

4 The Demise and Rebirth of Tongbai Palace

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I devoted the previous chapter to providing an overview of the development of Tongbai Palace from its construction in 711 to the beginning of the 17th century, when its decline was already evident to contemporary authors. By the beginning of the Qing dynasty, paralleling the decline of the Ming dynasty, that of Tongbai Palace had been going on for at least fifty years. What was left of this temple remained under Daoist management, despite the warfare and the economic problems that hit the region in the final years of the Ming. Nonetheless, their control over the temple and its territory had been dwindling: since the Tianqi 天啓 era (1621-1627), the land had been *de facto*, although certainly not *de iure*, in the hands of local gentry, who were eager to keep it and to possibly receive official recognition of their control over it. By the early Qing dynasty, Tongbai Palace of Tiantai County had lost much of its prominence within the national religious system. Yet, its memory lingered on due to its past connections to important Daoist lineages and especially to that

of Sima Chengzhen. The literati were aware of the layered history of Tiantai and appreciated its cultural, historical and religious significance. The surrounding natural environment was another aspect appreciated by Qing literati, who described it in their poems by relying, sometimes just as a *topos*, on the concept of *fudi* 福地. By the Kangxi era, when literati and members of the elite started challenging the occupation of the temple land by local families, this had been under the control of the local gentry for about 100 years.

The Qing dynasty did not take control of the whole empire when its army entered Beijing in 1644. The process of ‘pacification’ of the empire, especially of its peripheral and south-eastern territories took many years and was only completed at the beginning of the Kangxi reign, while the remnants of the Ming dynasty continued to affirm their right to rule until 1662.¹ If we turn our attention to the South, we see that the city of Nanjing was conquered by the Manchu only in the middle of 1646 and that the subjugation of south-east China – the area which is the focus of this study – was only completed with the conquest of Fuzhou in October 1646.² The pacification of the area, though, was a much more complex issue.³ The Qing could not declare total control of Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Fujian until 1661 – with the demise of the legendary Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (also known as Koxinga; 1625-1662), who had been harassing the Manchu forces since 1651 – and even then, not on all levels of society.⁴

The last decades of the Ming dynasty were characterised by various forms of power struggle. One of the reasons for the end of the dynasty was the competition and mutual diffidence between the military and bureaucratic hierarchies, with officials claiming authority over generals and the army demotivated by the lack of funding and career prospects.⁵ Before the final showdown, though, the situation had been exacerbated by another political conflict, this time involving the gentry on the one side and the state on the other. This is a fundamental topic for the present study because it is directly related to the change in social and political significance of the gentry and it provides the interpretative key for understanding how the gentry of Tiantai could exert seemingly unchallenged control over local affairs.

1 Struve, *The Southern Ming*, 1.

2 Struve, *The Southern Ming*, 95-8; Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise*, 577-90.

3 Cf. Struve, *The Southern Ming*; Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise*.

4 Struve, *The Southern Ming*, 154-66, 178-93; Croizier, *Koxinga and Chinese Nationalism*; Hung, *Protest with Chinese Characteristics*, 1-7, 106-10. Consider the role of secret societies in keeping alive a revanchist spirit against the Manchu: Novikov, “La propagande anti-mandchoue de la Triade en Chine”; Ownby, *Brotherhoods and Secret Societies in Early and Mid-Qing China*.

5 Struve, *The Southern Ming*, see especially the introduction.

These events mark the beginning of the second part of this book, which deals with the history of Tongbai Palace in late imperial times and more precisely between the 17th and the early 19th century. In this chapter I will focus on the period of transition between the end of the Ming dynasty and the Yongzheng 雍正 reign (1722-1735) of the Qing. Two of the main sources on which this chapter is based are the *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 天台山全志 (Complete gazetteer of Mt. Tiantai) and the *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 清聖祠志. It is noteworthy that Zhang Lianyuan was the editor of the former and author of the latter: the relationship between Zhang Lianyuan, Tongbai Palace and these texts will become clearer over the course of the present chapter.

At the end of the previous chapter, I established that at the beginning of the 17th century Tongbai Palace lacked resources and lay in a state of disrepair. This situation may have been caused by a number of factors: irresponsible management, the lack of resources and patronage, the direct influence of the local gentry or of the government and so on. According to my research, the two main causes were the lack of imperial support and the local gentry's attempts to occupy temple land. Regarding the former point, the late imperial sources that I could analyse are silent concerning any kind of imperial patronage after the restoration by Bao Liaojing of 1411. In fact, the *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* states that during the Kangxi era the temple was completely in disrepair (*jin ju fei* 今俱廢).⁶ A temple had two means of earning the resources that it needed to survive: donations and patronage, or properties and estates. From the time of its construction in 711, Tongbai Palace was designed as a temple located far from the major urban centres: while this made it a lofty, detached environment and thus benefited its reputation as a place for self-cultivation and transcendence, it also meant that lay sponsors were more difficult to attract. While the presence of charismatic personages such as Sima Chengzhen, Du Guangting and other renowned Daoists could obviate the geographical distance from prospective affluent donors, this could not be expected to be the case during periods in which the resident Daoists did not boast a comparable charisma. Moreover, from the start Tongbai Palace was designed as a residence for court Daoists, meaning that it relied on their privileged bonds with the court for its sustenance.

However, Tongbai Palace was not totally at the mercy of generous emperors: Tang Ruizong had already granted it lands intended to support its community in its daily activities and as we have seen in the previous chapter, the temple still possessed a large quantity of land during the Song dynasty. This source of revenue must also have been alluring for the local population, and it attracted especially

⁶ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 5:2b.

those who had the means to forcefully take hold of it: this became a problem for Tongbai Palace at the end of the Ming dynasty.

4.1 Tongbai Palace in Disrepair

Even though, as discussed at the end of the previous chapter, the temple found itself in critical condition, Tongbai Palace had not been destroyed in its entirety: we find evidence of this in a number of sources from the early Qing period. I will refer here to a record by Pan Lei 潘耒 (*zi*: Cigeng 次耕, *hao*: Jiatang 稼堂; 1646-1708), who visited Tiantai in 1691, just a few decades after Koxinga's defeat.⁷ Pan was a native of Wujiang 吳江 (Suzhou) and, after passing the imperial examinations in 1679, he entered the Hanlin Academy as a member of the Imperial Diary Office (*rijiang guan qiju zhu Hanlin Yuan* 日講官起居注翰林院).⁸ Pan Lei is also remembered as the author of many travelogues and journals, such as the *You Jinniu Shan ji* 遊金牛山記 (Record on the Excursion on Mt. Jinniu), *You Linlü Shan ji* 遊林慮山記 (Record on the Excursion on Mt. Linlü) and *You xianju zhushan ji* 遊仙居諸山記 (Record on Excursions to the Mountains Abodes of Transcendents).⁹ His *You Tiantai Shan ji* 遊天台山記 (Record on the Excursion on Mount Tiantai), includes the following excerpt:

[Travelling] more than ten li southward, I arrived at Tongbai Palace, which is the Daoist Jinting Grotto-Heaven. The Zixiao and Hualin peaks produce a large quantity of stalactites, *jinjiang*, *qi* flowers, *yao* grass and other famous drugs. The disciples of Ge Xuan and Sima Chengzhen lived here. [...] Today everything is covered in vegetation, except the Sanqing Hall. Raindrops become tears dripping from Tianzun's saddened face. The son of a local official's family is buried next to the temple. People say that the biggest responsibility for the temple's decline is this person's deluded geomantic practices and his avid interest in these propitious lands. There is nothing that this kind of people would not do in order to obtain the land, even openly occupying Buddhist or Daoist temples and burying their own bones under that soil. How could these people gain any benefit from actions that they themselves did not realise were a sin? I loathe their greed and pity their folly! This place had more than ten stelae from the Tang and Song dynasties: I

⁷ On Pan Lei, see *Da Qing yitong zhi* 57:3b; Jiang, *Qingdai renwu shengzu nianbiao*, 828. See also the short biographical annotations in *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 13:4a.

⁸ *Da Qing yitong zhi* 57:3b; Jiang, *Qingdai renwu shengzu nianbiao*, 828.

⁹ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 13:4a. These works are collected in *Xiao fanghu zhai yu die chao* 小方壺齋輿地叢鈔.

looked for them everywhere, but could not find them. The stone effigies of Bo Yi and Shu Qi solemnly sit one next to the other. How did the two masters from the Guzhu kingdom come here? The statues are very ancient.¹⁰

又南十餘里得桐柏宮遺墟，是道家金庭洞天也。紫霄華琳諸峰，聳躍抱石髓、金漿、琪花、瑤草，諸藥物多產其中。自葛仙公、司馬子微之徒居之。……今皆鞠爲茂草，惟存三清殿一間，雨淋天尊面淚下蘇蘇。有宦家子葬其旁。人言宮觀之廢，半由此自人之惑於堪輿，貪得吉地也。而可以勢力攘奪，無所不爲。乃至佛刹仙宮亦公然掩取而埋其骨。罪之不圖，福於何有？吾惡其貪亦憐其愚耳。此地有唐宋碑十餘，通徧求之，不可得。夷齊二石像儼然並坐孤竹子，何得在此？然像甚高古。

The existence of a functioning but dilapidated temple at the end of the 17th century, more precisely in 1691, is confirmed by Zhang Lianyuan's *Qingsheng Ci zhi*.¹¹ One aspect that attracts our attention is Pan Lei's forceful condemnation of the occupation of the temple land by local people. I could not determine Pan Lei's actual reasons for siding with the Daoists of Tongbai Palace against local takeovers: it may be that he was genuinely disgusted by this kind of behaviour on a moral level, or that he wished to defend Daoism against lay prevarication, or again that he had personal reasons to oppose the occupants, whom he may have known. In any case, he clearly blames them for the decline of the temple.

Pan Lei does not limit himself to describing the condition of the temple and what he regarded as the direct cause of its demise: he also suggests possible reasons why local families may have wanted the land of Tongbai Palace. He mentions a burial, "deluded geomantic practices" (*ren zhi huo yu kanyu* 人之惑於堪輿) and "propitious lands" (*jidi* 吉地). According to Timothy Brook, geomantic features were one of the qualities determining the significance of a landscape based on the local 'subterranean forces', which had to resonate with the architecture built on the surface level.¹² Timothy Brook has focused on how these marks of potency could promote the patronage of a temple, but in our case we distinctly see that geomantic power could also encourage the local elite to take possession of a temple and its land in order to satisfy their own private needs. Desirable characteristics, then, could work both in favour and against the survival and development of a temple.

The entry about the Qingfeng Shrine of Tongbai Palace in the *Tiantai Shan quanzhi*, compiled in the year 1717, states: "At the

¹⁰ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 13:8b.

¹¹ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:10a. See below.

¹² Brook, *Praying for Power*, 210-11.

moment, the Qingfeng Shrine has again been in ruins for a long time. It has been sent a memorial for its restoration” 今清風祠又已久圯矣。現在議詳重建。¹³ From this excerpt we learn that in a span of about 25 years nothing had changed for the Tongbai Temple: in fact, the situation of its Qingfeng Shrine might have even worsened. Due to its dilapidated status, it is unsurprising that there is little information about the activities of Tongbai Palace as a Daoist monastery during the first two reigns of the Qing dynasty. Contrary to what had happened with the establishment of the Ming dynasty, there is no reference to any imperial patronage of the temple and very little is known about the Daoist community that lived there, if there indeed was one. Instead, thanks to Zhang Lianyuan’s commitment, we have plenty of information on one specific portion of Tongbai Palace, the Qingfeng Shrine.

Due to the importance of this shrine in the history of Tongbai Palace during the Qing dynasty, as it was the only part of the temple to reportedly still be inhabited by the local Daoist community despite the overall decline, in the next pages I will follow the fate of this shrine with special reference to the period between the years 1715 and 1722.

4.2 The Qingfeng Shrine

Let us start by examining the history of the Qingfeng Shrine up until the last years of the Kangxi reign (1662-1722). In the previous chapter I discussed the hypotheses behind its construction. Regardless of which version (if any among those known) corresponds most closely to the historical truth, the sources date the origin of the shrine to the 12th century. We also know that a Jiutian Puye Shrine was built in Fusheng Abbey in 1141, before this abbey was absorbed by Tongbai Palace at the beginning of the Ming dynasty.¹⁴ According to the *Tongbai Gong yisi Yi-Qi xiang ji*, the shrine was built in the Shaoxing 紹興 era (1131-1162) by the county magistrate of Tiantai, Fang Weiyi.¹⁵ The shrine was certainly inhabited during the last part of the Ming dynasty, because Xiao Wenqing 蕭文清 (fl. 1521-1566) recorded his meeting with a Daoist living at the temple. It would seem that between the end of the Northern Song and the beginning of the Southern Song dynasty the cult of Bo Yi and Shu Qi became quite popular in Tiantai and influenced the religious development of the area over the following centuries.

¹³ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 5:7a.

¹⁴ *Tiantai Shan fangwai zhi* 4:19a.

¹⁵ Xinwenfeng chubanshe gongsì bianji bu, *Shike shiliao xinbian*, 299.

Some years later, the county magistrate Zhong Niu (fl. 16th century) renamed it 'Qingfeng Shrine' 清風祠 (Shrine of the Pure Demeanour) after he restored its exterior.¹⁶ I could not date the restoration precisely, but we know that the same county magistrate also renovated the walls of Tiantai city and added a south and a north gate to the two already built in 1121 on the west and east sides; he also added four more gates to the inner circle of walls (*xiaocheng* 小城).¹⁷

During the Tianqi and Chongzhen 崇禎 (1628-1644) eras, the whole complex, including the Qingfeng Shrine, was in dire condition. This agrees with the evidence discussed above and with Shi Chuandeng's statement that the temple had been in decline for at least 100 years (i.e. since the beginning of the 16th century).¹⁸ Another testimony, this time by Zhang Lianyuan, states that in the Jiajing 嘉靖 era (1521-1566) the shrine still had plenty of land.¹⁹ If this were true, then it would seem that the temple either lacked funding and was in disrepair, or possessed lands and therefore was able to survive, if not thrive. These two views need not necessarily be regarded as mutually exclusive and we do not need to invoke inaccuracy or hyperbole on either side to make sense of the apparently incompatible statements. It is possible, instead, that during the first half of the 16th century the temple still legally retained its ownership of the land, but in reality did not benefit from it, or that the local Daoist community (if present) was suffering from managerial incompetence, or even that local families had already begun to encroach on the temple land.

There is no doubt that at the beginning of the 17th century the shrine itself lay in a complete state of disrepair. Evidence is given by the fact that there is no mention of any repair work in relation to Tongbai Palace in general or on the shrine. Several visitors bear witness to this condition of neglect, with Zhang Lianyuan providing the most detailed accounts.²⁰ The main reasons for the decline of Tongbai Palace are two concurring circumstances: the Palace's loss of a significant position in the imperial Daoist system and the interests of the local gentry, who tried to take advantage of an institution that was no longer politically or religiously influential anymore.²¹

In the preface to his *Qingsheng Ci zhi* [fig. 7], Zhang Lianyuan provides a brief overview of the encroachment on the palace land:

16 *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 5:6b-7a.

17 *Zhejiang tongzhi* 24:14b. This is the only mention of Zhong Niu that I was able to identify in historical sources. Zhang Lianyuan agrees in dating the change of the name to Qingfeng to the Ming dynasty. *Qingsheng Ci zhi* "xu 2":1b.

18 *Tiantai Shan fangwai zhi* 4:18a.

19 *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 5b.

20 *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1b.

21 *Qingsheng Ci zhi* "xu 2":2a.

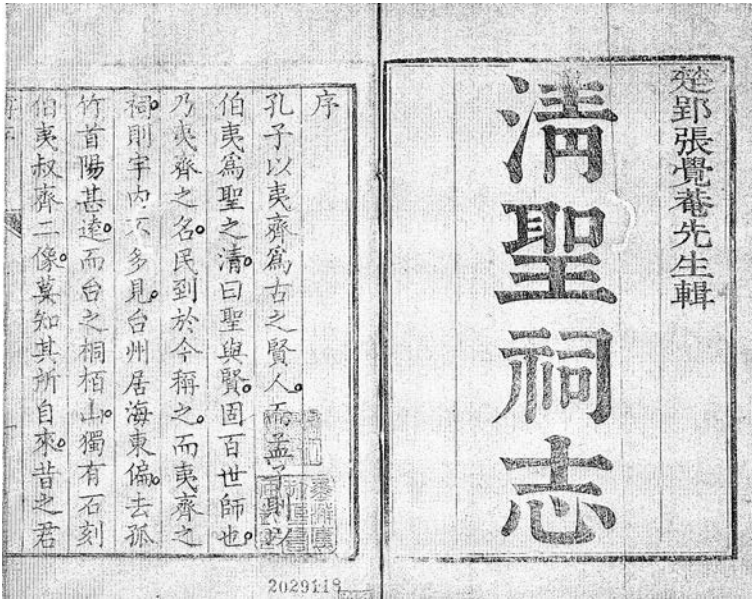


Figure 7 Frontispiece of the *Qingsheng Ci zhi* by Zhang Lianyuan with the first page of the preface by the official Fu Zeyuan 傅澤淵, dated 1723

I paid homage to [Bo Yi and Shu Qi] under a decadent thatched hut and my feelings were so deep that I could not depart. Afterward, I checked [and found out] that in the past the temple [had] 9 qing and 80 mu of cultivated fields, 1 qing and 90 mu of land and 5 qing and 69 mu of mountain land. During the Ming dynasty, the taxes of the abbey went to the county, the surplus was used for public expenses and the remaining sum was embezzled. 7 qing and 91 mu 9 fen of the abbey's fields and 1 qing, 12 mu and 3 li of land were divided and sold to four parties. Only 1 qing and 4 mu of incense fields remained, returned to the Daoists of the abbey to provide for [their] sustenance. There were still precisely 91 mu of uncultivated fields, 84 mu of wasteland and the four sides of mountain land which were left to the four parties, who paid the land tax, because the Daoists had all left. The abbey was surely still functioning, [but] surprisingly [they] pretended for a long time [that it was not] and did not return [the temple land], or conspired with their clique to delete the [land] registries or to forge fake ones, planning to secretly embezzle it.²²

²² *Qingsheng Ci zhi* "xu 2":1b-2a.

予瞻拜於零落茅簷之下，慨然不能去。隨查舊時觀田九頃八十畝，地一頃九十畝，山五頃六十九畝。明季觀租歸縣經收，以其贏餘充爲公用，及額外搜括。將觀田七頃九十一畝九分，地一頃一十二畝三釐，分爲四股變賣。止存香燈田一頃四畝。歸看觀道士供養香火，尚有荒田九十一畝零，荒地八十四畝零，並四面山場，因道士星散，令四股人等，隨帶完糧。固仍然觀業也。詎久假不歸，或將原冊申黨刪除，或造偽冊，設機影佔。

The occupation of the temple land turned into a legal case, documented in detail in the *Qingsheng Ci zhi*. This book takes its title from the name given to the shrine during the Qing dynasty and it represents the perspective of Zhang Lianyuan, who supported Tongbai Palace against the local families, but it remains an invaluable document for understanding the history of the temple during the late Ming and early Qing periods. In the following pages I will discuss in detail the circumstances of the embezzlement and Zhang Lianyuan's commitment to returning the land to Tongbai Palace.

First, who were these four parties? Here again, Zhang Lianyuan comes to our help. In a report that he wrote in 1717 he provides the names of the illegal occupants of the land. According to his own account, they were Zhang Ruoying 張若嬰, Zhang Rushao 張汝韶, Zhang Yuanhe 張元和, Tang Yuangong 湯元功, and Chen Wanli 陳萬里.²³ The Zhangs are the most numerous among them, followed by the Tangs and by only one member of the Chen family.

Additionally, as stated by Pan Lei and confirmed by later sources, we know that there was one local family that used the land of Tongbai Palace as its own private burial ground. What Pan Lei does not disclose is the name of the individual buried there or of his family: he was Zhang Ruoying, son of a local official. A secret memorial sent by Li Wei 李衛 (1687-1738) to the Yongzheng emperor accuses Zhang Tianyu 張天郁 of being responsible for the land encroachment:

In the Tianqi era Wei Zhongxian's associate, Zhang Tianyu, conspired to [take possession of] this place because of [its] geomantic characteristics. He sent his servants, pretending to be Daoists, to mistreat their [Daoist] companions, and so the latter all fled. [Zhang Tianyu] accused [the temple] of having extorted the land, so he returned more than 2000 mu of land to the government, making it public again.²⁴

天啓間魏忠賢羽黨張天郁謀此地爲風水。先令家奴充爲道士凌虐侶伴，悉皆星散。又借搜括之名，將賜田二千餘畝官賣歸公。

²³ *Qingsheng Ci zhi*, 1:9b-10a.

²⁴ *Gongzhong dang Yongzheng chao zouzhe* 19:51b-52a.

If we check the historical sources, we find no Zhang Tianyu from Tiantai among the eunuch Wei Zhongxian's associates. In the light of this, I began to question Li Wei's and Zhang Lianyuan's reports, but my mistrust was misplaced. As my research progressed, I did find a certain Zhang from Maoyuan 茅園 (Tiantai), who corresponded to the person described by the two authors, but his name was in fact Zhang Wenyu 張文郁 (*zi*: Congzhou 從周; *hao*: Taisu 太素; self-bestowed *hao*: Taoyuan sanren 桃源散人; 1578-1655).²⁵ So, it turned out that Zhang Tianyu is seldom used in the sources and that his actual name was Zhang Wenyu. Who was this official and how is the history of the empire tied to the case of the land occupation in Tiantai? Why was he singled out as the main culprit for this crime? It is necessary to focus on what happened at the end of the Ming dynasty in order to contextualize the later events.

4.3 Zhang Wenyu of Tiantai

I will focus on Zhang Wenyu's life and his role in state politics before attempting to understand why Li Wei especially blamed him for the occupation of the Palace land. Li Wei is described as a member of Wei Zhongxian's 魏忠賢 party. Chinese traditional historiography, following a well-established pattern of placing individuals into neat moral boxes, condemned Wei as a power-greedy despot and cruel oppressor of the morally upright scholarly elite. The latter, instead, represented by the militant Confucian Donglin party 東林黨, are often described as concerned with the salvation of the empire from impending doom and of the last emperors from themselves. The most extreme version of this position blames Wei Zhongxian for "planting the seeds of the [Ming] dynasty's demise".²⁶ An alternative interpretation of these events describes Wei Zhongxian's rise to power and his conflict with political opponents as the product of the harsh competition between state and gentry for the control of

²⁵ For an autobiographical account of Zhang Wenyu's life, see his *Zhang Taisu shilang zizhu nianpu* 張太素士郎自著年譜. Zhang mentions his hometown in *Zhang Taisu shilang zizhu nianpu*, 17a (24a). The page refers to the copy in the Shanghai Library, the page of the version in the Linhai Museum is provided in brackets (for an online copy of the latter, refer to <http://www.317200.net/thread-135769-1-1.html>).

²⁶ Williams, "The Manchu Conquest of China", 1:358-9; Miao, *Wei Zhongxian zhuanquan yanjiu*, 1. This position was just one of an array of different theses. Regardless of who was blamed, among Qing historiographers "[t]here was wide agreement [...] that the fate of the Ming was sealed by what had happened in the Tianqi era. There were differences, however, about who or what bore the main responsibility", Dardess, *Blood and History in China*, 165. It must be noted, though, that many of the sources available today had been written by supporters of the Donglin party, who generally opposed Wei's position at court and the policies that he represented.

political power, generated by two main causes: the economic, cultural and political rise of the local elite and the development of localist tendencies connected to Neo-Confucian philosophical tenets.²⁷

The power struggle between the two factions became harsher in 1620, a year marked by the death of the two emperors Wanli 萬曆 (r. 1572-1620) and Taichang 泰昌 (r. 1620) and by the ascent to the throne of the young Tianqi Emperor 天啓 (r. 1620-1627). Most notably, the infamous ‘three cases’ – three events preceding the death of Taichang that, according to Wei Zhongxian’s detractors, were caused by palace conspiracies – became a *casus belli* justifying open opposition to the palace eunuch.²⁸ After his ascent to the throne, the young Tianqi Emperor gradually distanced himself from the officials and surrounded himself with court eunuchs, including Wei Zhongxian, who became his closest collaborator.²⁹ The traditional understanding is that Wei Zhongxian’s power reached its peak between 1624 and 1627: by the end of the Tianqi era he had accumulated numerous titles and, more importantly, had become the most powerful man at court.³⁰ Harry Miller, opposing this interpretation, argued that Wei Zhongxian was a symbolic target of political attacks by the Donglin party and that he was never able to establish a tyranny or to usurp imperial power in any way. In any case, the Tianqi Emperor’s death and the Chongzhen Emperor’s ascent to the throne also spelled the end of Wei Zhongxian’s influence at court: in the year 1627 he committed suicide while travelling south to reach the destination of his exile.³¹

The name Zhang Tianyu is mentioned in the *Dongnan jishi* 東南紀事 (Accounts of the Southeast) by Shao Tingcai 邵廷采 (1648-1711), a history of the Southern Ming dynasty in southeast China during its resistance to the Manchu conquest. This text records that Zhang Wenyu was nominated Minister of Work (*gongbu shangshu* 工部尚書) by the Prince of Lu 魯王, a descendant of the first Ming emperor Zhu Yuanzhang and the ruler of the Southern Ming between 1645 and 1653.³²

By searching for Zhang Wenyu I was able to gather many more data. Gazetteers record that he passed his *juven* examination in

²⁷ This interpretative framework has been used by Professor Harry Miller to connect the increasing tensions between the central government and the gentry over the issue of sovereignty. Miller, *State Versus Gentry*, 4-18.

²⁸ Miller, *State Versus Gentry*, 9-30; Dardess, *Blood and History in China*.

²⁹ Miller, *State Versus Gentry*, 32-49.

³⁰ Miao, *Wei Zhongxian zhuanquan yanjiu*, 1, 11.

³¹ Dardess, *Blood and History in China*, 154.

³² *Dongnan jishi*, 184-98. On the *Dongnan jishi*, see also Wilkinson, *Chinese History*, 521 and Matsuda, *Japan and China*, 152.

1618 and received his *jinshi* degree in 1622.³³ The *Qinding ni'an* 欽定逆案 (Case of the Rebels, Compiled by Imperial Order) proved fundamental for my research on Zhang Wenyu's allegiance to Wei Zhongxian because, among other information, it provides a list of names of officials belonging to Wei Zhongxian's clique who were accused of having participated in his attempted coup d'état, a very obscure chapter in the history of the Ming dynasty.³⁴ The text lists his affiliates in order of involvement and therefore of the gravity of their crime, starting with the two leaders of the rebels (*shouni erren* 首逆二人) Wei Zhongxian and 'Madame Ke' 客氏, the Tianqi Emperor's wet-nurse. Madame Ke is one of the leading figures from the Tianqi era and was accused of having bewitched the sovereign to keep him under her control.³⁵ The list continues with the names of six 'accomplices of the leaders' (*shouni tongmou liu ren* 首逆同謀六人), with 19 'colluding retinue officials' (*jiaojie jinshi shijiu ren* 交結近侍十九人) and 11 'attached colluding retinue assistants' (*jiaojie jinshi cideng shiyi ren* 交結近侍次等十一人). The fifth section records the names of the 127 'other colluding retinue assistants' (*jiaojie jinshi you cideng* 交結近侍又次等), among whom we find Zhang Wenyu. The last group, that of the 'colluding retinue assistants who received a mitigated sentence' 交結近侍減等 contains 44 names. Thus, it is confirmed that Zhang Wenyu was officially condemned as a supporter of Wei Zhongxian, although the exact charges are not explained. Moreover, I was unable to recover in the sources any evidence about the specific occasion on which he actively supported Wei Zhongxian against the Donglin faction. My hypothesis is that he must have been a high ranking official and that his simple performance of his duties during Wei's regime was enough to have him impeached as a collaborationist.

This is substantiated by a sizeable array of sources confirming that Zhang Wenyu was in fact hired as an official of the Minister of Work during the Tianqi era. In the sixth month of 1625 Zhang Wenyu entered this Ministry as supervisor of the restoration of 'the halls' or 'palaces'.³⁶ One of the big projects realised by the Tianqi Emperor was in fact the restoration of several buildings in the Forbidden City, the most important of which were the 'Three Palaces' or 'Halls'

³³ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 17:13a; *Zhejiang tongzhi* 140:23b; *Lu zhi chunqiu* 8:10a-b; *Tiantai Xian difang zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui bangongshi, Qing Kangxi Tiantai Xian zhi zhi*, 174. The latter source indicates Badu 八都 village as his hometown: both are in Tiantai county today, but Maoyuan seems to be the more widely accredited piece information.

³⁴ *Qinding ni'an* 16a.

³⁵ On Madame Ke's alleged influence on the emperor, see Dardess, *Blood and History in China*, 31-7; Lee, Wiles, *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Women*, 178-80.

³⁶ *Mingshi* 354:26b; *Zhang Taisu shilang zizhu nianpu* 17a (25b).

三殿: the Hall of Imperial Supremacy 皇極殿, the Hall of Central Supremacy 中極殿 and the Hall of Establishing Supremacy 建極殿,³⁷ which had been destroyed in a fire on the sixth month of 1597.³⁸ The restoration work began in the second month of 1625 and ended in the eighth month of the following year, and came to a total cost of almost six million liang.³⁹ According to the *Mingshi* 明史 (History of the Ming dynasty), Zhang became Wei Zhongxian's collaborator on recommendation of Cui Chengxiu 崔呈秀 (?-1627), who in turn had been a close collaborator of Wei's since 1625 and who is remembered today as one of the 'Five Tigers' 五虎, the main supporters of Wei's 'eunuch party' (*yandang* 閹黨).⁴⁰ Cui Chengxiu was an adoptive son of Wei Zhongxian and during the Tianqi reign he filled the two positions of censor-in-chief and Minister of War. As a consequence of his position and prestige, he acquired considerable power and for this reason he was eventually impeached during the Chongzhen reign.⁴¹

The *Mingshi* suggests that Zhang's links to the eunuch allowed him to gain a series of offices: in 1626 he added that of Subdirector (*shaoqing* 少卿) of the Court of the Imperial Stud (*taipusi* 太僕寺), one of the 'Nine Courts' (*jiu si* 九寺), an institution responsible for managing the meadows for the state horses along with the relevant gear and vehicles.⁴² Once the restoration of the halls was completed, Zhang received two other positions, as Right Censor-in-chief 右都御史 and Left Vice Minister of Works (*gongbu zuo shilang* 工部左侍郎).⁴³ Although the majority of the positions held by Zhang were not at the top of the official ranking, he was nonetheless very close to the group in charge. Interestingly, his task as head of the censorial institution granted him control over an organisation responsible for denouncing the misconduct of government officials.⁴⁴ Wei Zhongxian fell into

³⁷ Dardess, *Blood and History in China*, 140-1.

³⁸ *Chunming meng yulu* 6:11b.

³⁹ *Chunming meng yulu* 6:11b; *Huang Ming xuji sanchao fazhuan quanlu* 16:32b-34a; *Zhang Taisu shilang zizhu nianpu* 17b (26b-27b). There is discrepancy among the sources. In his *nianpu*, Zhang Wenyu records that work on the three halls began on the seventh day of the eleventh month of the year 1625. *Zhang Taisu shilang zizhu nianpu* 17a (26a). The Chinese terms *liang* 兩 and *yinliang* 銀兩 are sometimes translated into English as '(silver) tael', whereas *qian* 錢 or *tongqian* 銅錢 are translated as '(copper) mace' or 'coin'. One tael equalled 10 maces. Cf. Wilkinson, *Chinese History*, 565, 568.

⁴⁰ *Mingshi* 354:26b; Dardess, *Blood and History in China*, 129-30.

⁴¹ Dardess, *Blood and History in China*, 151-2.

⁴² *Mingshi* 354:26b; *Zhang Taisu shilang zizhu nianpu* 17b (27b). It should be noted that the Court of Imperial Steed was under control of the Minister of War, which might confirm the close relation between Zhang Wenyu and Cui Chengxiu. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles*, 414, 481.

⁴³ Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles*, 426-7, 546.

⁴⁴ Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles*, 546.

disgrace at the beginning of the Chongzhen reign (1627-1644), when the opposite faction returned into power, and brought Zhang Wenyu down with him. Zhang was impeached and demoted soon after the change of regime and in 1628 he returned to Tiantai.⁴⁵ It is probably in this context that he started writing his *Anthology of Passing by the Small Pavilion* (*Du ziting ji* 度子亭集).⁴⁶

Zhang Wenyu, who hailed from a small county in the southeast part of the empire, was involved in historical events of great magnitude. This incident could have been the end of his official career, but life is always unpredictable. So, we come across Zhang Wenyu again after the fall of the Ming dynasty, actively supporting the Southern Ming regime in east Zhejiang. At that time, all members of the imperial family and of the court who could flee the capital hurried south. There, they tried to organise their forces for the purpose of resisting the Manchu army and hopefully take back the lost territories, and to raise their chances to survive the collapse of the regime. The last Ming emperor, Sizong 思宗 (r. 1627-1644), had committed suicide on the day Li Zicheng 李自成 (1605?-1645), head of the rebels, entered the capital, but news of this tragic event arrived in the South much later. Despite the confusion and the political instability, factionalism was still rampant among former Ming officials. After much debate, a regency was established under the Prince of Lu 魯王, title first held by Zhu Changfang 朱常澆 (r. 1645) and then by Zhu Yihai 朱以海 (r. 1645-1653).⁴⁷ The new political entity needed ministers as much as any ordinary dynasty, if it wanted to organise durable institutions and thrive. The qualified personnel was chosen directly by the prince from among the available officials. The government was established in Shaoxing and it counted Wang Siren as Deputy Minister of Rites (*libu shilang* 禮部侍郎).⁴⁸ Among his colleagues, we find Zhu Zhaobo 朱兆柏, Li Baichun 李白春 and Zhang Wenyu. Upon establishment of the regency, Zhang was promoted to the rank of Minister of Works (*gongbu shangshu* 工部尚書),⁴⁹ no doubt because of his previous experience within the same bureau.

Making sense of Zhang's allegiance to the Southern Ming resistance is a complex task and it critically destabilises the simplistic paradigm of 'good versus bad' officials suggested by supporters of the Donglin faction (in its various incarnations). The reasons why Zhang

⁴⁵ *Mingshi* 354:26b; *Zhang Taisu shilang zizhu nianpu* 18a (29b).

⁴⁶ *Zhejiang tongzhi* 251:21b.

⁴⁷ Regarding the part played by Zhu Yihai in the resistance to the Manchu conquest in Zhejiang, see Struve, *The Southern Ming*, 75-124.

⁴⁸ *Lu zhi chunqiu* 8:7b-10b. Wang Siren wrote the record "Travelling in the Tiantai Mountains" 游天台山記. *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 12:34a.

⁴⁹ *Lu zhi chunqiu* 8:10a-b; *Dongnan jishi*, 185.

Wenyu chose to join the resistance against the Manchu are subject to a variety of hypotheses. It is possible that he regretted the selfish ambition that had pushed him to become Wei Zhongxian's accomplice and sought to serve the dynasty one more time; it may be that he felt that his duty as a Confucian man of letters and former official was to remain loyal to that dynasty; he may have just wanted to clean up his reputation, or to take advantage of the situation and to satisfy his ambition; finally, it is possible that he just wanted to fight to protect his life, the lives of his family and his assets in Tiantai.

1.3.1 The Tiantai Elite

Having discussed the main features of Zhang Wenyu's biography and his links with the Ming court, let us return to analyse the families involved in the occupation of the land of the Qingfeng Shrine. Zhang Wenyu belonged to one of the most prominent families of Tiantai, but his was not the only one to occupy the temple land. How did it rank compared to the other families? What do we know about the Tangs and the Chens? There are various ways to assess the relative power of the local gentry. One parameter is the number of graduates that a family produced, namely of individuals who passed the *juren* and especially the *jinshi* 進士 examination, the highest level, whose holders could aim for a prestigious position in the bureaucracy. The results of my study on the successful candidates between 1370 and 1681 are summarised in **tables 2** and **3**.

We see that most of the graduates from Tiantai County at both levels belong to the period encompassed between the Hongwu and the Chenghua 成化 (1465-1487) reigns, with a peak in the latter. The average number of *juren* for the whole period is 3.22 every ten years, while in the Chenghua reign it is 10.4. The average number of *jinshi* in the period between the first examination (1371) and the last (1673) is 1.02 every ten years, while in the Chenghua era it is 4.78. In the period between the Hongzhi 弘治 (1487-1505) and the Kangxi eras, the average is 0.21 *jinshi* every ten years and 0.77 *juren*. Therefore, the clans of Tiantai County were much less able to produce graduates in either category during the last part of the Ming dynasty. In the first part of the Ming dynasty until the end of the Chenghua reign, the most successful clans were the Xia 夏 (3 *jinshi*, 7 *juren*), the Yang 楊 (3, 5) and the Fan 范 (3, 5); the Hu 胡 clan had a high number of *juren* (6), but only one *jinshi*. By comparison, the Zhangs only had 2 *juren* in this period and no *jinshi*. If we consider the Ming dynasty as a whole, it is also worth mentioning the Yang 楊 clan, which counted three *jinshi* graduates between 1388 and 1475: this shows that clans continued to produce individuals capable of passing examinations at the highest levels for an extended period of time.

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Tables 2-3 Successful candidates from Tiantai County for the provincial and national examinations between 1370 and 1681. Tiantai xian difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui bangongshi, *Tiantai Xian zhi*, 169-79

Name	Characters	Origin	Year	Degree
Hong Hua	洪華	Zheqiu 浙嶠	1371	<i>jinshi</i>
Zhou Bofu	周伯阜	Rutang 儒堂	1371	<i>jinshi</i>
Hu Ruyu	胡汝雨	Shuizhu 水竹	1371	<i>jinshi</i>
Yang Kejian	楊克儉	Badu 八都	1388	<i>jinshi</i>
Zhu Siping	朱思平	Jiudu Miaoshan 九都妙山	1397	<i>jinshi</i>
Lu Mu	魯穆	Taifang 太坊	1406	<i>jinshi</i>
Qiu Shen	裘參	Jiudu 九都	1411	<i>jinshi</i>
Ye Ying	葉穎	Taifang 太坊	1415	<i>jinshi</i>
Chu Sijing	褚思敬	Hefang 何坊	1418	<i>jinshi</i>
Du Ning	杜寧	Yongfang 永坊	1427	<i>jinshi</i>
Shi Mengkang	石孟康	Taifang 太坊	1430	<i>jinshi</i>
Fan Li	范理	Taifang 太坊	1430	<i>jinshi</i>
Qi Wang	齊汪	Taifang 太坊	1436	<i>jinshi</i>
Tong Shouhong	童守宏	Taifang 太坊	1442	<i>jinshi</i>
Xia Xun	夏埏	Yongfang 永坊	1451	<i>jinshi</i>
Lu Chongzhi	魯崇志	?	1454	<i>jinshi</i>
Xia Cheng	夏澄	Yongfang 永坊	1457	<i>jinshi</i>
Pan Zhen	潘禛	Rutang 儒堂	1466	<i>jinshi</i>
Fan Yin	范綱	Taifang 太坊	1472	<i>jinshi</i>
Yang Ze	楊澤	Taifang 太坊	1472	<i>jinshi</i>
Fan Ji	范吉	Taifang 太坊	1475	<i>jinshi</i>
Pan Qi	潘祺	Rutang 儒堂	1475	<i>jinshi</i>
Yang Fengchun	楊奉春	Badu 八都	1475	<i>jinshi</i>
Chu Tan	褚潭	Taifang 太坊	1478	<i>jinshi</i>
Pang Pan	龐泮	Ershiwudu 二十五都	1484	<i>jinshi</i>
Lu Jun	盧濬	?	1487	<i>jinshi</i>
Xia Hou	夏餼	Yongfang 永坊	1487	<i>jinshi</i>
Wang Huan	王環	十七都	1487	<i>jinshi</i>
Pan Han	潘漢	Taifang 太坊	1511	<i>jinshi</i>
Fan Xun	范洵	Taifang 太坊	1514	<i>jinshi</i>
Zhang Wenyu	張文郁	Badu 八都	1622	<i>jinshi</i>
Pan Zhang	潘璋	?	1673	<i>jinshi</i>

Name	Characters	Origin	Year	Degree
Hu Ruyū	胡汝雨	Shuizhu 水竹	1370	<i>juren</i>
Hong Hua	洪華	Zheqiu 浙嶠	1370	<i>juren</i>
Zhou Bofu	周伯阜	Rutang 儒堂	1370	<i>juren</i>
Yang Shan	楊善	Badu 八都	1370	<i>juren</i>
Wu Hao	吳昊	Ershiliudu Dongshan 二十六都東山	1370	<i>juren</i>
Hu Zongfu	胡宗輔	Hudou 胡竇	1370	<i>juren</i>
Pan Meiyōu	潘梅友	Ershibadu 二十八都	1370	<i>juren</i>
Zhu Weizhong	朱文中	Jiudu Miaoshan 九都妙山	1370	<i>juren</i>
Xia Di	夏迪	Yongfang 永坊	1387	<i>juren</i>
Yang Kejian	楊克儉	Badu 八都	1387	<i>juren</i>
Zhu Siping	朱思平	Jiudu Miaoshan 九都妙山	1396	<i>juren</i>
Zhu Wang	朱望	?	1396	<i>juren</i>
Qiu Shen	裘參	Jiudu 九都	1403	<i>juren</i>
Lu Mu	魯穆	Taifang 太坊	1405	<i>juren</i>
Wang Lu	王錄	Sidu 四都	1408	<i>juren</i>
Chu Zinan	褚子南	Hefang 何坊	1411	<i>juren</i>
Ye Ying	葉穎	Taifang 太坊	1411	<i>juren</i>
Chen Xiang	陳祥	Taifang 太坊	1414	<i>juren</i>
Ding Tingjie	丁廷頡	Badu Dingcun 八都丁村	1414	<i>juren</i>
Chu Sijing	褚思敬	Hefang 何坊	1417	<i>juren</i>
Chen Dan	陳啖	Jiudu 九都	1417	<i>juren</i>
Xu Xuping	徐敘平	Badu 八都	1417	<i>juren</i>
Dai Zongxian	戴宗賢	Jiexi 界溪	1417	<i>juren</i>
Qi Pu	齊普	Taifang 太坊	1420	<i>juren</i>
Hu Ju'an	胡居安	Nianjiudu 廿九都	1420	<i>juren</i>
Xu Banggui	徐邦貴	Houze 厚澤	1420	<i>juren</i>
Du Ning	杜寧	Yongfang 永坊	1423	<i>juren</i>
Qi Rangchuan	戚讓川	Taifang 太坊	1423	<i>juren</i>
Hu Kezhe	胡克哲	Nianjiudu Shuizhu 廿九都水竹	1426	<i>juren</i>
Fan Li	范理	Taifang 太坊	1429	<i>juren</i>
Cao Chang	曹昌	?	1429	<i>juren</i>
Hu Kezhao	胡克昭	Shuizhu 水竹	1429	<i>juren</i>
Shi Mengkang	石孟康	Taifang 太坊	1429	<i>juren</i>
Pan Wei	潘偉	Rutang 儒堂	1429	<i>juren</i>
Li Zehe	李則賀	Liudu 六都	1429	<i>juren</i>
Qi Wang	齊汪	Taifang 太坊	1432	<i>juren</i>
Xia Lu	夏魯	Yongfang 永坊	1435	<i>juren</i>
Zhang Xuan	張譚	Taifang 太坊	1441	<i>juren</i>
Tong Shouhong	童守宏	Taifang 太坊	1441	<i>juren</i>
Xu Duanhong	許端宏	Yongfang 永坊	1441	<i>juren</i>

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Name	Characters	Origin	Year	Degree
Xia Yao	夏曜	Yongfang 永坊	1444	<i>juren</i>
Xia Xun	夏埏	Yongfang 永坊	1451	<i>juren</i>
Lu Chongzhi	魯崇志	?	1454	<i>juren</i>
Xia Cheng	夏澄	Yongfang 永坊	1457	<i>juren</i>
Pan Zhen	潘禎	Rutang 儒堂	1466	<i>juren</i>
Fan Yin	范綱	Taifang 太坊	1472	<i>juren</i>
Yang Ze	楊澤	Taifang 太坊	1472	<i>juren</i>
Fan Ji	范吉	Taifang 太坊	1475	<i>juren</i>
Pan Qi	潘祺	Rutang 儒堂	1475	<i>juren</i>
Yang Fengchun	楊奉春	Badu 八都	1475	<i>juren</i>
Chu Tan	褚潭	Taifang 太坊	1478	<i>juren</i>
Pang Pan	龐泮	Ershiwudu 二十五都	1484	<i>juren</i>
Lu Jun	盧濬	?	1487	<i>juren</i>
Xia Hou	夏鏃	Yongfang 永坊	1487	<i>juren</i>
Wang Huan	王環	Shiqidu 十七都	1487	<i>juren</i>
Pan Han	潘漢	Taifang 太坊	1511	<i>juren</i>
Fan Xun	范洵	Taifang 太坊	1514	<i>juren</i>
Zhang Wenyu	張文郁	Badu 八都	1622	<i>juren</i>
Pan Zhang	潘璋	?	1681	<i>juren</i>

During the rest of the Ming dynasty, the only clans with a *jinshi* were the Pan 潘, the Fan 范 and the Zhang. We also count three *juren* among the Chens 陳, two in the Yang and the Pan clans, but only one (Zhang Wenyu) among the Zhangs. What distinguishes the Zhangs from the other clans is that Zhang Wenyu obtained positions in the capital.⁵⁰ Before him, Fan Xun 范洵 (*zi*: Yunqing 允卿; *jinshi* 1514) was appointed Assistant Surveillance Commissioner of Huguang (*Huguang anchasi qianshi* 湖廣按察司僉事), but this happened at a much earlier date.⁵¹ It is not possible to argue that the influence of an elite family at the local level was directly proportional to the number and rank of its graduates, but consistent rates of success at examinations indicate that a clan had access to enough wealth and cultural capital to ensure higher educational standards for its offspring. Moreover, we see that it was enough for one member of a family to obtain the *jinshi* degree and gain lofty bureaucratic positions in order to boost the whole family's wealth and local influence.

⁵⁰ *Zhejiang tongzhi* 131:2b, 19a, 135:16b; *Tiantai Xian difang zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui bangongshi*, *Qing Kangxi Tiantai Xian zhi* 173-8. The *Zhejiang tongzhi* provides two different dates for Fan Li's *jinshi* degree: the fourth year of the Xuande era (1429) and the *gengxu* year (1430). *Zhejiang tongzhi* 161:8a.

⁵¹ *Tiantai Xian difang zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui bangongshi*, *Qing Kangxi Tiantai Xian zhi*, 174.

If we compare the results of this study with the surnames of those who occupied the temple land on Mt. Tongbai, we find that only Chen and Zhang are present. Moreover, the Chens were not the most successful at the imperial examinations. Until the Chenghua 成化 era (1464-1487), the clans with the most *juren* had been the Xias, the Hus, the Yangs and the Fans with an average of five to seven graduates, followed by the Zhus 朱, the Pans, the Qis 齊, the Chens and the Xus 徐 with four. In the second period, from the Hongzhi era (1487-1505) to the Kangxi, the Chens and the Pans had the most graduates, three each: the Zhang clan only had one. In the same period, only the Pans had two *jinshi*, followed by the Fans and the Zhangs with one each. There is no trace of a Tang graduate. This seems to suggest that the elite of Tiantai included many families and that the Zhangs and the Chens were not necessarily the most successful at the examinations. It remains to be qualitatively assessed what contribution each of these graduates brought to their families in terms of power, prestige and wealth: the case of Zhang Wenyu shows that one graduate in the right place could be enormously beneficial to his own family. Therefore, it is not only a matter of *how many* graduates a family had, but also of *how successful* a career these graduates had. Having familiarised with the protagonists of the land encroachment case, I will now present it in detail.

4.4 Land Disputes and Tongbai Palace

If we are familiar with late imperial sources, then we know that gentry abuse at the local level was a widespread if not chronic phenomenon, especially during the last part of the Ming dynasty.⁵² This was not only lamented at the local level, but also explicitly discussed at court. The potential harmfulness of the gentry's power is clearly described in a letter that Prime Minister Zhang Juzheng 張居正 (1525-1582) wrote to a regional official at the beginning of the Wanli reign:

Today, those who secretly seize the land and occupy it with deceit are the rich and powerful, not the common people. I try to apply the law [against] the evildoers, not [against] the good people.⁵³

⁵² I use the term 'gentry' to translate the wide range of concepts indicated in Chinese by the terms *shi* 士, *shidafu* 士大夫, *shen* 紳, *shenshi* 紳士, *shenjin* 紳縉, *jinshen* 縉紳, *xiangguan* 鄉官, *tianzhu* 田主 and others. I follow Harry Miller's definition: "the Ming gentry seem to have based their status on a set of interrelated criteria, of which civil service examination performance, with the attendant possibility of government office, was perhaps primary, but which also included landholding and conventional behavior patterns". Miller, *State Versus Gentry*, 16.

⁵³ Zhang, "Da Yingtian xunfu Song Yangshan lun jun liang zu min". Cf. Miller, *State Versus Gentry*, 32-40.

今為侵欺隱占者，權豪也，非細民也。而吾法之所施者，奸人也，非良民也。

I started from this excerpt of a text by Zhang Juzheng because he aptly represents the position of the authoritarian and centralist style of administration of officials who preferred a strong central government to the detriment of the local autonomy of the gentry, whose interests they sometimes actively tried to curtail.⁵⁴

Illegal transactions and unregistered changes in landownership, as well as the unlawful occupation of land, were not unusual during the Ming and Qing dynasties, as demonstrated by a significant number of sources. For example, a report of 1494 recording the abuse of power perpetrated by local elite, states: “[small peasants, poor households and other marginal groups] are able to obtain shelter with the rich and powerful [families of Jiangnan] and then bully the weak on the strength of their connection with their patrons.... *Forcibly seizing small peasants’ property, or cheating and raping the wives and women of poor people, they use their influence to oppress people in debt and to set up private jails. They falsely claim ownership of rented land and openly deceive and take [rent from people].* They go beyond their social position and act improperly” [前項之徒]幸得豪富牧留便要仗勢欺人……強奪小民家業或欺姦貧民妻女威縛欠債人戶私置牢獄妄稱租田名色公然詐去非禮犯分靡所不為.⁵⁵ Shigeta Atsushi considered this group of ‘local strongmen’ part of the core of the gentry. They could come into conflict with the government because they represented ‘personal rule’, in opposition to ‘state power’.⁵⁶

One consequence of this situation is that the ‘common people’ mentioned in Zhang Juzheng’s document were often forced to seek protection under powerful families, who were able to avoid paying taxes instead of bearing their burden, as the peasants had to. The occupation of land could be carried out in different ways. According to Oyama Masaaki, this is what happened in the 17th century in the Jiangnan region, where many peasants were forced to leave their homes due to pressure from local powerful families and to seek protection under other influential households: as a result, some elite families were able to incorporate the vacant land and to employ their protégés as labourers, thugs and bondservants.⁵⁷ These were the

⁵⁴ Miller, *State Versus Gentry*, 32-3.

⁵⁵ *Huang Ming tiaofa shilei zuan* 1:31a quoted and translated in Oyama, “Large Landownership in the Jiangnan Delta Region”, 131. Italics in the original.

⁵⁶ Shigeta, “The Origins and Structure of Gentry Rule”, 355.

⁵⁷ Oyama, “Large Landownership in the Jiangnan Delta Region”, 130-5. Tanaka Masatoshi explained that ‘bondservants’ in late imperial China (called *nubi* 奴婢, *nupu* 奴僕, *tongnu* 僮奴, *tongpu* 僮僕) upheld a variety of class interests. He argued that some of them were poor peasants treated as objects, others performed complex tasks and were employed as secretaries and could accumulate a comparatively sizeable wealth.

other side of the gentry's organising, ordering rule: the dichotomy between a morally upright local elite and fierce strongmen was sometimes a simple matter of perspective.

In other cases, the act of submission could be totally voluntary and even justified by the increasing fiscal pressure from the government or by personal aspirations. The symbiotic relationship between the local elite and their lackeys would have harmful consequences for the general population, as exemplified by another record: "Brazen slaves and fierce bondservants relied upon the gentry's power to terrorize others. The common people in the district were not able to live in peace. Small peasants (*xiaomin*) in the town had no choice but to submit to such brazen slaves and bondservants in order to live in cordial harmony with them. Moreover, since these bondservants were protected by the gentry, they could get away with doing evil. As a result, 20 to 30 percent of the people on the land in a county or district posted their names (*guaming*) as bondservants" 至於豪奴 悍僕倚勢橫行里黨不能安居, 而市井小民計維投身門下。得與此輩水乳交融, 且可憑爲城狐社鼠。由是一邑一鄉之地, 掛名童僕者什有二三。⁵⁸ The gentry's servants indeed benefited from a degree of impunity and power as the local elite's protégés: in order to escape harassment, vexed people often sought to gain comparable protection themselves by accepting to serve the gentry as well. Some scholars deem this phenomenon very influential, with the most extreme view probably being Shigeta Atsushi's, who has argued that gentry rule as a whole was in fact based on this kind of unofficial bond.⁵⁹

4.5 The Case of the Qingsheng Shrine

I have anticipated that the local elite's abuses actually have much to do with the history of Tongbai Palace between the end of the Ming dynasty and the beginning of the Qing. The most significant source for reconstructing this period is the *Qingsheng Ci zhi*, where Zhang Lianyuan provides a thorough account of the land dispute through a series of documents. The oldest one is a report that he wrote in the

Tanaka, "Popular Uprisings", 192-3. The actual status of bondservants during the Ming and Qing dynasties has been much debated.

⁵⁸ *Xiaoxia xianji zhachao* 1:6a-b, quoted and translated in Oyama, "Large Landownership in the Jiangnan Delta Region", 135. Italics in the original. The situation does not seem to have improved much during the Qing dynasty. At the end of the 19th century the scholar Zhang Daye wrote in his memoirs: "if the landowner was unkind, then hunger and cold immediately struck the tenant farmers. When they could hardly make a living, they began to resort to all sorts of deception." Zhang, *The World of a Tiny Insect*, 128-9.

⁵⁹ Shigeta, "The Origins and Structure of Gentry Rule", 361.

twelfth month of 1716. This and the other documents usually start by introducing either the geography or the history, or both, of Tongbai Palace and the Qingsheng (i.e. Qingfeng) Shrine. In this case, the first report explains the route to reach Tongbai Peak and describes its geographical setting. This description is followed by a discussion of the ‘ten friends of the transcendents’ school’ (*xianzong shi you* 仙宗十友) and by the story of how the two statues of Bo Yi and Shu Qi arrived at the temple during the Song dynasty: only at this point does Zhang Lianyuan delve into the history of the Qingsheng Shrine.⁶⁰ In this way, he clarifies the links between the latter, the ancient sages and Tongbai Palace itself. This is instrumental for justifying his efforts in support of the small shrine of Mt. Tongbai. I can highlight two major points from which all the other arguments are derived: 1) the land that provided subsistence to the Qingsheng Shrine was originally that of Tongbai Palace and therefore must be inherited by the shrine; 2) the shrine’s existence was justified by the fact that it hosted the cult of Bo Yi and Shu Qi. If the shrine was to be somehow detached from these two elements, it would lose both juridical and cultural-religious legitimation.

After this general introduction, the author proceeds to illustrate the decline of Tongbai Palace during the Ming dynasty. Its economic decline was the result of two basic issues: the appropriation of the land tax of the temple by county officials and the division of the remaining land into four plots occupied by local families. Out of the original 9 qing and 80 mu (601,720 m²) of temple land that according to Zhang Lianyuan were recorded in the old documents, only 1 qing and 4 mu (63,856 m²) remained the temple’s possession as incense fields (*xianghuo* 香火).⁶¹ One of Zhang Lianyuan’s most serious accusations, supporting the thesis of a fraudulent appropriation of the land, was that these local families had either tampered with the old land registries or produced fake ones in order to strengthen their claim over the land.⁶²

The history of the Palace and of its decline, according to Zhang Lianyuan, runs as follows. At some point during the Ming dynasty, the temple lacked administrators. Due to this, the rent from its

⁶⁰ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* “xu 2”:1a-b.

⁶¹ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* “xu 2”:1b-2a. Units of measure, although officially established by the government, often varied depending on the historical period and location. Since the land was donated by the emperor, I have relied on the conversion table for the Qing dynasty provided by Wilkinson (1 mu = 614 m²), although I am aware that it may only represent an approximation. 1 qing = 100 mu. Wilkinson, *Chinese History*, 557-8. It should be noted that Barend ter Haar uses the equivalence 1 mu = 666,5 m² in ter Haar, “Yongzheng and His Buddhist Abbots”, 447.

⁶² “Maybe deleted [compromising information] from the original registries, or fabricated fake ones” 或將原冊串黨刪除, 或造偽冊. *Qingsheng Ci zhi* “xu2”:2a.

lands was poured into the public coffers and was managed by the county magistrate. To add insult to injury, what money remained was embezzled. It appears that the temple income was used to pay some allowances to the local students. Moreover, much of the temple land was sold to a party of four in 1629, marking the decline of Tongbai Palace and of the shrine from the first half of the 17th century onwards. The temple was apparently unable to recover from this series of events and plunged into a downward spiral that compromised its ability to resist outside pressures. Finally, the area of the Qingsheng Shrine became the burial ground of the Zhang family.

Part of the information summarised above is laid out in more detail in Zhang Lianyuan's earliest report, from 1716:

I have checked the old legal case of the fortieth year of the Kangxi era (1701), [which reports that] a Daoist from Tongbai Palace called Zhang Taiyuan accused the stipend students of misappropriating state wealth. The county official Yan Jingqian investigated: "in the past it was ordered to interrupt the allowances [for the students], therefore public land was used to pay them. If a city did not have public land, it had to use other resources. [Because] the [payment of the] allowances has already been resumed, [the land] should be returned to the temple". The former county magistrate of Tiantai decided that since Zhang Taiyuan was not a local person and had no definite whereabouts, [he] would not return the embezzled money [to him], but would rely on a local person [to manage things], although this would take a long time to accomplish. In addition, because the stipend students had already received more than half of the allowances for this year, for the time being he would collect the rent [of the land] to pay its land taxes. [...] Today, 15 or 16 years later, the temple and lands have yet to be reunited. If the land is not returned to the abbey, when will the time of its recovery come? Zhang Taiyuan is not a local [Daoist], so is there anybody who can supervise [the temple]?⁶³

因查康熙四十年間舊案，有桐柏宮道人章泰元，以吞佔國產等事，具控廩生佔抵廩糧。經前閩府，行縣敕查，有「該縣既稱昔年奉文裁扣廩糧，故將公田抵廩，設別邑並無公田之處，又將何項抵給。且廩糧既已奉復，理應退還本觀」等語。隨經天邑前令，以章泰元並非土著之人，行踪無定，涉手恐歸中飽，另給確實土著，又非旦晚可得。且廩生已將本年銀米，輪納過半。暫令收租完糧等情。……今又相隔十五六年矣，田不歸觀。豈能有興復之日？章泰元即非土著，豈無堪以住持之人？

63 *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:2a-2b.

The *linsheng* 廩生 (stipend students), or *shengyuan* 生員 (government students), were the most promising students of a Confucian school. They were expected to sit provincial examinations and received a stipend from the government.⁶⁴ The issue of allowances is better explained in a later report: “Due to the lack of grain rations for the salaried students [of the county school], the land [was used to] supplement the state allowance” 因廩生餼糧裁缺，將此田抵給廩膳。⁶⁵ The redirection of the temple’s income was therefore justified by the fact that the student allowances had been suspended at the end of the Ming dynasty.

Wang Ka argued that the decision to continue to use the temple land to subsidise local students was a political choice in favour of Confucianism over Daoism.⁶⁶ I would like to add some considerations over his argument. First, this event could be read also as the imperial state’s claim over local wealth: as we have seen, once the emergency situation ended and the allowances were reinstated, all property was expected to be returned to the temple. This is also the reason for Daoist Zhang’s complaint. It should further be noted that, given the rather murky circumstances, it is debatable whether the *linsheng* were in fact the most meritorious students, or whether they (or at least some of them) were the members of the most influential families. Based on the relationship between gentry, landowning and the education system discussed above, it is plausible that the *linsheng* belonged to the elite of Tiantai society, regardless of their merit. If so, the charge of misusing temple wealth to fund local students was actually a way of pointing to the abuses perpetrated by the local elite, guided by their wish to increase their economic benefits. Once the properties of a declining Daoist temple on the mountain had been appropriated by the local elite and by the Confucian schools, local officials may also have deemed it easier and less troublesome to keep things as they were without stirring up the notables of Tiantai, instead of subtracting resources from the local school to restore Tongbai Palace: this would have earned the elite’s hostility without ensuring comparable support from other groups.

The above-quoted excerpt contains another significant detail, namely that a Daoist called ‘Zhang Taiyuan’ 章泰元 was living at Tongbai Palace. This also allows me to discuss in more detail the history of the temple during the last decades of the Ming dynasty. Zhang Lianyuan wrote:

I have found that in the third year of the Ming Chongzhen era (1629), each household bought [part of] the abbey’s land: now the-

64 “Shén-shìh”, in Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles*, 313, 420-1.

65 *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:13a.

66 Wang, “Yongzheng huangdi yu Ziyang zhenren (xia)”, 4.

re are the registries as evidence, each with the name of the land and its location. Each party had more than 197 mu of cultivated fields, divided into three tiers according to their value. [Additionally,] each party had 28 mu and 8 hao of cultivated land, each mu valued at 2 qian. Each party took 22 mu of uncultivated fields, 21 mu of unclaimed land and 1 qing and 42 mu of unclaimed mountains, of which there is no evaluation.⁶⁷

卑府查明崇禎三年，各戶承買觀田。現有印冊存據，各有土名坐落處所。熟田每股一百九十七畝有奇，三則定價。熟地每股二十八畝八毫，價銀二錢。又每股隨帶荒田二十二畝、荒地二十一畝、荒山一頃四十二畝，俱並無價值。

The parcels would appear to have been more or less equally distributed among the four occupants. The date here is of interest to us, as 1629 is the year after Zhang Wenyu had to return home following Wei Zhongxian's impeachment and death. Therefore, it is possible that the scheme to appropriate the temple land was supported, if not organised, by him. This would hardly be surprising, because in order to embezzle wealth and illegally occupy land, Zhang Wenyu's prestige and political connections would have been instrumental.

According to Zhang Lianyuan, "when the abbey's land was sold, the halls had not yet totally collapsed and there were Daoists who managed [the abbey] and farmed [its] land until the thirtieth year of the Kangxi reign (1691)" 緣召賣觀田時，殿宇未盡傾廢，且有道士住持耕種觀田。⁶⁸ If this report is correct, then even though the land had been surrendered to some local families, Tongbai Palace was in fact still inhabited by one or more Daoists: although the decline is evident, the final collapse was due to the lack of means caused by acts of abuse and prevarication. As we have seen, about ten years later, in 1701, a Daoist of the Palace, Zhang Taiyuan, denounced the situation in which the temple found itself, but nothing was actually done until Zhang Lianyuan took on the case. We may conclude that between 1629 and 1701 the temple had not been entirely abandoned. It appears, though, that if Zhang Taiyuan lived at the Palace, he was alone, for otherwise the documents would have referred to his companions as possible abbots.

Before continuing with the study of the legal case involving the abbey's land, there is still one question that I wish to tackle: why did Zhang Lianyuan go to such lengths in order to restore the shrine? Wang Ka argues that the Confucian pedigree of Bo Yi and Shu Qi was the main justification behind it, a hypothesis that seems to be supported by a number of passages in the *Qingsheng Ci zhi*. In my

⁶⁷ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:9b.

⁶⁸ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:10a.

view, the Confucian significance of the shrine, in Zhang Lianyuan's mind, was not separate from the other strata of meaning: the official was fully aware of the Daoist significance of the place and of Bo Yi and Shu Qi, which was also clear to his contemporaries. For example, in his 1723 preface to the *Qingsheng Ci zhi*, Fu Zeyuan 傅澤淵 wrote: "Moreover the *Shuo fu* records that Bo Yi and Shu Qi of Guzhu are the *jiutian puye* and govern Mt. Tiantai, which is why the shrine was built" 而《說郛》載孤竹伯夷、叔齊，並為九天僕射，治天台山，故祠之建也。⁶⁹ Here we see that their Daoist role is mentioned as justification for the very existence of their cult on Mt. Tongbai. Moreover, it was well known to all the authors who reconstructed the history of the shrine, both in the *Qingsheng Ci zhi* and in the local and regional gazetteers, that the statues of the two Confucian sages/Daoist gods had been brought to the temple not by a scholar in the role of Confucian representative, but by a Daoist, maybe even invested with imperial authority.

In Zhang Lianyuan's discourse justifying the importance of the Qingsheng Shrine we can identify three main layers: the landscape, the Confucian elements and the Daoist ones. The first layer is more evident when he describes the features of the landscape: its peaks, springs, bridges, rivers and rivulets, and the literature they inspired.⁷⁰ The Confucian discourse is linked to Bo Yi and Shu Qi, who are described as "masters for hundreds of generations" 百世之師也, as sages (*sheng* 聖) and virtuous persons (*xian* 賢), and to the Confucian literati's responsibility to safeguard the cults associated with Confucian doctrine: "How could they both be abandoned to the wilderness? The blame for protecting this land is also shared by the gentleman" 詎得委諸草莽? 此守土者之咎也, 亦士君子之責也。⁷¹ This responsibility is also evident in how Zhang Lianyuan conceptualized the function of the worship of Bo Yi and Shu Qi: "Today, when ascending the famous mountains to pay homage to the new shrines, [people] linger looking upward [and this] really suffices to make the obstinate upright and to straighten up the coward" 今登名山而拜新祠, 瞻仰徘徊, 真足廉頑立懦。⁷² Finally, the Daoist layer appears as clearly as the Confucian one from Zhang Lianyuan's text. In the *fanli* 凡例 section, the Daoist identity of Bo Yi and Shu Qi as *jiutian puye* is mentioned in order to explain the name of the shrine during the Song dynasty; it is again mentioned in the *fanli* that Mt. Tongbai is one of the 72 'blessed lands'.⁷³ Finally, in his

69 *Qingsheng Ci zhi* "xu 1":2a. The *Shuo fu* is a collection of tales regarding unusual, curious or supernatural events compiled by Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀 (1329-1410).

70 Cf. *Qingsheng Ci zhi* "xu 2":1a-b.

71 *Qingsheng Ci zhi* "xu 2":3a.

72 *Qingsheng Ci zhi* "xu 2":3a.

73 *Qingsheng Ci zhi* "fanli":4a, 1:1a.

first report, Zhang Lianyuan mentions Sima Chengzhen and the group known in late imperial times as ‘the ten friends of the transcendents’ school’.⁷⁴ This cannot be regarded simply as the appreciation of Sima Chengzhen as a scholar, because the religious undertones of the group are clearly expressed in the name of the group itself and also because it would be problematic to separate the different roles of literatus and Daoist priest embodied by Sima Chengzhen.

To conclude, it appears that the importance of the shrine was based on the juxtaposition of multiple strata of meaning, broadly summarised by the Confucian and the Daoist ones. Which of the two was brought to the surface level and therefore made more visible and accessible, depended on the author, on his agenda and on the occasion. Despite this, one layer did not cancel the other: both subsisted, at everyone’s disposal.

1.5.1 The Temple Land

Apart from the problem of revenue loss, during the Kangxi period, Tongbai Palace was facing the problem of land encroachment. According to documents provided by local families, part of the temple land had been divided into four units. Zhang Lianyuan reported:

In the year Kangxi 40 (1701), the descendants of the Zhang who had bought the temple land were accused of extorting heavy taxes for generations. The previous Provincial Administration Commissioner ordered to carry out a detailed enquiry into this county. It was said that the buyers did not want the lower fields, [so] they only obtained the rent of two mu (1,228 m²) of lower fields calculated as [if they were] one mu of upper fields. The accusation ran that the Zhang family’s ancestor was a high official of the previous dynasty. He vied for the purchase of the land of Tongbai Palace with the Tiantai country gentlemen [surnamed] Chen.⁷⁵

康熙四十年間，有承買觀田張姓之裔，以重稅世累等事籲控。前布政使司批發該縣審詳，據稱買戶不肯要下田，只得將下田二畝之租，算作上田一畝出賣。據買戶人等，控稱張姓之祖係前朝顯宦，與本邑陳鄉紳爭買桐柏宮田地。

⁷⁴ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:1b. In addition to Sima Chengzhen, this group included famous literati of the Tang dynasty variously related to each other, such as Bi Gou 畢構 (650-716), Song Zhiwen 宋之問 (ca. 656-712), He Zhizhang 賀知章 (659-744), Chen Zi’ang 陳子昂 (ca. 659-700?), Meng Haoran 孟浩然 (689-740), Wang Wei 王維 (699/701-761), Li Bai 李白 (701-762), Lu Cangyong 陸藏用 (?-ca. 714) and Wang Shi 王適 (fl. 691). Cf. Jiang, *Qinshu daquan* 17:20a.

⁷⁵ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:3b-4a.

Here the Chen 陳 family is mentioned: we already know that they are one of the three clans that occupied the land of Tongbai Palace. According to this report, the relationship between the different clans may have been one not of collaboration, but of competition over the acquisition of the land. For reasons that are not clear, the Zhangs were nonetheless still largely blamed for the land encroachment. It may be that they controlled most of the temple land, or that they were especially powerful and well-known and that therefore they played a leading role among the Tiantai elite.

The other documents collected by Zhang Lianyuan elaborate on the details of the past and present of Tongbai Palace and of the Qingsheng Shrine. A document dated to the fifth month of 1718 provides a plan of the temple, parts of which were still visible among the ruined foundations:

In the past, the peak of Mt. Tongbai had a *dongmen* (main gate). From the peak one could reach the abbey via a very wide and flat road and in the middle there was the Hua Bridge. Today the bridge is broken and the road is extremely narrow. According to tradition, there were more than 1,300 buildings on the two sides of the bridge. North of the bridge, there is still a **stele from the Qiandao 乾道 era** (1165-1173). Its characters are already unclear and it used to be located outside the foundations of the then main gate. Beyond the stele, within [the territory of the temple] there are the **Lingxing Gate** and the **Longhu Temple**. Behind them, one enters the **second gate** and beyond it there is the **San Qing Hall**. One can still see the base of the side walls. Behind it, one floor higher, is the **Yuqing Hall**. To the west there is the **Lüzü Hall**, and to the east the **Pavilion of the Dipper**. The main mountain of the abbey is called **Mount Yuanwu** and it is to the right of the San Qing Hall: this is the Qingsheng Shrine of Bo Yi and Shu Qi.⁷⁶

從前桐柏巔，有洞門一座。自嶺達觀，俱康莊大路，中有花橋。今橋已中斷，路盡窄狹。橋之內外，相傳舊有屋宇一千三百餘間。橋之北尚存有乾道年間石碑，字已模糊，為當日大門外基址。碑以內，建有樞星門及龍虎廟。直北而進為二門，內為三清殿，兩邊尚有牆腳。殿後高一層，乃玉清殿。西為呂祖殿，東為斗閣。觀之主山曰元武山，其三清殿之右，即夷、齊清風祠。

In the same document, Zhang Lianyuan provides very interesting pieces of information taken from Ming-dynasty land registers. Here the four parties occupying the temple land and their respective properties are thoroughly described:

⁷⁶ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:8b. Emphasis added.

Each party has more than 197 mu (120,958 m²) of cultivated fields, [divided into] three price brackets and 28 mu and 8 hao (~17,192m²) of cultivated land, each mu being worth 2 coins. Annexed to each party's [property] are 22 mu (13,508 m²) of unclaimed fields, 21 mu (12,894 m²) of unclaimed land and 1 qing and 42 mu (87,188 m²) of unclaimed mountain, all of no [clearly indicated] value. According to these records, the share of Zhang Ruoying's fertile fields is on the east side of Mount Tongbai. It comes with unclaimed land at the foot of the mountain, all on the east side of Mount Tongbai. Tang Yuangong has fertile land on the southeast side of Mt. Tongbai and unclaimed mountain land on the foot of the mountain, all located by the peak at the northern limit of the valley of Mt. Tongbai. Zhang Rushao 張汝韶 has fertile land on the small peak on the northern border of Mt. Tongbai and unclaimed mountain land on the southern side of Mount Tongbai. Chen Wanli 陳萬里 and Zhang Yuanhe 張元和 own fertile land on the mountain in the west valley and unclaimed land, also in the west valley of Mt. Tongbai. I have checked the small northern peak, where the fertile land bought by Zhang Rushao is located. On the peak at the northern edge of the valley, there is the unclaimed mountain of Tang Yuangong. This territory is all within the sacred perimeter, which belongs to the temple. Zhang Rushao's uncultivated mountain land is located on the southern boundary of Mt. Tongbai and it marks the southern territory that was once outside the sacred perimeter. When it was decided to sell the land, the halls had not yet totally collapsed and there was a Daoist who tilled the land. [Moreover,] until the thirtieth year of the Kangxi reign (1691), the Sanqing Hall was still extant. [Therefore,] regardless of [whether] it, the mountain, the land and the foundations of the halls are within the bought land and annexed properties or not, how could the buyers consider the land and mountain area bestowed to the temple to have been sold [when it was] not sold and given [when it was] not given?⁷⁷

熟田每股一百九十七畝有奇，三則定價。熟地每股二十八畝八毫，每畝價銀二錢。又每股隨帶荒田二十二畝，荒地二十一畝，荒山一頃四十二畝，俱並無價值。據印冊開載，張若嬰一股，熟地坐桐柏山東界。山腳隨帶荒山，俱坐桐柏山東界。湯元功一股，熟地坐桐柏山東南界，山根隨帶荒山，俱坐桐柏山北畧界嶺。張汝韶一股熟地坐桐柏山北界小嶺中央。荒山俱坐桐柏山南界。陳萬里、張元和一股熟地俱坐西畧山，荒山俱坐桐柏山西畧界。查北面

⁷⁷ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:9b-10a. I have not followed David Hu, who translates *shutian* 熟田 as 'cultivated lands', since I had necessarily to translate *tian* as 'fields' in order to distinguish it from *di* 地, which I translated as 'land'. Hu, *Chinese-English Dictionary*, 2:2266. The term *di* appears to indicate land dedicated to dry field cultivation, while *tian* stands for rice paddies. The mountain land (*shan* 山) could indicate cropland on the slopes of the mountain, or it referred to mountain land used for gathering wood.

小嶺中央，方為張汝韶承買熟地。至北畧界嶺，方為湯元功隨帶荒山。是洞門以內之地，皆為觀業。即張汝韶一股荒山坐桐柏山南界，亦指舊時洞門外南一帶。而言緣召賣觀田時，殿宇未盡傾廢，且有道士住持耕種觀田，至康熙三十年，尚有三清殿一間。其附觀山地祠殿基，毋論不在編賣之中，亦并不在隨帶之列。詎承買之人竟將該觀嶺山額地，已賣未賣，已隨帶未隨帶。

A summary of the information is found in table 4.

Table 4 Distribution of land parcels to each of the four parties, divided by type

		qing	mu	fen	li	hao
Cultivated fields	熟田	1	97			
Cultivated land	熟地		28			8
Unclaimed fields	荒田		22			
Unclaimed land	荒地		21			
Unclaimed mountain	荒山	1	42			

The technical terminology of this excerpt reveals that cultivated fields (*shutian* 熟田) and cultivated land (*shudi* 熟地) were worth more than uncultivated land. We also have a thorough estimation of the value of each in the first report by Zhang Lianyuan: high-tier fields were valued at 1 liang and 5 qian per mu, mid-tier fields at 1 liang and low-tier fields at 5 qian, while the land was worth 2 qian.⁷⁸ Mountain land could be used to collect wood, but it was valued less than the rest. Yet, in the case of a temple, wood was a fundamental resource, especially when the building was in need of restoration, as such work was very expensive: the possibility of saving part of the funds allotted for the raw material could prove critical for the survival of the institution.

It has been calculated that while the construction of an entire temple required pooling the resources of a whole county, the restoration of one building was possible thanks to the patronage of just one group of elite families. However, this was not a simple endeavour: by the end of the Ming dynasty, 100 liang was considered a generous donation by a wealthy family, but the edification of a bell tower cost about 1,000 liang.⁷⁹ Moreover, keeping the temple in good conditions was vital in order for the clergy to attract more patronage from the elite. Given that the average life of a wooden building in late imperial times was around 50 years, consistent restoration work and a continuous inflow of donations could make the difference between the life and the demise of an institution.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:3a.

⁷⁹ Brook, *Praying for Power*, 162-4.

⁸⁰ Brook, *Praying for Power*, 162.

If we focus on the Zhangs, we find that they represented the $\frac{3}{5}$ of all landlords in the area and that they owned about $\frac{5}{8}$ of all parcels. From Zhang Lianyuan's report we now know the full names of those involved in the occupation of the land, although there is one exception. As noted by Wang Ka, the name of Zhang Wenyu was expunged from the *Qingsheng Ci zhi*. Wang interpreted this as a sign of Wenyu's prestige, which still endured at the beginning of the Qing dynasty, as did the power of his family.⁸¹ Even though I have no definitive evidence to prove the contrary, and Zhang Lianyuan may have decided to censor Zhang Wenyu's name to protect himself and the Daoists of Tongbai Palace from retaliation, it appears strange that in the same text he openly names other members of the Zhang clan, along with Tang Yuangong and Chen Wenli. Zhang Lianyuan's accusations were strong and clear enough to cause them serious trouble and the way in which he later dealt with these elite representatives makes me doubt that the absence of Zhang Wenyu's name has anything to do with Zhang Lianyuan's perception of his power or of that of his clan.

1.5.2 Analysis and Plan of Action

The Daoist Zhang Taiyuan's denunciation and the orders from the local authorities did not change the situation of the temple. Zhang Lianyuan observed: "Today, after 15-16 years, the land has yet to be returned" 今又相隔十五六年矣, 田不歸觀. He further noted that Tongbai Palace only retained 104 mu of 'incense fields' (*xiangdengtian* 香燈田).⁸² Historical evidence made it necessary, therefore, to find a more effective plan for the restoration of the shrine. The first problem that Zhang Lianyuan sought to solve with his first report was allowing the shrine to stand on its own feet, as it were, by making it economically independent again:

Apart from visiting the county and investigating which Daoist is managing the temple today, starting from the 56th year of the Kangxi reign (1717, i.e. the year after his first report) the land must be returned to the temple. [Moreover], wait until the taxes have been paid in autumn, then use what remains of the revenues to gradually buy supplies. Collect donations to restore the Qingfeng Shrine, where the statues of Bo Yi and Shu Qi will be enshrined, together with [a statue of] Sima Chengzhen.⁸³

⁸¹ Wang, "Yongzheng huangdi yu Ziyang zhenren (xia)", 1.

⁸² *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:2b, 5a.

⁸³ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:2b.

除行縣確查現今何道士住持，自康熙五十六爲始，觀內之田應歸本觀。其錢糧糧米，俟秋收完納。除完糧外，贏餘之租，逐次購料建，並行捐募建復清風祠，專祀夷齊石像，並以司馬承禎配之。

A second, related problem, also mentioned in the previous excerpt, was the settling of the land dispute. This was more difficult to solve because it entailed stripping local families of land that they regarded as their own and razing their tombs to the ground. The return of the land to the temple was fundamental for its survival as an institution. This was true for all Daoist and Buddhist temples, as they could survive without a stable income from their estates only in few exceptional cases.⁸⁴ The power of the gentry increased from the second half of the Ming dynasty onwards thanks to land control and privileges. This made them also the main providers of land to religious institutions, either directly or indirectly (i.e. through the donation of money that allowed monks to acquire land).⁸⁵ Another way in which the local elite could support a religious institution was by means of political patronage. Timothy Brook has noted that sometimes the gentry committed themselves to redeeming land that had once belonged to the monastery, but that for various reasons had been lost.⁸⁶ In this case, they would use their influence and prestige to push the county magistrate to return the land: this is reminiscent of what Zhang Lianyuan attempted to do in favour of the Qingsheng Shrine, both as a member of the elite and as an official, by relying on his influence. The fact that, as shown below, this proved to be a difficult task means that the opposition from the local families was fierce and backed by a similarly strong influence over the area.

As I have previously discussed, in his first report Zhang Lianyuan already presented a clear inventory of the estates belonging to Tongbai Palace, including their price per mu, which he compiled according to land registers from the Ming dynasty. The complex system of classification of the land (divided per kind – *tian* 田, *di* 地 or *shan* 山 – and according to its use) made it easy for the local elite to try to exchange less valuable parcels for more profitable ones. Towards the end of the first report, Zhang Lianyuan wrote:

⁸⁴ One example is the Qingyun Temple 慶雲寺 on Mt. Dinghu 鼎湖山 (Zhaoqing, Guangdong). By explicit orders of its first abbot (traditionally regarded as the second one), Liji Daoqiu 離際道丘 (1568-1658), this temple was forbidden to buy land that might ensure regular revenue, so the resident monks were forced to survive on the patronage of rich sponsors. This required exceptionally charismatic leaders, though. Brook, *Praying for Power*, 137-58.

⁸⁵ Brook, *Praying for Power*, 165-6.

⁸⁶ Brook, *Praying for Power*, 166.

An order must be issued to visit this county (Tiantai) and to investigate every uncultivated field, land and mountain parcel [indicated as] without value [as recorded] in the documents in order to understand [the actual situation]: return half of each to the temple. Donate enough state grain to build [the temple] and cultivate [the land]. Then, the cult of these ancient worthy sages will finally last forever.⁸⁷

應敕行該縣，將各帖內並無價值之荒田、荒地、荒山履勘明白。各開還本罐一半。輸糧官業，以便建造，并種植有資。則古聖賢祀典得以長存。

The ‘documents’ had been provided by leading local clans for the purpose of proving their rights over the land of Mount Tongbai. Since the beginning of the controversy, the Zhang family tried to play any card in their hands to hinder and possibly stop the restitution of the temple land to the shrine. As we have seen, the clan stressed its relationship with a high-level official of the previous dynasty, obviously referring to Zhang Wenyu, in an attempt to exploit his former influence and prestige.

In a later report, Zhang Lianyuan explained: “What was outside the second gate [of the temple] - all the foundations of the halls, the garden plots and the road - has become reclaimed land. It is not on the list of the [land] bought, therefore it is still the temple’s property” (即舊時二門以外凡殿宇基址、園圃、道路俱墾為平田，並不在變賣之列，亦依然觀業也。⁸⁸ The concept of reclaimed land appears to refer to the common practice, first promoted under the Ming dynasty and later by both the Kangxi and the Yongzheng emperors, according to which common people could occupy unclaimed land in order to cultivate it, eventually obtaining the right to own their ‘reclaimed land’, along with additional allowances. According to Wang Ka, in the first years of the Kangxi reign the process of land reclamation was as simple as settling down on uncultivated land and cultivating it, a circumstance that inspired some officials to suggest policies in favour of the secularisation of all temple land as territory to be reclaimed.⁸⁹

The third issue to be solved was the restoration of the shrine itself, which was not limited to the appropriation of the land for cultivation. In the excerpt from the *You Tiantai Shan ji* discussed at the beginning of this chapter, Pan Lei mentioned “deluded geomantic practices” and “burying [the] bones”: these two aspects were certainly connected to late imperial geomantic beliefs and the need to choose the appropriate location to set up a family grave. The *Qingsheng Ci zhi*

⁸⁷ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:4a.

⁸⁸ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:18a.

⁸⁹ Wang, “Yongzheng huangdi yu Ziyang zhenren (xia)”, 3-4.

in turn informs us: “the old foundations of the Qingfeng Shrine have been turned into a grave by the Zhang family. On its left and right sides are the remains of the walls of the old shrine” 今清風祠舊基，已爲張姓造墳。墳之左右，現有舊祠牆腳。⁹⁰ Although the Zhang family graveyard is the one usually mentioned in the sources, it was not the only one. Zhang Lianyuan himself recorded: “Moreover, they built graves on each mountain, not only the one of the Zhang family” 且造墳各山，亦不止張姓一處。⁹¹ The case of the Zhang grave was simply more problematic because it had been built on the site of the old Qingfeng (Qingsheng) Shrine: anyone wishing to rebuild the shrine on the same location would have to move the grave first. The grave also functioned as a marker for the Zhang family, whose possession of the land was confirmed and reinforced by the presence of their own relatives on the land itself.

In order for Fan Qingyun, the Daoist living among the ruins of Tongbai Palace, to have any claim on the land of Mt. Tongbai, it was important for the shrine to be restored first, as suggested by the insistence with which Zhang Lianyuan demanded the grave be moved and the temple rebuilt on its original location. It was not easy to move the grave and, one would guess, not auspicious either. Therefore, in 1717 Zhang Lianyuan provided an alternative plan for the restoration:

After intense deliberation, the Qingsheng Shrine will be built on the old foundations of the Sanqing Hall; [...] the second gate will be built where there was the ancient Sanqing Hall; the main gate will be located on the location of the ancient second gate.⁹²

至清聖祠，已酌定于三清殿舊基建造。……舊時三清殿，建爲二門。舊時二門，建爲大門。

This plan suggests that the new shrine had to be built as a resized Tongbai Palace, smaller in scale than the original temple. The reduced size was also justified by the missing land and the lack of funds for a more ambitious project. In order to prevent future problems, Zhang Lianyuan made two more requests. First, he asked his superiors to perpetually exempt the ‘incense fields’ from taxation – a request which was indeed granted to him.⁹³ This policy was aimed at avoiding the kind of problems that had led to the decline of Tongbai Palace towards the end of the Ming period. Moreover, monks were generally exempted from corvée and even though the temple land was entirely taxable,

⁹⁰ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:8b.

⁹¹ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:11b.

⁹² *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:10b-11a.

⁹³ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:10b, 13b.

petitions were often submitted to the local magistrate to ask for partial or full exemption. When applied, the favourable fiscal regime had the downside of being open to misuse by the monks, who would sometimes turn the monastery or temple into a tax haven for landowners by resorting to the practice of commendation (*touxian* 投獻).⁹⁴

Second, knowing that without an administrator the shrine would fall into disrepair again, Zhang Lianyuan suggested that “honest Daoists be hired with a grand ceremony in order to manage [the temple], as required by the prefecture” 再另募殷實道士管業, 以昭盛典, 應如該府所請.⁹⁵

1.5.3 Zhang Lianyuan and Fan Qingyun Restore the Qingsheng Shrine

Halfway through the second report, dated to the ninth month of 1717, Zhang Lianyuan introduces a very peculiar figure, destined to play a very important role in the history of Tongbai Palace and of Chinese Daoism as a whole: Fan Qingyun 范青雲. At that time, this person was only known as “the Daoist living in the thatched hut near Tongbai Palace, who has lived alone on top of the mountain, determinedly caring for the stone statues of Bo Yi and Shu Qi” 住桐柏宮茅屋道士范青雲, 以獨住高山之頂苦守夷齊石像.⁹⁶ But as I will explain in the next chapter, he received a place of honour in the Longmen lineages of the early 19th century. At the time of the restoration of the shrine, Fan Qingyun was only described as a Daoist recluse who had taken it upon himself to look after the two statues, along with what remained of the shrine. Zhang Lianyuan makes no mention of the Longmen lineage or the Quanzhen tradition in his documents.

The plan for the reconstruction of the shrine and for the restitution of the temple land also called for an improvement of Fan Qingyun’s living standards, which were far from enviable at the time. This is something we clearly learn from Zhang Lianyuan’s own words: “at first Master Fan had no food, but held firmly [to his vow], [so] he was treated as a slave [by the Zhangs, who were] waiting for him to pass away, [so that they might] swallow up the whole [temple] land” 先因范道士並無籽粒, 隻身苦守。人亦視同隸, 以俟其死徒, 可以盡行鯨吞。⁹⁷ What the Zhang clan did not foresee was that officials would take it upon themselves to restore the shrine:

⁹⁴ Brook, *Praying for Power*, 171.

⁹⁵ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:13b.

⁹⁶ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:6b.

⁹⁷ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:21a.

Unexpectedly, after [the officials of] this prefecture had worshipped the statues of the virtuous men, they [sent a] request to build the [Qing]sheng Shrine. Then, the Zhang family devised a stratagem to prevent Master Fan from becoming its abbot.⁹⁸

不料，本府拜謁聖像之後，詳建聖祠。張姓遂設機謀不容范道士住持。

The risk of losing the land and of being accused of embezzlement triggered the Zhangs' reaction: this is when things started to go sour for Master Fan - interfering with the local gentry's plans was very dangerous, a lesson that he learnt at his own expense.

A serious incident occurred in the fifth month of the year 1718: Fan Qingyun was accused of cutting down more than 20 trees located on the hill where the tomb of the Zhang family was located and for this reason he suffered a harsh retaliation at their hands. His (older) cousin, Fan Zhenyong 范振雍 (Fan Qingyun was his *tangdi* 堂弟), rapidly came to his rescue. On this occasion, the latter explained to the authorities:

Fan Qingyun left his family and embraced Daoism. He firmly cared for the statues of the pure sages for 25 years, all alone and living in a thatched hut. Lately, because of the restoration of the temple [i.e the Qingsheng Shrine], the unworthy despot <name missing>, on the 6th day of the present month sent a group of ten ferocious and armed men, each carrying a wooden stick. They injured his head and hurt his abdomen, sliced his hands and broke his feet. After this event, the supervisor of works of the southern yamen ordered to carry him to his house and to use any means possible to save him.⁹⁹

范青雲出家入道，苦守清聖石像二十五年，孑然一身棲止茅蓬。近因重修廟宇，豪劣□□□于本月初六日，部帶兇棍數十，各執木棍。將第碎首破臚，截手斷足。隨是，督工南衙命擡進房，百計救甦等情。

The aggression was clearly an act of retaliation against the ongoing restoration of the shrine: the same report also states that the beams of the new temple had been put in place on the tenth day of the same month, just four days after the beating. This *modus operandi* was not unprecedented, as Timothy Brook illustrated in his study. The local elite could not directly strike officials such as Zhang Lianyuan, so

⁹⁸ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:21a-21b.

⁹⁹ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:16a-16b. If the injuries inflicted on Fan Qingyun were as serious as those described here, he would most probably have died. According to this and later sources, Fan Qingyun survived the attack, so this seems to be an exaggeration, probably aimed at upholding the cause of the Qingsheng Shrine.

they directed their anger toward Fan Qingyun. In their eyes, he was most probably bound to become the administrator of the renewed institution and was responsible for resisting the land occupation.

The aggression against Master Fan Qingyun may appear an overreaction, or an exaggerated description by the author, maybe designed to gain sympathy for Fan Qingyun and support for his cause, but the same source also mentions a very interesting practice observed in imperial times that confirms the seriousness of the beating. The authorities decided to keep a *baogu* 保辜 period, which meant waiting a certain amount of time to see whether the victim of the aggression would die or recover: this was aimed at determining whether the charges against the assailants would be homicide or only assault. The social context of late imperial times was therefore not new to such violence. In fact, a local gazetteer of Wuxi 無錫 (Jiangsu) recorded in 1752: “During the Jiaping period the tyranny of bondservants from the two families Wang and Yu was terrible. Wang had 500 bondservants, while Yu had over 100. They liked elegant clothes and fresh food and maltreated the people in neighbouring villages, always seizing market goods”.¹⁰⁰

With regard to the gathering of wood, which constituted the pretext for the violence, Zhang Lianyuan stated:

According to the county [government] the forest from which the wood was gathered is located on the mountain behind the new Qingsheng Shrine and stands within the territory that must be returned to it. Therefore, the trees in fact belong to the shrine.¹⁰¹

據該縣詳稱所砍之木在新清聖祠之後山，應歸祠內之山。則樹實係祠內之樹。

It is not clarified whether the attack was planned by the Zhangs or whether it was carried out on the thugs' initiative, maybe in the hope of pleasing their masters, although the idea that the latter were totally oblivious to their lackeys' violent intentions seems rather implausible. Seeing themselves progressively entangled in a dangerous situation, the Zhangs finally agreed to compensate for the aggression and begged to be pardoned:

The Zhang family has sent for a doctor in order to heal [Master Fan], [promising that] in the future they will not get to this point and begging for mercy. For the time being [this event] was not thoroughly reported. Moreover, the county [government of Tiantai]

¹⁰⁰ *Xi Jin shi xiaolu* (Brief Record of Information from Wuxi and Jinkui) 10:2a, quoted and translated in Shigeta, “The Origins and Structure of Gentry Rule”, 368.

¹⁰¹ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:17a.

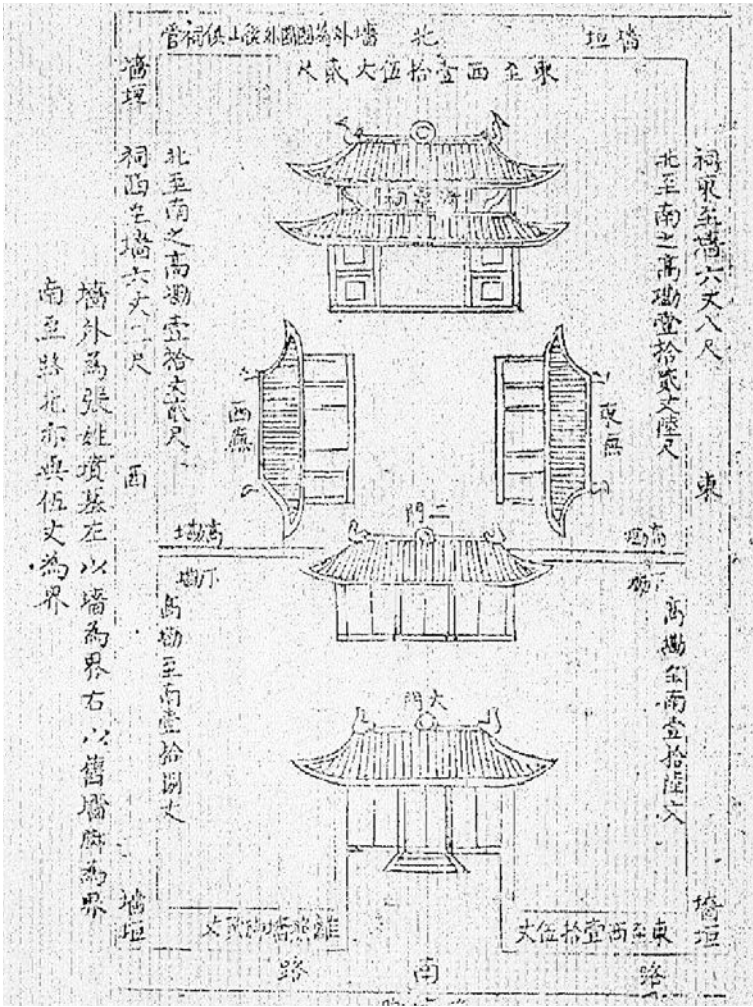


Figure 8 Plan of the Qingsheng Shrine of Mt. Tongbai after its restoration. *Qingsheng Cizhi* "tu":2a

requested [them] to pay two taels and <name missing> compensated [Fan Qingyun] with four silver taels for medical treatments.¹⁰²

現在張姓延醫調治。將來不致廢疾，伏乞恩開一面。暫免通詳，並據該縣令銀二兩。又□□□償還藥銀四兩等情。

Through the intervention of local officials, Fan Qingyun was healed and compensated, but he had risked his life and been warned that the Zhangs would not relinquish the land so easily. The fact that the Zhangs were not punished for their clear responsibility in the attack could be explained on the basis of their influence on local society and their prestige, but it is well known that illegal actions by the landlords' servants, in addition to being frequent, were sometimes perpetrated without their masters' explicit consent.¹⁰³ Whether the Zhangs denied direct responsibility is bound to remain a conjecture, but their link to the aggressors is beyond doubt.

The beating left Fan Qingyun even weaker than before and in need of fellow Daoists' support. This concern is reflected in Zhang Lianyuan's third report:

Today, although he has been lucky and still breathes after having been violently beaten, he cannot travel far to beg for alms: how could he still work hard to cultivate [the land]? [This is] very pitiful. Moreover, in Tiantai there are very few Daoists, so it is necessary to search again in other places to recruit them. [We] must find someone else he can rely upon. How could he live on the top of a high mountain with an empty stomach?¹⁰⁴

今被毒毆之後，雖倖畱殘喘，既不能遠行募化。豈尚能胼胝耕耘殊可矜憫。又天邑土著道士甚少，即向別處再行召募。令其其相依倚，而高山之巔，豈能枵腹而居。

The Zhang family continued to attack the Daoist, probably hoping to replace him with one of their own men, or to directly take control of the land. According to the report of the eleventh month of the year 1721, at that time Zhang Lianyuan was still trying to force the local elite families to give back at least part of the land. The situation remained very complex and problems started accumulating. First, 1720 was a year of famine, so the construction stopped. Second, the institution still lacked the 'incense fields' that would allow the consistent performance of rituals and the maintenance of a Daoist community. The Zhang

¹⁰² *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:17a.

¹⁰³ On this topic, see Shigeta, "The Origins and Structure of Gentry Rule", 371.

¹⁰⁴ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:19a.

张氏后裔数百人祭扫张文郁墓

来源：后司街

作者：度子亭

编辑：雪达云



4月2日，阳光明媚，春意盎然，时近清明，上宝相村和下宝相村共同主持拜祭张文郁墓仪式。来自各地的张氏后裔数百人参加祭扫仪式，寄托对先人的追思与怀念，场面既隆重，又壮观。随后，分别拜祭张文郁长子若婴公和次子九夏公。

张文郁(1578—1655)，字从周，号太素，又自号桃源散人，天台城郊茅园(今莪园)人。明天启进士，初授工部主事，督造三殿告成，累陞都察院右都御史，工部左侍郎。县志载：“丙戌方兵过台，文郁倾家犒士，多方调度，全活邑民数万……善事难以枚举。制行忠孝训后，从不以私于当道”。著《度子亭集》。

张文郁墓位于“桃源春晓”附近天官乡宝相村大坟山，山上松柏翠郁，花木扶疏，墓前原有碑坊、石亭、石碑，今存坟坦二道，坟面及罗围，雕有鲤鱼戏水、鹿、鹤、狮、猴、花卉等石刻图案。

墓右侧有张文郁长子明都督府都事张元声墓。

张元声，字汝韶，号九夏，别号幽溪散人，白云逸叟，博览史籍，钦赐举人，授刑曹主事。著有《度子亭草》、《桐柏草》、《兵燹拾余》等书。

1984年7月，天台县人民政府公布为第二批县级重点文物保护单位。

Figures 9-10 Screenshots of the online newspaper article concerning the gathering of the Zhang clan. The website is no longer accessible. <http://www.tt1890.com/tupian/3610.htm>

family had even pressed what Zhang Lianyuan called false charges against Fan Qingyun, accusing him of having embezzled the land.¹⁰⁵ Zhang Lianyuan expressed the following considerations:

Unexpectedly, a petition was sent to build the Qingsheng Shrine. After this, they [the local elite families] thought of a scheme to prevent him from becoming the abbot. The case of the theft [of the land by Fan Qingyun] was not filed 20 years ago, but after the construction of the shrine [started], [so] in fact it is an intolerable injustice.¹⁰⁶

不料詳請建造清聖祠。遂設謀不容住持。故捏造敕前竊案，不控逐于二十年前反控逐于建祠之後。實屬天理難容等情。

In the end and despite Zhang Lianyuan's efforts, the situation of the shrine did not improve as much as its supporters hoped. In the report of 1721, Zhang Lianyuan addressed many potential issues that were still unresolved: the local elite selling the land to someone else (a frontman/nominee?), loss of the land records, as well as the possibility that the land did not provide enough for the Daoists to make a living, even with the perpetual tax exemption previously obtained. Zhang Lianyuan, then, suggested:

If the uncultivated mountain land is enough to pay for the sacrifices and the restoration [of the shrine], there is no need to discuss matters any further. If the revenue of the uncultivated mountain land is scarce, [I'll] ask that a plot of land of either the Zhenjue Temple or of the Yangliu Hut to be selected and given to the shrine, in order to perpetually offer sacrifices [to the sages].¹⁰⁷

如荒山已足爲俎豆修造之資，毋庸置議外。如荒山花利無多，請將真覺寺田或楊柳庵田擇一處歸祠以永典。

Moreover, there was still the issue of the lack other Daoists at the shrine, who could aid Fan Qingyun in managing the temple. I think that this emphasises a problem inherent in the institution itself. The temple was built as a place of retreat for Sima Chengzhen, therefore it was originally located in an isolated area, maybe not too distant from urban centres, but nonetheless on a mountain located far away from large cities. It was different from the urban temples patronised by the local population, because it originally relied on imperial sponsorship and on its own estates to survive. This means that without proper

¹⁰⁵ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:31a-32a.

¹⁰⁶ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:31b.

¹⁰⁷ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:34a.

political and economic support from the state, it was difficult for such an institution to attract Daoists and to prosper.

Zhang Lianyuan's final report of the twelfth month of 1722 has been quoted in its entirety by Wang Ka,¹⁰⁸ and offers information on the status of the temple at the end of the Kangxi period. According to it, the land had been returned to the shrine, which had been rebuilt not on its original foundations [fig. 8], where the grave of the Zhang family was still standing, but according to Zhang Lianyuan's plan. Despite all his efforts, Zhang Lianyuan was unable to completely bring back the temple to its original status and the Zhangs did not lose on all fronts.

We can see in this Pyrrhic victory the reason for Zhang Lianyuan's decision to publish the *Qingsheng Ci zhi* as an enduring record of all the events. Again, this was not the first time that patrons employed literary works to record the extension and distribution of the temple land. Historically, this was just one of many different means of recording temple property – a more durable one being setting up a stele that could be paid for either by the gentry or by the county magistrate.¹⁰⁹

Just a few years later, the Yongzheng emperor would take an interest in Mount Tongbai and, with the help of Li Wei, one of his most trustworthy officials, would finally order the destruction of the grave and return part of the land to the temple.

4.6 Conclusion

If we focus on the world constructed by the excerpts mentioned at the end of the previous chapter and in this one, we see that Bo Yi and Shu Qi are often at its centre. There are two reasons for this. First, they had been associated with Tongbai Palace within the context of southern Daoist traditions since medieval times, as I have discussed in the second chapter. Second, the authors of these excerpts were trained Confucian scholars who were likely to support any initiative in favour of the two brothers, paragons of Confucian morality.

It is worth noting that starting with Zhang Lianyuan's third memorial, references to Confucianism in relation to Bo Yi and Shu Qi became more frequent. For example, Zhang Lianyuan wrote: "I have studied the four moral standards, called propriety, justice, integrity and honour, [so I know that those who] insult the sages and the worthy are degenerate [people]. Bo Yi and Shu Qi are called sages and worthy persons and are mentioned many times in the *Lunyu* and the *Mengzi*: if one does not know them, then one does not know Confucius and Mencius" 卑府

¹⁰⁸ See Wang, "Yongzheng huangdi yu ziyang (xia)", 4-5.

¹⁰⁹ Brook, *Praying for Power*, 174.

查禮、義、廉、恥，謂之四維。侮聖蔑賢，即為敗類。夷齊之曰聖曰賢，迭見于孔孟之書。不知有夷齊，即不知有孔孟。¹¹⁰ This was a severe attack against any official who failed to deal with the problems in Tiantai with the due care and respect and especially against the local elite, guilty of having stolen land from the sages' shrine. At this stage in the history of Tongbai Palace, then, the focus was on Bo Yi and Shu Qi and on their shrine. Cursory references to Sima Chengzhen recall the illustrious Daoist past of the Tongbai Palace, but also remind us that that past was long gone. It was no longer the imperial authorities that cared for the temple, but rather private citizens and local officials, who superimposed their own version of Tongbai Palace on its old history. Nonetheless, we should not read the preoccupation with Bo Yi and Shu Qi only as an endorsement of Confucianism: the two brothers were equally depicted as the *jiutian puyue*, members of the supernatural Daoist bureaucratic hierarchies. Final proof of this comes directly from the brushes of officials and literati, who clearly acknowledged this fact. That depiction of Tongbai Palace as an eminent Daoist institution is witnessed in a poem by Zhang Yuansheng 張元聲 (*zi*: Rushao 汝韶; *hao*: Jiuxia 九夏; *biehao*: Youxi sanren 幽溪散人; 17th century), member of the Zhang family of Tiantai, titled "Passing by Tongbai Palace, [I was] Moved" 過桐柏宮有感,¹¹¹ where the author refers first of all to Ge Xuan and then to the "gracious Daoist priests" 娟娟羽客. The Zhang family's attachment to the religious landscape of their native land is also evident in Zhang Lihuang's 張利璜 (*zi*: Weifu 渭夫; *hao*: Xiongbu 熊卜; other *hao*: Yongzhuo 用拙)¹¹² poems "Walking through the Village on Mt. Tongbai on a Cold Day", "Passing below Tongbai Peak" 過桐柏嶺下,¹¹³ "Passing through the Valley of the Abbey" 過觀巖,¹¹⁴ "Crossing the Cha Peak" 度察嶺,¹¹⁵ "The Mingyu (Jingling Jade) Ravine" 鳴玉澗,¹¹⁶ "Passing by the Qingfeng Shrine" 過清風祠 and "Paying Homage to the Statues of [Bo] Yi and [Shu] Qi" 謁夷齊石像.¹¹⁷ These poems return a somewhat more nuanced picture of the relationship between the Zhang family and Tongbai Palace compared to the one in the *Qingsheng Ci zhi*, telling us of their emotional attachment to the region, including the palace and the shrine.

This literary output in a Qing gazetteer also documents the enduring relevance of the Zhang family in Tiantai County. The

¹¹⁰ *Qingsheng Ci zhi* 1:15b-16a.

¹¹¹ "Guo Tongbai Gong you gan", in *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 16:16b-17a.

¹¹² *Guochao Tiantai shi cun* 3:17b.

¹¹³ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 16:19a-19b.

¹¹⁴ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 17:49a.

¹¹⁵ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 17:50a.

¹¹⁶ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 17:53a.

¹¹⁷ *Tiantai Shan quanzhi* 18:43b-44a.

importance of Zhang Wenyu for local history and familial memory is still evident today. In April 2008 members of the Zhang clan gathered at his grave to perform a ritual and pay homage to their ancestor [figs 9-10].¹¹⁸ Next to it, today we find the tomb of his son, Zhang Yuansheng, who owned part of the temple land.¹¹⁹ The old *jinshi* who achieved a high position in the imperial bureaucracy still exerts a strong, lingering influence on his forebears.

118 Du, “Zhang shi houyi shubai ren jisao Zhang Wenyu mu” 張氏後裔數百人祭掃張文郁墓, in *Zhongguo jigong wang* 中國濟公網. <http://www.tt1890.com/tupian/3610.htm>. According to the *Taizhou Fu zhi* 台州府志 (1722), quoted in the *Zhejiang tongzhi*, Zhang Wenyu’s grave was located in Taoyuan 桃源.

119 *Liangzhe youxuan xulu buyi* 1:9b; *Tiantai Xian difang zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui bangongshi*, *Qing Kangxi Tiantai Xian zhi*, 185.