. Kublai had only proclaimed the “Da Yuan” or “The Great Primal dynasty” eight years earlier, which reflects the challenges and resistance of the Mongol rulers to a Chinese-

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24 For a detailed account of the dynasty’s final days, see Wang E 王鶚’s Reminiscences of Runan (Runan yishi, 汝南遺事). Translated in Chan Hok-lam, The Fall of the Jurchen Jin: Wang E’s memoir on Ts’ai-chou under the Mongol siege (1233-1234) (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1993).

25 John Dardess has argued that Kublai would have accepted the Southern Song as a vassal state, but the Southern Song court’s unwillingness to accept Mongol suzerainty and pay tribute led Kublai’s advisors to push for annexation. See John Dardess, “Did the Mongols Matter? Territory, Power and the Intelligentsia in China from the Northern Song to the Early Ming,” in Paul Jakov Smith and Richard von Glahn, eds., The Song-Yuan-Ming Transition in Chinese History (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 119.
style bureaucratic state. The Yuan lasted less than a hundred years before the Ming conquest returned northern China to Han rule.

Beyond the constant political changes, the twelfth, thirteenth, and especially fourteenth centuries were times of extreme social turmoil caused by a prolonged series of natural disasters such as flooding, severe cold, drought, famine, disease epidemics (likely including plague outbreaks) and earthquakes coupled with wide-scale rebellions against the government. Ray Huang has previously given a figure of 1.42 natural disasters per year during the Han through Qing.\(^{26}\) This figure is based on mentions of floods and droughts in the dynastic histories. By my own count, the Yuanshi records thirty-nine years with severe droughts (kanghan, 亢早 or dahan, 大旱), with an additional thirty-seven years with minor droughts (han, 旱).\(^{27}\) 125 major floods are recorded (dashui, 大水), with an even higher number of minor floods. Considering only the drought years and the major floods and measuring from 1261 to 1368, the Yuan dynasty averaged 1.88 natural disasters per year, or above average. Were all the “minor” floods included, which I estimate to be around two hundred, the average would jump to 3.75, which is well above Huang’s 1.42.\(^{28}\)

\(^{26}\) Ray Huang, China: A Macro History (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1996), 25. Huang does not identify the Chinese terms he counts as “flood,” but the Jinshi and Yuanshi use a variety of terms such as霖雨 (lin yu, continuous rain), 淫雨 (yin yu, excessive rain), 水/水災 (shui/shuizai, flood), and 犯 (fan, overflow/flood [in the context of a river]) to denote flooding.

\(^{27}\) It is unclear how the compilers of the Yuanshi distinguished between major and minor droughts. Some “minor” droughts covered many prefectures or were sufficiently severe to prompt people to sell their children, presumably because they could not feed them. See Yuanshi 50: 1069-1070 for examples.

\(^{28}\) For comparison, Hok-Lam Chan, relying on the Jinshi and Records of the Great Jin State (Da Jin guo zhi 大金國志), counts thirty-two droughts and thirty-one floods
Timothy Brooks has pointed out that the natural disasters of the early fourteenth centuries coincide with the onset of the Little Ice Age, a global period of cooling. The modern reader is all too familiar with the extremes in weather caused by climate change. The Yellow River significantly changed course no less than three times during the twelfth through fourteenth centuries. Changes in the river’s course were accompanied by widespread catastrophic flooding, which lasted for approximately a decade. Naturally, the flooding led to crop failure, hunger and bred disease.

The 1320s may have been the worst decade for natural disasters in the Yuan, as unusually severe and long periods of flood and famine overlapped. For example, Shaanxi experienced a horrific drought from 1325-1328, during which people resorted to cannibalism. At the same time, the valleys along the lower Yellow River and Yangzi were suffering from heavy flooding. The early 1340s were also a particularly bad period as floods and famine were accompanied by an outbreak of deadly pestilence, likely bubonic plague. Earthquakes were also a common occurrence, especially in the 1340s.

During the Jin dynasty, for an average of 0.52 natural disasters per year. Chan, however, believes these numbers are incomplete, particularly for years prior to 1161. Looking at just the period between 1161-1208, which corresponds to the reigns of Shizong and Zhangzong and for which we know the compilers of the Jinshi had access to the “Veritable Records” (shilu 資錄), then there were thirty-three droughts or floods, for an average of 0.69 per year, well below Huang’s 1.42. See Hok-lam Chan, “Calamities and Government Relief under the Jurchen Jin Dynasty (1115-1234)” in Papers on Society and Culture in Early Modern China, 781-872. Reprinted in Herbert Franke and Hok-lam Chan, Studies on the Jurchens and the Jin Dynasty (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 1997), 790.


30 Yuanshi, 32: 724.

31 Brook, 68-70.
The worst earthquake was centered near Zhaocheng in 1303, which did significant damage and killed an estimated 250,000 to 500,000 people.\(^{32}\)

In many ways, Mongol rule represented a significant deviation from the previous non-Han dynasties. The Liao and the Jin had adopted a system of dual governments, one for the steppe peoples and one for the Han Chinese, following Tang tradition, which allowed matters involving non-Hans to be settled according to their laws.\(^{33}\) Generally, the Chinese bureaucratic system tended to win out over the course of the conquering dynasty, not in the least part because the Chinese system was usually better-equipped to govern large populations.

The Mongols attempted to create a kind of hybrid government combining traditions from the steppe, China, Central Asia, and the Islamic world. Their idea of how an emperor should act and the Chinese ideal did not always coincide. Additionally, while the Liao and Jin dynasties favored certain ethnicities over others initially, the lines tended to blur over time and, particularly in the Jin, create a “Northern hybrid culture,” where differences between non-Han and Han were not pronounced. This is often thought of as sinicization, where the non-Han become Han over time, but the reality was much more complicated as Han just as frequently seem to have adopted non-Han customs as the

\(^{32}\) Brook, 62. The destruction of the earthquake is described in hagiography of the Twelfth Patriarch of the Zhen dadao school. See Chapter Five.

\(^{33}\) The general standard was ethnic communities settled their own disputes and meted out their own punishment so long as both parties were members of the group. If the dispute or offense involved multiple ethnicities, then the Chinese legal system had jurisdiction. See Herbert Franke, “Jurchen Customary Law and the Chinese Law of the Chin Dynasty” in D Eikemeier and H. Franke, eds, \textit{State and Law in East Asia, Festschrift für Karl Bünger} (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981), 215-233. Reprinted in Herbert Franke and Hok-lam Chan, \textit{Studies on the Jurchens and the Chin Dynasty} (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 1997).
reverse. The Mongols, in contrast, created a complex ethnic hierarchy, with Mongols at the top, Central and West Asians (the so-called “colored eyes” or semu 色目 class) second, Northern Han Chinese and steppe peoples third, Southern Han at the bottom. The Mongols’ ethnic hierarchy was also more rigid, in attempt to balance and control the vast competing interests within its territory.

The Mongol rulers are not generally known for their interest in or patronage of Daoism. Christopher Atwood has described the Mongols’ overall religious policy as founded on four presuppositions. First, that “the four great religions, Buddhism, Christianity, Daoism, and Islam, prayed to the same God, more specifically, to the same God who had given Chinggis Khan victories in his wars.” Second, “God responded to human prayer.” Third, “God, in distributing favours, did not limit himself permanently to one place or cult.” Finally, the Mongols “rejected confessional or ritual means of assuring the power of prayer and earning divine favor.”

As supporting evidence for the first presupposition, Atwood offers the account of William of Rubruck, a Franciscan monk who set out to convert the Mongols in 1253-1255, of a conversation he had through an interpreter with Möngke Khan. In it, Möngke

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34 The lumping of steppe peoples such as the Khitan and Jurchen in with the Han Chinese of Northern China into a single ethnicity class may be viewed as a reflection of the area’s previously-mentioned hybrid culture.

35 Christopher Atwood, “Validated by Holiness or Sovereignty: Religious Toleration as Political Theology in the Mongol World Empire of the Thirteenth Century,” *The International History Review* 26, no. 2 (June 2004): 252.

36 Ibid, 253.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.
describes a single god who gives men multiple “paths” or religious practices. However, as the letter Möngke sends with William to the king of France makes clear, Möngke both issues his pronouncements as “commandments of God” and refers to himself as the “son of God.” William, while a keen observer, was nevertheless a Christian missionary and his Christian worldview and desire to convert undoubtedly influenced his interpretation of Möngke’s words.

In fact, the Mongols’ supreme god was Tenggerri, meaning “Heaven,” which seems to have been conflated with “God” in Atwood’s writing, perhaps in an attempt to place the discourse in familiar terms for a Western audience. Certainly, the idea of multiple paths (dao?) is how discussions of religion were often framed in China. From the Chinese perspective, it is now understandable how the Mongols could have believed everyone worshipped Heaven, though it is still difficult to believe that they were unaware that what religions meant by “Heaven” could be very different. For example, Atwood notes that the “Mongols’ political theology treated both Buddhism and Daoism as theistic religions centred on prayer to a single supreme deity,” despite the fact that the two

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40 Ruysbroeck, 248-250.

41 The Mongols also had ancestral cults and worshipped deities associated with natural forces, in addition to the supreme god Tenggerri. For a detailed discussion of the nature of Tenggerri and its role in legitimizing rule, see Brian Baumann, “By the Power of Eternal Heaven: The Meaning of Tenggerri to the Government of the Pre-Buddhist Mongols,” *Extrême-Orient Extrême Occident* 35 (2013): 233-284.

religions were blatantly pantheistic.\textsuperscript{43} While Buddhism may have been sufficiently foreign to the Mongols that it could be treated in the manner described above when Genghis was Khan, it is difficult to accept that still held true during reign of Kublai who famously favored the Sakya school of Tibetan Buddhism.

Atwood is also incorrect when he claims that the decrees of Genghis Khan fail to distinguish between between Buddhism and Daoism on the basis of technical terminology.\textsuperscript{44} While \textit{xingxiu} (行修), \textit{chujia} (出家), and \textit{zhuchi} (住持) may have originally been associated with Buddhists, Daoists themselves had been using those terms since the early medieval period.\textsuperscript{45} Certainly, Qiu Chuji and his disciples were eager to promote the broadest interpretation of the decrees possible, but whether Genghis himself intended for Qiu to have authority over Daoists and Buddhists in China because the Khan “was not thinking in terms of defined religious communities” remains unproven.\textsuperscript{46}

Still, Atwood is right in pointing out that the Mongols gave special status to Buddhism, Christianity, Daoism, and Islam not out of a sense of religious tolerance, but because those religions were deemed best able to provide divine assistance. Mongol emperors granted tax-exempt status to the clergy of those four religions throughout the Yuan dynasty specifically on the grounds that they “report to Heaven and pray for [my] longevity 告天祈壽,” as can be seen in the \textit{Stele of the Sagely Edict for Tianbao Palace in

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\textsuperscript{43} Atwood, 252.
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\textsuperscript{44} Ibid, 246.
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\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Xingxiu} and \textit{chujia} appear in multiple Lingbao scriptures, while \textit{zhuchi} seems to have been appropriated by Daoists in the sixth century, slightly later than the two other technical terms.
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\textsuperscript{46} Ibid, 246.
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Xuzhou (Xuzhou Tianbao gong shengzhi bei 許州天寶宮聖旨碑) and the Stele of the Sagely Edict for the Yizhen Palace in Huizhou (Huizhou Yizhen gong shengzhi bei 輝州頤真宮聖旨碑), as well as the proclamation Atwood provides.\(^{47}\) That the Mongols extended tax-exempt status to those religions deemed best able to deliver divine assistance state and that those religions had with sizable memberships within Mongol-held territory is unlikely to be a coincidence. This is supported by the tailoring of state recognition and tax breaks in imperial edicts by the later khanates. Thus, Jews are included and Daoists omitted in the edicts within the il-Khanate, only Christians are mentioned in the Khanate of the Golden Horde’s Russian territories, and so on.\(^{48}\) In sum, the Mongols’ religious policy seems to have been based on both in taking any divine assistance for the state they could, while seeking balanced treatment for the largest religious groups in their empire in an effort to avoid religious conflicts which could destabilize their rule.

The religious policies pursued by Kublai Khan provide a good case study in the complexity and practicality of the religious policies of the Mongol rulers. Atwood considers Kubilai to be the most interested of the Mongol emperors in curtailing religious privileges. Atwood cites not only Kublai’s burning of the Daoist canon, but a ban on halal slaughter of animals, circumcision, the re-imposition of certain taxes on monasteries, and the forbidding of fortune-tellers to associate with imperial princes.\(^{49}\) However, the last two can hardly speak to any anti-religious agenda in the context of Chinese history.

\(^{47}\) See pp. 194-195 and 251-252. Also, Atwood, 240. Working from a Middle Mongolian version of a similar edict, Atwood translates the corresponding phrase as “pray to God and give blessings.”

\(^{48}\) See Atwood, 243 and 250.

\(^{49}\) Ibid, 251.
The tax status of monasteries and other religious institutions generally reflected the dynasty’s financial condition, rather than any devotion on the part of the emperor. When the coffers were full, they were exempt and when the dynasty needed to raise funds, they were not. Likewise, there is a story about every founding emperor having his rise to power foretold by fortune-teller or religious itinerant. Frankly, it was just sound policy to keep fortune-tellers away from any potential challengers to the throne. The bans on halal slaughter and circumcision, however, deserve more attention.

According to the Persian historian, Rashid al-Din, the ban on halal slaughter was the result of Muslim merchants refusing to eat the meat at an imperial banquet and could thus be seen as an insult to the Khan and his power. The ban on circumcision came after the ban on halal slaughter as Kublai’s Chinese advisors capitalized on his rage. The ban on circumcision goes unmentioned in the *Yuan History*. But the dynastic history does confirm al-Din’s account of the ban on halal slaughter and the Compendium of Statutes and Sub-statutes of the Yuan Dynasty (*Yuan dianzhang* 元典章) contains the body of the edict.

The *Yuanshi* puts an interesting spin on the circumstances surrounding the ban. After the Muslim merchants presented their tribute, they refused to eat the non-halal meat at the banquet. The common people were distressed by it (百姓苦之), leading to Kublai’s famous declaration, “They are my slaves. In matters of food and drink, how dare they not

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50 Rashid al-Din, *Jami al-Tawarikh*, quoted in Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan: His Life and Times* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 200. Technically, these prohibitions would have affected Jews under the Khan’s control as well; however, the Jewish community in China during the Yuan dynasty was neither large nor influential.

follow my court [in custom]! 彼吾奴也, 飲食敢不随我朝!” The edict is to be promulgated to the four corners of the world and across the seas, and to all foreign rulers. In the *Yuan History*, the Muslim merchants’ offense is portrayed as two-fold. The merchants both insult the Khan by refusing his meat and troubling the people.

At the same time as the ban was issued, one of the most important positions in the Yuan empire was held by Ahmed 啊合馬, the infamous Muslim minister of finance, who in turn staffed the government with allies and relatives, many of whom were Muslim as well. His power and taxation policies had earned him many enemies at court, who would see to his assassination, the execution of his family, and the confiscation of his property in two short years. In light of the broader context of court politics at the time, Morris Rossabi has suggested, means the actions were more likely designed to curtail the power of a specific Muslim faction at court than exact vengeance for any personal slights. Francis Cleaves concurs, as he believes any affront by the Muslims merchants would have been insufficient to provoke such a severe response. Certainly, the ban had the effect of emphasizing Kublai’s power while putting the Muslims at court in a position of weakness where they would have to prove their loyalty. The fact that the edict was intended for “the four corners of the world and across the seas, to foreign rulers 海内海外諸番國王” strongly implies that a reassertion of the Khan’s power lay at the heart of the matter.

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52 *Yuanshi*, 10: 218.

53 Rossabi, 179-184.

54 Ibid, 201.

Turning to the Buddho-Daoist debates that ultimately led to the burning of the Daoist canon, we again find that the motives behind them might not be simple religious intolerance. Although Kublai was not yet Khan, it was under his authority that the infamous court debate of 1258 between the Buddhists and the Daoists was held, the results of which was the conversion of over two hundred of Daoist institutions to Buddhism, and a ban of certain “forged” texts.\(^{56}\) These measures appear to have been poorly enforced. In 1281, a scandal erupted over a fire at the prestigious Changchun Palace, a Quanzhen institution in Dadu, with both sides accusing the other of having caused it. According to the *Record of Distinguishing the False [from the True] during the Zhiyuan era* (*Zhiyuan bianwei lu* 至元辨偽錄), the ultimate result of this new round of Buddho-Daoist discord was the execution of several Daoists, the forced tonsure and conversion to Buddhism of several hundred other Daoists, and the burning of the canon including the printing blocks.\(^{57}\)

However, if we read between the lines of the Buddho-Daoist debates of 1258 and 1281, we see one of the main points of conflict between the two sides was the ownership of certain temples and their surrounding properties. Surviving edicts show specific Zhen dadao institutions being exempted from certain taxes--applied generally across the major religions in Yuan territory--and issuing warnings to those who infringed upon the

\(^{56}\) The debate and its outcome is recorded in the *Zhiyuan bianwei lu* 至元辨偽錄, T. 2116. Since the only source is a Buddhist one, its account must be taken with a grain of salt.

\(^{57}\) Only the burning of the canon is supported by the *Yuanshi*. See *Yuanshi*, 11: 222.
institutions’ property. The temples’ properties could be vast. The *Huizhou Yizhen gong shengzhi bei* (1335) lists not only the temple and its land, but also the water and the land of the families attached to the temple, the people themselves, livestock, gardens, mills, lodging, stores, pawn shops, bathhouses, boats, bamboo and reeds, etc. Thus, what was at stake was a significant amount of wealth for whichever side could own the most temples. Kublai’s orders seem have only returned disputed properties, that is those temples that had changed from Buddhist to Daoist control, but not stripped Daoist institutions or priests of their tax-free status nor converted temples whose ownership was not in question. Given this, Kublai’s goal was likely to settle what he viewed as a property dispute rather than pick a side to support in a religious battle.

Regarding the burning of the canon, Kublai actually issued two imperial decrees, one in 1280 and one in 1281. As recorded in the *Yuanshi*, the first decree ordered the burning the “false and absurd” (*weiwang*, 備妄) scriptures in the canon, including the blocks used to print the spurious texts. This essentially was a repeat of the order to burn certain texts as the result of the debate of 1258. The task of doing so was given to the eighth Quanzhen patriarch, Qi Zhicheng 祁志誠. It wasn’t until the next year that an Assistant Director of the Bureau of Military Affairs named Zhang Yi 張易 declared all but the *Daodejing* were falsely composed by later generations and urged Kublai Khan to have all of them to be burned. Kublai then issued the second decree ordering just that.

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58 Examples of such edicts include the *Xuzhou Tianbao gong shengzhi bei* and the *Huizhou Yizhen gong shengzhi bei*.

59 See the *Yuanshi*, 11: 222.

60 Ibid, 11: 234.
Why was an assistant director of the bureau of military affairs involved in a religious matter and why did Kublai take his advice? The answer may lie in an anecdote recorded in the *Yuanshi*. On the Yihai day of the second month of the seventeenth year of the Zhiyuan era, Zhang told Kublai he had heard the Buddhist monk Gao who could turn demons into soldiers and take control of enemy forces via magic.\(^{61}\) The Khan was intrigued enough to order a field test, though the outcome is not recorded.\(^{62}\) Exactly three weeks later, the first decree ordering the burning of Daoist texts was issued.\(^{63}\) If Zhang was a follower of Buddhism (or the follower of one specific Buddhist), he may have been trying to strengthen their position with the court by weakening the Daoists. Whatever his motivation, Zhang did not get to enjoy the fruits of his scheming. He was among those who conspired to assassinate previously-mentioned Ahmed and was summarily executed (and possibly pickled) along with the Buddhist monk Gao and the Yidu Chiliarch Wang Zhu.\(^{64}\)

In the long term, the Buddo-Daoists debates of 1258 and 1281 had a minimal effect on the practice of Daoism in North China. In the short term, the debates may have actually aided the Dadao school. While the Quanzhen school was forced to lower its profile for a time, the Dadao school appears to have increased its activity. Because its central (and only known) scripture was the *Daodejing*, the burning of the canon would

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\(^{61}\) March 5, 1280.

\(^{62}\) Ibid, 11: 222. The biography of Wang Zhu mentions that he and Gao were publically executed and pickled, while Zhang was also killed. The Veritable Records of Shizu states that all three were publically executed and pickled. See *Yuanshi*, 205: 4563 and 12: 241.

\(^{63}\) *Yuanshi*, 11:222.

\(^{64}\) Ibid, 12: 241.
have left the Dadao school unaffected. Only two of the school’s institutions had their ownership challenged by the Buddhists in 1281 and it is unclear whether they were among those temples returned to Buddhist control, so Dadao lost very few or possibly none of its temples and abbeys. The Tianbao lineage, under the leadership of Li Xicheng’s disciples, seems to have particularly taken advantage of the uniquely strong position the school was now in.

Overall, the driving interest in the religious policies of the Mongol rulers seems to have been avoiding religious conflict which could threaten their rule while simultaneously seeking to legitimize their rule through religious means. Religion was a tool to assist in government or to control the people, but it wasn’t a matter of “Truth” or belief or doctrinal correctness to the Mongols, nor was it a belief that all worshipped the same singular god they did.

Frederick Mote has aptly summarized the latter half of the Yuan dynasty as “a half-century of intensifying chaos, an age of breakdown.” As will be seen in the chapters that follow, Dadao was founded in chaos of the fall of the Jin dynasty, thrived in

65 A Dadao nun surnamed Xin 信 was accused of taking over the eastern caitya (stupa hall) in the Minzhong temple in the capital and a Ritual Master Ma was accused of seizing Longquan temple in Nianfeng, Shunzhou. The second notably had hemp fields and a jujube tree orchard, which would have made it unusually appealing to the self-sufficient Dadaoists. See Zhiyuan bianwei lu, 52:0767a18 and 52:0767b19-21. “Ritual Master Ma” might be Ma Dezheng, who is listed as a Ritual Master residing at Yingxiang Abbey on the back side of the Stele on the Founding of the Yingxiang Palace (Chuangjian Dadao Yingxiang gong zhi bei, yangmian 創建大道迎祥宮之碑，陽面), dated 1280.

66 See Chapter Five for more information on the Tianbao lineage between 1260 and 1299.

chaos of the Mongol conquest, and eventually dissolved in the chaos accompanying the
disintegration of the Yuan empire. It is the ultimate result of the social turmoil that
gripped North China between 1115 and 1368.
CHAPTER 2: THE LIVES OF THE FOUNDERS, LIU DEREN AND ZHANG XINZHEN

Liu Deren (劉德仁, traditionally 1121/2-1180/1) is credited as the progenitor of the Dadao school of Daoism, while Zhang Xinzhen (張信真, trad. 1163/4-1218) was supposedly the third patriarch. The lives of both men are not well-documented but, as will be shown below, both were very influential on the school in both image (Liu) and reality (Zhang). For Liu, I will examine the six surviving biographies, paying special attention to why Liu’s image might have shifted over time and what the changes to his biography can tell us about the development of the Dadao school. For Zhang, I will correct his dates, critically analyze his biography from a late-Ming gazetteer, and argue that he, not Liu Deren, was the true founder of the Zhen dadao.

Liu lived in northern China during the Jin dynasty, where he spread his teachings and eventually attracted disciples. If this sounds vague, that’s because those few things are the only information about Liu Deren consistent across surviving accounts of his life.

Six biographies of Liu’s life exist, which are contained within the Stele of the Transmission of the Dadao Patriarchate at Yuxu Abbey (Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuan shou zhi bei 玉虛觀大道祖師傳授之碑), the Record of the Building of Daming Abbey (Later Shangqing Palace) (Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji 創建大明觀更上清記), the Record of the Reconstruction of Xiantian Palace on Mt. Gou in Luojing (Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji 落京缑山改建先天宮記), the Restoration of Longyang Palace Stele (Chongxiu Longyang gong bei 重修隆陽宮碑), the Stele for Tianbao Palace (Tianbao gong bei 天寶宮碑), the Stele of the Account of the Speech and Conduct of the Perfected of the Zhen dadao [School] At the Yanshou Palace
of Emperor Yao (Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei 堯帝延壽宮真大道真人道行碑), the Stele on the Speech and Conduct of the Perfected Zhang who Mysteriously Answers of the Zhen Dadao School [At Daming Abbey] ([Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei [大明觀真大道教玄應張真人道行碑] and the Record of Events in the Life of the Perfected Liu (Shu Liu zhenren shi, 書劉真人事). The most lengthy and detailed accounts were composed between a hundred-and-fifty to two hundred years after Liu’s death.

Neither of the two records of the school that survive from the Jin-dynasty mention Liu. The earliest extant account of Liu Deren’s life dates to 1270, almost a hundred years after his death. Because one of the biggest challenges in studying Dadao is the extreme scarcity of records, especially prior to 1270, I caution against reading too much into the gap in time between Liu’s lifetime and the date of his first known biography. This first biography comes from the Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei, which was extracted from the Yuan yitong zhi and copied into the Gazetteer of Shuntian Superior Prefecture from the Yongle Era (Yongle Shuntian fu zhi, 永樂順天府志, henceforth referred to by its Chinese title). The Yuan yitong zhi exists only in fragments today, which do not include Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei. This makes it difficult to know whether the inscription as it exists today is the full or abridged text of the original inscription. Dated 1270, the record reads,

As for the original patriarch, it was Liu Deren, the Master without Worry. During the Jin Dading era [1161-1190], he received the sobriquet, “Daoist of the Eastern Peak.” He treated illness without using medicine; [instead] he lifted up his head and prayed to Heaven, and the sickness was always cured.
初祖，即劉德仁無憂子。金大定間，號東嶽先生。救病不用藥，仰面祝天而疾無不愈。68

Here we have a very brief list of vital information and the reason for Liu’s fame. The vital information is probably correct; at the least, it is consistent throughout the six inscriptions. The reason for Liu’s fame is interesting and consistent with what is known about Dadao practices; namely, that they eschewed forms of ritual healing such as talismans or sending petitions to the gods and common medicinal practices such as herbs, moxibustion and acupuncture. Instead, they preferred to rely on only prayer for healing. This account of Liu’s life, though brief, is extremely important as it is the only surviving record of Liu’s life from the Yuxu lineage of Dadao. Only two records from this lineage are extant, but it appears at least superficially that their image of Liu Deren did not vary from that of the better-documented Tianbao lineage.69

The second and third accounts of Liu’s life come from the Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji, dated 1275, and the Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji, dated 1278. Both inscriptions have the distinction of being written by a follower of the school and an Jin-dynasty metropolitan scholar (jinshi 進士), Du Chengkuan (杜成寬, fl. 1278). Both inscriptions are quite lengthy and provide important material on Dadao beliefs and practices unattested to elsewhere. In the earlier of the two inscriptions, the Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji, Du recounts the life of Liu Deren as follows.


69 See Chapter Five for a full description of the development of lineages within the school.
[Laozi] lowered himself and went up to the gate of the hermit, Mr. Liu, and passed on key teachings and methods. Through transcendents, [Laozi] bestowed scriptures, commanded [Liu] to take “Shanren” as his religious name, and caused Liu to expand the religion of the Great Way (dadao). As for this man, he served his mother with filial deeds. Showing his benevolent heart which wanted to save things, he moved the sagely Perfected to hand over this miraculous method. He used simplicity, embracing the unadorned, lessening thought, and reducing desire as the substance of the Dao which he established. These methods had the effect of expelling deviant [spirits], controlling illnesses, saving the living and redeeming the dead. He went over to the Mt. Gong cloister, where he bitterly contemplated and greatly manifested the awesome spirit to spread the teachings. He obtained the Baiyun Grotto stone tablet and then knew the karma of past generations. He treated the gentleman of Liang’s flourishing skin disease and quickly gained a reputation; he expelled a wicked fox [spirit] from the great gentleman Zhao and became famous. Within the home, he nourished the Dao for eighteen years. He wandered around practicing Daoism for twenty years, in the east connecting with Jin and Yi and in the north reaching Yan and Qi. All together, he spread [his teachings] and transformed [the people] for thirty-eight years. As for the people [he converted], none know their number.

【老子】屈登隱士劉公之門,傳以心法,授以仙經,命以善仁為法名,俾弘大道之宗教。是公也,有事母之孝行,攄濟物之仁心,致感聖真付此妙法,以見素,抱朴,少思,寡欲為立道之體,用除邪治病,濟生度死為開化之方。度恭山院冤思,而大章闡教之威神,得白雲洞石碣,而乃知宿世之因果。治梁子榮癩病而馳譽,除趙大郎妖狐而著名。在家養道者十八年,遊方行教者二十載,東連晉益北及燕齊,共闡化三十八年,其人莫知其數。75
This first account written by Du is very interesting, especially when contrasted with the second (below). Du begins his account with Laozi as the subject, who had set the world in harmony with the Dao in antiquity, but must now return into the world of men as it has strayed from the Dao again. The subject only shifts to Liu Deren after he receives key instructions from Laozi, who has recognized Liu’s virtue. He does not receive the *Daodejing* or any written texts from Laozi, but from other transcendents at Laozi’s behest.

The religious figure who has a chance meeting with divine figure who bestows special teachings and texts on him or her is just as much of a literary trope within Daoism as the unusual child who grows into a sage. Most, if not all, of the founders of new schools of Daoism, claimed to have received their texts, talismans, methods, etc. from a variety of divine beings. Among other examples, Zhang Daoling (張道陵, second century) claimed to have been visited by the deified Laozi and offered a sacred covenant when he started Tianshi Daoism; Yang Xi (楊羲, 330-386) claimed revelations from Wei Huacun within the Shangqing tradition; and Rao Dongtian (饒洞天, fl. 994) was guided by an unidentified transcendent to the texts and methods that became Tianxin zhengfa.

With his new knowledge, Liu travels around North China, engaging in exorcisms and healings in order to “save the living and cross over the dead.” He also engages in personal cultivation. The “bitter comtemplation” he engages in may refer to ascetic practices and mediation. Certainly, later Dadao patriarchs were known for practicing

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mediative retreats. Note that he does not found temples, train disciples, write commentaries on scriptures or receive revelations in this account.

Rather, the emphasis in the *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji* is on Liu as a healer and exorcist with supernatural abilities, which might seem a counterintuitive role for a Daoist sage based on the classical model of Laozi, but the two were closely connected in Song-Liao-Jin-Yuan period. While exorcism had been a part of the Daoist priest’s repertoire since the Tianshi (天師) school in the late Han, in the Song a new class of lay Daoist ritual masters (*fashi* 法師) developed. As Edward Davis has described, these Daoist ritual masters were “traveling exorcist[s] serving an elite, urban clientele.” Exorcisms were a common method of treating illness in pre-modern China, but the Song urban elite who employed the ritual masters no longer connected illness to sin but to rogue demons who were exploiting a minor deity’s failure to act. Additionally, such exorcisms often blurred the line between local cultic practice and established Daoist or Buddhist practices. Some exceptionally popular local exorcistic movements such as

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76 The twelfth Tianbao patriarch was in a mediatative retreat when the Hanlin scholar Wu Cheng came to visit him. As a result, Wu was turned away by the gate attendant. Later, when the patriarch heard Wu had come to call, the patriarch went to call on Wu at the Hanlin Academy where the gate attendant failed to recognize the patriarch and refused him entry. See Yu Ji, “Refined Illustrated Poems of Wu and Zhang Wu, Zhang zhi gaofeng 吳張之高風圖詩,” in Yu Ji, *Yu Ji Quan ji* 厚集全集, ed. Wang Ting 王頤 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2007), 524. Yu Ji also refers to this event in the *Stele of the Eighth Patriarch of the Zhen dadao school, the Loftily Mysterious and Broadly Transforming Perfected* (*Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei* 第八崇玄廣化真人岳公之碑), lines 14-15, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 830.


78 Ibid, 41-43. See also 45-66.
Tianxin zhengfa (天心正法) and the cult of Zhenwu were incorporated into Daoism during the Song, moving from the periphery of religious practice to widespread acceptance. Numerous texts on “inspecting and summoning” (kaozhao 考召) spirits of all kinds, written in the ninth through thirteenth centuries and now preserved in the Daoist canon, also testify that the Daoist orthodoxy of the time had a deep interest in controlling malevolent entities. Davis notes that Wang Wenqing (王文卿, 1093-1153) and Lu Shizong (路時中, fl.1120-1130) both started as fashi and went on to play pivotal roles in establishing new schools of Daoism. In short, while the overall image of Liu is not a classical Daoist sage in the model of Laozi or Zhuangzi, he is presented as someone his contemporaries would easily recognize as an accomplished Daoist in the popular vein.

Du’s second account of Liu’s life reads much like a pared-down version of the first; however, the encounter with Laozi is given much more detail and Liu’s supernatural abilities are mostly skipped over. This shifts the emphasis to what Liu Deren did to why and how he was able to do it. From the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*,

My patriarch, the Perfected of the Eastern Marchmount, Lord Liu, was born and dwelled in Cangzhou on the northern border of Laoling county. In the beginning, he loved and respectfully served his mother and established himself in the world with purity and quiescence. Because he could rectify his mind and preserve its true form, he moved the sagely master to descend [from the heavens]. Again [the sagely master] rode a black calf and came to Liu’s house. [The sagely master] gave Liu the cardinal tenets [of the *Daodejing*] and handed him a brush to copy scriptures, which caused him to give rise to the correct teachings of the Great Way (Dadao), in order to redeem the common people of the final age of the world. As for his teachings, he rooted them in seeing the pure and embracing the simple, lessening his thoughts and having few desires; sustaining them by emptying the

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79 Ibid, 54. Wang represented the *Shenxiao* (神霄) school at Huizong’s court after the founder lost favor. Wang also wrote several texts on Thunder Rites (*leifa* 雷法) included in the Daoist canon. Lu founded the Yutang dafa (玉堂大法) school, which is closely related to the much better-known Tianxin zhengfa school. He is also the author of several texts in the canon.
mind and filling the belly, guarding his qi and nourishing his body gods, to the point that his virtue flourished and his efforts were complete. Then was he able to save the living and cross over the dead. Through the absence of action, he ensured his allotted lifespan [was reaches]; through the absence of attributes, he expelled demons and commanded gods. He spread his teachings for thirty-eight years and lived in the world for fifty-nine years.

Stripped of its supernatural miracle stories, the focus now turns to Liu’s ascetic practices. Asceticism has a long history of being practiced within Daoism, but it seems to have taken on special importance during the Jin dynasty as two of the three new schools of Daoism, Dadao and Quanzhen, featured ascetic practices prominently. The early Quanzhen masters were well-known for their extreme ascetic practices and brutal discipline. According to traditional dating, the new Northern schools were all started during the constant warring between the Jin and the Southern Song, which had left the population utterly impoverished. Monks who accumulated material wealth in such a time

80 Allusion to Daodejing 3.

81 Zongsheng 宗乘 was originally a Buddhist term, but by the Song it had been appropriated by Daoists.

82 Record of the Reconstruction of Xiantian Palace on Mt. Gou in Luojing (Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji 落京緱山改建先天宮記), lines 12-16 in Chen Yuan, Daojia jinshi lüe 道家金石略 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe), 1988, 818.

83 The third school, Taiyi, also included ascetic practices, but it does not seem to have accorded them the same prominence as the two other schools.

84 See for example, Wang Chongyang’s training of Ma Danyang, Qiu Chuji, Tan Changzhen, and Wang Yuyang in Hachiya Kunio, Kindai dôkyô no kenkyû: Ô Chôyô to Ba Tanyô 金代道教の研究－王重陽と馬丹陽 (Tokyo: Kyûko shoin), 1992, 94-103.
would have looked gallingly insensitive to the suffering of the people around them. Such image problems would have been particularly concerning for new religions trying to attract converts. Additionally, conservative Confucian attitudes left over from the Northern Song may have added another layer of disapproval from the official class, who had a complex relationship with institutionalized monasticism and who occasionally launched polemics against Buddhist monks and, to a lesser extent, Daoist monks. A common trope dating to the introduction of Buddhism in the late Han dynasty was of monastics as parasites on society, who took much from the people but provided nothing in return. The Song literatus Huang Tingjian (黃庭堅, 1045-1105) summed up many of his contemporaries’ attitudes writing, “Generally, [Buddhists] have the property of a myriad households of the common people; truly they are parasites on the common people’s grain and cloth. 蓋中民萬家之產，實生民穀帛之蠹。” Dadao appears to have been especially attuned to this concern, being the only Daoist school of the time to insist that monastics support themselves through their own labor.

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85 Mark Halperin has written extensively on the relationship between Buddhists and Song literati, arguing that the connections between the two were both stronger and took on new forms during the period. See Mark Halperin, Out of the Cloister: Literati Perspectives on Buddhism in Sung China, 960-1279 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center), 2006. Even the formidably Confucian Zhu Xi, who otherwise had some very harsh criticisms of Buddhism and Daoism, prayed at Buddhist and Daoist temples and even sponsored ritual sacrifices to Buddhist and Daoist deities as a local official trying to alleviate drought. See Chen Xi and Hoyt Tillman, “Ghost, Gods, and the Ritual Practice of Local Officials During the Song: With a Focus on Zhu Xi in Nankang Prefecture,” Journal of Song-Yuan Studies 44 (2014): 291-327.

Liu is also portrayed as having the ability to heal and save people as the result of his self-cultivation efforts. In the *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*, these seem to come as the result of his study of the *Daodejing*. His more advanced self-cultivation efforts are undertaken in between or even alongside Liu’s work as a healer. Thus, in the *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*, the internal process of self-cultivation is intertwined with external manifestations of spiritual powers. However, in the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*, Liu’s abilities as a healer are specifically the final result of his self-cultivation. It is only because his efforts were complete, only because his virtue was flourishing—in other words, because he was one with the Dao—that he is then able to save the living and redeem the dead. External manifestations only come after unity with the Dao is achieved, not while the refining process is still on-going.

In the second of the two accounts written by Du Chengkuan, we see more of the trappings of a typical Chinese-style biography. The reader is told where Liu is from, given a description of this youth, the reason for his fame, and a description of him as a person. Young Liu is presented in the guise of both a filial son and as someone about whom something is unusual, foreshadowing his abilities as a religious leader. Because both texts specify the object of his filial piety was his mother, it has generally been assumed that he lost his father at a young age since if both parents were living the text would more likely use the gender-neutral “parent(s),” *qin* (親), or the more inclusive term for parents, *fumu* (父母). Whether Liu actually was a filial son or unusual as a child is irrelevant, it is how he was *expected* to have behaved, based on his later accomplishments.
Overall, the image from Du’s second biography of Liu is one of a Daoist sage in the classical model. Detached from mundane affairs, he maintains his original Dao nature, which is confirmed by divine visitors. He is the keeper of the Dao for this age, who guides the people through his example. Whereas in the first biography, Liu was portrayed as a healer and thus a special individual; here his self-cultivation and spiritual detachment are the main focus. His abilities to assist others are merely a manifestation of the spiritual power he has come to possess through the cultivation of the Dao within himself. Both accounts agree on key points such as where Liu was from, the visit from Laozi, Liu’s skills which allowed him to “save the living and cross over the dead,” and the length of his practice; however, the shift in Du’s two biographies of Liu in emphasis away from Liu’s healing and exorcistic powers and towards his self-cultivation mirrors a broader shift in portrayals of Liu Deren as will be seen below.

The fourth account of Liu Deren’s life comes from the *Chongxiu Longyang gong* bei dated 1291.

[When] the founder of Zhen dadao, the Master without Worry taught his followers, he used clothing only sufficient to cover his form, not esteeming the flowery or beautiful [as] his eyes did not covet color. His prayers did not have the accompaniment of bells or drums [as] his ears did not covet noise.

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87 Why Du shifted his portrayal is unclear. Both inscriptions were composed close in time and in order to commemorating the restoration of an abbey.

88 A criticism of Buddhism, but also other Daoists who had incorporated the Buddhists’ instruments into their worship. The Jin-dynasty Daoist Sun Mingdao (孙明道, fl. 1190) had lamented the inclusion of such bells and drums in Daoist services and won an imperial prohibition against their use. See the *Stele of the Great Sacrifice for Universal Salvation which Moved [the Gods] to Respond at the Great Tianchang Abbey of the Ten Directions in Zhongdu* (Zhongdu shifang Da Tianchang guan Putian dajiao ganying bei 中都十方大天長觀普天大醮感應碑) and the *Record of the Auspicious Response to the Great Sacrifice for Universal Salvation at the Great Tianchang Abbey of the Ten Directions* (Shifang Da Tianchang guan Putian dajiao ruiying ji 十方大天長觀普天大醮瑞應記).
food, he cut off the five kinds of forbidden foods,\(^8^9\), [as] his mouth did not covet flavor. To support life, he took farming and sericulture to be his enterprise, [as] his four limbs did not covet comfort. Extremely fine things he did not beg from people, [as] his feelings did not covet addicting desires. Now, being this, his mind was at peace, secluded and detached, [in?] unvoiced agreement with the abstract principles of the Most High. Thus was his Zhen dadao lineage!

The master’s surname was Liu, his taboo name was Shanren, [and] he was from Laoling county in Cangzhou. He was born in Bianliang under the Song on the eighteenth day of the first month of spring in the fourth year of the Xuanhe era.\(^9^0\) His father died when he was young; he did not like gathering with other children to play. If he saw crickets or ants, he avoided them and did not walk on them. On the jiwang\(^9^1\) day of the eleventh month of winter in the second year of the Huangtong era of the Jin, around dawn, there was an old man whose beard and eyebrows were bright white who arrived riding in a cart drawn by a blue calf. It was like a dream, but it was not a dream. Consequently, [the old man] bestowed the oral teachings of the mysterious and marvelous Dao and left; [Liu] did not know what they were. From then on, villagers who were sick would come from far and near, requesting treatment. Talismans, medicine, acupuncture and moxibustion were not used. The healing effect was like shadow and echo to them. He instructed his followers on the precepts and monastic law. All in an instant did not forget and obeyed them. Reaching the seventh year of the Dading era, he was awarded the sobriquet of “Lord of the Eastern Peak.”\(^9^2\) On the jiwang of the middle month of spring in the twelfth year of the Dading era, the master paid obeisance to the great void and peacefully passed away.\(^9^3\)

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\(^8^9\) Lit. “the five pungent vegetables,” referring to garlic, leeks, shallots, green onions, and xingqu (asafoetida?). Here, I believe the term is being used in the broader sense of “forbidden foods.”

\(^9^0\) May 25, 1122. Laoling is some five hundred kilometers north of Bianliang in Shandong.

\(^9^1\) The jiwang (即望) day is the sixteenth day of the month, so the revelation was received around December 4, 1142.

\(^9^2\) 1167.

\(^9^3\) May 10, 1172.
Immediately, the basic vital information about Liu Deren in this stele inscription is vastly more detailed than that in the previous ones. It gives his taboo name of Shanren (善仁), not his religious name of Deren (德仁) which all but one of the other accounts use.95 He was born in the Song capital of Bianliang, though his family traced its ancestry to Laoling in Cangzhou. Laoling is north of Bianliang, which suggests Liu’s family may have been forced to take refuge in Bianliang by the Jurchen invasion pressing down from the north. If this is true, it may explain why the Bianliang circuit seems to have had so much Dadao activity. Twenty-one of the seventy-seven known Dadao institutions were in the Bianliang circuit, compared to nine in Dadu circuit, where the school was based. Additionally, Liu is given birth and death dates and his father is explicitly stated to have died with Liu was young.

Whether any of the information cited here is true is questionable. A date around 1121/1122 is usually accepted for the founding patriarch’s birth and 1180/1181 for his death.96 However, his death date is listed here as 1172. The oldest record of the transmission of the patriarchate is the *Stele of the Transmission of the Dadao Patriarchate at Yuxu Abbey* (*Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei* 玉虛觀大道祖師傳授隻碑).

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94 *Restoration of Longyang Palace* (*Chongxiu Longyang gong bei* 重修龍陽宮碑), lines 14-22 in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 823.

95 *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji* gives Liu’s name as “Shanren,” but explicitly states it was his religious name (*faming* 法名), not his taboo name as here.

96 See, for example, Qing Xitai’s entry on Liu Deren in *Zhongguo Daojiao*. 
傳授之碑) erected in 1270. Unusually, it gives no date for the transmission of the patriarchate from Liu Deren to the second patriarch, Chen Shizheng, though it gives the dates of almost all of the other transmissions up to its date of composition.\textsuperscript{97} I believe the traditional dates given for Liu Deren have been generated by accepting the date of birth and visitation given here, then adding the numbers given in the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji* (proselytizing for thirty-eight years, living for fifty-nine total). This method of reckoning age, of course, completely ignores the death date given in the *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei*, while it unquestioningly accepts the other dates given.

More profitable than trying to figure out whether the given dates are accurate is to examine why the dates were given. Of all the accounts of Liu Deren’s life, this is the only account to include his secular name and exact dates—and it does that for his birth, death, and his visitation from Laozi. It also gives the exact year—though not day—that he received the title “Perfect” and his sobriquet from the Emperor Shizong. It is likely these precise details were added to give a veneer of historicity to account. In my opinion, this was the “official biography” of Liu adopted by the Tianbao lineage.

Both the eighth and twelfth patriarchs of the Tianbao lineage seem to have had a keen interest in how past patriarchs were remembered. According to the summary of the *Stele on the Establishment of Tianbao Palace [from the Great Yuan Dynasty]* ([Da Yuan] *chuangjian Tianbao gong bei* [大元創建天寶宮碑]) in the *Yuan yitong zhi*, after Li Qian composed an inscription commemorating the awarding of the posthumous titles of “Perfected” to the first four Dadao patriarchs, the eighth patriarch, Yue Dewen (岳德文, 1235-1299) asked him to record a history of the Tianbao Palace in Dadu and its lineage.

\textsuperscript{97} The other exception is the date of transmission from the third patriarch to the fourth.
Li Qian appears to have been uninterested, for the *Yuan yitong zhi* states that Yue pressed his case again a year later with Wang Zhigang, another member of the Hanlin Academy, which resulted in the aforementioned *[Da Yuan] chuangjian Tianbao gong bei.*98 The twelfth patriarch, Zhang Qingzhi (張清志, d. 1327/28), in addition to producing more than ten copies of his own biography, also commissioned additional biographies of the first, fifth, and eighth patriarchs. His interest likely stems from the succession struggle within the Tianbao lineage that will be discussed in chapter four. The *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei* inscription was composed during the time of Sun Defu (孙德福, 1218-1273), the seventh patriarch. Perhaps he too shared the eighth and twelfth patriarch’s interest in historiography. Given the paucity of materials from the early period of the school, this sense of concern for the school’s past may have arisen from interactions with Quanzhen Daoists who, as Pierre Marsone has convincingly argued, were interested from the beginning in recording and controlling their school’s history.99

In all three cases, however, the patriarchs’ overarching interest is in connecting the present with the past. Thus, while we can’t be sure that the practices ascribed to Liu Deren in the third account of his life reflect the historical reality of his teachings, we can be certain they reflect the Dadao school’s practices at the time each inscription was composed, though probably in an idealized form.

The fifth account of Liu Deren’s life comes from the *Tianbao gong bei* (1326), *Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei* (1328), and *[Daming guan] Zhen

98 *Stele on the Establishment of Tianbao Palace from the Great Yuan Dynasty (Da Yuan chuangjian Tianbao gong bei) in Yongle Shuntian fu zhi, 7:53b-54a.*

dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei (1334). All three accounts are copies of the same inscription honoring the twelfth patriarch, Zhang Qingzhi, on the occasion of his retirement as patriarch.\textsuperscript{100} The original is the 1326 stele; however, it was destroyed during the Ming and the copy of the inscription which has been preserved shows signs of later editing when compared with the two other copies.\textsuperscript{101} The Tianbao gong bei account of Liu Deren’s biography appears to have been largely based on the account of Liu’s life given in the Chongxiu Longyang gong bei, which further supports my belief that it was intended to be the official version of Liu Deren’s life. From the Tianbao gong bei,

There was the founding patriarch Liu, who shunned the common and became a monk. He cut off sexual desires [and] abandoned alcohol and meat. [He] diligently labored in agriculture to provide clothing and food for himself [and] was able to endure hardship and suffering. Simple, frugal, compassionate, and sympathetic, his intent was to benefit all living creatures. In keeping the precepts, he was strict and clear in his distinctions. In a short period, he was uniformly considered to be the founder [of the Dadao school].

\textsuperscript{100} Either this retirement was short-lived or Zhang passed on the patriarchate in title only, for he appears to control the school’s affairs for at least another three years. Of the more than ten steles containing Zhang’s biography which were erected, three are still extant: the Tianbao gong bei, the Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei, and the [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei. The Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei was re-discovered in Dongping county in 2003. A rubbing also exists and is preserved in the National Library in Beijing. Both the stele and the rubbing are incomplete, so it is necessary to compare both texts in order to recover the complete inscription. The [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei was still extant in Fenyang county (now Fenyang city) in 1935, when Wang Yuchang recorded it in his collection, Fenyang xian jinshi lei bian, but is no longer. Wang’s collection was re-published in 2000 and the Daming stele inscriptions specifically were published a third time in 2011 by Zhao Jianyong, who hoped to raise awareness of Wang’s work among modern scholars.

\textsuperscript{101} The most obvious example is the Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei, and the [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei refer to the deaths of patriarchs using polite euphemisms such as “shed his body and ascended to the Transcendents” (jiezhen 解真) and the Tianbao gong bei uses the much blunter and impolite “died” (si 死).
From the *Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei*,

“There was the founding patriarch, Liu Deren. Originally his sobriquet was the Perfected Without Worry who Universally Saves, which was increased to The Perfected Lord Without Worry who Universally Saves and Perfectly Understands the Abstruse. Because he embodied the qualities of the *Daodejing*, he emptied his mind and filled his belly, [missing character] speaking of being enlightened to the true and spreading the teachings. [He] cut off sexual desires [and] abstained from alcohol and meat. [He] diligently labored in agriculture. In keeping the precepts, he was strict and clear in his distinctions. In a short period, he was uniformly considered to be the founder.”

From the *[Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei,*

“There was the founding patriarch Liu, who shunned the common and became a monk. He cut off sexual desires [and] abandoned alcohol and meat. [He] diligently farmed to provide clothing and food for himself [and] was able to endure hardship and suffering. Simple, frugal, compassionate, and sympathetic, his intent was to benefit all living creatures. In keeping the precepts, he was strict and clear in his distinctions. In a short period, he was uniformly considered to be the founder.”

As the reader can see, the first and third copies are identical, while the second inserts Liu’s full name, titles, his status as enlightened, and his intent to teach. It is not clear why the author of *Yaodi yanshou* Palace copy chose to deviate from the original Tianbao

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102 *Tianbao gong bei*, lines 2-3 in *Daojia jinshi liüe*, 827.

103 Reconstructed text of the *Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei*, lines 6-7 in Appendix C.

Palace stele, but the added material probably explains why the phrase “his intent was to benefit all living creatures” is omitted since it is now redundant.

Asceticism, physical labor, and strict observance of the monastic precepts is emphasized in both inscriptions and the language clearly echoes that found in the *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei*. However, unlike earlier inscriptions, his ability to cure illness, his visitation by Laozi and receiving instruction from the *Daodejing*, or his unusual nature from birth are unmentioned. By downplaying anything extraordinary or innately unusual, Liu Deren is presented here in the guise of an ordinary monk. Liu’s being a monk is not seen in earlier inscriptions, nor is it included in Song Lian’s lengthy biography, discussed on the next page.

The author of the accounts, Wu Cheng (吳澄, 1249-1333), may have chosen to depict Liu Deren as a monk to provide a model for the monastics within Dadao abbeys to follow. Be diligent in keeping the precepts and separating from the material world and you too may achieve great enlightenment. It is important to remember that these biographies of Liu were included as parts of a larger biography of the twelfth Tianbao patriarch, Zhang Qingzhi. Wu Cheng was a close friend of Zhang Qingzhi, who claimed to be the reincarnation of Liu. It is possible that Wu, knowing his friend’s claim, may have projected the virtues and practices of the twelfth Tianbao patriarch—who certainly started his career as a monk—back onto Liu Deren.

However, there may be another reason for Liu Deren to be presented as a monastic model at this time. Later in his biography, Zhang Qingzhi is quoted as complaining about how the previous three patriarchs handled issues within the school, especially the issue of monastic discipline.
“Our teaching takes compassion, frugality, and non-action as treasures, [but] now [adepts] hear lawsuits and establish of harsh punishments as if they are legal officials. Is our teaching really to be like this? From now on, as for all the tools of punishment, we completely abandon them.’ [...] Since this [admonition], the adepts have been at peace and harm ceased; five years of abuse in one day was all swept away.”

我和以慈儉無為為寶，今聽獄訟，設刑滅若有司然。吾教果如是乎？繼今以始，凡桎梏鞭笞之具盡廢之。自是眾安害息。五年宿弊，一旦悉除。105

If we take this account at face value, monastic discipline had been enforced by the previous three patriarchs through physical punishment. This was common in the Quanzhen school and may have be adopted from them. Zhang Qingzhi, however, felt this was contrary to the school’s teachings and is credited with restoring discipline through exhortation and his own moral example. In such a situation, it is easy to see why Zhang would have wanted Liu Deren depicted as a monastic model in accounts of his life, rather than the extraordinary person he had previously been portrayed as, and asked Wu Cheng to describe Liu Deren accordingly.

The sixth and final account of Liu Deren’s life is the longest and fullest. It is a stand-alone biography written by Song Lian (宋濂, 1310-1381), a notable literatus of the fourteenth century, and included in his work, The Collected Works of Song Scholars (Song xueshi quan ji, 宋學士全集, new edition 1550). Song is best-known as the editor of the Yuanshi and his mentor Liu Guan (柳貫, 1270-1342) wrote the letter of investiture raising Liu Deren’s title from Perfected to Perfected Lord.106 His account, believed to have been written in the 1350s, reads as follows.

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105 Tianbao gong bei, lines 2-4, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 827.

106 See the Edict Posthumously Advancing the Zhen dadao founder, the Perfected who is Without Worry and Universally Saves, Liu Deren, to the Rank to Perfected Lord (Zhen dadao jiao zushi wu you qi zhenren Liu Deren jiafeng zhenjun 真大道教祖師-無大教主鎮奉真君).
The Perfected Liu Deren was a native of Laoling in Cangzhou. When he was born, there were rays which shone on his dwelling. As he grew older, he would read books, vaguely understanding the main points. Encountering the disorder of the Jingkang era of the Song, he moved his residence to Daping village in Yanshan. [When] one day, he arose around dawn, there was an old man riding in a calf-drawn cart who passed him. [The old man] plucked out the Essential Sayings of the Daodejing and bestowed it on Liu, saying, “Understand [this book] well and you will be able to cultivate yourself and transform the people.” Then he tossed him a writing brush and left. From this point on, Liu’s study of the abstruse suddenly advanced. Those who followed him were multitudinous.

The Perfected [Liu] took the book which he was given and laid out its meaning in order to show others: the first said see others as like yourself; do not let sprout an injurious and intensely angry heart. The second said be loyal to one’s lord, filial to one’s parents, and honest to others. Let your words have no flowery speech, let your mouth have no evil words. The third said, sweep away the depraved and licentious, protect the pure and tranquil. The fourth said keep distant power and profit, be content with riches or poverty, labor at plowing in order to eat, [and] live within your means. The fifth said do not gamble or play go; do not practice theft or robbery. The sixth was do not drink alcohol or eat alliaceous foods; in attire and food, take sufficiency the limit. Do not be proud or full of one’s self. The seventh was to empty the mind and weaken your amibition, “match their radiance and share their dust,” be inconspicuous and humble. The eighth is do not rely on the powerful and influential; be modest and respectful and thus radiant. The ninth says to be content with one’s lot is to not be 

107 In present-day Hebei.

108 The “disorder of the Jingkang era” refers to the taking of Kaifeng by the Jurchen Jin and marks the end of the Northern Song dynasty.

109 A neighboring county, still in Cangzhou.

110 To “match their radiance and share their dust 和光同塵” is a quote from Zhang Huan’s biography in the History of Later Han (Hou Han shu, 後漢書), 65: 2143.

111 This is drawn from the Daodejing 4 and 56. The full phrase is “和其光, 同其塵.”

112 This is a quote from the Tuan commentary on Yijing 15. The full line is “謙尊而光, 卑而不可踰.”
disgraced, knowing when to stop is to not be endangered.\textsuperscript{113} Those who study [this] have spread it to the world and abide by them.

At the beginning of the Dading era of the Jin dynasty, he was summoned to dwell in the capital at Tianchang Palace and was awarded the sobriquet of “the Perfected of the Eastern Marchmount.”\textsuperscript{114} Those who transmitted his way covered nearly the entire state. Moreover, he was skilled at the art of “accusing and summoning.” A Mr. Zhao was possessed by a fox spirit. The Perfected laid an accusation against the fox spirit and the cemetery in Zhao’s village began to burn spontaneously. Several hundred foxes went crying into the fire and perished. People then especially considered [Liu] divine. This being the case, he still supported his mother as ritual dictated and when she died, he mourned and sacrificed in accordance with teachings of the time and without error. Later, after a certain number of years, they conferred upon him the posthumous title of “The Without Worry and Universally Saving Perfected who Perfectly Understands the Abstruse.”

The opening presentation of Liu Deren in this account is fairly formulaic. We’re told that brilliant rays--a sign of a sage--accompanied his birth and that he was literate, but not very educated. Song Lian uses these tropes to both foreshadow what the reader already knows (the rays at Liu’s birth mean he’ll become a sage) and to subvert the reader’s expectations (Liu can read, but not well enough to fully understand what he’s reading). This literary technique heightens the drama of Liu’s ultimate mastery of the \textit{Daodejing}.

\textsuperscript{113} This is a quote from the \textit{Daodejing} 44, “知足不辱, 知止不殆, 可以長久.”

\textsuperscript{114} The Dading era was from 1161-1190. Tianchang Palace was the forerunner of the present-day Baiyun Abbey in Beijing.

\textsuperscript{115} \textit{Shu Liu zhenren shi} in \textit{Daojia jinshi lüe}, 835-836.
The gift of the writing brush--mentioned in the second account as well--implies Liu was expected to produce sacred texts, but there are no surviving scriptures, commentary, poetry or any other form of literature attributed to him.\textsuperscript{116} This absence of writings by Liu, in conjunction with the fact that most accounts specify Liu received oral instruction for the Lord Lao and the fact that no scriptures survive from the school, suggest Liu may have primarily transmitted his teachings orally. In fact, it is not until the third patriarch, Zhang Xinzhen (張信真, 1164-1218), that a Dadao patriarch or master is credited with any writings. Zhang Xinzhen’s writings supposedly filled hundreds of folios which had been handed down until Song Lian’s time.\textsuperscript{117} Zhang Xinzhen’s disciples and grand-disciples at Dadu Tianbao Palace also produced a number of texts “in imitation of their master (\textit{zunshi} 遵師).”\textsuperscript{118}

Regardless of whether Liu’s work was lost or never existed, Song Lian is probably using a trope when he refers to the gift of the writing brush. As the founder of a school of Daoism, Liu would have expected by the reader to have produced texts and indeed, the following paragraph dutifully records the nine precepts laid out by Liu Deren. Interestingly, Song Lian’s account is the only version in which Liu actually receives the written text of the \textit{Daodejing} from the Lord Lao.

\textsuperscript{116} Barend ter Haar has suggested that the \textit{Ledger of Merits and Demerits of the Transcendent Lord of Taiwei} (Taiwei xianjun gongguo ge 太微仙君功過格) may have been written by Liu; however, given that the ledger awards merits for the use of moxibustion, acupuncture, and medicinal herbs to cure sickness in others, it seems unlikely that the text was written by Liu. See B.J. ter Haar, “Review of \textit{The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit: Social Change and Moral Order in Late Imperial China} by Cynthia J. Brokaw,” \textit{T’oung Pao} 2nd ser. 79, no. 1-3 (1993): 160-167.

\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Shu Liu zhenren shi}, line 11 in \textit{Daojia jinshi lüe}, 836.

\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Yuan yitong zhi}, quoted in “Tianbao gong,” \textit{Yongle Shuntian fu zhi} 7:55a.
The image of Liu up to this point in the biography has been very much in keeping with a benevolent sage. He’s officially recognized and sanctioned by the government through summoning to the capital and the awarding of a sobriquet. His Dao (“way”) has spread through all of China. Then the biography pivots to showcase Liu Deren’s exorcistic abilities with the anecdote about the fox spirit possessing a certain Mr. Zhao.

Fox spirits are very common in Chinese folklore and literature, dating back at least to the Eastern Han dynasty. They often take human form and are considered quite dangerous, though not inherently evil. They are closely associated with ghosts and thus may make their homes in graveyards, as do the fox-spirits in this story. The attribution of exorcistic abilities to Liu is not new; Du Chengkuan wrote about them extensively in the *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji* and Liu’s ability to “order about demons and gods” was also mentioned in the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*. But the sheer scale of the exorcism in biography by Song Lian is vastly more impressive.

When Liu rightfully recognizes Zhao is possessed by a fox spirit, Liu not only exorcises the fox-spirit from Zhao, but exorcises fox-spirits from the entire village by causing the village cemetery to spontaneously erupt in flame. Hundreds of foxes cry and howl before immolating themselves in the fire. This extraordinary display of supernatural power made a deep impression. “People then especially considered [Liu] divine.” Perhaps this exorcism marks the moment when Liu Deren achieved widespread fame. When Du Chengkuan mentions the exorcism of Mr. Zhao in the *Chuangjian Daming guan geng*

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119 See Kang Xiaofei, *The Cult of the Fox: Power, Gender, and Popular Religion in Late Imperial and Modern China* (New York: Columbia University, 2006), 17-43 and 73-78. She cites several Tang anecdotes of fox spirits living in graveyards from the *Taiping guangji*. The topic is also covered more briefly in Rania Huntington, *Alien Kind: Foxes and Late Imperial Chinese Narrative* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003).
Shangqing gong ji, he writes that the event made Liu famous. It is even possible that the fuller account which Song Lian provides may record a well-known tale in popular circulation at the time. After Song Lian relates the story of Mr. Zhao’s possession, he immediately turns to a decidedly Confucian theme of filial piety. This underscores the orthodoxy of Liu Deren’s teachings and methods. He was acted with propriety; his way is not deviant (xie 邪), nor his practices are illicit (yin 淫).

The biography of Liu Deren written by Song Lian is the only account of Liu’s life written for a non-religious audience. The other accounts were all meant to be read by either monastics or those who visited the abbeys and perhaps could be induced into membership in the Dadao school. In contrast, Song Lian’s account was probably written with the intent of promoting Liu posthumously to a high rank. As such, it may have been prepared as part of the memorial to raise Liu from a Perfected (zhenren 真人) to a Perfected Lord (zhenjun 真君). This means Song Lian could have written Shu Liu zhenren shi no later than 1342, as Liu Guan who wrote the edict raising Liu’s rank to Perfected Lord died that year. If Shu Liu zhenren shi was in fact written in the 1350s, it suggests there may have been an attempt to further enhance Liu Deren’s posthumous honors in the Dadao school’s twilight years.

The information contained in these six accounts has generally gone unchallenged since their respective dates of composition. Modern scholars have accepted the Dadao school was founded in 1142 by Liu Deren who, after receiving either a copy of or oral instructions about the Daodejing from Laozi, began to preach a syncretic belief system rooted in Daoism to the neighboring areas. As was demonstrated in the previous pages, this is by no means certain historical fact, despite its wide acceptance. In fact, there is
actually nothing to tie the Dadao school to Liu Deren beyond lineage listings in later inscriptions. There’s no accounts of Liu founding temples, writing scriptures or commentaries on scriptures, and he trains only one disciple: the second Dadao Patriarch, surnamed Chen. Even the earliest stele linking Liu to Dadao, *Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei*, is uncharacteristically vague on the first two generations of the school. It gives the date for all of the transmissions of the Law for all of the patriarchs except from Liu Deren to Patriarch Chen, and from Zhang Xinzhen to Mao Xicong (毛希琮, 1186-1223/1227).

Indeed, it is not until Zhang Xinzhen, the third Dadao patriarch, that I find a likely candidate for the founder of the Dadao school. A zealous missionary and a prolific writer, Zhang Xinzhen behaves much more consistently like a founder of a religious school than Liu Deren. While the first and second Dadao patriarchs only have one known disciple each, Zhang Xinzhen has multiple disciples mentioned in the preserved inscriptions. The fourth and both of the fifth patriarchs were his disciples, as well as the abbots Liu Xixiang 刘希祥 and Xing Xide 林希德. Multiple disciples and written texts are necessary elements to both organize and propagate a religious institution. According to the *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*, by the time of Zhang Xinzhen’s  

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120 The only information on the second patriarch comes from Song Lian, who says the second patriarch, a Chen Shizheng 陈師正, was a fisherman on the Yellow River before Liu Deren brought him into the Dao. The Yuxu lineage inscriptions state his name was Chen Zhenglun 陈正論. His only known disciple was the third patriarch. See Shu Liu zhenren shi, lines 10-11, in Daojia jinshi lie, 836.

121 Zhang Xinzhen’s other disciples probably include Li Ximao 李希茂, Niu Xixian 牛希仙, Yan Xihe 阮希和, Zhao Xisong 赵希松, and Zhao Xiyuan 赵希元.
death, “his followers and adepts were eighteen thousand people.” A solely oral tradition handed down from a master to a single disciple or even a small group of disciples would not have been sufficient to spread the Dadao teachings to that large of a number of people in space of twenty-five years. Additionally, oral transmissions are unreliable, as anyone who has ever played “Telephone” knows. It is possible that Liu Deren could have been the originator of the teachings and methods used by the Dadao school, but it was Zhang Xinzhen who created the school itself.

It was his disciples—if not him personally—that established Dadu (Beijing) as the school’s headquarters. According to the Yuan yitong zhi, it was Zhang Xinzhen’s disciple, Liu Xixiang, who took over the Tianbao Palace in Dadu in 1227. Liu Xixiang repaired the abbey, which had been damaged by fire, and expanded it. The Dadu Tianbao temple would later become the headquarters of the Tianbao lineage. Even earlier, Li Ximao 李希茂 appears to have brought Wuwei Abbey in Dadu under Dadao auspices prior to 1215, though the evidence that Li Ximao was connected to Zhang Xinzhen remains circumstantial. Zhang Xizhen probably also introduced the generational naming system to the school, where adepts of the same generation and master all had

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122 Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji, line 24, in Fenyang xian jinshi lei bian, 313.

123 Although Liu stayed at Tianchang Abbey in the capital in 1167, there is no reason to assume he stayed until his death. Tianchang Abbey was used by Jin Shizong as an imperial institution to house Daoists invited to court. As such, the roster was constantly changing. Based on Quanzhen sources, Daoists seem to have stayed from several months to a year.

124 Yuan yitong zhi, quoted in Yongle Shuntian fu zhi 7:54.

125 See the Remnant of the Stele at Wuwei Abbey (Wuwei guan can bei 無為觀殘碑), in Daojia jinshi lüe, 836.
names that started with the same character. All disciples of the third patriarch have religious names that start with the character 希 (xi); all of the disciples of the fifth patriarch have religious names that start with the character 德 (de) and so on.

Traditionally, religious names were given through lineage poems, but it is unknown if the Dadao school followed this practice since no lineage poems have been associated with the school.

It is, of course, purely speculative on my part that Zhang Xinzhen was the true founder of the Dadao school, but it explains why no school is associated with Liu Deren in contemporary accounts, why the second patriarch is so unknown, and most importantly, why the school was not banned in the first years of Jin Zhangzong’s reign along with Quanzhen and Taiyi as would have been expected if the school had in fact started with Liu--it didn’t exist yet!\textsuperscript{126}

Details of Zhang Xinzhen’s life are not as abundant as Liu Deren’s. Only one, partial inscription from before 1270 that is confirmed to be from the Dadao school is extant, the Remnant of the Stele at Wuwei Abbey (Wuwei guan can bei 無為觀殘碑).\textsuperscript{127} Unlike later steles, it does not recite the patriarchal lineage. As is usual for information

\textsuperscript{126} Quanzhen was banned in 1190, Taiyi was banned in 1191. See \textit{Jinshi} 9: 216 and 219.

\textsuperscript{127} There are two other inscriptions known to have been composed before 1270, the \textit{Record of Repairing the Hall of the Three Clarities in Yuxu Abbey} (Chongxiu Yuxu guan Sanqing dian ji 重修玉虛觀三清殿記) and the \textit{Stele for Fuyuan Abbey} (Fuyuan guan bei 副元觀碑). The \textit{Record of Repairing the Hall of the Three Clarities in Yuxu Abbey} (1208) cannot be confirmed to belong to the Dadao school, as it does not identify which school controlled Yuxu abbey at the time and contains no obvious Dadao references. But it doesn’t contradict Dadao teachings and tonally, it fits with other Dadao inscriptions. The \textit{Stele for Fuyuan Abbey} (1267) was composed by Wang E (王鶚, 1190-1273), but its existence is only known from a mention in the \textit{Yongle Shuntian fu zhi}. 

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about the first four patriarchs, we must turn to Song Lian’s account. Song Lian gives us just a single piece of information. Zhang, he says, wrote “several hundred folios of poetry and prose compositions, [which] were called the ‘Collectanea of the Mysterious Perfected’ and which were handed down generation to generation.” 詩文數百編，號玄真集，傳於世. Further bits of information can be found in *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*. In the section reciting the lineage of the patriarchs of the Tianbao lineage in the first inscription, Zhang is described as possessing an extraordinary nature, being fond of antiquity, and having spent fifty-five years as a practicing Daoist, twenty-five as patriarch.128

Although Zhang’s dates are often given as 1163/1164-1218, these are just guesses. Because the fourth patriarch is described as having been “flexible” and thus able to survive the transition from the Jin to Yuan and the fifth patriarch received the Law in 1224, it is generally assumed that Zhang died around 1218. Subtract fifty-five years and you get his “birth date” of 1163. The problem, of course, is that Zhang didn’t start practicing Daoism at birth, but probably some time between seven and sixteen, based on the ages others entered the Dao as mentioned in the surviving Dadao stele inscriptions. We also have no particular reason to assume he died in 1218. In fact, the only firm date for Zhang comes from the *Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei*, which states he received the Law from the second patriarch in 1190. Both the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji* and the *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji* agree Zhang was patriarch for twenty-five years. If we add twenty-five to 1190, we get 1215, the year

the Mongols captured Beijing after a lengthy siege. This would put his birth year between 1144 and 1153.

Frustrated by this lack of information, some younger Chinese scholars have turned to a late-Ming biography of a Perfected Zhang, claiming that this Perfected Zhang and Zhang Xinzhen are the same. It was first noted by Yuan Guofan, who found it in the *Comprehensive Gazetteers of Shandong* (*Shandong tongzhi* 山東通志). Yuan doesn’t specify the edition, but it is the Republic edition, dated 1915. Chen Zhichao then traced it to the *Gazetteer of Qingzhou from the Jiajing era* (*Jiajing Qingzhou zhi* 嘉靖青州志) (1565). He sounded a cautionary note about the record, as the chronology provided was surely was mistaken if it was truly the biography of Zhang Xinzhen. Shortly after, Qing Xitai located a copy in the *Gazetteer of the Province of Caozhou from the Qianlong era* (*Qinglong Caozhou fu zhi* 嘉靖曹州府志) (1756) and published it. It reads,

His sobriquet was Master Xiyi. He was from Le’an. For generations, his family had taken agriculture as their occupations. His mother once at night dreamt a transcendent riding on a crane appeared in the sky. Subsequently, she was touched and became pregnant. When he was three months old, his mother died. When he was barely six years old, he loved to read books and his intellect and enlightenment surpassed others. In the first year of the Taihe era, when he was fifteen years old, he followed his father to pay obeisance to Datong as his master and took the precepts. Disciplined, he was able to exorcise deviant spirits and control illnesses. Great were numinous responses! Later, at Tianchang Abbey, he asked the Celestial Master to bestow on him the Zhengyi covenant with the powers and register. He was awarded the sobriquet “Perfected.” When he was

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131 Qing Xitai, 31.
fifty-five years, then he rose into the sky on that very day and departed [the world].

張希夷子。樂安人。世以農桑為業。其母嘗夜夢一鶴仙人現空中。遂感而娠。既誕三月。母亡。甫六歲。喜讀書。聰悟過人。泰和初年。十五從父參禮大通為師戒行。精嚴。祛邪治病。大有靈應。後於天長觀。問天師授正一盟威秘錄。賜號真人。行年五十五。當晝凌空而去。

Zhang Xinzhen’s sobriquet was Xiyi. We have no idea where he was from or if his family’s profession was farming. (Although in a pre-industrial society, that’s a good guess!) His mother’s dream and his precocious intellects are common tropes. The first concrete piece of information comes when he takes “Datong” as his master in the first year of the Taihe era, when he was fifteen. Patriarch Chen’s sobriquet was supposedly Datong, but here is where the biography is undoubtedly describing someone other than Zhang Xinzhen because the first year of the Taihe era was 1201 and Zhang Xinzhen had already been patriarch for eleven years in 1201, according to the Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei. Furthermore, if he formally started practicing Daoism at fifteen and lived for fifty-five years in total, then this Perfected Zhang died in 1241, well into the time of the fifth patriarch. This Perfected Zhang also received the Zhengyi rites and registers at Tianchang Abbey, which makes no sense for a Dadao patriarch.132 While it is very unclear what liturgy the school used, the eschewing of the talismans and registers associated with the so-called Southern schools of Daoism are consistently mentioned in contemporary sources as a Dadao hallmark. Now, if the reader accepts as I have proposed that Zhang Xinzhen was the true founder, rather than an early patriarch of the Dadao

132 Even the reference to Tianchang Abbey itself is anachronistic. The abbey was damaged by fire in 1202 and the restored building was renamed Taiji Palace (太及宮) in 1204. Sometime between 1207 and 1215, the abbey was again heavily damaged, either by fire or the Mongol invasions or both. See Pierre Marsone, “Le Baiyun Guan de Pekin,” Sanjiao wenxian 3 (1999): 73-136.
school, then the biography is even more confused and appears to be a composite of the biographies of several different Daoists surnamed Zhang from the Jin, Yuan, or early Ming dynasties.

I am not the first to raise concerns about the reliability of the biography; Chen Zhichao’s reservation was previously mentioned. Despite this, current scholars such as Liu Xiao and Bai Ruxiang continue to treat the biography from the Jiajing Qingzhou zhi as a serious source of information.133 This is a grave mistake. In Qing Xitai’s footnotes, he mentions that the biography of Zhang Xinzhen is also included in the Continued Comprehensive Investigation of Literary and Documentary Sources (Xu wenxian tongkao), which was completed by 1568. However, the text of the biography from the Xu wenxian tongkao is not the same as that found in the Jiajing and later editions. The Xu wenxian tongkao version of Zhang’s biography reads:

His sobriquet was Master Xiyi. He was from Le’an. His mother dreamed a transcendent riding on a crane appeared in the sky. Subsequently, she was touched and became pregnant. In the Taihe era, when he was fifteen years old, he paid obeisance to Datong as his master and took the precepts. Disciplined, he was able to exorcise deviant spirits and control illnesses. When he was grown, there were the numinous responses. Later, at Dachang Abbey, he asked the Celestial Master to bestow on him the Zhengyi covenant with the powers and secret register. He was awarded the sobriquet “Perfected.” When he was fifty-five years, he rode up high in the clouds on that very day and departed [the world].


134 Wang Qi (王圻, jinshi 1565), Xu wenxian tongkao 續文獻通考, 243:14555.
In the *Xu wenxian tongkao* biography, there is no mention of Zhang’s family background. His mother, who does not die shortly after childbirth, appears to have conceived him in a dream and his father is conspicuously absent. The trope of the precocious child is missing and the time period is only given broadly as the Taihe era (1200-1208). Finally, he receives the Zhengyi covenant and register at the Dachang abbey, not Tianchang abbey.

The *Jiajing Qingzhou zhi* and the *Xu wenxian tongkao* are contemporary texts. Did the author embellish the Perfected Zhang’s biography in the *Jiajing Qingzhou zhi* or did Wang Qi excise some material from the biography of the Perfected Zhang he included in the *Xu wenxian tongkao*? From comparing these two early versions of the biography, it seems even more probable that the “Perfected Zhang” of the text is at best a composite figure of Zhang Xinzhen and some other Daoists with the same surname. It is my suspicion that none of the biography belongs to the third Dadao patriarch, but is the biography of another Daoist that has somehow been attached to Zhang Xinzhen during the intervening years. Unfortunately, until an earlier biography or some of Zhang Xinzhen’s writings surface, this suspicion cannot be confirmed.

This chapter has discussed the lives of the Dadao founders, Liu Deren and Zhang Xinzhen. In case of Liu, I have shown how Liu’s image was shaped over time by the shifting needs and circumstances of the school. In the earliest now-extant account contained in the *Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei*, Liu is portrayed as a healer and thus, a special individual. This portrayal is repeated in the second account from the *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*, which emphasizes his supernatural abilities as a healer and exorcist. However, by the composition of the third account in the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*, Liu’s image begins to shift
away from a charismatic healer and exorcist towards his self-cultivation and spiritual detachment. The fourth account from the *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei* was likely intended as the “official biography” of Liu within the Tianbao lineage and stresses his historicity as well as linking the current practices of the school with its founder. The fifth account from the *Tianbao gong bei*, the *Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei*, and the [*Daming guan*] *Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei* respectively, draw on the fourth biography, while presenting Liu as a much-needed monastic model as the school reformed itself in regard to monastic discipline. By the writing of the final account, the *Shu Liu zhenren shi*, some hundred and fifty to two hundred years after Liu’s death, Liu is both ambiguously presented as both a paragon of sagely virtue and a powerful practitioner of the mantic arts. This mixed view is likely the result of this account being the only biography of Liu written for private consumption by non-religious audience.

In contrast, Zhang Xinzhen is the subject of no biographies from within the school and, at best, a composite one in a local gazetteer. This is despite the fact that Zhang Xinzhen was probably the true founder of the school, brought the school to Beijing, established the generational naming system, and exerted great influence on the development of the school through his disciples, the fourth patriarch and fifth patriarchs of both lineages. The image of a man who likely never had any knowledge of Dadao endures, while the actual man who founded the school has passed into even greater obscurity than the school itself.
CHAPTER 3: BUILDING A RELIGION—DADAO UNDER THE FIRST THREE PATRIARCHS

Having examined the lives of Liu Deren and Zhang Xinzhen, I now turn to consider how Dadao developed from the lone, itinerant, charismatic healer the school claimed descent from into an institution complete with hierarchy, bureaucracy, and broad geographic range. In other words, how does one “build” a religion? In this chapter, the beliefs, praxis, and organization that bound together the Dadao school will be discussed. Additionally, I will address the “muddiness” of the school’s beliefs and praxis, which have caused Chen Yuan, Qing Xitai and others to speculate on Dadao’s beginnings as a popular religious movement. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the origins and development of the school’s beliefs and practices is still unclear, so this chapter will mostly focus on their mature forms, which are better documented.

Whether the true founder was Liu Deren or Zhang Xinzhen, he created a religion that had significant appeal in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. What is known of Dadao thought and practices is limited. Liu Deren/Zhang Xinzhen laid out a series of nine precepts to aid followers in attaining the Dao. These nine precepts were accompanied by the “three treasures” (sanbao 三寶), a decently robust cosmogony and eschatology. As for the school’s practices, common magico-medical practices were rejected in favor of simple prayer. Dadao priests and nuns supported themselves through labor rather than begging for alms as was customary, and liturgy seems to have been greatly simplified, though still present.

The number nine in the “nine precepts” is a misnomer; there are actually twenty-seven rules which are loosely organized into the nine categories. The first two categories
cover rules for the treatment of others. “[T]he first said observe others as like yourself; do not let sprout an injurious and intensely angry heart. The second said be loyal to one’s lord, filial to one’s parents, and honest to others. Let your words have no flowery speech, let your mouth have no evil words.” Precepts three through six focus on personal conduct. “The third said, sweep away the depraved and licentious, protect the pure and tranquil. The fourth said keep distant power and profit, be content with riches or poverty, labor at plowing in order to eat, [and] live within your means. The fifth said do not gamble or play go; do not practice theft or robbery. The sixth was do not drink alcohol or eat alliaceous foods; in attire and food, take sufficiency the limit. Do not be proud or full of one’s self.” The last three encourage followers to be humble, modest, satisfied with their lots and circumspect in their actions. “The seventh was to empty the mind and weaken your ambition, “match their radiance and share their dust.” Be inconspicuous and humble. The eighth is do not rely on the powerful and influential;

135 *Shu Liu zhenren shi*, lines 4-7, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 835-836.

136 “Protect the pure and tranquil 守清靜” comes from the Heshanggong commentary gloss for the phrase, 守靜篤, in the *Daodejing* 16. The full phrase is 守清靜,行篤厚.

137 To “match their radiance and share their dust 和光同塵” is a quote from Zhang Huan’s 張奐 biography in the *History of Later Han (Hou Han shu)*, 後漢書, 65: 2143.

138 This is drawn from the *Daodejing* 4 and 56. The full phrase is “和其光, 同其塵.”.
be modest and respectful and thus radiant.\textsuperscript{139} The ninth says to be content with one’s lot is to not be disgraced, knowing when to stop is to not be endangered.\textsuperscript{140}

Supposedly, the nine precepts were drawn from studying the \textit{Daodejing}, but there is very little in them that is unique to that book. Only the seventh and ninth precepts contain text actually drawn from the \textit{Daodejing}, although a portion of the third does comes from a commentary on the \textit{Daodejing}. The eighth feels Daoist, but is in fact based on a quote from a commentary on the \textit{Yijing}. The remainder draw on a broad variety of Chinese religious and social beliefs. Loyalty and filial piety were drawn from Confucianism. Prohibitions against lying, cheating, sexual misconduct, even the avoidance of alcohol and alliaceous foods were originally Buddhist, but had been incorporated into Daoist practice for at least seven hundred years by the time of Dadao. Thus, while the last three precepts give the set a distinctly Daoist flavor, there is not anything new or doctrinally unique in them, with the exception of the requirement to be self-sufficient through farming which had not previously been a part of Chinese religious practices.

The three treasures are non-action (\textit{wuwei 無為}), thrift (\textit{jian 儉}) and compassion (\textit{ci 慈}). Unlike the precepts, they are drawn from the sixty-seventh chapter of the \textit{Daodejing}, which states the three treasures are compassion, thrift, and not daring to put one’s self before others (\textit{bu gan wei Tianxia xian 不敢為天下先}). Notably, the third treasure of the list in the \textit{Daodejing}, modesty, has been replaced by non-action in the list of the three treasures of the Dadao school. All three are values that would be highly

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{139} This is a quote from the Tuan commentary on \textit{Yijing} 15. The full line is “謙尊而光, 卑而不可踰.”
\item \textsuperscript{140} This is a quote from the \textit{Daodejing} 44, “知足不辱, 知止不殆, 可以長久.”
\end{itemize}
desirable during a period of extreme social turmoil, such as the Mongol invasions.

Compassion encourages much-needed social relief and thrift avoids adding to the burdens of an already-suffering people. Non-action, perhaps better translated as the absence of action, has long been extolled by Chinese Daoists as a way to preserve one’s self in perilous times.\footnote{See the Daodejing 43.} The influence of the three treasures can be seen in the fourth through ninth precepts as well.

Beyond the basic commandments found in the nine precepts or the virtues of the three treasures, Dadao thought is not well-understood. From the steles of Du Chengkuan, the Record of the Reconstruction of Xiantian Palace on Mt. Gou in Luojing and the Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji, we know the school had at least a cosmogony and an eschatology comparable to earlier Daoist teachings. Du Chengkuan was a member of the Dadao school himself, so his inscriptions can be considered to be reliable sources on Dadao beliefs. According to the Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji,

In the beginning, the pure and the turbid were not yet separated; the two qi were meshing and condensing and mysteriously advanced.\footnote{The term translated as “meshing and condensing” (yinyin 氛氤, also written 绪縕) goes back to the Xici commentary on the Yijing, where the term describes the formation of the heaven and earth. At this point in the Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji, this process of creation is still in progress. See Xici B5, translated in Richard Lynn, The Classic of Changes: A New Interpretation of the I Ching as Interpreted by Wang Bi, reprint (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 85.} Yin and yang began to be distinguished; heaven and earth were faint and just being formed. The Dao was wondrously close yet difficult to thoroughly probe, the forms were unheard and unseen and none could probe them. At ease and accomplished, the progenitor-master of the Zhen dadao [school], the Mysterious Prime of the
Golden Watchtower, the Lord Lao lived before Taichu and [even] Taiyi, dwelling within shapelessness and formlessness. He shaped the Nine Qi, regulated the revolutions of the Six Voids, from which the sun, moon, stars, and constellations arose, and the Five Phases then moved.

From the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*:

That *pi* culminated and *tai* returned, it was proper then for the primal transformations to proceed from here and again more forward to create. *Qian* revolved and *kun* turned, then the August One, right at that point, through replication and smooth process, caused the many forms of life again to be witnessed in the pure breeze so that the ten-thousand-surnames could all attain living out their allotted lifespan.

O how great is the Mysterious Prime, the Lord of the Most High Golden Watchtower, who, acting as the root of that which adances towards

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143 The deified Laozi. The *Qingwei xianpu* 清微仙譜, which refers to a 金闕玄元老君 who is also 道德天尊. See *Zhonghua daozang* 31:4c19.

144 *Taiyi* refers to the absolute beginning of time; *Taichu* is the second period of time and marks the beginning of primordial chaos. See p. 71 for more.

145 The Nine Qi are the Mysterious (*xuan* 玄), Primal (*yuan* 元), and Beginning (*shi*, 始) qis, which each divide into three other qis to create the Nine Heavens.

146 The Six Voids are heaven and earth, including the four directions.

147 *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*, lines 1-4, in Wang Yuchang, 313.

148 *Pi* 否 and *tai* 泰 are names of hexagrams in the *Yijing*. *Pi* represents obstruction and stagnation, and *tai* represents action, progress, creation. See *Yijing*, 11 and 12.

149 *Qian* 乾 and *kun* 坤 are the names of hexagrams in the *Yijing*. *Qian* represents heaven and *kun* earth. Heaven was believed to be round and revolved around a central axis, while earth conversely was squared and rotated towards the sun. See *Yijing*, 1 and 2.

150 The deified Laozi. See note 143.
transformation, was the father and the mother of the Black and the Yellow;\textsuperscript{151} who held in embryonic potential the two qi, who transformed and nurtured the three cai.\textsuperscript{152} He resided before Taichu and [even] Taiyi. He lived within shapelessness and formlessness, [and] embodied the unfathomable and yet none probed [the matter]. The Dao was marvelously near and yet it was considered difficult to probe.

What stands out in both descriptions is the Lord Lao’s role as a creator. According to both inscriptions, the Lord Lao was born before Taichu, when only the Dao existed. He did not create the Dao, which appears to stand outside of time, but rather, he is the personification of the Dao. Everything that was created in the cosmological periods after Taiyi was either made by or placed into its proper role by him. The Nine Heavens, where various gods and transcendents dwell, were created from the nine qi; the orbit of the earth and the orientation of the four cardinal directions, the stellar objects, even man indirectly through the mixing of yin and yang are the results of the Lord Lao’s actions.

As Isabelle Robinet has noted, “Taoist cosmogonies are often theogonies,” meaning “[the] primordial divinity exists in emptiness and takes form progressively….It fashions the celestial and human worlds that constitute its own body.”\textsuperscript{153} In the \textit{Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji} and \textit{Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji} and \textit{Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji}, lines 2-3, in \textit{Daojiao jinshi liüe}, 818.

\textsuperscript{151} The Black and the Yellow are colors of heaven and earth, respectively. Here I believe they are representing yin and yang. See the \textit{Yijing}, 2.

\textsuperscript{152} The three cai are heaven, earth, and people.

\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji}, lines 2-3, in \textit{Daojiao jinshi liüe}, 818.

“gaijian Xiantian gong ji,” we are told that the Lord Lao “dwelled in shapelessness and formlessness,” which would seem to imply that the creation of the heavens and earth must also have involved the creation of the divinity himself. Certainly, the Lord Lao is often identified in Daoist texts as the primordial divinity to which Robinet is referring. It would make sense for the Dadao school to incorporate the cosmogony-theogony pattern used in earlier schools of Daoism.

The Dadao school clearly did draw on earlier Daoist teachings for some of their beliefs. The separation of time into “Taiyi” and “Taichu” reveal the school followed a five-fold division of time commonly used in Daoist texts from the Tang onward, although the division of time into five periods dates back to the Late Han.\textsuperscript{155} Additionally, many of the main elements of the Laozi myth identified by Livia Kohn are present in some form in Dadao inscriptions.\textsuperscript{156} We have already seen “Laozi as the Dao creates the Universe.” Laozi descends as the teacher of dynasties, however, takes on a very different form in the teachings of the Dadao school.

Rather than being the teacher of the sage-kings of the legendary early dynasties, Laozi as the Lord Lao performs all of the cultural heroics of all of the sage-kings on his own.


\textsuperscript{155} The \textit{Liezi 列子}, in fact, names and defines the first four divisions of time: Taiyi 太易, Taichu 太初, Taishi 太始 and Taisu 太素. It further states that the second, third, and fourth epochs comprise \textit{hunlun 渾混論} or primordial chaos. See \textit{Liezi} 1.2.

He created writing and drew the trigrams, and this was done by sagely knowledge. He destroyed caves and burned nest, and this was brought about through divine effort. He fixed the four seasons and made the Five Phases clear. He divided the hundred grains and correct the myriad affairs of the state. He gave rise to agriculture and sericulture to support and nurture the people; he established weapons and armor to cause the withdrawal of and resistance to vileness and evil.

These achievements are normally credited to the three August Ones and five sage-kings. Fuxi created the trigrams, weapons, and regulated the Five Phases. Shennong invented agriculture and the calendar; the Yellow Emperor taught the people how to make houses and how to write, while his wife introduced sericulture to China. Yao and Shun brought proper government.  

But in the Dadao school, the work of eight semi-divine rulers was all of work of the singular Lord Lao. It is likely that the author of the inscription, Du Chengkuan, meant the August Ones and sage-kings were all avatars of the Lord Lao, but it possible that Dadaoists didn’t believe in them at all. If so, this would have been a radicial rewriting of Chinese culture history by the school. And like the sage-kings of old, the Lord Lao’s influence is not limited to China. According to the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*, he “spread his protection through ‘all of the sub-celestial relam’ and mightly protected ‘the boundaries of the empire.’”

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158 Different accounts assign different cultural achievements to the Three August Ones and the five sage-kings. The Yellow Emperor especially could be credited with virtually all of Chinese civilization.

159 The first two lines are from the *Shijing*. The complete lines are “Of all which exists under Heaven, there is nowhere that is not the king’s land. Of that which lies
refers to the early kings, rather than the Lord Lao or any Daoist figure, which underscores the cast of the Lord Lao as a sage-king by Du Chengkuan.

According to Du Chengkuan, despite all that the Lord Lao has taught the people, they stray from the Dao either involuntarily through the distance created by the passage of time, as in the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*, or through deception by others such as Confucians, evil men, and the minions of the Devaputra-Mara of the Sixth Heaven, as in the *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*. Confucians thwart the Dao through artificial and contrived actions which give rise to falseness. Legalists, and the introduction of punishment and reward which gives rise to thoughts of money and security, are lumped in with the Confucians. The whole world becomes deviant and the Devaputra-Mara of the Sixth Heaven sends his minions to cause natural disasters and banditry.\(^\text{160}\)

The inclusion of the Devaputra-Mara is interesting. According to Buddhist teachings, the Devaputra-Mara of the Sixth Heaven (*diuliu tianmo* 第六天魔) sought to obstruct the Buddha’s path to enlightenment. Now, he and his minions seek to prevent the Buddha’s followers from obtaining enlightenment. He first appears in Chinese Buddhist apocalyptic texts beginning in the early medieval period and is most frequently found in texts from the fourth through sixth century, though there are sporadic mentions of the Devaputra-Mara of the Sixth Heaven through the Song. The Mara King makes his first appearance in Daoist texts during the medieval period as well, notably appearing in the

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\(^\text{160}\) *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*, lines 9-11, in Wang Yuchang, 313.
fifth-century The Most High Scripture on the Divine Incantations of the Penetrating Abysses (Taishang dongyuan shenzhou jing 太上洞淵神咒經). By the late Jurchen Jin dynasty, the Devaputra-Mara of the Sixth Heaven was a popular Chinese religious “opponent” figure that had lost its original Buddhist associations.

However, what is even more interesting is that all of this happens before the Lord Lao as his avatar Laozi descended into the world. This both minimizes the role of the historical Laozi (to the extent that he was believed to exist in the thirteenth century) and emphasizes the pattern of the Lord Lao intervening in the human world. He intervenes to rectify matters and bring the people into harmony with the Dao. The people eventually fall out of harmony, and the Lord Lao intervenes again and so on. This cycle could go on forever, but there are hints that the Dadao teachings will be the Lord Lao’s final intervention in this age of the world, which are discussed below. In the time between Laozi’s departure and the time of Liu Deren, the world has once again lapsed deeply into evil. The Lord Lao then descends a second time into the world to rescue it through Liu Deren. Thus, the Lord Lao stands as creator, cosmic organizer, and savior in Dadao thought.


162 Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji, lines 15-17, in Wang Yuchang, 313.
In descriptions of Liu’s life, he is often credited, like the Lord Lao, with the ability to save the living and redeem the dead (ji sheng du si, 濟生度死). More importantly, he does so for the common people in the final age of the world. This somewhat apocalyptic tone may also explain why Du included the Devaputra-Mara of the Sixth Heaven in *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*, since the Mara King makes his first appearances in Buddhist sutras which focus on the final age of the Dharma.\(^{163}\) Liu Deren is not the only one with the ability to rescue the living and the dead. According to the *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*, such actions were the purview of all Dadao masters. The inscription credits the “Elevated Master” (*jushi* 舉師) and the Ritual Master (*fashi* 法師) of the Xiantian Palace with causing to transform and cross over an unknown number of people. Speaking of the two, the inscription states, “As for those who were rescued and cured, and escaped suffering and were reborn [were many], it is difficult to guess the number.” 救治而脫苦超生者，難以數目計.\(^{164}\)

Better understood than the Dadao school’s thought are its practices, perhaps because they made more of a lasting impression on members and non-members alike. The most-commonly cited practice of the school is the rejection of magico-medical

\(^{163}\) See, for example the *Sutra the Buddha Spoke to Prince Moonlight* (*Fo shuo Yueguang tongzi jing* 佛說月光童子經) (T.534), dated to the Western Jin (265-316) and *The Transmission of the Causes and Conditions Concerning the Bequeathing of the Dharma Treasury* (*Fu fa zang yinyuan zhuan* 付法藏因緣傳) (T. 2058), probably mid-to-late sixth century.

\(^{164}\) *Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji*, lines 58-59, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 819. The “Elevated Master” mentioned here appears to be Du Chengkuan himself, but the inscription isn’t clear. Du Chengkuan is the attributed author of inscription, but here Chengkuan is referred to in the third-person, while the rest of the inscription frequently mentions the author in the first person. Additionally, his title is given as “Lofty Way and Broadly Practicing Great Master,” not Elevated Master in the stele credits.
techniques in favor of healing through simple prayer. As the *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei* eloquently puts it, “Talismans, medicine, acupuncture and moxibustion were not used. The healing effect was like shadow and echo to [the healed villagers].”  

Even the prayers themselves were brief, according to the *Stele for Dadao Yanxiang Abbey (Dadao Yanxiang guan bei 大道延祥觀碑)*. Rather than rituals or petitions to deities for intervention, Zhen dadao priests relied on their moral power (*de*, 德) to move Heaven to respond to their prayers, whether for healing as here or rain to end a drought, as in the case of the fifth Tianbao patriarch. Du Chengkuan points out of the folly of mistaking talismans and other magical forms of practice as worthwhile activities. “Some use incantations and [magic] skills in order to save from and regulate [illness], others use talismans and rituals to control evil spirits; taking fasts or turning [a prayer wheel] as one’s religious practices or using alchemy in order to cultivate and nourish one’s body. These are all alike in ‘neglecting the root to pursue the branches.’”  

The *Record of Repairing the Hall of the Sanqing in Yuxu Abbey (Chongxiu Yuxu guan Sanqing dian ji 重修玉虛觀三清殿記)*, potentially the earliest Dadao inscription, bitterly criticizes those “followers of magical skills and sacrifices, speakers of alchemy and and

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165 *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei*, line 20, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 823.

166 The *Stele for Dadao Yanxiang Abbey (Dadao Yanxiang guan bei 大道延祥觀碑)*, line 6, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 822.

167 Quoting the *Baopuzi waipian*, 3: 15a8-1b. The full couplet is 捨本逐末者，謂之勤修庶幾; 擁經求己者，謂之陸瀋迂闊.

supernatural beings” as “vying to dazzle the world” rather than achieve the Dao.\(^{169}\) Shenxiao Daoism and its associated practices are “used to deceive the blind in the subcelestial realm.”\(^{170}\) In contrast, the reader (zhishu 知書) of Tianbao Palace, Zhao Qinglin (趙清琳, fl. 1289) stated that as for Zhen dadaoists, “[if] they are asked about the skills of flying up to heaven and alchemy or the matters of immortality and predicting the future, they will say I do not know [about those things].” 彼言飛昇化煉之術，長生久視之事，則曰吾不得而知.\(^{171}\) Clearly, Dadao considered a reliance on moral power alone to be superior to any supernatural skills, spells, or talismans.

Another Dadao practice that seems to have been unique among the schools of Daoism is the Dadao approach to liturgy. According to the *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei* and the *Dadao Yanxiang guan bei*, the school abandoned the popular liturgical schedule of morning, noon, and night offerings, in favor of simple morning and night offerings of a single stick of incense.\(^{172}\) The *Stele of the Eighth Patriarch of the Zhen dadao school, the Loftily Mysterious and Broadly Transforming Perfected, Mr. Yue (Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei 第八崇玄廣化真人岳公之碑)* adds that sacrifices were made to deceased masters and the patriarchs on the first and fifteenth of every month, which agrees with the funeral practices accorded to the eleventh patriarch in the

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\(^{169}\) It is not clear whether Yuxu Abbey was a Dadao institution at the time of the inscription’s composition in 1208. The scorn towards Confucianism and magical practices certainly seem to fit with other surviving inscriptions.

\(^{170}\) The *Record of Repairing the Hall of the Sanqing in Yuxu Abbey (Chongxiu Yuxu guan Sanqing dian ji 重修玉虛觀三清殿記)*, in *Yongle Shuntian fu zhi* 8:59b.

\(^{171}\) *Dadao Yanxiang guan bei*, lines 7-8, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 822.

\(^{172}\) *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei*, line 42, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 823 and the *Dadao Yanxiang guan bei*, line 8, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 822.
These offerings for deceased patriarchs and probably great masters were made in special portrait halls called *congzhen tang* (從真堂) or *shizu tang* (師祖堂). According to the *Zheng Zhenren bei*, the primary tablets for the patriarchs were erected in the main Tianbao temple in Beijing, but additional tablets could also be erected in Dadao temples in the deceased’s hometown or province. Within the school, the only other known sacrifices were the *fu* (伏) and *la* (臘), which marked the summer and winter solstices respectively. Outside of the school, the patriarchs performed common liturgical programs at imperial command. The eleventh Tianbao patriarch, Zheng Jinyuan, celebrated three “great sacrifices” on the emperor’s behalf in successive years, including a Great Retreat of the Yellow Register (*huanglu da zhai* 黃籙大齋).

It seems that despite the bare-bones liturgical practices of their own school, at least those in the school’s upper ranks were well-versed in Daoist liturgy. By far, the most well-known Dadao practice was the requirement that priests and nuns support themselves through labor rather than begging for alms as was customary. The *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji* provides the best description of how this worked. According to the record, the monks worked in the fields, tending to vegetable plots and orchards. Nuns did spinning and weaving, with the cloth used for the

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173 *The Stele of the Eighth Patriarch of the Zhen dadao school, the Loftily Mysterious and Broadly Transforming Perfected (Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei 第八崇玄廣化真人岳公之碑)*, line 39, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 831 and the *Stele for the Perfected Zheng (Zheng Zhenren bei 鄭真人碑)*, line 20, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 826.

174 For an example, see *Zheng Zhenren bei*, lines 20-21, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 826.

175 See *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*, line 30.

176 *Zheng Zhenren bei*, lines 16-17.
fu and la sacrifices. Women also tended the mulberries and hemp plants, while the men harvested grain and millet.¹⁷⁷ This matches the information in the *Stele for Tiancheng Abbey* (*Tiancheng guan bei* 天成觀碑), which states “those people who had taken the precepts personally toiled in the fields, working together to provide clothing and food.”¹⁷⁸ It seems everything raised by the monks and nuns was used to supply the abbey either directly or indirectly and all were expected to participate. Even the building of the abbey itself used monastic labor. When the Xiantian Palace was rebuilt, its abbot and intendant for Henan circuit, Yang Deyuan (楊德元), and the circuit recorder, also named Yang Deyuan (楊德元), performed physical labor at the building site, participating in building excavation and clearing away overgrowth.¹⁷⁹

There are two implications of such a self-sufficient system. First, at least the school’s flagship abbeys must have been quite large and probably contained both monasteries and nunneries within the compound. The inscriptions confirm that Dadao temple complexes could be massive. On Mt. Gou near Luoyang, the Xiantian Palace was comprised of “between four and five hundred” buildings before it was rebuilt.¹⁸⁰ Edicts giving special tax exemptions to Dadao temples mention guesthouses, mills, stores,

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¹⁷⁷ *Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji*, lines 28-31, in Wang Yuchang, 314.


bathhouses, and even pawnshops among the temples’ properties.\textsuperscript{181} The restored Longyang Palace, in addition to the main halls, had farmhouses, granaries, several mills, even corrals for cattle.\textsuperscript{182} The Tianbao Palace in Beijing had a similar layout, with a central hall, a hall for the sages, a hall for reciting scriptures, a portrait hall, dormitories, a kitchen, storehouses, and stables.\textsuperscript{183} The central hall alone at Tianbao Palace in Beijing was five pillars wide and so tall it “reached the heavens,” complete with a tiered altar.\textsuperscript{184}

The second implication is that at least the flagship abbeys must have been able to draw on a very large pool of labor. Wu Cheng tells us that under the auspices of the twelfth patriarch, several thousand people attended the daily meals at Tianbao Palace in Beijing.\textsuperscript{185} While the monastics housed in the abbeys undoubtedly provided a significant amount of the necessary labor, the edicts giving special tax relief mention waters and lands belonging to families attached to the temple.\textsuperscript{186} These “attached families,” who may have been slaves, probably also provided a considerable amount of labor, which would have allowed the monastics some time to practice self-cultivation and tend to lay communities.

\textsuperscript{181} Xuzhou Tianbao gong shengzhi bei, lines 7-8, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 829 and Huizhou Yizhen gong shengzhi bei, lines 8-9, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 835.

\textsuperscript{182} Chongxiu Longyang gong bei, lines 40-41, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 823.

\textsuperscript{183} Tianbao gong bei, lines 39-40 in Daojia jinshi lüe, 828. See also Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei, line 46 in Appendix C and [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, line 57, in Wang Yuchang, 151. The transcription of Daming guan inscription mistakes “月” for “日” in the line “日食数千指”.

\textsuperscript{184} Yongle Shuntian fu zhi, 7:54b.

\textsuperscript{185} Tianbao gong bei, lines 39-40, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 828.

\textsuperscript{186} Huizhou Yizhen gong shengzhi bei, line 8, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 835.
According to the Yuan scholar-official Yu Ji, the temples were organized into networks in order to provide mutual aid and protection.\textsuperscript{187} In practice, the organization of the Dadao school was much more complex. At the head of the school stood the patriarch. Patriarchs named their successors and seem to have favored succession with the same generation. Below the patriarch were a group of general officials who had school-wide authority over specific groups such as the Elevated Masters or monastics. Below them were the circuit officials, whose authority was limited to a specific geographical area. Next were the abbey officials, particularly the abbot and zhiguan (知觀) who may have functioned as a kind of comptroller. Yu Ji also says that a Daoist official from the school’s headquarters was sent to govern the followers and establish relations with the local Quanzhen and Zhengyi institutions whenever the school moved into a new area, attributing the practice to Liu Deren.\textsuperscript{188} More likely, the practice originated with Li Xicheng as he was trying to establish the Tianbao lineage and consolidate his control.

Trying to correlate titles with this basic description of the organization of Dadao is extremely difficult. At the highest level, the title of Perfected (zhenren 真人) was reserved for the patriarchs alone and was not used until the school received official sanction from the Mongols in 1259. Perfected was then used retroactively for all the patriarchs, except Liu Deren who was raised to a Perfected Lord near the end of the Yuan. General officials seem to have had their titles affixed with “for all circuits of the Zhen

\textsuperscript{187} Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei, line 6, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 830.

\textsuperscript{188} Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei, line 9, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 830.
dadao school” (zhulu Zhen dadao jiaomen 諸路真大道). At the circuit level, there were the head of the Elevated Masters (dou jushi 都舉師), the circuit intendant (lutidian 路提點), the circuit recorder (daolu 道緣), and an assistant recorder (daopan 道判). In addition to the abbot and the zhiguan, other abbey officials included the secretary (zhishu 知書), abbot’s assistant (fugong 副宮), attendants (shizhe 侍者), and a head of guest services (zhike 知客). Other titles such as great master (dashi 大師), ritual master (fashi 法師), elevated master (jushi 舉師), and Daoist (daoshi 道士) appear to be ranks in the school unconnected to the organization of the school’s government just described.

There is also some evidence of Dadao lay societies. The Chongxiu Longyang gong bei says that after they were healed by the fifth patriarch, people either became monastics or “disciples in the home” (zaijia dizizhe 在家弟子者) Since the term for becoming a monastic is literally “to leave the family” (chujia 出家), it seems the inscription is acknowledging a lay component to the school. Near the end of the Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei, it says that the disciples of the fifth patriarch believed it was not just those who practiced Daoist cultivation who gained good fortune and blessings, as there were “many [deserving people?] who were not equal to their position.” This seems to support the idea of lay communities, as a way for those who were unable to become monastics due to family responsibilities to participate in the school’s good deeds and thus gain blessings. It makes sense that the Dadao school would

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189 Jiaomen is more literally translated as “members,” but here it is just referring to the body of the members, which is the school.

190 Chongxiu Longyang gong bei, lines 35-36, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 823.

191 Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei, lines 39-40, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 831.
have a lay component, since lay societies had exploded in popularity during the Song. However, it is presently unclear how lay societies fit into the school’s system of government or even how they operated.

Having reviewed the beliefs, praxis, and organization that bound together the Dadao school in as much detail and as clearly as possible, I now return to the question raised by Chen Yuan, Qing Xitai, and others: was Dadao originally a popular religious movement that got subsumed into Daoism? I would argue that was probably not the case. Certainly, the school mixed common cultural beliefs into its particular blend of Daoism. For some, this blend of religious beliefs is evidence of the school’s origin as a popular religious movement. But that assumes that the “mountain metaphor” of Chinese religions, as defined by Patricia Ebrey and Peter Gregory as an undefined base that gradually divides into three distinct peaks representing Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism as one moves up the social strata, is correct—and it’s not.192 The “mountain metaphor” assumes that the Three Teachings never interact at the highest levels: a Daoist would never borrow Buddhist terminology or vice versa, a Confucian would never quote Daoist or Buddhist texts, etc. This is a ridiculous assumption, especially when much of what is labeled “Confucian” or even “Daoist” is simply part of a shared culture rooted in classical texts. In the Song-Jin-Yuan period, there was an active effort among scholars to syncretize the “Three Teachings.”

192 Patricia Ebrey and Peter Gregory, Religion and Society in T’ang and Sung China (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1993), 12. The metaphor originated in Erik Zürcher who referred Buddhism and Daoism as twin pyramids, separate and distinct at the top, but which might merge into a less-differentiated religion practiced by lay members of those religions and which was built on a foundation of shared cultural beliefs and practices. See Erik Zürcher, “Buddhist Influence on Early Taoism,” T’oung Pao 65, nos. 1-3: 146. Edward Davis has pointed several reasons why this metaphor is not accurate, especially in terms of Confucianism and Daoism. See Davis, 304 n.18.
Crucially, at its core, Dadao is unquestionably Daoist. As far as is known, its liturgical practices, its cosmogony and eschatology, its scriptures, even its temples appear to have incorporated no elements—from Confucianism, Buddhism or local cults—not already present in the Daoist tradition. If Dadao had been a popular movement prior to its incorporation into Daoism, I would expect to see a more eclectic offering, especially in deity worship. The school doesn’t even have appeared to worship popular deities that had been “Daoified” by the Yuan like Zhenwu or Guan Yu, much less any cultic figures associated with its heartland of Hebei-Henan.

Chen Yuan also cites an anecdote about the fifth patriarch fleeing persecutors into the mountains and throwing off his robe and alms bowl, taking the robes and bowl as evidence of Buddhist influence on Dadao practices. This anecdote will be fully addressed in the next chapter, but for now, I will simply say that the anecdote is a clearly retelling of a popular story about the Chan patriarch Huineng. There is no reason to assume its validity in this case.

Lastly, while inscriptions from before 1270 are rare, a few are still extant and neither they nor any other Dadao stele suggest that the school considered itself or was

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193 The possible exception is the Dadu Yuxu Abbey. According to Yongle Shuntian fu zhi, Yuxu Abbey had a shrine to the Great Marshal of Liang, the Martyred Prince (Wanyan Zongbi, d. 1148) within its complex and control over a nearby independent shrine to Excellency Cui (崔府君). However, the shrine to the Prince of Liang predates Dadao control of Yuxu Abbey, as confirmed by a stele inscription which survives in the Gathered Remnants of the Gazetteer for Xijin (Xijin zhi jiyi 析津志輯佚). It is unclear when the other shrine was built or whether it was controlled by Yuxu Abbey during the Yuan. See the entries for “Cui fujun miao 崔府君廟” and “Taishi Liang zhonglie wang citang 太師梁忠烈王祠堂” in Xiong mengxiang 熊夢祥, Xijin zhi jiyi 析津志輯佚, Beijing tushuguan shanben zu, eds. (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 1983), 57 and 62-63.

194 Chen Yuan, Nan Song chu Hebei xin Daojiao kao, 73.
considered by others to be anything other than Daoist. If the *Chongxiu Yuxu guan Sanqing dian ji* in Yuxu Abbey is indeed from the Dadao school, then the evidence for Dadao having originated from within the Daoist tradition like the other two Northern schools, Quanzhen and Taiyi, is very strong. While extant sources can only provide evidence of the school’s operation beginning with the third patriarch, Zhang Xinzhen, when one considers that Zhang was probably the school’s true founder, there is very little time to convert the popular religious movement, Dadao, into the recognized school of Daoism, Dadao.

If the evidence is lacking, then why have modern scholars seemed so quick to embrace a popular origins story for Dadao? In the case of Chen Yuan, he seems to have been led astray by limited source material and the anecdote about the fifth patriarch, though I cannot guess why such an erudite scholar could have missed its connection to Huineng. For Qing Xitai, it seems to have been more driven by ideological concerns, perhaps as a means of political expediency, as he emphasizes the school’s appeal to and connection with the peasant class. Since these two Chinese scholars are so influential in the field of Daoist Studies, it is likely that other scholars are merely repeating their statements without independent inquiry.

This chapter has examined the school’s thought, beliefs, praxis and organization in an attempt to provide a more comprehensive understanding of Dadao. In addition to the Nine Precepts and Three Treasures, there was a basic cosmogony and an eschatology built on earlier Daoist beliefs. I have shown that the Lord Lao played a critical role in Dadao theology, acting as creator, cosmic organizer, and savior but also fulfilled the role of cultural hero usually associated with the early sage-kings. As for the school’s practices,
common magico-medical practices were rejected in favor of simple prayer. Dadao priests and nuns supported themselves through labor rather than begging for alms, and liturgy seems to have been greatly reduced, though still present. Organizationally, the school had a governing system independent from ranks based on religious achievement and, particularly in the Tianbao lineage, served to keep institutions closely connected to the school’s headquarters in Beijing. Finally, based on the material presented here on the school’s thought and practices, I have raised serious doubts regarding Chen Yuan’s, Qing Xitai’s, and other modern scholars’ suggestions that Dadao started as a popular religious movement which was later incorporated into Daoism.
CHAPTER 4: ONE IS THE LONELIEST NUMBER—THE DEVELOPMENT OF LINEAGES IN THE DADAO SCHOOL

The Dadao school’s founding unity lasted for roughly thirty-eight years, through the retirement of the fourth patriarch, Mao Xicong. It was Mao Xicong who was responsible for the creations of lineages within the school by seemingly inexplicably ordaining two successors, each who in turn led their own line of disciples and supporters. This chapter will examine the development of the Tianbao and Yuxu lineages within the school, seeking to explain their formation, relations with each other and relations with the imperial court. Finally, the mystery surrounding the ultimate fate of the Yuxu lineage will be addressed, including theories proposed by previous scholars that the lineages merged under the Tianbao name or that the Yuxu lineage was absorbed into the Zhengyi school.

In truth, “lineages” is a misnomer, as both the Tianbao and Yuxu factions claimed that their patriarch had been rightfully ordained as the fifth patriarch by Mao Xicong and had sole control over the entire school. The Tianbao and Yuxu lineages thus represent rival claims to the fifth-generation patriarchate rather than true separate lineages. Each lineage is named after its headquarters in Dadu, the Tianbao Palace and the Yuxu Abbey respectively. However, at the time, both of the lineages simply referred to themselves as “Dadao” (Yuxu) or “Zhen dadao” (Tianbao, after 1254). The lineage names were given by Chen Zhichao, who realized two Dadao inscriptions from the Dadu Yuxu abbey collected by Yang Guofan represented a group of Dadaoists distinct from those in all other known inscriptions.  

Yuan yitong zhi preserved in the remains of the Yongle dadian 永樂大典. Although the new inscriptions listed the familiar first four patriarchs, they identified the fifth patriarch as Li Xi’an 李希安, d. 1266) and the sixth patriarch as Liu Youming 刘有明, died between 1270 and 1275), rather than Li Xicheng 李希誠, 1181-1259) and Sun Defu 孙德福, 1218-1273) as expected. Li Xi’an could have been excused as a mistake for Li Xicheng. The surnames are homophonous, the first character of the given names are the same, and cheng 成 could be misread as an 安 if the character was damaged. It is stretching, but not impossible. But there is nothing to suggest that Liu Youming and Sun Defu could possibly be the same person, as the two have very different names, phonetically and graphically. Additionally, the inscriptions provided some detailed information about the two new patriarchs that conflicted with known information about other fifth and sixth patriarchs. The answer was clear. There had to have been two competing groups claiming the name “Dadao.”

Re-examining the other materials confirmed this. Since Chen Yuan, it had been known that at the court debates between the Daoists and Buddhists held in 1281, the Dadao school was represented by two individuals, Li Dehe 李德和, d. 1284) and Du Fuchun 杜副春, fl. 1275-1281), while the Tianshi and Quanzhen schools were each represented by their respective patriarchs. Why Dadao was permitted two participants when the other schools only had one was unexplained. Now, it was realized that each was

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196 Li Xicheng’s name actually used the character 誠, but sometimes the homophonous character 成 was used instead.

197 The Tianshi school was represented by its thirty-sixth patriarch Zhang Zongyan 張宗演, 1244-1291) and the Quanzhen school by its patriarch, Qi Zhicheng 祁志誠, 1219-1293), the fourth successor to Qiu Chuji.
representing a lineage: Li Dehe as the seventh Tianbao patriarch, having succeeded Sun Defu, and Du Fuchun as the seventh Yuxu patriarch, having succeeded Liu Youming. Li Xicheng’s lobbying for official recognition and titles now made more sense too. If there were two lines of descent, it would make sense that Li would try to buttress his line’s claim to the patriarchate through prestige and adding the world “zhen” (真, true) to his lineage for extra emphasis.

If it is now generally agreed that there were two lineages, what caused the split? Qing Xitai was the first to note that the dates given for the transmission of the patriarchate in the two Yuxu inscriptions don’t match those given in the Tianbao inscriptions.\(^{198}\) He was also the first to question why—assuming neither side was lying—Mao Xicong would ordain two fifth patriarchs.\(^{199}\) The Tianbao inscriptions state Mao Xicong passed the Law to Li Xicheng in 1224, just prior to his death.\(^{200}\) According to the Tianbao version of events, Li Xicheng was proselytizing in Shandong, when he was urgently recalled to Yan (Beijing) on account of the fourth patriarch’s illness. The fourth patriarch then ordained him as the fifth patriarch.\(^{201}\) However, the *Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei* states that Mao Xicong repaired the Dadu Yuxu abbey in 1227 and passed the Law to Li Xi’an the next year.\(^{202}\) In the *Xiyou ji* 西遊記, Li Zhichang (李志

\(^{198}\) Qing Xitai, *Zhongguo daojiao*, vol. 3, 243-244.

\(^{199}\) Ibid, 243.

\(^{200}\) *Longshan shuigu Taixuan gong Zhen dadao wuzu Taixuan zhenren Li benxing bei*, lines 28-29 in Wang Zongyu, 40.

\(^{201}\) *Chongxiu Longyang gong bei*, lines 23-24 in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 823.

\(^{202}\) *Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei*, in the *Yongle Shuntian fu zhi* 8: 60b10-61a1.
常, 1193-1256) mentions Qiu Chuji staying at the Yuxu Abbey in Yanjing (Beijing) several times. Qiu Chuji died in mid-1227, so it’s possible that the monastery changed hands after Qiu Chuji’s death. In the early period of the school, Dadao priests generally generally took control of existing Daoist (and in two cases, Buddhist) abbeys rather than building new ones. Of course, this assumes that the Quanzhen school controlled the Yuxu Abbey in the capital when Qiu Chuji was visiting it. It is just as possible that Daoists from a number of different schools visited what was then a venerable abbey with no particular sectarian identity.

Since Qing Xitai, modern scholars have consistently taken the view that neither side was lying about their patriarch’s ordination, so his question then as to why would Mao Xicong ordain two fifth patriarchs seems to hold the key to understanding what caused the lineage split. Liu Xiao 刘晓 has proposed that the Li Xicheng’s retreat to the mountains might have been the cause. Since the Chongxiu Longyang gong bei states that after receiving the Law, Li Xicheng “brushed off his sleeves and was concealed deep in the mountains 拂袖有深山之隠,” Liu Xiao argues Li Xicheng could not have been filling the office of patriarch at the time. Thus, apparently thinking Li Xicheng was in

203 Li Zhichang, Changchun zhenren xiyou ji 長春真人西遊記, CT 1429, Zhengtong Daozong 47:1a: 4, 2c:1-3, and 17c:13-18a:4. Arthur Waley translated most of the Xiyou ji as Travels of an Alchemist: The Journey of the Taoist Ch’ang-ch’un from China to the Hindukush at the Summons of Chingiz Khan (London: Routledge and Sons), 1931. However, like Emil Bretchschneider’s earlier translation, the discourses Qiu delivers before Genghis Khan are omitted.


permanent seclusion or perhaps needing a temporary leader for the school but being unwilling to do it himself, Mao Xicong ordained Li Xi’an as patriarch. Li Xicheng, however, came out of the mountains ready to be patriarch, and Li Xi’an was not interested in yielding. The stage for the lineage split was now set.

Liu Xiao is certainly right that the Chongxiu Longyang gong bei states that after receiving the Law, Li Xicheng “brushed off his sleeves and was concealed deep in the mountains,” but the inscription continues on to say that “Followers of the admirable Dao in unison followed. They were not summoned, but came on their own; they were not called, but responded on their own. As a result, he departed [the mountains] to restore the declining order.” 慕道之徒, 翕然而從, 不召而自来, 不言而自應, 於是出整頹綱. This implies that Li was still in contact with at least a number of Dadaoists during his retreat and would have been capable of managing the school from a distance. A second possibility is that this refers to Li Xicheng fleeing the turmoil of the Mongol invasions with his disciples to Sichuan and Shaanxi before finally returning to Dadu. Zhongdu fell in 1215, but extensive fighting continued in Shandong and Hebei into the early 1220s. In my opinion, the second possibility is more likely for reasons I will shortly get into.

Liu Xiao further ties the split to a conflict he sees within the school between the more iconoclastic originalists and those who wanted to adopt the use of talismen and other “magical” elements found in other schools of Daoism, notably the Zhengyi

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line 24. Qing Xitai mentions this in passing as a possibility, but does not explore it. See Qing, Zhongguo daojiao shi, vol. 3, 243.

206 Chongxiu Longyang gong bei, lines 24-25, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 823.
Liu Xiao takes the late-Ming biography of the third patriarch discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation at face value and believes that Zhang Xinzhen, in a split from earlier Dadao practice, obtained “the Zhengyi covenant with the awesome powers and register 正一盟威秘籙” from a Celestial Master residing at Tianchang Abbey in Zhongdu (Beijing). He admits that scholars have “had reservations” (baoliu 保留) about the material in the biography, but points out there is no reason to believe that a Celestial Master Daoist couldn’t be residing at Tianchang Abbey during the Jin dynasty as it was routinely visited by Daoists from all schools and lineages. He also states that modern scholars have been reluctant to acknowledge that the older schools of Daoism remained active in the North after the founding of Taiyi, Dadao and Quanzhen, implying that is another reason they might reject Zhang Xinzhen’s having received the Zhengyi covenant and register.

Liu Xiao is right about Tianchang Abbey having no specific school or lineage attached to it during the Jin dynasty and that it often goes unacknowledged that the older schools of Daoism continued in the North, but he misses the larger reasons for rejecting biography laid out in chapter two: very little of it can be verified and what little can (such as the dates) is very, very wrong. Since I have also argued that Zhang Xinzhen, not Liu Deren, was the true founder of the Dadao school, there was no earlier form of the school for him to reject. In fact, if Zhang Xinzhen supported the use of talismans and other magical elements, then it would be the later patriarchs who are so proudly mentioned as

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eschewing them that rejected the earlier form of Dadao and radically changed its beliefs and practices! In general, Liu Xiao’s research is highly interested in proving a connection between the Dadao (especially the Yuxu lineage) and Zhengyi schools. I believe a more logical explanation for the cause of the lineage split can be found in the chaos of the time.

According to his hagiography, the fifth Tianbao patriarch, Li Xicheng, took his disciples and fled the capital to Sichuan, then Shaanxi before he finally returned to Dadu. Another account has him dwelling in mountains, only coming out when the survival of the school was threatened. A third, utterly false legend has him fleeing his vengeful rivals into the mountains and abandoning the supposed signifiers of his office. The unifying thread in all the accounts is that Li Xicheng did not remain in the capital after being made patriarch. In fact, it seems likely that Li Xicheng’s whereabouts or even whether he was alive were not known to those Dadaoists who remained in the capital. Such confusion was common during the tumultuous years between the fall of Zhongdu in 1215 and the fall of the Jurchen Jin in 1234. Consider the case of the poor abbot of Wuwei Abbey in the capital. The earliest confirmed Dadao institution, it was run by a priest named Cao. When the Mongols captured the city, the abbot did not know what to do, so he took the abbey’s name plaque (probably its most valuable possession) and fled the city. It was only some years later when the city was

209 Longshan shuigu Taixuan gong Zhen dadao wuzu Taixuan zhenren Li benxing bei, lines 36-37 in Wang Zongyu, 40.

210 Chongxiu Longyang gong bei, lines 24-25 in Daojia jinshi lüe, 823.

211 Wang Yun? 王惲, Interlinear Commentary, “You Guichun shuigu Taixuan dao gong 游媯川水谷太玄道宮,” in Wang Yun quanji hui jiao 王惲全集彙校, ed. Yang Liang 楊亮 and Zhong Yanfei 鐘彥飛 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2013), 185. I have confirmed that the commentary dates back to the 1321 edition now preserved in the National Library in Beijing, though the authorship of the commentary is not clear.
completely restored to normal living that the abbey’s long-time patron undertook a search for the abbot and the plaque in the mountains that the plaque (and presumably the abbot) were reunited with the abbey.\footnote{See Wuwei guan canbei in Daojia jinshi lüe, 836.}

It seems likely that in the absence of Li Xicheng and great confusion over whether he would ever return, the Daodaoists who remained in the city asked Mao Xicong to appoint a new fifth patriarch, which he did, unintentionally creating two fifth patriarchs. It probably wouldn’t have mattered that there were two patriarchs for a time had Li Xicheng stayed in the mountains of Sichuan, Shaanxi or anywhere else, but he didn’t. Instead, he returned to the capital, probably sometime in the late 1230s or 1240s,\footnote{Based on the information in the Chuangjian Dadao Yingxiang gong zhi bei, Li Xicheng may not have taken up permanent residence in the capital until summoned by the Mongols. How much earlier than before the Zhen dadao school was officially recognized by Mongke Khan is unclear.} with “more than a hundred” disciples and lay followers.\footnote{Longshan shuigu Taixuan gong Zhen dadao wuzu Taixuan zhenren Li benxing bei, lines 36-37 in Wang Zongyu, 43.}

Liu Xiao has shown rather convincingly that Yuxu, rather than the better-documented Tianbao, was initially the more prestigious of the lineages.\footnote{Liu Xiao 刘晓, “Yuandai Dadaojiao Yuxu guan xi de zai tantao--cong liang tong shike mopian shuo qi 元代大道教玉虚观系的再探讨--从两通石刻拓片说起,” 123-125.} According to the Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanzhou zhi bei, Li Xi’an received an imperial summons in 1241 from Mongke Khan, but declined it on the grounds of old age. Nevertheless, the
Yuxu patriarch was honored with ritual vestments. The fifth and sixth Yuxu patriarchs also have longer titles—at least initially—than their Tianbao counterparts, indicating greater honors from the court. While the fifth Tianbao patriarch was initially granted the title of “The Most Mysterious Perfected” (Taixuan zhenren 太玄真人), his Yuxu counterpart was “the Perfected who Emanates Harmony and Miraculously Responds” (Chonghe miaoying zhenren 沖和妙應真人). The prestige gap is even wider between the sixth patriarchs. The Tianbao representative, Sun Defu, was “the Perfected who Penetrates the Mysterious” (Tongxuan zhenren 通玄真人), while the Yuxu representative, Liu Youming, held the far more eminent title of “the Lofty and Mysterious Perfected who Embodies the Dao and is Universally Compassionate” (Chongxuan ti Dao pu hui zhenren 沖玄體道普惠真人). While Li Xicheng did receive the title of Perfected earlier than Li Xi’an, Li Xi’an was honored as a Perfected just one year after Li Xicheng.

Unsurprisingly, it was the Yuxu lineage head, Li Xi’an, that Kubilai Khan appointed head of the school in 1261. The notably higher prestige of the Yuxu lineage relative to the Tianbao lineage could be explained if Li Xicheng and the Tianbao lineage in general were operating some distance from the capital during the early period of the lineage division, which would have limited their visibility to the imperial court.

I have argued that the lineage split was likely the result of the perception among Dadaoists in the capital that Li Xicheng was unable to provide the leadership the school needed in tumultuous times, probably because his whereabouts were unknown but

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217 Yuxu guan Dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei, in the Yongle Shuntian fu zhi 8: 61a5.
possibly because he went into seclusion in the mountains and (initially) refused to come out. Once he did return, the Dadaoists in the capital considered him to have forfeited the patriarchate and snubbed him in favor of Li Xi’an. But Li Xicheng didn’t back down or retreat to his home base in Shaanxi. Instead, he moved into a nearby abbey and went about establishing his anti-patriarchate at Tianbao Palace. Needless to say, relations between the two lineages were not good.

They were also not as bad as many scholars have previously believed. Scholars as diverse as Pierre Marsone and Liu Xiao have promoted the opinion that relations between the two lineages were so poor as to rise to the level of violence. For example, Marsone states that Li Xicheng “had to flee into the mountains because of violent internal splits inside the Dadao school” before repeating the legend from Wang Yun’s commentary. Liu Xiao, who, it should be remembered, sees the lineage split as a fight over the acceptance of magical practices, likewise describes the two sides as being “at daggers drawn” (jian bo nu chang 劍撥弩長) and struggle overall as “very fierce” (hen jiliede 很激烈的).

Clearly Liu Xiao and likely Marsone as well have been led astray by Qing Xitai. Qing Xitai was the first scholar to put forth the idea that the struggle between the lineages for supremacy was violent, based on a line in Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji. Contrary to what those scholars have stated, there is no evidence that relations between the two lineages were ever violent. The line from the Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji cited as evidence is “[He] met demons and turmoil arose, from

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218 Marsone, “Daoism under the Jurchen Jin Dynasty,” 1115.

beginning to end, it was fifteen years. By chance, he encountered seventeen great demons. Because the fifth patriarch’s way and its virtue were lofty and high, his authority was illustrious. The demons were not able to overcome the Dao [and instead] shortly pacified themselves.”逆魔亂起，始終一十五載，遭逢十七大魔。以五祖道德崇髙，威靈顯赫，魔不勝道，尋乃自平。220 This sentence is vague and its meaning is far from clear, unless it is explicitly read in the light of the popular legend recorded in the interlinear commentary contained in the Wang Yun poem, “Roaming around the Taixuan Palace in the Gui River valley (You Guichun shuigu Taixuan dao gong 游媯川水谷太玄道宮),” which is highly problematic. The line as given is also misleading. It is missing its beginning which reads, “In the days of that the fifth patriarch managed the school, setting up the Great Yuan [dynasty] and founding the state were just beginning. Laws and ordinances had not yet been circulated; opposing demons and disorder rose.”五祖當教之日，值大元立國之初，法令未行，逆魔亂起。221 Now the connection between the line from the Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji and the lineage split is far more tenuous, since the text is appears to be talking about the political turmoil between the fall of Zhongdu and the establishment of the Yuan dynasty. In fact, it seems much more likely that the “seventeen great demons” were warlords or other powerful men that Li Xicheng met in his wanderings and apparently converted.

Finally, I direct the reader’s attention to the interlinear commentary contained in the Wang Yun poem, “You Guichun shuigu Taixuan dao gong,” that so many modern

220 Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji, lines 20-21, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 818.

221 Ibid, line 20.
scholars have uncritically recounted. The commentary, which dates at least to 1321 when the first edition of Wang Yun’s works was published, is provided as a bit of explanation for how the abbey in the poem got its name. It reads as follows.

“In the beginning, there was the fifth Dadao patriarch Li. He fled hardship to this mountain. A group of adepts pursued him and so he abandoned his robe and begging bowl on a rock and hid. His bowl was heavy; of the adepts, none was able to lift it. The adepts then took him as unique and subsequently asked him to head their school. The present Daoist temple probably is what Li started.”

初大道酈五祖者，逃難此山，衆追及弃衣鉢石上而匿，其物重，衆莫能舉，遂請主其教，今道院蓋酈所創也。^{222}

A few things should immediately stand out to the reader. Number one, why is Li Xicheng carrying an alms bowl? Dadaoists don’t beg for alms, so why would he be carrying one? Number two, why would he take off his robe? In the inscriptions, there are references to Dadao masters and patriarchs receiving purple robes and other signs of favor from the imperial court, but Li Xicheng wasn’t honored by the imperial court until 1254 as far as the sources mention, so we have to assume the robe he was wearing was standard issue. Possibly there could have been some identifying features, but there’s nothing in the sources that indicates what if any they might be. Finally, and this is entirely speculative on my part, but Li Xicheng doesn’t seem to have shied away from conflict nor did he hesitate to call out those who doubted his abilities.^{223}

In fact, the legend relayed in the interlinear commentary is a repurposing of an anecdote originally told about Huineng (慧能, 638-713), the famous sixth Chan patriarch.

^{222} Wang Yun quanji hui jiao 王惲全集彙校, 185.

^{223} See Chongxiu Longyang gong bei, lines 25-32 in Daojia jinshi lüe, 823 where Li rebukes a Daoist named Pu for questioning whether Li can truly cause it to rain.
Huineng abandoned his robe and alms bowl because they were signifiers of his receiving the Dharma from the previous patriarch Hongren (弘忍, 601-674) while being pursued by the supporters of his rival, Shenxiu (神秀, 606?-706). When they couldn’t lift the bowl, they acknowledged Huineng had truly received the Dharma.\footnote{See John Jorgeson, Inventing Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch: Hagiography and Biography in Early Chan (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 275-286.} Somehow, the legend got attached to Li Xicheng, probably because of the lineage struggle and his time in the mountains, but the essential Chan elements of the story—the ones that couldn’t possibly apply to a Dadao patriarch—still remain to signal its Buddhist origins.

Because the Yuxu lineage seemed to disappear from records after 1281, many scholars have assumed that the lineage either died out or merged with another group of Daoists. Qing Xitai believed that the two Dadao lineages reunited during the tenure of the eighth Tianbao patriarch, Yue Dewen (岳德文, 1235-1299) under the Zhen Dadao name and kept the school’s headquarters at the Dadu Tianbao Palace. Others have been vaguer on the details, but generally agreed that the two lineages had reunited by 1300.\footnote{Surprisingly, given his reliance on Qing Xitai, Pierre Marsone does not mention the lineage reunification, leading the reader to believe that the lineages were permanently separated.}

Liu Xiao has been a vocal dissenter to the theory of reunification. In 2005, he published an article containing a transcription of a rubbing held in the National Library in Beijing. Titled the \textit{Record of the Carrying out of the Sacrifice to the Waterways and Throwing in of the Dragon Slips} (Dai si ji du tou long jian ji 代祀濟瀆投龍簡記), the stele inscription commemorates a Great Retreat of the Golden Register (jinlu dazhai 金籙大齋) held at Yuxu Abbey in Dadu in 1275. The inscription refers to Du Fuchun, the seventh
Yuxu Patriarch, by the title “the Imperially Recognized Head for all the Circuits, the Seventh Patriarch of the Zhengyi Dadao school, the Perfected who Fully Illuminates Mysterious Enlightenment.”226 Liu Xiao then identified another inscription recording a similar sacrifice in 1324 which referred to “Zhengyi dadao.”227 Since then, he has found a third inscription, the *Record of the Temple at the Black Dragon Pond* (*Heilong ze miao ji* 黑龍澤廟記), again a rubbing held in the National Library in Beijing, which refers to a sacrifice for rain led by a Master Bi Fugui, described as a disciple of the eleventh patriarch of the Yuxu Abbey [lineage].228 As previously stated, Liu Xiao believes that the Yuxu lineage joined with the Zhengyi school or at least came to sufficiently affiliate itself with Zhengyi to represent its Northern branch at official court functions.229 Because the *Record of the Carrying out of the Sacrifice to the Waterways and Throwing in of the Dragon Slips* uses the term “Zhengyi dadao” and it predates the 1281 court debates, he

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226 Yuan Zhiyuan 袁志遠, “The Record of Throwing in of the Dragon Slips during the Sacrifice to the Waterways (*Dai si ji du tou long jian ji* 代祀濟瀆投龍簡記),” lines 5-6, quoted in Liu Xiao 刘晓, “Yuandai Dadaojiao Yuxu guan xi de zai tantao--cong liang tong shike mopian shuo qi 元代大道教玉虚观系的再探讨--从两通石刻拓片说起,” 118.

227 Ibid., 119.

228 Liu Xiao 刘晓, “Yuandai Dadaojiao shibu zhu--yi Beijing diqu san tong beiwen wei zhongxin 元代大道教史補注--以北京地區三通碑文為中心,” *Zhonghua wenshi luncong* 中華文史論叢 2010, no. 4: 76-80. Liu refers to this inscription in his 2005 article, but actually publishes the text here, noting that previously published versions have many mistakes.

believes Du Fuchun was present at the debates as a representative of the Zhengyi school, rather than the Dadao school.  

While accepting that the Yuxu lineage was present at the court debates of 1281 and other official functions as a representative of the Zhengyi school provides a nice symmetry, there’s no reason to think along such sectarian lines. For example, at the 1324 sacrifice, there are two representatives from the Xuanjiao school, two from Taiyi, and one from Zhengyi dadao listed. Likewise, the Taiyi and Xuanjiao schools aren’t mentioned as having participated in the 1281 court debates between the Buddhists and the Daoists. It seems more likely that those who were chosen to participate were chosen for their personal eminence, rather than sectarian ties.

Reading the Yuanshi, the Secret History of the Mongols, and Rashid al-Din’s account of the Mongols, one gets the impression that the early Mongol emperors were not particularly aware of, nor interested in, the finer divisions of Daoism. The later, sinicized Yuan emperors would probably more attuned to the differences between the schools; however, I believe a bigger factor than the earlier emperors’ disinterest was that the sectarian divisions at the time were much less rigid than is often portrayed. The early Quanzhen school provides a great example. Of the so-called Seven Perfected of

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231 Record of the Throwing in of the Dragon Slips during the Great Sacrifice for the Whole Heaven (Zhoutian dajiao tou long jian ji 周天大醮投龙简记), Lines 1-2 in Liu Xiao 刘晓, “Yuandai Dadaojiao Yuxu guan xi de zai tantao--cong liang tong shike mopian shuo qi 元代大道教玉虚观系的再探讨一从两通石刻拓片说起,” 119.

232 Shi Xiangmai 释祥邁, Da Yuan Zhiyuan Bian wei lu 大元至元辨伪錄, T. 52 no. 2116.
Quanzhen--Ma Yu, Tan Chuduan, Liu Chuxuan, Qiu Chuji, Wang Chuyi, Hao Datong, and Sun Bu’er--only the first four studied with Wang Chongyang exclusively. The others received training from Wang Chongyang and a number of other Daoist masters.

For an example with connections to Dadao, a specialist in Chinese opera, Cao Fei, has endeavored to prove the Wanshou Palace in Gaoping, Shanxi was a Zhen dadao institution during the Jin-Yuan period. Cao Fei has an uphill battle as he tries to explain why a temple to a local deity named Ma Xiangu 马仙姑 would be run by a group that has no known affiliation with that cultic deity and only very circumstantial affiliations with any cultic deities. His case hinges on a stele inscription, according to which a nun named Han Zhicheng 韩志诚 paid a visit to Tianbao Palace, paying obeisance to the eighth Tianbao patriarch. Han Zhicheng’s disciple, Zhang Jinshan 张进善 received instruction in 1307 from the eleventh Tianbao patriarch who she begged to come to the temple and secure a name plaque for it.

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234 Zhao Shiyu fleshes this out, quoting from The Record of the Restoration of the Wanshou Palace (Chongxiu Wanshou gong ji 重修万寿宫记), revealing that the purpose of Han’s visit was to try to persuade the patriarch of Ma Xianggu’s abilities and have the temple and its deity incorporated into Zhen dadao. Zhao Shiyu argues that this would have legitimized the temple and spared it from being shut down as an illicit shrine (yinci, 淫祠). The eighth Tianbao patriarch’s mother was a native of the area, which may explain why Han chose to approach him. See Zhao Shiyu 赵世瑜, “Shenggu miao: Jin Yuan Ming bianqian zhong de ‘yijiao’ mingyun yu Pudong shehui de duo yangxing 圣姑庙: 金元明变迁中的‘异教’命运与普东社会的多样性,” Qinghua daxue xuebao 清华大学学报 2009, no. 4: 8.

235 Cao, 82. The stele inscription he draws on appears to be The Record of the Restoration of the Wanshou Palace (Chongxiu Wanshou gong ji 重修万寿宫记), dated 1322. Unfortunately, the text of this inscription has never been published, so it is difficult to evaluate its reliability as a historical source.

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Unfortunately for Cao Fei, the information provided by the stele is suspect. Jin 進 was a character used for a generation of Zhen dadao adepts, but the eleventh patriarch belonged to that generation and so would not have used it for one of his disciples. More importantly, the eleventh patriarch died the previous year, so it would have been quite a feat for Zhang Jinshan to have received instruction from him in 1307! However, Cao Fei’s argument has been taken up by at least one Chinese historian, Zhao Shiyu 赵世瑜, which has lead probably the most knowledgeable Chinese scholar on Dadao, Zhao Jianyong 赵建勇, to (correctly) pronounce that not only does Zhao Shiyu lack documentary evidence, but he is plain unfamiliar with the Zhen dadao school.236

I would say Zhao Jianyong’s judgment is too kind. Zhao Shiyu omits critical portions of text to the point of falsification when he cites Zhen dadao inscriptions. For example, the lines “真大道第八師曰岳真人，諱德文，字□□/父曰得慶，故蒙降州翼城 縣，娶澤州王氏，兵間遷涿之汾陽，今為涿州人” from the Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei are combined and quoted as “真大道第八師曰岳真人，諱德文...故蒙降州翼城縣，娶澤州王氏，兵間遷涿之汾陽，今為涿州人” by Zhao Shiyu. That deliberate omission changes the subject of the second line from the patriarch’s father to the patriarch himself. This is then cited as “evidence” that those running the Ma Xiangu

temple and the patriarch were related by marriage! This is especially suspicious since Dadao monastics are believed to have been celibate, based on the third precept and descriptions of Liu Deren, which say he “cut off” sexual desire.

Even assuming Zhang Jinshan or any other monastic from the Wanshou Palace had received instruction from a Dadao patriarch, that would not have been sufficient to make her or her institution part of the Dadao school. As we have seen with the seven Perfected of the Quanzhen school, it was not uncommon for Daoists during this period to receive training from any number of masters, regardless of sectarian affiliations.

Returning to Liu Xiao’s premise, even if sectarian boundaries could be ill-defined, the practices of Dadao and Zhengyi were not particularly well-matched. While I am far more reticent to say that just because Zhengyi is in the name, it doesn’t mean Zhengyi dadao was part of the Zhengyi tradition, I will say that there is no evidence besides the word itself to indicate a connection between the two. Moreover, what would be the reason for the Yuxu lineage joining with the Zhengyi school? For Liu Xiao, it’s a reaction against the simple early practices in favor of more traditional avenues of practice, but that explanation was rejected earlier in this chapter. The Zhengyi school was not particularly powerful or prestigious in North China during the Yuan. Its beliefs and practices do not mesh well with Dadao. So why join them?

I propose that the Yuxu lineage never joined with the northern branch or any other branch of the Zhengyi school. Instead, I suggest that the addition of “Zhengyi” to the school’s name within the lineage should be viewed similarly to the addition of “Zhen” to

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the school’s name within the Tianbao lineage. I believe that like Li Xicheng had “zhen” added to his lineage to emphasize the legitimacy of his claim to the fifth-generation patriarchate, so “zhengyi” was added to emphasize the legitimacy of Li Xi’an’s claim to the fifth-generation patriarchate. After all, “zhengyi” means “orthodox” (zheng 正) and unified (yi 一), so Zhengyi dadao would be “the Orthodox and Unified Great Way.” This would be a clever reframing of the relation between the two lineages. Li Xicheng names his lineage Zhen dadao, “the True Great Way,” which implies the other lineage is false. Li Xi’an responds by emphasizing the orthodoxy and unity of his lineage, implying that Li Xicheng’s lineage is a small group of heretical malcontents. If the name change was indeed to counter the name Zhen dadao, then it was probably done at the time Li Xi’an was raised to a Perfected or possibly when Kubilai Khan gave him control of the school in 1261. If the addition of “zhengyi” to the name was to parry Li Xicheng’s attacks on Li Xi’an’s legitimacy, this could also explain why Du Fuchun is listed as simply belonging to the Dadao in the Record of Discerning the False in the Zhiyuan era (Zhiyuan Bianwei lu 至元辨偽錄).238 In fact, Shi Xiangmai lists both lineage heads as belong to just Dadao, which would make more sense if they were opposing lines than parts of two different schools.

In this chapter, I have examined the development of the Tianbao and Yuxu lineages within the school, explaining their creation as the result of Mao Xicong’s ordination of two successors under the mistaken belief--caused by the deep political turmoil of the period between the fall of Zhongdu and the fall of the Jin dynasty--that his first successor, Li Xicheng, was missing and thus unable to fulfill the duties of the office. When Li

238 Shi Xiangmai 釋祥邁, Da Yuan Zhiyuan Bian wei lu 大元至元辨偽錄, T. 52 no. 2116.
Xicheng finally returned to the capital, his replacement Li Xi’an refused to yield the patriarchate and Li Xicheng refused to back down. Both sides sought to find support for their claim through imperial recognition and changing the school’s name within their lineage to emphasize their legitimacy. Finally, while the ultimate fate of the Yuxu lineage is not entirely clear, I have argued that the lineage neither reunited with the Tianbao lineage nor was absorbed into the Zhengyi, but rather continued as a separate entity at least until 1350 and probably until the school’s institutional demise eighteen years later.
CHAPTER 5: WHEN IS A PATRIARCH NOT A PATRIARCH? SUCCESSION STRUGGLES WITHIN THE TIANBAO LINEAGE

When Chen Yuan was writing in 1941, one of the most puzzling issues was a patriarch Zhang, who was variously described in the stele inscriptions, to which Chen Yuan had access, as either the ninth, eleventh, or twelfth patriarch of the Zhen dadao school. What caused such internal confusion over Zhang’s place in the list of patriarchs? With the limited sources at hand, Chen Yuan could only speculate the order and names of the ninth through twelfth patriarchs and offered no reason for the confusion.\textsuperscript{239} With the inscriptions that have come to light since Chen Yuan’s research, the order and names of the patriarchs has been confirmed and, with this chapter, the reason for the initial confusion will be explained as well. This chapter will discuss the succession struggles within the Tianbao lineage, focusing on the tumultuous reign of the eleventh patriarch, Zheng Jinyuan, and the twelfth patriarch Zhang Qingzhi’s attempts to justify his claim to the patriarchate, nearly erasing the “two Zhaos and one Zheng” who preceded him from the list of Zhen dadao patriarchs in the process.

Within the Tianbao lineage, the fifth patriarch, Li Xicheng, had an outsized presence through his five disciples that followed him as patriarch. In total, Li Xicheng’s disciples governed the Zhen dadao school for forty-five years. Li Dehe as the sixth patriarch, Sun Defu as the seventh, and Yue Dewen as the eighth, all provided stable leadership during a period of great growth and prosperity in the school. Under Yue Dewen, the school undertook missionary efforts in Jiangnan. The resulting census tallied some three thousand monastics and four hundred temples which belonged to Zhen

\textsuperscript{239} Chen Yuan, *Nan Song chu Hebei xin dao jiao kao* 南宋初河北新道教考, 80.
The eighth patriarch also seems to have taken a particular interest in the school’s history and initiated the first of two periods of significant stele erection. Nine of the known steles originated in his patriarchate.

This pattern of lateral or fraternal succession was standard within the school and dates back at least to the fourth patriarch, who appointed his monastic brothers as the fifth patriarchs of each lineage. Typically, the patriarchate was handed down from master to senior disciple, then from that senior disciple to the next most senior disciple of the same master. Unlike the Tianbao lineage, the Yuxu lineage appears to have either abandoned the practice of lateral succession after its fifth patriarch or abandoned the practice of generational naming because none of the patriarchs in the Yuxu line share a common name, with the exception the fifth patriarch.

After the eighth patriarch Yue Dewen’s death, the patriarchate passed to another disciple of Li Xicheng’s, surnamed Zhao (趙, dates unknown). Unfortunately, because of Zhang Qingzhi’s rewriting of the school’s history, nothing is known about his time as patriarch or even his name. The one thing that is known is that his elevation to patriarch was unexpectedly contentious. According to the hagiography of Zhang Qingzhi, immediately after the eighth patriarch’s burial, Zhang Qingzhi fled to Linfen 臨汾 in Shanxi. The inscriptions use the word “潛遁” (qiandun), meaning to go into seclusion, but it can also mean to secretly flee or steal away. It appears the hagiography is using both meanings: that Zhang Qingzhi went into seclusion, as is later referenced in the text,
but that his choice to go into seclusion might have been forced, as suggested by the rapidity with which he left the capital after the eighth patriarch’s death. Why did Zhang Qingzhi flee? There are probably two reasons. First, we know that the line of succession was altered after the tenth patriarch. The eleventh patriarch’s biography claims the ninth patriarch, the Perfected Zhao, intended to make the future eleventh patriarch his successor, but died before this could be carried out and another became the tenth patriarch. Zhang Qingzhi was a disciple of the seventh patriarch and thus one of the school’s most senior monks after the ninth and soon-to-be tenth patriarchs. If the surviving disciples of the fifth patriarch truly intended to alter the line of succession, a quarrel may have broken out between the senior leadership of the school over the legitimacy of such an action, as well as how to choose the next patriarch. Second, it may be an attempt to portray Zhang Qingzhi’s life as mirroring that of Li Xicheng, who fled the turmoil of his age by going into the mountains of Shanxi where Zhang Qingzhi himself would also take refuge. Zhang Qingzhi later insinuates he is the reincarnation of Li Xicheng (who was himself claimed to be a reincarnation of Liu Deren!), which gives this theory more weight.

The patriarchate of the ninth patriarch Zhao was very short, lasting only two or three years. According to the hagiography of the eleventh patriarch, the ninth patriarch Zhao died prematurely, though that description is hyperbolic, given that his master died roughly fifty years earlier. He was succeeded by Zhao Desong (趙德松, died c.1302). Like his predecessor, his life and patriarchate are virtually unknown. In the hagiography of his successor, the eleventh patriarch, Zhao Desong’s surname is omitted, being replaced rather ignominiously by “so-and-so” (某, mou). In fact, that there were two
separate, successive patriarchs surnamed Zhao only came to light in 1986, when Chen Zhichao published an article announcing the discovery of three new Zhen dadao steles at the ruins of the Tianbao temple in Xuchang. Among the steles was a *Stele for the Spirit Pavilion of Zhao Desong* (*Zhao Desong lingge bei* 趙德松靈閣碑). Although the text of the inscription is unpublished, Chen Zhichao’s article revealed the tenth patriarch held the illustrious title of “The Perfected who Clearly Illuminates and, Being Uninterested in Fame, Universally Transforms” (*Mingzhao zhanran puhua Zhenren*, 明照湛然普化真人). This was the highest-ranked title awarded to any Tianbao patriarch up to that time, which suggests the tenth patriarch was well-respected by the imperial court. He seems to have been greatly respected within the school as well. The hagiography of the beleaguered eleventh patriarch, the *Zheng Zhenren bei*, mentions insufficient depth of mourning for the tenth patriarch and an insufficient tomb for the tenth patriarch as two of the “slanders” against the eleventh patriarch.

The eleventh patriarch, Zheng Jinyuan (鄭進元, 1267-1306), appears to have had a rough patriarchate. His hagiography states that he was the student of the Great Master Dang and later followed the circuit recorder for his native Huizhou, Master Jia, to Yanjing (Dadu). He received the precepts and his name from the eighth patriarch, but returned to preside over the school’s activities in Huizhou. After the tenth patriarch inherited the Law, he recalled Zheng Jinyuan to the capital and made him superintendent of all of the school’s abbeys. Later, he gave Liu Deren’s brush, zither, scriptures, and sword to Zheng Jinyuan. These items are otherwise unmentioned in Dadao texts, but the

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243 *Zheng Zhenren bei*, lines 13-14, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 826.
implication is that they signify the transmission of the Law, much like the robe and alms bowl functioned in Chan Buddhism. Initially, Zheng Jinyuan did not understand the meaning of the act, which led the tenth patriarch to write several poems to him.\textsuperscript{244}

The question arises: why did Zheng Jinyuan need the brush, zither, scriptures, and sword as additional signifiers of the legitimacy of his claim to the patriarchate? The answer is that the line of succession in the school went laterally, meaning Zheng Jinyuan as (nominally) a disciple of the eighth patriarch should not have succeeded the tenth patriarch. Thus, the elevation of Zheng Jinyuan to the patriarchate represented a break in tradition. There are then two possibilities as to how Zheng Jinyuan became the eleventh patriarch of the Zhen dadao lineage. Either he usurped the position from the senior disciple of the tenth patriarch or the tenth patriarch himself decided to break with tradition and make Zheng Jinyuan his successor. Anticipating resistance from within the school, the tenth patriarch provided Zheng Jinyuan with the brush, zither, scriptures, and sword to use as proof that the Law had been transmitted to him.

Because virtually nothing is known about the tenth patriarch and little is known about the eleventh patriarch, it is difficult—if not impossible—to know for certainty what happened. By the time of Zhao Desong’s death, the line of the fifth patriarch had been exhausted and he may have felt his own disciples were too young or inexperienced to lead the school. Why he would have chosen the disciples of the eighth patriarch over the sixth or seventh remains unclear. However, since Zheng Jinyuan’s own hagiography mentions “increasing slander” against him after the tenth patriarch’s death, we must wonder whether the slander was the result of Zheng Jinyuan usurping the patriarchate, being chosen over the tenth patriarch’s own disciples contrary to the principle of lateral succession.

\textsuperscript{244} Ibid, lines 5-13.
succession or whether it was part of a campaign launched by supporters of the soon-to-be twelfth patriarch to undermine Zheng Jinyuan.

Assuming Zheng Jinyuan legitimately inherited the office of patriarch, the only reason that emerges from the limited information currently available for the change in the line of succession is prestige. According to his hagiography, while Zheng Jinyuan served as a circuit recorder, he was already receiving favors from a Mongol prince.\textsuperscript{245} After becoming patriarch, he celebrated a Rite of the Yellow Register and two other great rites at imperial command. He was rewarded with a six-character title, an imperial audience, and other privileges which were extended “very thickly” even among the adepts.\textsuperscript{246} The tenth patriarch appears to have been the recipient of the most imperial honors in the Zhen dadao lineage to that date and he may have wanted his successor to be someone equally well-known and honored outside the school. If that was the case, then Zheng Jinyuan as probably the most senior disciple of the eighth patriarch at the time would have been a good choice.

Nevertheless, Zheng Jinyuan’s biography portrays him as something of an outsider and his actions make it seem as if he was frequently on the defensive regarding his right to the patriarchate. He commissioned a lengthy stele commemorating the school’s lineage founder, Li Xicheng, and erected numerous “portrait halls” where sacrifices were made to the previous patriarchs on the first and fifteenth of every month.\textsuperscript{247} He also spent lavishly enlarging and landscaping the lands of an abbey east of

\textsuperscript{245} Ibid, line 10.

\textsuperscript{246} Ibid, lines 16-18.

\textsuperscript{247} Ibid, lines 15-16.
the old Jin capital of Zhongdu where Tianbao Palace was located. If his political connections and perhaps a natural gift for managing finances meant that despite his spending, the school was never in debt. If his hagiography is even somewhat reliable, the eleventh patriarch was likely a well-known and respected religious figure in the capital and an able administrator, a good successor to the tenth patriarch and a fitting match for a school that’s political capital was on the rise.

After Zheng Jinyuan’s death, Zhang Qingzhi (張清志, d.1327/28) succeeded him as the twelfth patriarch. Accounts differ on how exactly Zhang Qingzhi was chosen. Zheng Jinyuan’s hagiography says that when the eleventh patriarch felt the end was near, he gathered all of his disciples together and summoned Zhang Qingzhi to Dadu from Linfen in Shanxi. Four months later, Zhang Qingzhi had yet to arrive and so Zheng Jinyuan affirmed him as his successor to his attendants before passing away. Linfen is roughly thirty to forty-five days’ travel on horseback from the capital, but being the middle of winter undoubtedly slowed both the news and Zhang Qingzhi’s travel. It is possible that he was deliberately stalling, but he just as easily could have been waiting for mountain roads to become passable as he was dwelling on Mt. Hua at the time. Ascribing any malicious motive to the delay seems unnecessarily conspiratorial.

Zhang Qingzhi’s hagiography presents a very different version of how the patriarchate passed into his hands. According to the Tianbao gong bei, after Zhang

\[^{248}\text{Ibid, lines 16-17.}\]
\[^{249}\text{Ibid, line 22.}\]
\[^{250}\text{Ibid, line 18-19.}\]
Qingzhi fled Dadu, he lived a hermit’s life on Mt. Hua. The “two Zhaos and one Zheng” were merely administrators acting on his behalf while he, the patriarch, lived in righteous seclusion. However, the two Zhaos and one Zheng were poor substitutes. They involved the school in lawsuits and established the use of harsh punishment among the adepts. Even Zheng Jinyuan, at the end of his life, questioned their choices. “Heaven sends down calamities and death is repeatedly met. Can it be that we have done contrary to the teachings? I heard Zhang Qingzhi personally received Master Yue’s instruction. He is thus presumably a person of benevolence who could be offered the management of the school. Perhaps that is the solution?”

With that, the adepts from Tianbao Palace sweep out to find Zhang Qingzhi. Once they found him on Mt. Hua, they “joyfully submitted” (悦服, yuefu) to him as patriarch, and he in return set the school back on its correct path by outlawing corporal punishment.

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251 Originally, more than ten copies of Zhang’s hagiography were inscribed on steles and erected at various Zhen dadao abbeys. Of those copies, three are still extant: the Tianbao gong bei, the [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei from Daming Abbey in Fenyang, and the Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji from Yaodi yanshou Palace in Dongping.

252 The Daming guan inscription and the Yaodi yanshou gong inscription reverse 囑咐 as 付囑.

253 The Daming guan inscription and the Jinshi cuibian buzhen 金石萃編補正 copy of the Tianbao gong bei have 庶有眾乎. As Chen Yuan has noted, the correct phrase is 庶有眾乎 and is a quote from the Zuozhuan. The Yaodi yanshou gong inscription contains the correct phrase.

254 Tianbao gong bei, lines 15-22, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 827-828. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 22-31, in Wang Yuyang, 149; and the Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji, lines 23-29, in Appendix C.
It is clear that Zhang Qingzhi’s hagiography cannot to be taken at face value. That Zheng Jinyuan would on his deathbed acknowledge his and his predecessors’ misdeeds while affirming Zhang Qingzhi’s close relationship with the eighth patriarch requires an amazing suspension of disbelief. The passage was clearly designed to buttress Zhang Qingzhi’s claim to the patriarchate. In fact, virtually everything Zhang did was designed to promote his claim to the patriarchate and rewrite the school’s history to make him the successor to the eighth patriarch, effectively removing the ninth, tenth and eleventh patriarchs from ever existing. But that doesn’t mean his hagiography is unusable as a historical source.

His hagiography says he was a disciple of the seventh patriarch, serving the eighth patriarch after the former died. Remembering that the school followed a generational naming system, all Zhen dadao monastics with Qing (清) as the first character in their names should have also been nominally disciples of the seventh patriarch. Looking over the names of known Zhen dadao members and their dates, that seems possible. There are thirty-seven members with Jin (進) as the first character in their names, all of who flourished between 1291 and 1344. Of those thirty-seven, twenty-one appear as signatories on the back side of the (Xuzhou) Tianbao Palace Stele dated 1329. Zheng Jinyuan only lived to thirty-nine, so it is consistent that members of his generation would appear as senior monks on an inscription twenty-three years after his death.

In contrast, there are eighteen members with Qing (清) as the first character in their names, all between 1280 and 1339. Of those eighteen, ten appear as signatories on steles dated 1291 or earlier. The sample sizes are small, but large enough to be suggestive that the disciples of the seventh patriarch bore the character Qing (清) and those of the
eighth patriarch bore the character Jin (進). That being the case, Zhang Qingzhi was one of the most-senior monks, if not the most senior monk, at the time he became patriarch.²⁵⁵ Yet in spite his seniority, Zhang Qingzhi seems to have been hypersensitive to criticism regarding the legitimacy of his patriarchate, as a close reading of his hagiography will reveal.

The earliest copy of Zhang Qingzhi’s hagiography is the Tianbao gong bei dated 1326. In it, the author of the text, Wu Cheng, takes great pains to describe Zhang Qingzhi as a paragon of moral and Daoist virtue. From the beginning, he has the large, droopy ears and handsome beard of a sage. He is filial to the utmost and so advanced in his study of the Dao that by the time he was thirty-three, he had established two Zhen dadao abbeys and performed a sacrifice to all of the mountains and waterways at the command of his patron, the Prince of Yongchang.²⁵⁶ Subsequently, the eighth patriarch tried him and found him to be a capable missionary and administrator. After being elevated to

²⁵⁵ After this dissertation was complete, I learned of the most recent article by Zhao Jianyong, who also came to the same conclusion regarding the order of the Zhen dadao generations based on a previously unpublished dataset. See Zhao Jianyong 赵建勇, “Jin-Yuan Dadao jiao shi xu kao--Cong yi zong zhuming gongan shuoqi 金元大道教史续考--从一宗著名公安说起,” Shijie zongjiao yanjiu 世界宗教研究 2016, no. 1:77-91.

²⁵⁶ Tianbao gong bei, lines 6-11. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuyying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 9-15 and Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoing beiji, lines 14-19. The Prince of Yongchang is probably Zhibi Temur (只必帖木兒, also transliterated with 指 or 隻 in place of 只, fl.1260-1310), a grandson of Ogodei. He allied with Kubilai early on and built Yongchang (永昌, located in modern-day Gansu), hence the title. He has a biography in Xin Yuanshi 111.
patriarch, he still longed for seclusion and considered staying at Taixuan Palace in Shanxi, but was reluctantly returned to the capital by an imperial summons.

Breaking from a chronological format, the hagiography then tells a series of vignettes grouped around a common theme. There are stories of Zhang Qingzhi’s asceticism, more rigorous than was common in Dadao, of his living in mountain caves or ravines. He was a strict vegan, eschewing eating or wearing anything that was produced by animals. He wore a simple hemp cassock and ate basic diet of rice congee and probably vegetables. When others offered him payments or gifts, he either refused them or used them only to benefit others.

The stories of Zhang Qingzhi’s extreme filial piety are more striking. In one, he sucks the pus from his mother’s ulcerated leg. In another, he fasts and goes without sleep for forty days, until he moves the gods to heal his mother, who recovers from a serious illness after spitting out “a melon-like hunk of mucus” (tu xian kuai ru gua 吐涎塊如

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257 The Taixuan Palace was built by and named after the fifth Tianbao patriarch, who spent much of his time there. Whether Zhang ever lived at the palace or whether this is merely another imitation that he was the reincarnation of the fifth patriarch is unclear.

258 Ibid, lines 13-25. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 17-18, 31-34 and Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji, line 21. The paragraph where Zhang Qingzhi longs for seclusion and how he was summoned to the capital is missing from this inscription.

259 Ibid, lines 28-30. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 41-43 and Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji, line 15-17.

260 Ibid, lines 12-13. See also ([Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 16-17 and Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji, line 19.
In his youth, he repeatedly leaves his training either to tend to his parents and grandparents or to properly mourn and bury them. Wu Cheng takes pains to make it clear that although Zhang Qingzhi was “extremely grieved,” his mourning behavior never deviated from Confucian standards.

Towards the end, the hagiography includes stories of Zhang Qingzhi’s exceptional compassion—drawing water from a distant well and leaving some for animals nearby to drink, telling people in villages lacking wells where to dig to find water, paying for the wedding of an orphaned relative, organizing famine relief, even donating three hundred strings of cash of his own money to support those who were without family to depend on in their old age. The final story is of Zhang Qingzhi ’s wrongful imprisonment and his superhuman response to the situation. The hagiography ends

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261 Ibid, lines 26-27. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 38-40 and Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji, lines 31-32.

262 Ibid, lines 7-9, 12. See also ([Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 10-12, 16 and Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji, lines 15-17, 20.

263 Ibid, line 27. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, line 40 and Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji, line 32.

264 Ibid, lines 31-37. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 44-53 and Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji, lines 35-40.

265 Ibid, lines 37-38. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 53-55. This story is missing from the Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji.
with his retirement as patriarch and the flourishing state which he is leaving the Zhen
dadao lineage in.\textsuperscript{266}

The line between hagiography and biography is often unclear, but here the details
of Zhang Qingzhi’s life are completely buried under tropes: the filial son, the
otherworldly ascetic, the humble and compassionate monk, the miracle-working
transcendent, even the paragon of Confucian values. For example, one of the most
interesting stories by far is Zhang Qingzhi’s wrongful imprisonment. According to the

\textit{Tianbao gong bei},

\textit{[I]n Bianliang, there were violent people who rebelled and were
defeated.\textsuperscript{267} Those who were implicated and the master had the same surname. By
mistake [the authorities] took the master and left. When the one who ran the
prison interrogated him, the master just stood there and didn’t move, not speaking
one word of explanation. He was detained for over a year. There was an
administrator of the regional censorate who slowly examined the false accusations;
he specially granted [the master] release.}

汴有狂民, 以逆取敗, 其所罥罣與師同姓, 執師以往。治獄者鞫問, 師凝然不
動, 無一辭辯解。拘繫年余。有省台官徐察其誣, 特釋與免。\textsuperscript{268}

This is a fascinating tale. Rebels (or bandits, the two categories often overlap in Chinese
history) were defeated in Bianliang. Following the well-established Chinese legal

\textsuperscript{266} Ibid, lines 38-41. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang
zhren daoxing bei, lines 55-59 and Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing
beiji, lines 40-43.

\textsuperscript{267} The Daming guan copy reads “師之達於命也, 汴有. 狂民欺
衕, 取敗其所
罥罣 為師同姓, 執師以往.” 汴 is probably a mistake for the visually similar 汴.
Whether the “violent people” were bandits as in the Daming guan copy or rebels as in the
Tianbao gong version is currently undeterminable.

\textsuperscript{268} Ibid, lines 37-38. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang
zhren daoxing bei, lines 53-55. However, the character 特 (te, especially) is missing
from the Daming guan inscription. The entire story, roughly one line in the Tianbao gong
inscription, is missing from the \textit{Yaodi yanshou gong Zhen dadao Zhenren daoxing beiji}. 120
principle of punishing the entire family for the crimes of one member, everyone with the same surname as the rebels was rounded up and held in prison while the local officials tried to sort out who was involved/related and who was not. Given that the patriarch’s surname of Zhang is one of the three most-common surnames in China, it is no wonder that an official from the regional censorate had to be dedicated to shifting through the names! When interrogated, Zhang Qingzhi remains silent and thus imprisoned until the censorate official determines he is unconnected to the rebels and releases him. Interestingly, this is categorized under “the master’s attainment of his allotted [by Heaven] lifespan” (shí zhī dà míng 師之達命), which means it was probably meant to illustrate Zhang Qingzhi’s practice of preserving life through non-action (wùwèi 無為). Non-action was cited by him as one of the Three Treasures of the Dadao school in his speech to the adepts upon becoming patriarch.²⁶⁹ By taking no deliberate action to secure his release, he also avoids unintentionally incriminating himself. In due course, his virtue was discovered by the rectifying official and all was set right.

This process could be repeated for every part of Zhang Qingzhi’s hagiography. It is a carefully crafted propaganda piece, with every scrap of information deliberately included and framed in such a way to support the legitimacy of Zhang Qingzhi’s patriarchate on a moral, historical, and objective basis. He’s a paragon of filial piety! He received the Law from the eighth patriarch! He exhibits supernatural powers! When I wrote earlier than that virtually everything Zhang did was designed to promote his claim to the patriarchate, I was not being facetious. He had the stele that the eleventh patriarch

had erected with the hagiography of the fifth Tianbao patriarch, Li Xicheng, taken down and either added on to or, more likely, replaced with a new stele with a new hagiography of the fifth patriarch of his own commission. This new hagiography contains a passage which describes how elders in the fifth patriarch’s home province said Zhang Qingzhi closely resembles Li Xicheng. When Zhang visits Li’s funerary temple and sees Li’s portrait, the truth of the elders’ words is confirmed to Li.\textsuperscript{270} It also signals to the reader that Zhang Qingzhi is truly the reincarnation of Li Xicheng. This is an interesting twist since earlier in the inscription Li Xicheng himself is claimed to be the reincarnation of Liu Deren.\textsuperscript{271} Thus, if Zhang Qingzhi is the reincarnation of Li Xicheng, he is also the reincarnation of Liu Deren!

Imagine these stories inscribed on steles--seven-to-ten feet tall and three-and-a-half or even four feet wide--spread across North China. The affect would have been enormous, a fact the Zhen dadao leadership at the time seems to have been cognizant of. Just under half of the extant records date from Zhang Qingzhi’s patriarchate or shortly thereafter. Of Zhang Qingzhi’s hagiography alone, there were originally more than ten copies carved on steles. That is an overwhelming, powerful image campaign. Indeed, it’s more than overwhelming, it’s excessive and raises the question why was Zhang Qingzhi so very desperate to establish as fact the legitimacy of his patriarchate and why does the pace of stele erection seem to increase after he supposedly retired?

\textsuperscript{270} \textit{Longshan shuigu Taixuan gong Zhen dadao wuzu Taixuan zhenren Li benxing bei}, lines 66-76, in Wang Zongyu, 40.

\textsuperscript{271} Ibid, lines 29-35. The prophecy that Liu Deren will reincarnate in fifty years first appears in the \textit{Stele on the Establishment of the Tianbao Palace during the Great Yuan (Da Yuan Chuangjian Tianbao gong bei, 大元創建天寶宮碑)}, composed during the tenure of the eighth patriarch (1208-1299). The stele is no longer extant, but a summary of its inscription is contained in the \textit{Yuan yitong zhi}.  

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The answer probably lies in Zhang Qingzhi’s own struggle for control of the school, and with his disciples, who supposedly erected the many copies of Zhang Qingzhi’s hagiography. Zhang Qingzhi’s “retirement” as mentioned in his hagiography was either temporary or he continued to have a hand in the school’s affairs after he retired. The *Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei* (1328) says it was commissioned by Zhang Qingzhi, who also provided the information for it, two years after he supposedly retired.\(^{272}\) If Zhang Qingzhi was unable to leave the school’s affairs to a thirteenth patriarch even after retirement, that would only have increased the destabilization already occurring in the school.

When the school elevated Zhang Qingzhi, a disciple of the seventh patriarch, to the office of patriarch rather than a disciple of the tenth patriarch, it sent a clear message that the school would not be returning to the old system of lateral succession. This left the line of succession unsettled, which created the potential for destabilization within the school. By erecting steles that so completely illustrated both the historical and moral legitimacy of the twelfth patriarch, his disciples were probably positioning themselves to keep the patriarchate within their ranks. Additionally, since Zhang Qingzhi had written out the ninth, tenth, and eleventh patriarchs, there were a number of monks--some very eminent, one of the brother-disciples of the eleventh patriarch boasts a six-character title--who either had to be rendered “illegitimate” and thus excluded from pool of potential patriarchs or some uncomfortable questions would be raised. Those monks were likely not particularly pleased by these developments and could have formed a powerful opposition to the disciples of the twelfth patriarch.

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\(^{272}\) *Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei*, lines 17-18, in *Daojia jinshi lüe*, 830.
Given how tightly controlled the image of the twelfth patriarch is, it is not surprising that what is known about him from outside his hagiography doesn’t exactly match the moral paragon described above. Zhang Qingzhi seems to have taken efforts to cultivate friendships with literati in the capital. For example, Zhang Qingzhi’s close friend and biographer, Wu Cheng, was a Chancellor in the Hanlin Academy. He had resided in Le’an for some time after the fall of the Southern Song. The third patriarch was supposedly from Le’an, so it is possible Wu Cheng became acquainted with the school’s teachings there. Wu Cheng was well-known for his interest in Daoism—he famously wrote a commentary on the Daodejing—and Zhang Qingzhi’s hagiography claims he came from a family of Confucian scholars and minor officials. Their shared background and mutual intellectual interests likely drove their poetic exchanges, discussed below. Wu Cheng’s fellow Chancellor, Liu Geng (劉庚, 1248-1338), is credited with composing the inscription for the Longshan shuigu Taixuan gong Zhen dadao wuzu Taixuan zhenren Li benxing bei. This is the inscription which imitates that Zhang Qingzhi is the reincarnation of the fifth patriarch and was likely commissioned by Zhang Qingzhi or one of his disciples on Zhang’s behalf. A third Chancellor, Zhang

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273 David Gedalacia, A Solitary Crane in a Spring Grove: The Confucian Scholar Wu Ch’eng in Mongol China (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), 23.

274 It is possible that Liu Geng composed this inscription at the request of the eleventh patriarch, whose biography states that he erected a stele with the same title. However, the text that has been handled down under the name Longshan shuigu Taixuan gong Zhen dadao wuzu Taixuan zhenren Li benxing bei has a portion towards the end about Zhang after he became patriarch, so either Zhang Qingzhi had Liu Geng’s original inscription copied and added to on a new stele or Zhang had a new inscription for the fifth patriarch commissioned from Liu with the same title as the stele erected by the eleventh patriarch. Taking down a stele and copying its inscription on to a new stele just to add roughly two lines seems like a lot of effort for little reward, so it is my suspicion that Zhang Qingzhi commissioned an entirely new inscription from Liu Geng.
Shiguan (張士觀, fl. 1306-1318), is mentioned in the Zheng zhenren bei under his studio name, Qinghe 清河, as being originally asked to write the composition. The inscription was actually composed by another literatus, Cheng Jufu (程鉅夫, 1249-1318), who was friends with Zhang Shiguan, Wu Cheng, Song Lian, Liu Guan (劉貫, 1270-1342), and Yu Ji (虞集, 1272-1348). Yu Ji, who at Zhang’s request composed the Diba chongxuan guanghua Zhenren Yue gong zhi bei, was the Grand Academician of the Academy of Scholars in the Guizhang Pavilion and remembered as one of the Yuan dynasty’s best poets. In fact, Wu Cheng was supposed to write the hagiography of the eighth patriarch, but he was away from the capital due to illness and passed it on Yu Ji, who was his disciple. Yu also wrote the preface for the “Refined Illustrated Poems of Wu and Zhang” (Wu, Zhang zhi gaofeng, 吳張之高風圖詩), a collection of poems exchanged by Wu Cheng and Zhang Qingzhi. Regrettably, the collection itself is now lost.

Yu Ji’s preface is the one secular description we have of Zhang Qingzhi. It describes him as wearing a short, coarse robe with grass sandals, a woven bamboo hat, and a wooden staff. He travelled with but one attendant and went unrecognized through the city, even unable to pass the doorkeepers at the Hanlin Academy who did not believe he was a Perfected, while on a visit to Wu Cheng.275 He had a good singing voice and rarely permitted visitors.276 It seems that Zhang Qingzhi’s hagiography was correct when it described his attire as a simple hemp cassock, but the singing adds a more human touch

275 Yu Ji, “Refined Illustrated Poems of Wu and Zhang Wu, Zhang zhi gaofeng 吳張之高風圖詩,” Lines 12-15 in Yu Ji, Yu Ji Quan ji 虞集全集, ed. Wang Ting 王頤 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 2007), 524. Yu Ji refers to this event in the Stele for the Eighth Patriarch of the Zhen dadao School, the Loftily Mysterious and Broadly Transforming Perfected, Mr. Yue, lines 14-15.

276 Ibid, lines 18-19 and line 8.
to Yu Ji’s description. According to the preface, Wu Cheng and Zhang Qingzhi never did
meet in person. Yu Ji compares them to Mencius and Zhuangzi, two sages of classical
Confucianism and classical Daoism respectively, who never met though it was
traditionally believed that the two lived in the same generation. And yet, their writings
continued to circulate long after their deaths. An auspicious reference for a collection of
poetry, no doubt.

This chapter has discussed the succession struggles within the Tianbao lineage,
focusing on the tumultuous reign of the eleventh patriarch, Zheng Jinyuan, and the
twelfth patriarch Zhang Qingzhi’s attempts to justify his claim to the patriarchate, which
nearly erased the three Zhen dadao patriarchs who preceded Zhang Qingzhi. I have
shown how the practice of lateral succession was abandoned by the lineage after the tenth
patriarch. Instead, a disciple of the eighth patriarch, Zheng Jinyuan, was chosen as
patriarch followed by Zhang Qingzhi, a disciple of the seventh patriarch with some
nominal connection to the eighth as well. Why the school chose to abandon its previous
succession practices is not clear, but what is clear is that it had a destabilizing effect on
the school, as Zheng Jinyuan’s biography discusses his struggles against “slanders” and
Zhang Qingzhi seems obsessively preoccupied with establishing his legitimacy. It is
likely Zhang Qingzhi’s disciples were also zealously involved in the promotion of the
twelfth patriarch’s virtues, probably in an attempt to keep the patriarchate within their
lineage. Cumulatively, their efforts wound up nearly erasing the ninth, tenth, and eleventh
patriarchs from Zhen dadao history, despite their relative eminence, and likely
contributed to the school’s rapid decline as will be addressed in the next chapter.

277 Ibid, lines 20-23.
CHAPTER 6: IT ALL FALLS DOWN—THE SUDDEN DECLINE OF THE DADAO SCHOOL

The last stele inscription for either lineage of the Dadao school is dated 1344. Between 1344 and 1398, the history of the school is completely obscured. What happened to cause the school to decline so drastically and why, after such a burst of activity, does the school itself seem to stop recording its history? This chapter will attempt to answer these questions by examining the environmental, political, social, and internal factors that likely contributed to the school’s total collapse as an institution by 1398.

First, let me be clear: the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Vincent Goossaert has shown that inscriptions from the Quanzhen school drop off to nearly zero between 1345-1368 despite the strong state of the school overall, so the lack of Dadao steles after 1344 might reflect a broader drop in stele erection in North China, as the Yuan dynasty was rapidly sinking. However, Ming gazetteers make it clear that the flagship abbeys in Dadu of both the Tianbao and Yuxu lineages were abandoned during or shortly after the establishment of the Ming dynasty. The (Ming) Stele for Tianbao Palace ([Ming] Tianbao gong bei, [明]天寶宮碑) tells us the Dadu Tianbao Palace was abandoned during the reign of the first Ming emperor. The Yuxu Palace in the capital was probably abandoned at the same time. It was still in use during the 1340s, as seen in

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the *Xijin zhi jiyi* which mentions two smaller temples in the capital under the jurisdiction of Yuxu Palace, but fell into disrepair during the Yuan-Ming transition.\(^{280}\) According to the *Rixia jiuwen kao*, the complex was repaired and returned to use as a Daoist abbey in 1437. During the intervening years, it had been used as a temporary housing for Imperial Bodyguard and Chiliarch Lü Yi 呂儀.\(^{281}\) So it is with some confidence that we can use the date 1398 to mark the end of Dadao as an institution. I stress as an institution, because while the headquarter abbeys might have been destroyed and the hierarchy ceased to function, Dadao monks and nuns may have continued to live together and practice the school’s teachings in small groups for some time after the demise of the school’s formal structure.

The last known Dadao inscription is the *Stele on the Rebuilding of Longshan Abbey from the Great Yuan [Dynasty]* (*Da Yuan Chuangjian Longshan guan bei* 大元重建龍山觀碑), dated 1344.\(^{282}\) Two copies have been preserved: one in the *Yidu jinshi ji* (益都金石記), a mid-Qing collection of stele inscriptions from Yidu county and one in the [Guangxu] *Yidu xian zhi* ([光緒]益都縣志), with the latter republished in Wang Zongyu’s

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\(^{280}\) *Xijin zhi jiyi* 析津志輯, 57 and 62. The temples are the temple for the Magistrate Cui (崔府君廟) and the shrine hall to the Grand Marshal of Liang, the Martyred Prince (太師梁忠烈王祠堂). The former was dedicated to the deified Cui Jue, a Tang-dynasty official and the latter to the eighth son of the Jin founder Aguda, Wanyan Zongbi. The *Yuan yitong zhi* entry on Yuxu Palace mentions the shrine hall as being within the abbey complex.


\(^{282}\) Both Chen Zhichao and Wang Zongyu give the inscription’s date as 1343, but the inscription itself clearly states that the author was approached about composing the inscription at the Lantern Festival of the Jiashen year of the Zhizheng era, which was January 1344.
“Zhen dadao jiao shiliao gouchen 真大道教史料鉤沉.” The inscription is not very long. It gives a flowery description of the abbey’s location and a brief biography of Yu Qingyuan (于清淵, 1260-1335), who was likely a monastic brother of the twelfth patriarch and oversaw the restoration of the abbey. The inscription’s most obvious value to the study of the Dadao school is the many names and positions mentioned. Originally, the obverse of the stele had a full lineage chart for Yu and his disciples, as well as the names of many “senior and virtuous heads” of local Daoist institutions and the name of the thirteenth patriarch. Unfortunately, that side of the stele was not recorded. It is gives no indication that the school is in decline or that something might be amiss within the school’s ranks.

The last mention of the Dadao school is found in the Record of the Establishment of the Temple at Heilongze (Chuangjian heilongze miao beiji 創建黑龍澤廟碑記). Dated 1350, it mentions a disciple of the eleventh Yuxu patriarch who assisted a local official in performing a sacrifice for rain during a severe drought. It indeed rains and the dragon lord of Heilongze is recognized with a new temple. This fleeting mention is the only concrete evidence we have that the school continued to operate after 1344.283

While 1398 is firmly fixed as the end date of the Dadao school, most scholars have refrained from speculating on any Dadao activity after 1344 beyond that it ceased to exist as an institution.284 Thus, an examination of the environmental, political, social, and internal pressures the school faced during the last few decades of the Yuan dynasty has never done. However, I believe that such an examination can provide a general picture of

283 Ouyang Xuan, Chuangjian heilongze miao beiji 創建黑龍澤廟碑記, in Ouyang Xuan quan ji 歐陽玄全集 (Chengdu: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 2010), 533-536.

284 The exceptions being Chen Zhichao, Qing Xitai and Liu Xiao, all of whom will be discussed later in this chapter.
the decline and institutional collapse of the school and at least partially answer the questions about the school’s final years.

The last three decades of the Yuan dynasty were exceptionally tumultuous. The 1340s were a period of unparalleled suffering as natural disasters struck one after another. Timothy Brook has termed four of the years as the “Zhizheng slough.” Starting with a severe drought in 1342, the weather then shifted to dramatic floods which caused the Yellow river shift course in 1344. The shift in course in turn rendered the Grand Canal useless, forcing grain to be shipped from the south either by the maritime route, which was vulnerable to pirates, or overland, which was excruciatingly slow and inefficient. Plague and diseases like typhoid and dysentery reached epidemic proportions that and the following year, aided by a weakened and migratory population. By 1346, the flooding and plague had eased, but bitter cold--part of a global little ice age--would last into the early 1350s. A widespread locust attack was the final blow. The Yuan government worked vigorously to provide relief aid, but the damage was done. Ten years of never-ending natural chaos had created a desperate population--starving, displaced, and without the tight family bonds that might have otherwise restrained them.

If the tumult of the 1340s was caused by nature, the tumult of the 1350s was decidedly man-made. Banditry spread and widespread uprisings began. Large-scale piracy cut into maritime trade. Corvee labor enabled the Grand Canal resume operation, but the men pressed into service were easy converts to rebel movements, collectively known as the Red Turbans. Although popular rebellions had been occurring sporadically since the 1330s, it quickly became apparent that the dynasty had neither the troops nor

285 Timothy Brook, 71.

286 Ibid, 53-73.
the degree of local control needed to quash so many rebellions over a wide geographic
area at one time. Frederick Mote has divided these rebellions as four categories: Regional
warlords, local leaders, bandits, and sectarian movements (the so-called Red Turbans).287
In spite of the many threats to its unity, the Yuan had good success with its regular and
hastily conscripted troops after the Chancellor on the Right Toghtō created a system that
gave the court a much higher degree of control over both local officials and the military.
But Toghtō was forced to resign in 1355 after he lost the emperor’s support over a delay
in the formal investiture of the crown prince. Power immediately devolved from the
imperial court to the local warlords and generals. This was especially poor timing as the
Red Turban rebellion exploded after Toghtō’s dismissal.

The Red Turban rebellion is a bit of a misnomer, as it is the collective name given
to several different but religiously motivated movements in the late Yuan. White Lotus
Society groups and local groups of a similar messianic flavor began attracting a motley
crew of malcontents, drawn from the “uprooted and restless” folk of the cities and
market towns, whose numbers had been greatly increased by the natural disasters of the
1340s.288 The core leadership of one of the early rebellions consisted of an itinerant monk,

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287 Frederick Mote, “The Rise of the Ming Dynasty: 1330-1367” in Frederick W. Mote and Denis C Twitchett, eds, *Cambridge History of China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), vol. 7: *The Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644*, Part I, 18. It should be noted that local militias were not rebels per se, but are included by Mote because they represent military forces unauthorized by the Yuan court.

288 John Dardess, “Transformations of Messianic Revolt and the Founding of the Ming Dynasty,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 23, no. 3 (May 1970): 541. By the late Ming, “White Lotus” was used in a broad sense to refer to a popular uprising with religious underpinnings, rather than any formal organization. Whether the millenarial White Lotus societies of the Yuan-Ming transition were the same or directly related to the White Lotus societies of the Song and earlier Yuan is a matter of much debate. See Barend ter Haar, *The White Lotus Teachings in Chinese Religious History*, reprint, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999), 115-172, especially 166-172.
a blacksmith, a descendent of slaves, a Daoist, a fisherman, a musician, and someone with the ominous nickname “Double-knife” (perhaps a butcher?).\textsuperscript{289} The future first emperor of the Ming was an itinerant monk during this time, joining a Red Turban group led by Guo Zixing (郭子興, 1302?-1355), who was the son of a successful soothsayer.\textsuperscript{290}

The lines between Yuan forces, rebels and local militias were constantly shifting. Here, Guo Zixing’s group provides a good example. Guo Zixing originally led a local defensive force before deciding to take in fleeing rebel leaders of a White Lotus Society. Over time, many of the Red Turban groups shifted away from their early messianic elements and leadership turned to more militarily-minded men: bandits and smugglers turned into minor warlords. In the end, the largest groups, led by Liu Futong/Han Lin’er (Song), Chen Youliang (Han), Zhang Shicheng (Zhou), and Zhu Yuanzhang (Wu) all incorporated Confucian ideology as they shifted from rebel movements to small states vying for control of the empire. This shift is especially pronounced in Zhu Yuanzhang’s faction, which was able to convince such eminent scholar-officials as Song Lian and Li Ji to join its cause.\textsuperscript{291}

By 1367, Zhu Yuanzhang had defeated most of the larger rebel factions-cum-small states to become the dominant force in central China. The Yuan court through

\textsuperscript{289} Ibid, 544.

\textsuperscript{290} Ibid, 546.

Chaghan Temur controlled the North until 1362, but he was assassinated and his son, Koko Temur, was neither as gifted of a leader nor as loyal to the court. With the immediate threats to his power eliminated, Zhu Yuanzhang proclaimed his new dynasty, the Ming, in 1368 and swept into North China. With no real opposition, he reached Beijing in the fall and Mongol control of China reached its end. Given the unbelievable turmoil of the 1340s and 1350s, it has been questioned whether any state could have endured after such an intense and prolonged beating at the hands of fate.292

Returning to Dadao, it was always a Northern school and, by virtue of geography, the heart of the school in Beijing remained untouched by the turmoil and destruction of Ming conquest until its final phase. But the natural disasters of the 1340s would have wrecked havoc on the fields and orchards which sustained the school’s abbeys and temples, threatening their self-sufficiency and weakening the institutions at the core of the school. If the abbeys were having difficulty supporting themselves, this could have caused them to turn away novices--as famously happened to Zhu Yuanzhang--which would have further restricted the school’s growth.293 Additionally, the commandment that monastics support themselves through agriculture meant that Dadaoists were tied to their abbeys and temples much more than other Daoists. Zhao Jianyong has theorized that Dadao abbey and temple sites were specifically selected for their agricultural potential.294


293 Zhu Yuanzhang joined a Buddhist monastery in an effort to avoid starving, only to be turned out with the rest of the novices when the monastery ran out of food.

294 Zhao Jianyong 赵建勇, “Yuandai Dadaojiao zai Guanzhong de chuanfan--yi ‘Chuangjian Dadao Yinxiang gong zhi bei’ beiyang timing wei zhongxin de kaocai 元代
In times of trouble, Daoists typically retreated to the mountains or “roamed around,” neither which would have been viable options for Dadao monastics because of the command that they support themselves through farming, especially on a large scale.

While Beijing was relatively insulated from the fighting, the disintegration of the Yuan empire would have left many Dadao temples and abbeys cut off from the school’s headquarters. The other major center of Dadao activity—as best we know—the Bianliang circuit, which included Xuzhou, was cut off from the control of the Yuan court as early as 1350. Instead, Bianliang circuit was now located on the fluid border between the territory controlled by Chaghan Temur and the new state of Song. The city of Kaifeng itself switched hands twice between 1351 and 1362. The reader will recall chapter three where the organization of the school was discussed. Initially, the local leadership of Dadao hermitages, temples, and abbeys was appointed by officials at the main abbey in Dadu. I suggested that the practice originated with Li Xicheng as he was establishing the Tianbao lineage and trying to consolidate his control in order to strengthen his claim to the patriarchate. Particularly in areas where the school was not well-established, control over Dadao institutions would have quickly devolved to local communities. Abbots could have switched allegiances to other schools in the area or simply died, which would have left their temples vulnerable to takeovers, much as the temples had originally come into possession of the school. In such a situation, it is difficult to imagine the institutions not consistently prioritizing local interests over the interests of the school as a whole, thus weakening the abbeys’ sense of identity and affiliation with the Dadao school.

大道教在关中的传播—《创建大道迎祥宫之碑》碑阴题名为中心的考察,” Zhongguo Daojiao 2010, no. 6, 35.
Furthermore, the sheer scale of the destruction associated with the establishment of the Ming dynasty would have been devastating. Timothy Brook, citing a stele inscription from the Ming, believes only twenty to thirty percent of monasteries survived the disintegration of the Yuan empire.\textsuperscript{295} This number should be treated with some caution as it is a single data point and the inscription which the data is derived from is undated. However, it is from a Buddhist temple in Hebei, a province where Dadao had a number of temples and abbeys. If indeed 70\% or 80\% of the temples and abbeys in Hebei were destroyed, that alone would account for the school’s sudden demise. Dadao was relatively small school, holding roughly 10\% of the abbeys in North China compared to Quanzhen. Even the loss of 50\% of religious institutions in Hebei would have had a disproportionately large effect on the Dadao school. It simply did not have enough institutions to sustain a large loss without collapsing. Again, abbeys were the essential unit of the Dadao school and the monastics were tied to the abbeys. If the abbeys were gone, the monks and nuns would have had nowhere to go.

Additionally, the Dadao school had received much official recognition and honor from the Yuan court. The Tianbao lineage in particular had seen its fortunes soar since the 1280s. Titles, robes, and gifts flowed from the imperial court. The privileges only increase with time. Invitations to perform rituals on the emperor’s behalf and even

\textsuperscript{295} Timothy Brook, \textit{The Chinese State in Ming Society} (London; New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 141. Although he does not give the inscription’s name, it is the \textit{Record of the Renovation of the Daming Temple} (\textit{Chongxiu Daming si ji} 重修大明寺記) by Ye Guan 葉觀. The line in question reads “元兵火之餘，其存者僅十之二三耳.” There is another inscription from the same temple dated 1507, but it does not contain the reference to the destruction at the end of the Yuan. Assuming the inscriptions are in chronological order, the \textit{Chongxiu Daming si ji} must date between 1507 and 1522. See Ye Guan 葉觀, \textit{Chongxiu Daming si ji} 重修大明寺記 in Zhao Zhibi 趙之璧, \textit{Pingshan tang tuzhi} 平山堂圖志 (s.n.: s.n., 1765), reprint 1883, 8:13b.
audiences with the emperor himself had been bestowed on eleventh and twelfth patriarchs. Special tax breaks were also extended, notably to the Yizhen Palace in Huizhou (home abbey of the eleventh patriarch) and the Tianbao Palace in Xuzhou. From a political perspective, the school had a lot to lose from the defeat of the Mongols. This undoubtedly limited the school’s ability to maneuver between the various factions vying for control of the empire.

In its formative years between the fall of Zhongdu and the fall of the Jurchen Jin, the school was unattached to any political entity and could thus keep its distance until the victor seemed clear. The fourth patriarch Mao Xicong is primarily remembered in Dadao inscriptions as having been “flexible” (ruo 弱) and thus able to survive the perilous times. Unfortunately, the imperial favor that fueled the school’s prestige and, to some extent, growth bound the school to the Yuan court as long as it held Dadu. Without the ability to be “flexible,” the school’s survival was put into jeopardy.

Looking beyond the political challenges the Dadao school would have faced, the social pressures were no less great. The widespread rebellions and migrations would have been highly disruptive to its lay societies. Moreover, people seem to have been looking for something different in religion than what Dadao was offering. In the turmoil that surrounded the Jin-Song wars of the twelfth century, people were interested in what Daoism could provide them, but large numbers were drawn to newly-formed schools (Quanzhen, Dadao, Taiyi) rather than existing ones. In the collapse of the Yuan empire, it appears that people drawn primarily to millentarial teachings. Perhaps after several hundred years of frequent warfare with intermittent periods of peace and with each invasion more destructive and devastating than the last, people in North China were ready
for a permanent end to what must have seem like a never-ending cycle of suffering and a
glorious new age of peace. Unfortunately, Dadao did not offer that kind of hope and
change, so far as is known.

It is true that some modern scholars have seen an “apocalyptic overtone” in the
school and I myself mentioned a somewhat apocalyptic tone in reference to some of Du
Chengkuan’s inscriptions in Chapter Three. However, it would be wrong to classify
the school as messianic, especially in its late form. The phrase “save the living and
redeem the dead” (jisheng dusi 濟生度死), which is seen in several Dadao inscriptions,
provides a good example of how the mature form of the school at least took an
apocalyptic element and recontextualized it. In Dadao, the term “saving the living and
redeeming the dead” seems to have been read in the context of providing relief aid and
healing the sick, particularly through exorcisms. The phrase is used in two early
hagiographies of Liu Deren and the epitaph for a circuit recorder, while the
hagiography of the twelfth patriarch has an entire section devoted to “saving the living,”
which includes animals. This stands in marked contrast to the movement of Han


297 See for example Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji, line 17, in Wang Yuyang, 313; and Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji, line 15, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 818.

298 The two steles mentioned above, Epitaph for the Circuit Recorder, the Ritual Master Mr. Zhang (Daolu Zhang gong fashi muzhi 道錄張公法師墓誌), line 1, in Li Hui and Cao Fazhan, Xianyang beike 咸陽碑刻 (Beijing: Santai chubanshe, 2003), 498.

299 Tianbao gong bei, lines 31-37, in Daojia jinshi lüe, 828. See also [Daming guan] Zhen dadao jiao xuanying Zhang zhenren daoxing bei, lines 44-53, in Wang Yuyang, 150; and Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadaozhenren daoxing bei, lines 35-40, in Appendix C.
Shantong (韓山童, d. 1355), for example, which revered the *Scripture of the Lesser and Greater King of Light* (*Xiaoda mingwang jing* 小大明王經) or the sectarian group that produced the *Scripture about the Greater and Lesser King of Light Appearing in the World to Open a New Era* (*Da xiao mingwang chushi kaiyuan jing*, 大小明王出世開元經).\(^{300}\)

Finally, even if the Dadao school had tried to reorganize and reassert itself after the Ming conquest, it probably would have run afoul of Ming Taizu’s policies to restructure Chinese society.\(^{301}\) Beginning with the very first year of his reign, he initiated a series of policies designed to strictly control Buddhism and Daoism by directing their efforts towards his goal for a perfect society. The *Da Ming Huidian* contains many pieces of legislature regarding Buddhism and Daoism. Among those of concern are the 1373 statute recognizing only two schools of Daoism: Quanzhen and Zhengyi.\(^{302}\) Failure to be recognized doesn’t equal a ban--the Qingwei and Jingming schools are both unmentioned yet began in the Yuan and continued into the Ming--but it does signal a lack of imperial support that whatever remained of the school would have desperately needed if it was to turn its fortunes around. A 1391 edict combined temples and hermitages into abbeys.


\(^{302}\) Li Dongyang 李東陽, *Da Ming Huidian* 大明會典 (Beijing: Neifu kanben, 1587), 226: 3b5.
which were then strictly limited to one at the prefectural level, one at the sub-prefecture level and one at the county level, all to be located at their respective seats.\footnote{Ibid, 226: 1b2-4.} Given the small percentage of Daoist institutions in the North that the school controlled in its heyday, there is little chance that a Dadao abbey would have been one of the three sanctioned abbeys in any prefecture--and the Dadao school was nothing without its temples and abbeys. There is much debate as to the degree to which the edict was effective, but the overall environment under Ming Taizu would have been discouraging at best to any formal reorganization the remaining Dadaoists may have hoped for.

As for any internal factors that might have contributed to the school’s demise, it was already discussed in the previous chapter how the selection of the eleventh and twelfth Tianbao patriarchs deviated from the previously established tradition of lateral or fraternal succession. If the line of patriarchal succession was not fixed by the twelfth patriarch before his retirement, internal disputes over who was to be the thirteenth patriarch could have weakened or even split the Tianbao lineage. Splitting an already small school into multiple rival lineages would not have helped the school weather the difficult conditions that lay ahead in the 1340s and 1350s.

It was Qing Xitai who in his 1988 work, *Zhongguo daojiao shi*, first suggested that the remaining members of the Dadao school, once bereft of a formal structure, joined with the Quanzhen school. His suggestion that the two schools merged was based on the Dadao school disappearing from the historical record and his belief that Quanzhen and the Longhu lineage had already become the core of Daoism in China, ergo those Dadao
refugees would likely gravitate towards Quanzhen.\textsuperscript{304} It was speculative exercise on circumstantial grounds and Qing Xitai acknowledged it as such. Over time, however, Qing Xitai’s “what if” has moved into the realm of more concrete. Qing Xitai’s discussion of Dadao in his two other books is abbreviated and his reasoning is omitted.\textsuperscript{305} By 2008, the idea that the two schools had merged in some form had wormed its way into the \textit{Encyclopedia of Taoism},\textsuperscript{306} despite the fact that the one scholar who gave any consideration to Qing Xitai’s suggestion--Liu Xiao--in an article published three years earlier had vigorously argued that at least the Yuxu lineage joined with the Zhengyi school.\textsuperscript{307} The weaknesses of Liu Xiao’s argument have already been discussed in chapter four, but he is right to question the gradual acceptance of Qing Xitai’s speculative exercise into the accepted narrative.

Based on Ming stele inscriptions from the Xuzhou Tianbao Palace, Chen Zhichao has suggested that the school might have continued in some form into the Ming, at least in Xuzhou. Although the Xuzhou Tianbao Palace was abandoned during the Ming conquest like its mother abbey in Dadu,\textsuperscript{308} the palace had been repaired during the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{304} Qing Xitai, \textit{Zhongguo daojiao shi}, 264.
\item \textsuperscript{305} For example, the \textit{Zhongguo daojiao} ends its discussion of the school with the line, “可能此后不久，真大道即归并入全真道.” See Qing Xitai, \textit{Zhongguo daojiao} (Shanghai: Zhishi chubanshe) 1991, 169.
\item \textsuperscript{307} Liu Xiao 刘晓, “Yuandai Dadaojiao Yuxu guan xi de zai tantao--cong liang tong shike mopian shuo qi 元代大道教玉虚观系的再探讨--从两通石刻拓片说起,” 125-126.
\item \textsuperscript{308} The \textit{(Ming) Stele for Tianbao Palace} says the Xuzhou Tianbao Palace was abandoned in the Yuan. Since it had just undergone a major renovation in the late 1320s,
Hongwu era and continued to be repaired and remodeled throughout the Ming and Qing dynasties, remaining in use as a Daoist abbey until the 1940s. Unfortunately, only three of the inscriptions at the Xuzhou Tianbao Palace have been published (and none of them are the Ming ones cited by Chen Zhichao), so we must rely on the small pieces quoted in the “Jin Yuan Zhen dadao jiao shiliao” to evaluate his suggestion.

Chen Zhichao quotes the Xuzhou Tianbao gong zengxiu ji (许州天宝宫增修记) (1517) as saying:

Now, as for the teachings of Laozi, legend says that there were those who wandered around collecting alms, generally not farming or weaving yet [they] have clothes and food......and their abbey [Tianbao Palace] in the past had several tens of mu of fields, now it has increased to several hundred mu. When those in the stream of the Dao weren’t burning incense and cultivating themselves; [they] joined their strength and worked together, farming [what] the abbey controlled. The lands outside the abbey walls, they cultivated to maximum yield; Within the abbey walls, the granaries were full. They pay their taxes, make offerings every morning and evening, take in guests, laboring for their wages. So it was like this and [they] took it as sufficient. Although there are six names listed, in actuality, all together there are four.

夫為老氏之教，有專事遊覽募化者，率不耕織而衣食，....而其宮舊有田數十畝，今增至數百畝。道流於焚修之暇，並力合作，耕耘剝畝，野而稱載，入而廩積，國賦以輸，晨暮以給，營作工食，亦於是乎而取足。名雖列於六人，實則同乎四人。

it is unlikely that the Palace would have been abandoned and in need of repairs within forty years for reasons unrelated to the disintegration of the Yuan empire.


310 The three inscriptions are the Xuzhou Tianbao gong shengzhi bei 許州天寶宮聖旨碑 and the (Xuzhou) Tianbao gong bei yin timing (許州)天寶宮碑陰題名 published in Chen Yuan’s Daojia jinshi lüe, and the (Ming) Tianbao gong bei (明)天寶宮碑 published in the (Minguo) Xuchang xian zhi (民國)許昌縣志. In his articles, Chen Zhichao refers to five additional steles—including three from the school--originally located on the abbey grounds: Chuangjian Tianbao gong bei 創建天寶宮碑, Zhao Desong lingge bei 趙德松靈閣碑, Tianbao gong Mingzhen guangde dashi daoxing bei 天寶宮明真廣德大师道行碑, Xuzhou Tianbao gong zengxiu ji 許州天寶宮增修記, and Xuzhou Tianbao gong chongxiu Zhenwu dian ji 許州天寶宮重修真武殿記.

311 “Those in the stream of the Dao” (daoliu 道流) are the Daoist monastics.
From the snippet provided, it certainly seems like the Daoists in question could have been Dadaoists. However, there’s no time period mentioned. We know the Xuzhou Tianbao Palace was a Dadao institution in the 1300s, so the Ming record could very well be describing the abbey’s past. If we assume that Ming record was describing contemporary events, then that is more intriguing, but it is still not solid evidence that the Dadao school continued well into the Ming dynasty. The Daoists described in the text could belong to another school or local tradition that was influenced by Dadao practices, but were not Dadaoists themselves. If--and it’s a big if--the Xuzhou Tianbao gong zengxiu ji is describing contemporary events, then I believe that the second possibility is the more likely. With the school as an institution dissolved, I find it difficult to believe that a single congregation could sustain itself for so long without attempting to rebuild the school’s hierarchy, reclaim its flagship abbeys, or at least proselytizing and rebuilding a local network of temples. Additionally, an earlier Ming stele, the (Ming) Stele for Tianbao Palace, dated 1492, does not link the abbey’s Daoists with any larger school, although its author was clearly cognizant of the abbey’s past during the Yuan.312

Chen Zhichao’s other bit of evidence comes from the Record of the Renovation of the Zhenwu Hall at the Xuzhou Tianbao Palace (Xuzhou Tianbao gong chongxiu Zhenwu dian ji 許州天寶宮重修真武殿記), dated 1574. He quotes the inscription as noting that the Zhenwu Hall was commonly know as the “Masters Hall” (shizu dian 師祖殿). If this shizu dian is same as the Dadao shizu tang (師祖堂), where offerings were made to deceased masters and patriarchs, then this could be a good sign that the school continued

312 Shao Bao 邵寶, (Ming) Stele for Tianbao Palace (明)天寶宮碑 in the (Minguo) Xuchang xian zhi 16:51a4, 52b2-4.
to exist either as a local tradition or in public memory well after the formal structure of Dadao had disintegrated. It’s highly speculative and I’m not convinced that the continued use of a name represents any significant continuation in the public memory of the Dadao school itself, rather than that of the local abbey.

This chapter has attempted to identify the cause or causes of the sudden demise of the Dadao school by examining the political, social and internal factors that likely contributed to the school’s total collapse as an institution by 1398. Why the school collapsed so suddenly is likely tied to the same reasons the Yuan dynasty collapsed. The prolonged environmental disasters of the 1340s would have wrecked havoc on the Dadao abbey’s fields and orchards, weakening the institutions at the core of the school. Politically, the subsequent disintegration of the Yuan empire would have left many Dadao temples and abbeys cut off from the school’s headquarters in Dadu. In such a situation, it is difficult to imagine the temples and abbeys not prioritizing local interests over the interests of the school as a whole. Moreover, thanks to years of imperial honors and privileges, Dadao had much to lose if the Mongols fell from power, which would have limited their flexibility in maneuvering between the different factions vying for control. The fighting during the last twenty years of the Yuan was extremely destructive. Again, abbeys were the essential unit of the Dadao school, if they were destroyed in large numbers or across a wide area, the school could not survive. Finally, even if the school tried to get back on its feet after the Ming conquest, they probably would have run afoul of Ming Taizu’s policies designed to restructure Chinese society. Socially, it appears that people were drawn primarily to messianic teachings at the end of the Yuan, something that Dadao did not offer so far as we know. Internally, an unsettled line of succession
would have destabilized the school when it needed strength to face the challenges of the 1340s and 1350s.

There has been an oft-repeated idea that some or all of the Dadao school merged with Quanzhen at the end of the Yuan. This is simply unverifiable, as there is no evidence that the two schools were ever connected. It is possible, however, that Dadao may have continued as a local tradition around Xuchang into the Ming dynasty until there too it faded away.
CONCLUSION

Near the end of the introduction, I stated that I intended for this dissertation to be the most comprehensive study of the Dadao school since Chen Yuan’s 1941 work, *Nan Song chu Hebei xin Daojiao kao*. By that measure, this project has been a success. I have argued that Zhang Xinzhen, rather than Liu Deren, as tradition holds, was the true founder of the Dadao school. In chapter three, I covered the entirety of the school’s beliefs, praxis, and formal structure to the degree which they are known. I’ve traced both Dadao lineages and been able to show that they remained separate until the demise of the school in 1368. I’ve discussed the troubled period between the eighth and twelfth Tianbao patriarchs, revealing how a break in the line of succession led the ninth, tenth, and eleventh patriarchs to nearly be erased from the school’s history. Finally, I examined the environmental, political, social, and internal factors that likely contributed to the total collapse of Dadao, which no other scholar has considered, as an explanation the sudden demise of school.

But I also laid out two other goals in the introduction: to elucidate the flourishing state of Daoism in North China during the twelfth through fourteenth centuries beyond just the activity of the Quanzhen school and to examine how Chinese religions, specifically Daoism, respond to times of political and social turmoil, which North China during the twelfth through fourteenth centuries experienced in abundance. To what degree have I achieved these goals?

In this conclusion, I’d like to rephrase the first question as “How does this advance the study of Daoism in North China during the Jin-Yuan period?” Quanzhen has
commanded the lion’s share of scholarly interest, partially based on its dominance in the
contemporary (20th century) period and partially on its abundance of resources from the
Jin-Yuan period. Quanzhen’s own interest in historiography from the very early days of
the school has provided modern scholars with valuable internal voices on the school’s
development. In contrast, Dadao and Taiyi died out centuries ago and left few records
behind. Both have often been treated by scholars as minor variations on Quanzhen and
therefore not really of interest or worthy of study. But that’s just an assumption. As I
pointed out in the introduction, no one has closely studied either Taiyi or Dadao in any
Western language prior to this dissertation. Yao Tao-chung and Marsone both came from
a background of studying Quanzhen and both read just enough on Dadao to write a short
summary on the school for much larger overviews of Daoism during the Jin dynasty. And,
as I again pointed out in the introduction, both are seriously flawed in their understanding
of the Dadao school. In Chinese, one would have to go back to Chen Yuan’s 1941 work
to find a comprehensive study on Dadao--and I believe this is true for Taiyi as well. In
the intervening seventy-five years, a considerable amount of additional source material
has come to light. Chen Yuan had fourteen pieces of primary source material for Nan
Song chu Hebei xin Daojiao kao; this dissertation has used over thirty. In the case of the
Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei, Chen Yuan was working with an
incomplete copy, whereas I have the complete inscription.

The result of this scholarly neglect is a very distorted view about the state of
Northern Daoism during the Jin and Yuan periods, where Quanzhen is assumed to be the

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\(^{313}\) For example, see Vincent Goossaert, “The Invention of an Order: Collective
Identity in Thirteenth-Century Quanzhen Taoism,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 29
norm—in doctrine, practice, and organization—and whatever small information on the
other schools is presented is ridiculously out-of-date. In “Daoism under the Jurchen Jin
Dynasty” in Modern Chinese Religion I, Quanzhen is covered in over forty pages, Dadao
gets less than four pages, and poor Taiyi gets just over two! This kind of disparity in
coverage, of course, reinforces the view that Dadao and Taiyi are nothing more than
minor variations on Quanzhen and now the whole field is stuck in a negative feedback
loop. Furthermore, without any information on the other two schools, scholars can’t
undertake any serious study into why these schools emerged so close together
chronologically and geographically, which is something I see as a significant gap in
Daoist Studies.

Modern scholars also can’t offer a valid conclusion for why Quanzhen continued
and the other two schools didn’t because we don’t know what is unique to each school.
As I postulated when presenting a summary of this dissertation to the Society for the
Study of Chinese Religions, Quanzhen’s ability to survive the fall of the Yuan and the
civil restructuring done by the first Ming emperor may have had more to do with sheer
number of institutions either belonging to or affiliated with the school rather than some
great doctrinal appeal or extraordinary leadership in a time of crisis.

As to the remaining question, how do Chinese religions, specifically Daoism,
respond to times of political and social turmoil, it has been addressed throughout this
dissertation, as the very existence of the Dadao school—much less its beliefs and
practices—is a response to the turmoil surrounding the Jurchen invasion and the fall of the
Northern Song. The development of Dadao has often been grouped as part of a larger
trend of “reformation” in Northern Daoism during the twelfth century. While I am
hesitant to declare any broad trends with so little information known about Taiyi, I will say that as far as the establishment of Dadao is concerned, this “back-to-basics” Daoism is a very different religious response to non-Han invasion and the fall of the native dynasty than is seen during the fall of the Yuan dynasty or during in the Six Dynasties period. In those periods, the trend seems to have been towards messianic or millenarian movements, often with obvious Maitreya or Manicheistic elements. Why the upheaval caused by the Jurchen invasion and the fall of the Northern Song seems to have provoked response for religious reform--at least among those with Daoist inclinations--rather than apocalyptic texts and charismatic preachers preparing the people for a new glorious beginning is something that can’t be adequately explained, though it is likely linked to the “return of antiquity” that was so influential in Northern Song thought.

Looking to the future, there is much work to be done. The same in-depth study of the Dadao school that I have just written needs to be done for the Taiyi school as well. Once that has been undertaken, scholars can finally begin to search for the factors that caused these schools to emerge so close together in both time and geography. While I do not anticipate being able to take on such large research projects in the near future, I hope my research will inspire other scholars and we will not have to wait another seventy-five years for a comprehensive study on the Taiyi school.

Within the Dadao school, Da Yuan chuangjian Tianbao gong bei, Zhao Desong ling’ge bei, and Stele on the Speech and Conduct of the Great Master of and Broad Virtue at Tianbao Palace (Tianbao gong Mingzhen guangde dashi daoxing bei 天宝宫明真广德大师道行碑), that is, the stele inscriptions so far known only to Chen Zhichao, need to be studied in context of the other Dadao inscriptions and the full text of the
inscriptions needs to be published. At the time Chen Zhichao saw them in 1986, those three Dadao steles were in private possession. Additionally, the two Ming inscriptions from the Xuzhou Tianbao Palace, *Xuzhou Tianbao gong zengxiu ji* 許州天寶宮增修記, and *Xuzhou Tianbao gong chongxiu Zhenwu dian ji* 許州天寶宮重修真武殿記, need to be have the full text of the inscriptions studied to further investigate Chen Zhichao’s suggestion that the Dadao school continued in that location into the Ming. All of the steles in question were originally erected at the Xuzhou Tianbao Palace. In the last twenty years, the buildings at the Xuzhou Tianbao palace complex (now called the Xuchang Tianbao Palace) have been rebuilt or, in a few cases, repaired. Construction remains ongoing, but a stele garden has been constructed. Some of the steles are obviously damaged, but appear to number around twenty. Whether the Dadao steles previously in private possession are among those re-erected is unclear, but future research at the Xuchang Tianbao temple is likely to yield new information on the Dadao school and its ultimate fate.

In regard to new source material either from or about the school, I share Zhao Jianyong’s assessment that gazetteers are our best hope. All of the material that has come to light in past seventy-five years--with the single exception of the *Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhen dadao zhenren daoxing bei*--has come either from gazetteers or from a collection of stele rubbings held in the National Library in Beijing. To this end, a systematic search of gazetteers in areas where known Dadao temples or abbeys were located should be conducted with the intent of finding new records or inscriptions related to the school. While there is much we still do not know about the Dadao school, I am

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314 E-mail to the author, Sept. 22, 2016.
optimistic that continued research over the next few years will reveal even more about the school’s history and the flourishing state of Daoism in North China during the twelfth through fourteenth centuries.
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SBCK  
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SKQS  
Siku quanshu 四庫全書

SSIZS  
Shisan jing zhushu 十三經注疏

ZHDZ  
Zhonghua Daozang 中華道藏

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APPENDIX A
LIST OF STELE INSCRIPTIONS AND RECORDS IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER
Chongxiu Yuxu guan Sanqing dian ji 重修玉虚觀三清殿記 (1208)
Wuwei guan can bei 無為觀殘碑 (after 1216)
◇ Fuyuan guan bei 副元觀碑 (1267)
Yuxu guan dadao zushi chuanshou zhi bei 玉虛觀大道祖師傳授之碑 (1270)
Chuangjian Daming guan geng Shangqing gong ji 創建大明觀更上清宮記 (1275, recarved 1336)
Luojing Goushan gaijian Xiantian gong ji 落經緱山改建先天宮記 (1278)
Yuan chuangjian Dadao Yingxiang gong bei 元創建大道延祥宮碑 (1280)
Dadao Yanxiang guan bei 大道延祥觀碑 (1289)
Chongxiu Longyang bei 重修隆陽碑 (1291)
Yuan daolu Zhang fashi muzhi 元道錄張法師墓誌 (1292)
Zhi zeng Dadao zhengtong sishi chenghao bei 制贈大道正宗四世稱號碑 (1295)
Da Yuan Chunagjian Tianbao gong bei 大元創建天寶宮碑 (1295)
* Chuangjian Tianbao gong bei 創建天寶宮碑 (1295)
Untitled Record at Tongzhen Palace (1296)
*Zhao Desong ling’ge bei 趙德松靈閣碑 (1305)
Zheng zhenren bei 鄭真人碑 (1318)
(Xuzhou) Tianbao gong bei (許州)天寶宮碑 (1326)
Xuzhou Tianbao gong shengzhi bei 許州天寶宮聖旨碑 (1326)
Longshan shuiyu Taixuan gong Zhen dadao wuzu Taixuan zhenren Li jun benxing bei 龍山水谷太玄道宮真大道五祖太玄真人酈君本行碑 (c.1328)
Zhen dadao jiao xianying zhenren daoxing bei 真大道教玄應真人道行碑 (1328)
Tiancheng guan bei 天成觀碑 (1328)
Yaodi Yanshou gong Zhenren daoxing bei 堯帝延壽宮真人道行碑 (1329)
*Zhen dadao gongdian zhi bei 真大道宮殿之碑 (1329)
(Xuzhou) Tianbao gong bei, yin timing (許州)天寶宮碑陰題名 (1329)
Zhen dadao jiao Xuanying zhenren Zhang daoxing bei 真大道教玄應真人張道行碑 (1334)
Huizhou Yizhen gong shengzhi bei 輝州顏真宮聖旨碑 (1335)
*Tianbao gong Mingzhen guangde dashi daoxing bei 天寶宮明真廣德大師道行碑 (1339)
Da Yuan chongjian Longshan gong bei 大元重建龍山觀碑 (1344)
Shu Liu zhenren shi 書劉真人事 (c. 1350s)

*unpublished
◇ not extant, content unknown.
APPENDIX B
LIST OF DADO PATRIARCHS
Founding Patriarch
Liu Deren 劉德仁
1121/2-1180/1

Second Patriarch
Cheng Shizheng/Zhenglun 陳師正/正論
Dates Unknown

Third Patriarch
Zhang Xinzhen 張信真
d. 1215?

Fourth Patriarch
Mao Xicong 毛希琮
1186-1223/1227

Tianbao lineage
Li Xicheng 鄆希誠
1181-1259

Fifth Patriarch
Yuxu Lineage
Li Xi’an 李希安
d. 1266

Sixth Patriarch
Sun Defu 孫德福
1218-1273

Seventh Patriarch
Li Dehe 李德和
d. 1284

Du Fuchun 杜副春
fl. 1275-1281

Eighth Patriarch
Unknown**

Yue Dewen 岳德文
1235-1299

Ninth Patriarch
Unknown**

Zhao 趙
d. 1300-1302

Tenth Patriarch
Unknown**

Zhao Desong 趙德松
d. c. 1302
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Eleventh Patriarch</td>
<td>Zheng Jinyuan 鄭進元</td>
<td>1267-1306</td>
<td>Zhang 張</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth Patriarch</td>
<td>Zhang Qingzhi 張清志</td>
<td>d. 1327/28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteenth Patriarch</td>
<td>Li 麗</td>
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**One of these is Liu Shangping (劉尚平, fl. 1324) but which is unclear.
APPENDIX C

RECONSTRUCTED TEXT OF THE 堯帝延壽宮真大道真人道行碑
致和元年，歳在戊辰夏四月朔日，大中大夫東平路總管蘇侯出自長安下陣為治，革其宿弊，新其政，令不數月六縣一司，兵民咸被其澤，莫不稱羨侯當謁堯帝延壽宮行香，因語提點杜進福，曰甫問宗派真大道之門，玄應真人乃吾鄉人，實平生方外之友。今外而路府州縣皆為真人立道行之碑，若等盍不紀其延壽宮之始末暨汝先師玄應真人之行實，刻之貞珉以垂永久。亦宗門之美事也。退而集法宗義之小大，歡謹按真大道之教也。興金人得中土之時，有祖師劉德仁，初號無憂普濟真人，加號無憂普濟開明洞微真君。因味道的經，虛心實腹。言悟真闡教，絕去嗜慾，屏斷酒肉，勤力耕種，戒行嚴沽。一時翕然宗之。傳之五祖麗真人克遵訓，尤謹修持。其時有孟德平乃泰安長清縣第六鄉人也。父祖俱事戎壨從嚴，武惠公閫幕勾當。其德平不喜俗冗，斷葷，
絕欲，惟務修行。屢常其真志，遂令督修堯帝延壽宮兼管四季祭禮，凡督工修造，僅三載工畢。德平率眾俱禮五祖為師。忽一日，得浩然之氣，輒以宮門付王成貴，杜進副主持，師一瓢一仗，云遊山川。既而復歸【】清舊隱，重修上清宮為之祖堂，以俟老焉。惟成貴承繼宮門，蒙六祖真人授以東平路道錄勾當，令職垂二十年，未聞面惡於人。後解職與杜進福任進貴等遵守戒律，未嘗違怠。至於玄應真人，九傳矣。真人張氏，乾州奉天縣人。儒官著族。太父德開為軍官長千夫。父永興襲其職，母呂氏。師長身，古貌，聰耳，美須，蕭然塵壒表之。望而知其有仙風道氣。自幼，惡殺不啖肉。年十六，從天寶李師為道流，錫名清志。然猶歸養父母。年十八，辭家，入太白山越一年，往覲李師。復還省親，久之，辭親人終南山。大父年老，招之出山，乃家居侍養。年二十六，創長安明道觀，又造鳳翔扶風縣立天寶宮。及李師解真，師事岳師，

328 The *Daojia jinshi lüe* substitutes the homophonous character "嘗".

329 The excavated inscription has "邀" in place of "遂", which is a mistake.

330 The excavated inscription is somewhat different, reading "既而長清隱".

331 The excavated inscription has "杜" here. Either of author of the stele (or its transcription) accidently combined the names of Du Jinfu and Wang Chenggui into one or the "杜" is a mistake and the *Daojia jinshi lüe* text is correct.

332 The excavated inscription misreads "六" as "八", which is a mistake since the inscription previously states that Meng served at Yanshou Palace during the time of the Sixth Patriarch.

333 The excavated inscription has "進", which is clearly a mistake.

334 The excavated inscription is missing the character "父" and mistakenly has "間" in place of the visually similar "開".

335 The excavated inscription has "盍". No version of Zhang’s hagiography has the exact same character here, although there are all visually similar characters. Perhaps the original inscription was particularly difficult to read here, resulting in each copy using a different character.

336 The *Daojia jinshi lüe* text has "啖". Historically, the two characters were interchangeable.

337 The excavated text has "徙觀".

338 The excavated text is missing "觀".

339 The excavated text has "又造武州扶風縣立天寶宮", but this is undoubtedly a mistake because Wuzhou is in Shanxi and had no Fufeng county.

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界以扶風道教之職。年三十三，為永昌王祈福於五嶽四瀆名山大川既遍，復來關中，修理前所創宮觀。居太白山老虎洞三載。妖魅障厄極至，一皆不攝。聞大母喪，歸服喪如禮。會陝西行省有疾，治之而愈，有所贈遺，皆卻不受。彼乃為辦葬資。服闋至景縣，岳師試以勞事，喜曰：是子可矣。又遣之出，曰：他年再來。吾師暨二人入大珠牢山，結茅而居。舊多虎穴，虎避他處，頗為人害。吾師曰：吾奪其所，可去之。於是遊山東諸州，為人除疾，應驗之速，若或相之云。已而岳師殞，吾師還喪之。喪畢潛遁，逾大慶渡，至河東居臨汾。五年白雲庵地大震，城邑鄉村屋廬悉摧。壓死者不可勝計。獨師而其徒所居，中裂為二，得免於患。師遍巡木石間，聽呻吟聲，救活甚眾。歸華山舊隱，而天寶宮二趙一鄭攝掌教事。五年之間，相繼殞滅。齊臨終語其徒曰：天降兇菑，死亡薦臻，得非於教條，有違逆歟。吾聞張清志躬受岳師付囑，蓋仁人也。可奉之掌教，庶有豸乎？於是宮之徒眾尋訪吾師於華山巖谷。既至眾皆悅服，師諭徒眾曰：我教以慈儉無為為寶，今聽獄訟，設刑滅威若有司然。吾教果如是乎？繼今以始，凡桎梏鞭笞之具盡廢之。眾諾。自是眾安害息。五年宿弊，一旦悉除。吾師之孝其親也。大父母父母之存，膳必親視，藥必親嘗，出入必告，應對必謹。請溫定省，靡或有闕。母嘗病疽殆甚，口吻吮其膿去毒，遂德甦瘥。又患膈氣，疾幾不救，師禱神進
藥，不寢食四旬。母忽吐涎塊如瓜，漸底平復。居喪至哀，於儒家制不悖。師之敬其師也，塵賤之役，人不屑為者皆不厭倦，衣布衲，攜銅罐，自為粥以食，終夜危坐，未嘗解衣甘寢。不衣纖纩，及氈罽皮毛之屬，至於奶酪酥蜜亦未嘗啜也。師之濟於人也，少能力耕，其鄉土厚泉深，難於得水。盛夏時，每日於農務之余，汲水貯石槽，使盈而不竭，以待鄰里放牧牛羊，及禽鳥之渴者來飲之。宗戚之家，親死子壯，葬娶愆期，則傾囊為之葬娶。饑饉之歲，見不能自存之人，輒賑恤令不至餓死。行禱嶽瀆山川時，齋钱三千緡隨行，以濟所在茕獨無告者。鈞州趙家河，民居進山麓，莫可凿井，遠取河水於飲。師為相土脈，俾井其處，果得甘泉，人甚便之。新豐戲河，地在高原，亦以無井為苦。或告以師前在趙家河得水之事，詣師請。師曰前特偶然爾。其何在乎？請不已，竟為掘二井。師之達於命也，謙冲損抑。掌教將二十年，教風日盛，於天寶宮完舊營新，誦经之堂，禮師之祠，安聚

352 The excavated inscription has 后 instead.

353 The *Daojia jinshi lüe* text has 潢.

354 The excavated inscription has the variant character 翦.

355 The excavated inscription reads 師出其身也而....

356 The excavated inscription omits 及 and misreads 氣 as 托, probably due to damage to the inscription here.

357 The excavated inscription misreads this as the visually similar and sometimes homophonous character, 齊.

358 The excavated inscription misreads this as 財.

359 The excavated inscription misreads this as 恤, probably due to damage to the inscription here.

360 The *Daojia jinshi lüe* text has 資.

361 The excavated inscription has 閑 instead, which is surely a mistake.

362 The excavated inscription omits this character.

363 The excavated inscription reads 竟為辨決二井.

364 The excavated inscription misreads 建 for 達, probably due to damage to the inscription here.

365 The excavated inscription has the homophonous character 頌.
之寮，以至庖庾，各有修宜。日食数千指，而吾师淡于无欲，仙翁神君，亦将让德。欲立石以纪天宝宫重兴之由，敢以为世之能文章者请。子曰：子之教自托于老氏。其原盖深远矣。其流之别，教各不同，予未暇细论。洪惟我朝列圣之于二教，其恩至厚，其礼至隆，前古未之有也。而子之师皎然独清于眾濁之中，口绝荤膻之味，身绝污穢之行，可谓特立不群者矣。若夫客尘不入而心常虚，主珍不出而腹常实，神气合一如夫妻子母之相变而不离。长生久视以閲生生灾灾之眾，此则老氏之末流，所谓神仙之伎也。予学孔氏，不足以知此。然或罔克究竟而斯世盗名者，盖亦不無。若子之师，洁尚质素，柏然自守，庶乎可与游方之外者哉！谨记。

時歳次已巳天歷二年三月【】日東平路舉師任成貴，【宮】門三洞講師王天秀，【】府東平路道判都提點杜進福等
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366 The excavated inscription misreads this as 康, probably due to damage to the inscription here.
367 The Daojia jinshi lüe text has 枚.
368 The excavated text has 柏, which is clearly a mistake. From this point on, the excavated inscription is highly fragmentary.
369 The excavated text has 清, neither 清師 nor 講師 appear in any other Dadao text.
370 The excavated text has 主.