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## Contested Connections: The Twelfth-century Debate over the Location of Zhou Dunyi's Hometown\*

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### ABSTRACT

This article investigates the Southern Song construction of Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 shrines in Daozhou, where Zhou was born, and Jiangzhou, where he died. As his posthumous fame increased, each prefecture sought to promote its ties to the alleged “founding father of Neo-Confucianism.” Prefect Lin Li of Jiangzhou argued that Zhou’s studio name, Lianxi 濂溪, had originally been Lianxi 廉溪. This offended Daozhou literati, who rejected the claim. The dispute would only be settled when Neo-Confucian dignitaries Zhu Xi 朱熹 and Zhang Shi 張栻 came out in support of Daozhou’s cause. This case study shows how Zhou Dunyi shrines were negotiated and appropriated by local elites in the interest of local pride, what kind of resources they were able to utilise in the service of their goals, and how Neo-Confucianism mediated the process.

**Keywords:** Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤, Lianxi 濂溪/廉溪, Neo-Confucianism, Zhu Xi 朱熹, shrine, hometown, local identity, local pride.

### Introduction

Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤 (1017–1073) is now primarily known as the founding father of Neo-Confucianism<sup>1</sup> and also as the designer of the Tai Chi (太極) diagram, whose far-reaching influence is attested to by the modern Mongolian and South Korean national flags. His life was remarked on only by a handful of friends until about a hundred years after his death when some Southern Song literati took inspiration from his intellectual legacies.<sup>2</sup> Among them were Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) and Zhang Shi 張栻 (1133–1180), arguably two of the best-known twelfth-century Neo-Confucians.<sup>3</sup> Thanks to their efforts, Zhou Dunyi was transformed by the 1170s from an obscure local official into the founding father of the Neo-Confucian movement.<sup>4</sup> His sudden rise in fame inevitably attracted the attention of localities associated with him, prompting them to assert their connections to this increasingly esteemed gentleman. Enshrining him was viewed as a legitimate expression of such a connection, whereas worshipping the man at an unconnected place would have been a violation of ritual norms.<sup>5</sup>

Shrines to Zhou Dunyi proliferated in all directions, prompting contemporaries to call them “ubiquitous” (*wuchu buyou* 無處不有) (QSW 350: 8). In the absence of any sort of state regulation, these Zhou Dunyi shrine projects assumed diverse local characteristics. There were one-hundred-and-thirty Zhou Dunyi shrine projects inaugurated in sixty-six different prefectures, amongst which Daozhou 道州 (m. Yongzhou 永州, Hunan 湖南) and Jiangzhou 江州 (m. Jiujiang

九江, Jiangxi 江西) were the two busiest, accounting for eleven and eight projects respectively.<sup>6</sup>

Linda A. Walton (1998, 37, 108–111) explains the spread of Neo-Confucian shrines and academies in the Southern Song in terms of “vital forces.” She claims

<sup>4</sup> The first draft of this article was presented at the Second Conference on Middle Period Chinese Humanities 2017 (Leiden University, Leiden). I thank Sarah Schneewind and Cheung Hiu Yu for their meticulous reading and valuable comments.

<sup>1</sup> There has long been a debate on the issue of how to name this ideology in modern scholarship. The two strongest contenders are “Daoxue” 道學 and “Neo-Confucianism” (Bary 1993; Tillman 1992; 1994). The strength of the former lies in its being the name the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Southern Song Chinese literati used in their writings to refer to this movement. The beauty of the latter is that it immediately provides the reader with an understanding (it was something “new” and something “Confucian”) without requiring the readers to speculate as to what *dao* was and what *xue* meant. Using a literal translation of Daoxue, “the Learning of the Way,” may help the former to avoid the trap effectively but not necessarily efficiently—writing five words every time the need arises to refer to the Learning of the Way is not very convenient. Since the way this ideology is referred to does not affect the main argument of this article, I will refer to it as “Neo-Confucianism” for the sake of convenience.

<sup>2</sup> See Joseph Adler (2014, part 1) for an in-depth analysis of the unfolding of this reappraisal project.

<sup>3</sup> Note that the Neo-Confucians this article discusses are predominantly those from the Cheng-Zhu branch. Such being the case, a reader may be legitimately concerned whether the author is in effect expelling the other branches from Neo-Confucianism by using the term more narrowly. However, although it was indeed some Cheng-Zhu scholars who began the wholesale promotion of Zhou Dunyi as the first sage of the Song, there is ample evidence that, for instance, many Lu branch literati in the thirteenth century were surprisingly enthusiastic in worshipping Zhou Dunyi in different prefectures (see *Quan Song wen* 全宋文 [henceforth QSW] 281: 207 for Yuan Xie 袁燮 (1144–1224), QSW 290: 87 for Sun Yingshi 孫應時 (1154–1206)). Of course, a good number of high-profile Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 (1139–1193) supporters, such as Yang Jian 楊簡 (1141–1226), remained suspicious of Zhou Dunyi’s scholarship (QSW 275: 320). However, following the consolidation of Zhou Dunyi’s status as the intellectual ancestor of *all* Neo-Confucian branches by the mid-thirteenth century, even a commemorative essay for a shrine to Yang Jian would trace the latter’s intellectual descent from Zhou (QSW 341: 139)! Therefore, calling the Southern Song Zhou Dunyi fever a “Neo-Confucian” phenomenon would not be too off the mark. I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for raising this issue and hope to explore the non-Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian acknowledgment of Zhou Dunyi’s character and ideas in a future publication.

<sup>4</sup> It is, of course, a historical construction. See Tsuchida Kenjirō (2002) for scepticism over Zhou Dunyi’s position as the founding father.

<sup>5</sup> There were two types of shrines in the Song: “proper” (*zheng* 正), and “illicit” (*yin* 淫). Notwithstanding some exceptional cases, it was commonly believed that the criterion determining whether a shrine was proper or not was the appropriateness of its location—that is, the extent of the enshrinee’s connection to the locality. If the enshrinee was “connected in some way to the place where he was honoured,” it was a proper shrine (Neskar 1993, 419). See also Umemura Naoki (2013) for the canonical justification of this standard. Valerie Hansen (1990, 128–132) shows that the same principle was applied to shrines for popular deities as well.

<sup>6</sup> The Song dynasty saw a proliferation of shrines dedicated to literati. They were different from shrines for deities in that worshipping them seldom promised supernatural benefits or aid. Song literati did not put these shrines into a new category, but, for the sake of consistent translation, this article will call them “literati shrines.” Neo-Confucian shrines were literati shrines solely or partly dedicated to those who contributed to the tradition of Neo-Confucianism. For instance, QSW contains 405 commemorative essays (*ciji* 祠記 or *citangji* 祠堂記) for shrines dedicated to either Neo-Confucian (e.g. Lu Jiuyuan) or non-Neo-Confucian literati (e.g. Wang Anshi 王安石, 1011–1086), ninety-one of which are unambiguously for Neo-Confucians. Of those ninety-one, forty-three were for the worship of either Zhou Dunyi alone or together with other figures. When we include Zhou Dunyi shrines *without* extant commemorative essays, the number goes up to 130. Although estimating the total number of literati shrines in the Song is beyond the scope of this article, a quick calculation (130:43=x:405) yields an estimated number of 1,224 literati shrines constructed throughout the Song.

that there was an “organic relationship between the natural beauty of mountains and rivers, where ‘vital forces’ (*ch’i* = *qi*) collect, and the production of eminent scholars, whose residences or studies often became the site of academies.” She rightly notes that the landscape becomes “sacred” once it is associated with a Neo-Confucian master, but leaves several questions open: What did it mean for a landscape to be a sacred place? How did such a designation benefit the local people? Did they view it as desirable? How much might they be willing to sacrifice for a marginal improvement of the local *qi*?

This article finds answers to such questions in the case of Zhou Dunyi shrines in Southern Song Daozhou and Jiangzhou. It reconstructs the concerns of the two localities that must to varying degrees have dictated the themes of the commemorative essays for their shrines. We will see that the two prefectures had a conflict of interests and that a naming issue—whether the “*lian*” in Zhou’s studio name was *lian* 廉 or *lian* 濂—lay at the heart of the contest between them.

Zhou Dunyi was born and grew up in Daozhou. He left the town at age fifteen (AD 1032) after his father’s death, went to the capital city of Kaifeng and became an official, and served in dozens of different local positions for about thirty years until he finally made his new home in Jiangzhou where he retired (1071), died, and was buried (1073). He paid only one visit to Daozhou in 1067, which lasted no longer than thirteen days. Thus, despite Daozhou’s stature as his birthplace, Zhou Dunyi’s failure to return “home” was a headache for Daozhou literati. To assert the strength of their location’s connection to Zhou, they needed a narrative that could explain why Zhou was compelled to live in Jiangzhou against his true “intention” (*yi* 意). They developed a story wherein Zhou wanted to return home but was so poor and feeble that he could not afford his final trip and so, instead, named his retirement studio and the nearby brook in Jiangzhou after one in Daozhou, “Lianxi” 濂溪, to express his loyalty to his “roots (*ben* 本)” and, as a result, the man came to be remembered and referred to as Master Lianxi (*Lianxi xiansheng* 濂溪先生). In short, this story was based on the coincidence of the three names. Daozhou’s Lian Brook, Jiangzhou’s Lian Brook, and Zhou’s studio name (*hao* 號) constituted the trinity of Daozhou’s narrative.

Jiangzhou Prefect Lin Li 林栗 (*jinshi*, 1142) rejected this trinity in 1166, arguing in his commemorative essay for the Jiangzhou Zhou Dunyi shrine that Zhou’s studio name was Lianxi 廉溪, not Lianxi 濂溪. This upset the people of Daozhou: If the “original” studio name of Zhou Dunyi had nothing to do with the brook in Daozhou, the great man’s connection to Daozhou would be rendered far more tenuous. Accordingly, the residents and supporters of Daozhou proffered their rebuttals, and so began the contest.

This debate has attracted little attention from modern researchers. There are a few articles in Chinese (Zhang 2005; Wu 2005; Kong 2010) and one in Japanese (Matsukawa 1979) that discuss some factual details. However, none of them fully investigates the social implications and ramifications of this event, nor does any of them discuss why the actors of the two prefectures, especially the Daozhou elites, were so eager in the first place to stake a claim to Zhou’s “hometown” (*guli* 故里).

By following the timeline of the name debate, we will see the substantial

degree to which that issue dictated the content of commemorative essays. The enthusiasm of each prefecture's elites for dedicating shrines to Zhou Dunyi, commissioning Neo-Confucian dignitaries to write essays for those shrines, consecrating the surrounding landscape, and disputing the claims of the rival prefecture all served ultimately to improve their standing in a world where many prefectures were searching for local pride (Zhang 2003, 172; 2011, 157).

Let us start with the first commemorative essay for the 1166 Jiangzhou Zhou Dunyi shrine.

**Lin Li's Argument: Lian 濂 Should Be Lian 廉**

When Prefect Lin Li established a Zhou Dunyi shrine at Jiangzhou in 1166, at the request of young Zhu Xi, he knew that Zhou had once lived in Jiangzhou and had taken his name from a brook in front of his abode: Lianxi 濂溪. He could have let it go at that but continued to probe the meaning of the character “lian” 濂. When he found some pieces of evidence in favour of his hypothesis, he confidently declared that the character *lian* 濂 was actually a mistake for *lian* 廉 and insisted that the error be corrected.

In the beginning, Lin Li had thought that *lian* 濂 meant something along the lines of “modesty/incorruptibleness/purity” (*lian* 廉). However, to his chagrin, he found that the entry for *lian* 濂 in his dictionary carried negative connotations such as “shallow, pitiless, and narrow.” Finding this unacceptable, he felt compelled to challenge the authenticity of the sinograph. When he sought insight from a local person, whose name he did not record, the person replied “when the master’s sons asked Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045–1105) for a commemorative poem for their father, they changed the character [*lian* 廉 into *lian* 濂] in order to avoid mentioning [Huang’s] uncle [Huang Lian’s 黃廉 (*fl.* 1090)] taboo name (*hui* 諱).”

Lin Li found this anecdotal explanation convincing, albeit possibly not sufficient to persuade the most sceptical readers. Accordingly, he buttressed his finding by tapping into what he believed to be a very authoritative source—namely, Su Shi’s 蘇軾 (1037–1101) commemorative poem for Zhou Dunyi.

坐令此溪水	[And] it makes the brook
名與先生俱	have the same name as the Master.
先生本全德	Originally, the Master is a man of complete virtue,
廉退乃一隅	Modesty ( <i>lian</i> ) is only a corner [of it] (Wang Wengao 2002, 31: 17b–18a) <sup>7</sup>

It is clear from Su Shi’s self-commentary that the “brook” the poem is addressing was the one in Jiangzhou (Su 2001, 1579), but it does not say whether the name of the Master and the Brook was *lian* 廉 or *lian* 濂. What it confirms is that Zhou Dunyi held himself up as a man of modesty and may simply have named the brook in Jiangzhou after that virtue. As we will see, there was a convention of naming a brook or mountain by adding the radical for “water” (*shui* 氵) or

<sup>7</sup> Matsukawa Kenji (1979), the only modern work that deals with this poem, also touches briefly on the naming issue.

“mountain” (*shan* 山) to sinographs connoting virtues. In any case, Lin did not go to any length to find a more plausible explanation but simply read his conjecture into the poem; he concludes that Su Shi’s choice of the character *lian* 廉 in the poem corroborates his hypothesis.

The final part of Lin’s essay is quite provocative in that he seems to regard the literati of Jiangzhou and Zhou Dunyi as a single congruent unit:

Now, mountains, rivers, air, and vital energies (*qi* 氣) are what people receive, and upon which people rely to be born. People inculcate themselves with the customs bequeathed in prominent longstanding families. The Way of the Master was transmitted to the two Chengs and therefore what it achieved is abundant. However, I have failed to hear about him at the place under Mount Lu 廬 and over Lian Brook. It may well be because this brook has been incorrectly known as *lian* 濂. From now on, I know that the literati of Jiujiang are incorruptible but not narrow-minded (*qing er bu ai* 清而不隘), are modest but not vulgar (*jian er bu lou* 儉而不陋), discriminating but not contentious (*bian er bu zheng* 辨而不爭), and strict but not harsh (*yan er bu li* 嚴而不厲). (Zhou 2006, 171)

“Congruence” is the term Roel Sterckx (2002, 103) uses to signify the unity of the human inhabitants, animals, and regional “air” (*qi* 氣) in the ancient Chinese worldview. He demonstrates that the “human physique, political action, climate, and the natural environment were closely intertwined” in ancient China such that the “dialectic between *qi* and human behaviour” came to be a “key notion” of discourse. Different qualities or behavioural characteristics of people were attributed to differences in regional “airs,” which in turn were confirmed through the observation of the varying qualities of the natural landscapes of each region. For example, those who inhabited a rugged mountainous region were thought to be violent, while the residents of a swampy damp region were deemed to be treacherous.<sup>8</sup> This way of thinking was devised to make sense of the cultural differences among regions in the Warring States period.

Although Sterckx’s period of interest is confined to the era spanning the Warring States period and the two Han dynasties, we can find a similar attitude in the early Song comprehensive geography *Universal Geography of the Taiping Era* (Taiping huanyuji 太平寰宇記). In this magnificent topo-cultural *summa geographia*, each Northern Song prefecture is allotted a chapter and described thoroughly in relation to a number of categories, one of which is “Social Mores” (*fengsu* 風俗). This work finds fault with the customs of nearly all prefectures, disparaging them for not complying with the normative standards of imperial-capital culture. It even suggests that such nonconformity has been a perennial problem by quoting extensively from equally capital-centric Warring States and Han period texts, such as the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 and the *Comprehensive Discussion*

<sup>8</sup> The tautological nature and socio-political implications of this line of argument are worth considering. Compare this, for instance, with what Bourdieu believed to be the tautology of the reproduction logic of modern French elite education: “. . . following this line of reasoning: we are excellent because the education that produced us is excellent; moreover, the education that produced us is excellent because we are excellent” (Bourdieu 1996, 410).

of *Social Mores* (Fengsu tongyi 風俗通義).<sup>9</sup>

This tendency to denigrate distinct provincial customs can be explained by the fact that it was the centre that called for, produced, and consumed this kind of comprehensive geographical study (Lewis 2006, chap. 4). Understandably, as the localities gave rise to a new genre of geography, “local gazetteers” (*difang zhi* 地方志), the negative representation of diverse and multiple local cultures promptly disappeared. As Peter Bol (2001) notes, the early thirteenth-century comprehensive gazetteer *Record of the Best Sites in the Realm* (Yudi jisheng 輿地紀勝) is qualitatively different from its predecessor written 200 years earlier in that it is aimed at local readers who were deeply interested in reading about their own affairs and not the capital-based elites who identified themselves with the “legitimate” culture of the centre.<sup>10</sup>

We can discern a similar approach to local cultures and geography from this mid-twelfth century commemorative essay aimed at a Jiangzhou readership and can catch a glimpse of the benefit the local elites were expecting from constructing a Zhou Dunyi shrine. Lin Li’s essay postulates a virtuous cycle in which people are infused with the vital energy of their local environment and in turn leave positive impacts on its quality, thus creating an endless feedback loop.

Such logic was by no means uncommon in the Southern Song, yet only a few essays applied this logic to a place other than the birthplace of a noted figure.<sup>11</sup> Although Lin Li’s essay does not explicitly refer to this logic, it is entirely possible to read into it an attempt to appropriate the claim that was reserved for the birthplace of Zhou Dunyi—an implicit declaration that Jiangzhou was at least as much his hometown, if not more so.<sup>12</sup>

The character *lian* 廉 now came to represent the congruence between the virtue of the Jiangzhou literati, the brook running through Jiangzhou, and Zhou Dunyi, who had left a huge footprint in Jiangzhou. At the same time, Daozhou’s congruence with Zhou was damaged by Lin’s rejection of the character *lian* 濂, the underpinning symbol. This damage is compounded by the fact that all the virtues he enumerates in the last sentence are the dictionary definitions of *lian* 廉, while the vices are those of *lian* 濂.

The meaning of *lian* 廉 is “incorruptible” (*qing* 清), and “simple” (*jian* 儉); it therefore has the meaning of self-restraining (*jian lian* 檢斂). . . . . [Whereas *lian* 濂 means] “shallowness/

<sup>9</sup> Not coincidentally, these ancient sources were also heavily cited by Sterckx (2002).

<sup>10</sup> For more about the readers of local gazetteers and their keen interest in the affairs of their native locales, especially in the Southern Song, see Hargett (1996).

<sup>11</sup> The Tang dynasty literary giant Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824) was deemed to be more strongly connected to his place of exile, Chaozhou 潮州 (m. Chaozhou, Guangdong 廣東), than anywhere else because some of his most highly-acclaimed pieces were written during his exile period and also because they teem with allusions to the local landscapes and issues (Hartman 2014, 90–99). The same is true of Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773–819), who has been most strongly connected to Liuzhou 柳州 (m. Liuzhou, Guangxi), his place of long exile. For Huizhou’s 徽州 cases, see Yongtao Du (2015, 29–32).

<sup>12</sup> There are essays written in sixteenth-century Jiangzhou in which the authors realise this potential. See page 55 of this article.

pitilessness” (*bo* 薄) and “a big river stops (*jue* 絕) halfway and a small river comes out.” (Zhou 2006, 171)

Thus, it is hardly surprising that the people of Daozhou, where the “vicious” brook was now running, were seriously offended.

### Daozhou’s Responses

Despite the dearth of available materials from which to reconstruct the early circulation of Lin Li’s essay, the fact that Lin met a great-grandson of our hero, Zhou Zhiqing 周直卿 (*fl.* 1180), suggests that this man might have brought a copy to Daozhou. Also, Zhu Xi notes in his letter dated 1169 that Lin sent a copy of the essay to him (Zhu 2002, 21: 1305–1306).

Early responses by Daozhou literati appeared between 1166 and 1175. Since these responses were in most cases transmitted to posterity via Zhu Xi’s hands, it is important to review the instances where he refers to the name issue in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Zhu Xi’s References to the Name Issue

	yyyy/m (lunar)	Title	Zhu (2002)
1	1169/6	Records of the Deeds of Master Lianxi (Lianxi xiansheng xinglu 濂溪先生行錄)	26: 778
2	1179/1	Written at the end of the Huizhou Wuyuan County edition of the <i>Book of Penetration</i> of Master Zhou (Shu Huizhou Wuyuan xian Zhouzi Tongshu banben hou 書徽州婺源縣周子通書版本後)	24: 3840
3	1179/5	Postface to the Second Collation of the <i>Great Ultimate</i> and the <i>Book of Penetration</i> (Zaiding Taiji tongshu houshu 再定太極通書後書)	24: 3652
4	1179/6	Records of Facts about Master Lianxi (Lianxi xiansheng shishi ji 濂溪先生事實記)	25: 4558

When Zhu Xi wrote the second and final version of his short biography of Zhou Dunyi in the sixth lunar month of 1179 (No. 4), he conceded that his first biography had not been entirely “correct” due to the lack of sources at his disposal at the time of its completion in 1169 (No. 1). In particular, he regretted his extensive reliance on Huang Tingjian’s commemorative poem for Zhou, expurgating nearly all of it from the final edition. Entries 2 and 3 are his postfaces to the different versions of the *Complete Works of Zhou Dunyi*, wherein he seeks to justify expurgating Huang’s description of Zhou, which had been the most popular poem about him, by enumerating more “authentic” pieces of evidence that he has obtained as replacements. Let us review the sources Zhu had access to as seen in Table 2.

Given Zhu Xi’s relentless attack on Su Shi, Huang Tingjian, and their followers, it is no surprise that he did not take entries 1 and 2 seriously.<sup>13</sup> Although he had no option but to quote Huang extensively in the beginning, he did not hesitate to delete entry 1 once he became confident of his argument. Entries 3, 4, 5, and 6 all favoured Daozhou on the name issue and unmistakably came from either Daozhou natives or sources closely related to them.

<sup>13</sup> For Zhu Xi’s criticism of the Su Shi school, see Bol (1989).



**Table 2.** Sources Available to Zhu Xi in 1179.

	Author	Title	Date
1	Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅	A Poem on Lianxi, with a Preface (Lianxi shi bing xu 濂溪詩並序)	Late eleventh century
2	Su Shi 蘇軾	A Poem on Master Maoshu's Lianxi, Presented to My Benevolent Brother Ciyuan (Maoshu xiansheng Lianxi shi cheng Ciyuan rendi 茂叔先生濂溪詩呈次元仁弟)	Late eleventh century
3	He Qi 何棄 (or He Qizhong 何棄仲) (dates unknown)	Yingdao Studio, with a Preface (Yingdao zhai bing xu 營道齋並序)	1166–1173
4	Zou Fu 鄒敷 (fl. 1170)	A Rhapsody Commemorating my Trip to Lianxi, with a Preface (You Lianxi ci bing xu 游濂溪辭並序)	1171?
5	Zou Fu 鄒敷	Postface to the Calligraphy of Master Lianxi (Ba Zhou Lianxi xiansheng shoutie 跋周濂溪先生手帖)	1175
6	Zhang Shi 張栻	Postface to the Calligraphy of Master Lianxi (Ba Lianxi xiansheng tie 跋濂溪先生帖)	1175–1178

What Zhu Xi saw first apart from 1 and 2 was He Qi's poem and preface. Zhu not only referred to He's poem first whenever he tried to address the name issue, but also included this piece in his genealogical work for the Neo-Confucian movement, the *Record on the Deep Origin of the Rivers Yi and Luo* (Yiluo yuanyuan lu 伊洛淵源錄), as early as 1173 (Zhu 2002, 12: 927).

However, the importance of this piece notwithstanding, we have virtually no information on who its author was or when it was written. In fact, the author's name is not even known for certain. All that we know is that he was called either He Qi or He Qizhong and was a member of the He 何 family who lived in Daozhou in the Song and formed affinal ties to Zhou Dunyi's descendants. Moreover, since the He surname of Hunan was rarely successful in the civil service examination, and since there is no source indicating his association with Neo-Confucianism, we can only assume that He Qi was at best a member of Daozhou's local elite. The fact that even his contemporaries who obtained this poem could not confirm his name suggests that he did not cultivate any serious translocal social relationships.

The piece first appears in the earliest extant late-Southern Song printed edition of Zhou Dunyi's Complete Works (Zhou 1988); we have no good reason to doubt that this version is virtually identical with what Zhu Xi read in 1173. The poem is not particularly interesting, but the preface is:

Chongling's 春陵 prefectural seat is Yingdao 營道, and there is . . . Lianxi 濂溪 Village. The Zhou family lives there. . . . There was a native son whose name was Dunyi, style name Maoshu 茂叔. After retiring from serving in far-off posts, he laid down his burden on Mount Lu 廬. [Because] he had no strength (*li* 力) to come back to his old house, he therefore built a new house on the brook and endowed it with the name Lianxi; the intention was to put his hometown in front of his eyes. Mr Jiangxia 江夏 of Xiushui 修水 (Huang Tingjian) admired him and always spoke of and encouraged [Zhou Dunyi's] sons Shou 壽 and Tao 燾. Tao . . . was also recognized by Mr Po 坡 (Su Shi). Po wrote a "Poem on Late Maoshu Lianxi" wherein he frequently alludes to Zhou Dunyi's modesty only; Xiushui also merely describes Zhou's modesty and fairness. Thus, none of them has explicated his [true] intention of only temporarily staying (*qiao yu* 僑寓) there away from [his real] home. It is probably due

to the juniors' failure to understand the elders' intention. . . . they all misunderstood the original intention of Zhou and their essays mistransmitted the information. Alas! It is indeed lamentable. . . (Zhou 2006, 123–124)

He Qi's preface delivers a few significant points. First, it is the earliest known text that notes the existence of the Lian 濂 Brook in Daozhou. Second, it is the earliest known text that endeavours to give a rationale as to why Zhou Dunyi's abandonment of his hometown does not contradict his supposed love of that hometown. Third, it criticises Su Shi, Huang Tingjian, and the two sons of Zhou Dunyi for their "failure" to understand Zhou's "intention."

Last but not least, this is perhaps the only place where Huang Tingjian is referred to as Mr Jiangxia 江夏 of Xiushui 修水. Xiushui is Huang's birthplace and the home of his ancestors as well. When he died in a certain prefecture in Guangxi 廣西, his place of exile, his disciples moved his body to Xiushui and buried it there, next to his paternal ancestors. Jiangxia is his choronym (*benwang* 本望).<sup>14</sup> It may have been the case that this unusual reference was chosen on purpose to capture the attention of contemporary readers by making an ironic contrast between Huang's love of his hometown and his ignorance of Zhou Dunyi's birthplace-cum-ancestral hometown.<sup>15</sup>

An even more radical interpretation is possible when Huang Tingjian's better-known appellations are taken into consideration. Huang had been best known by his studio name Shangu 山谷, which was neither his hometown nor his *benwang*. He named himself after a certain Shangu Buddhist Monastery in Huoshan County 霍山 (m. Huoshan, Anhui 安徽), hundreds of miles away from his ancestral hometown as an expression of utmost admiration for the beauty of the scenery there. We do not know whether He Qi knew this or not; if he did, which is probable, then he might have deliberately avoided referring to Huang as Shangu to minimise the risk that his readers would make the connection to Zhou Dunyi's studio name "Lianxi," which likewise had nothing to do with Zhou's hometown. In other words, calling the poet "Shangu" would have offered too clear a parallel between Huang's love of the scenic beauty of Shangu and Zhou's love of the scenic beauty of Jiangzhou's Lian Brook.

Was He Qi responding directly to Lin Li's essay? Perhaps he was tacitly refuting Lin's arguments, without mentioning him by name. Thus, the work can

<sup>14</sup> *Benwang*, also known as *junwang* 郡望 or *junxing* 郡姓, refers to the place from which a lineage originated. It is a term reminiscent of the old aristocratic order of the pre-Tang era that survived the order itself. Many well-known surnames of Song were still preserving the memory of their *benwang*, such as Longxi 隴西 (m. Longxi, Gansu 甘肅) for the Li 李 surname. Zhou Dunyi himself was sometimes referred to by his *benwang*, Runan 汝南 (Runan, m. Henan) as well. See Bao Weimin and Wei Feng (2007) for the difference between the notions of household register (*huji* 戶籍), ancestral hometown (*zujudi* 祖居地), and *benwang*. See also David Johnson (1977, 30; 203) and Robert Hartwell (1982, 411–412).

<sup>15</sup> Moreover, it was very common for Song people to bury the bodies of their close kin "within reasonable proximity," not least for the convenience of the performance of seasonal rituals at the burial site. Beverly Bossler (1998, 42–43) therefore suggests that when we study a Song dynasty family's associated "location" or the "primary geographic attachment," the place of their burial ground should be taken as "the surest clue." Given this, Huang Tingjian's sons' labour in moving the body back to their "home" stands in sharp contrast to Zhou Dunyi's burial at Jiangzhou.

best be viewed as a veiled criticism, if not a mere matter of coincidence. In any case, this essay provided the basic narrative structure and a collection of images to a group of literati, including Zhu Xi, who would later adapt and fine-tune them in favour of Daozhou.

Zou Fu's 鄒敷 (a. k. a. 鄒塍, fl. 1170) "Rhapsody" (Table 2, No. 4) is the first fully-developed, outright rejection of Lin Li's essay. In the preface to his "Rhapsody," Zou excerpts two passages from Huang Tingjian's poem and Lin's essay to criticise them for distorting the facts concerning the naming issue. What Zou contends in this piece, drawing on his own first-hand experience in Daozhou, coincides with He Qi's argument:

The master could not return home. Therefore he named his studio [in Jiangzhou] Lianxi to show that he had never forgotten his roots. (Zhou 2006, 124)

What Zou Fu saw in Zhou Dunyi's "hometown" was a dilapidated, unattended house, which was alleged to be where the master had spent his early days. Out of frustration, Zou went further to seek out Zhou's legacies from natural and cultural landscapes as well. He postulates a sort of "congruence" between Daozhou's inhabitants and the sublime quality of the natural landscape surrounding them. Below are lengthy parallels between the natural landscape of the locale and the morality of the native people, and even the morality inherent in the natural landscape itself:

識先生之所復兮	I asked what the Master revived.
已乎莫之知也	Ah! Nobody knows.
...	
雲山巖而崇崇兮	The clouds and the mountains are towering high.
豈絕塵之姿也	Is it [not] the appearance of those who retreat from the dirt [of the secular world]?
泉石激而泠泠兮	Springs and stones are rapid, chilly, and refreshing.
抑玄誦之遺乎	Is it [not] the lingering sounds of Confucian cultivation through music?
百卉秀而不枯兮	Hundreds of plants flourish and never wither.
豈道德之輝乎	Is it [not] the glory of the Way and the Virtue [of Zhou Dunyi]?

(Zhou 2006, 125)

In his depiction of Zhou Dunyi's "hometown," the residents, cultural legacies, morality, and the natural landscape are deeply intertwined in such a way that they form a cohesive whole. The envisioning of such a coherent picture led Zou to a familiar idea in which the production of such a great personage as Zhou must have been an inevitable consequence of that unity. In this regard, Zou concludes that it is "little wonder that [Huang's and Lin's] words are all wrong because [they] did not see [the master's] roots."<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Of course, Zou Fu was not the only Song literatus who believed that one could discern a man's

What follows is an argument on the origin of the name of the Lian 濂 Brook in Daozhou. Yuan Jie 元結 (723–772) was a Tang literatus who had once governed Daozhou. He was known for endowing landscapes with original names, terms that he coined himself. His favourite way of coming up with a name was to combine the “water” radical with a character representing a certain virtue (e.g., Xiao 孝 for filial piety, Zhi 直 for uprightness, or Fang 沆 for integrity). Finding no extant text that says Yuan coined Lian 濂, Zou Fu concludes that the people of Daozhou must have devised the term by coupling the “water” radical with “modesty (*lian* 廉),” following the wisdom of Yuan Jie.

His lamentation on people’s ignorance of the “truth” raises an interesting question. Is it not paradoxical for the Daozhou literati to have been trying to reinforce their connections to Zhou Dunyi when they were unaware of who he was? Can we find a reasonable explanation for this?

In considering this seeming contradiction, we must bear in mind that what we know today of Zhou Dunyi’s character is the product of a reconstruction undertaken during the late 1160s and 70s. The earliest commemorative essays for Zhou Dunyi shrines in Yongzhou and Daozhou, written in 1158 and 1159, respectively, neither say anything about the origin of the name Lianxi nor contain any local voice offering anecdotal stories about Zhou. Moreover, the 1159 Daozhou essay says that the then prefect of Daozhou, a certain Xiang 向, had to “persuade” the local elite to agree to the project.

To speak in anthropological parlance, one’s reputation is dependent on the recognition afforded by others. People tend first to heed others’ recommendations before forming their own judgments.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, as Pierre Bourdieu has brilliantly demonstrated, those with a high volume of cultural capital tend to wield greater power in judging the legitimacy of a taste or work (Bourdieu 1979, 20–22). Simply put, Zhu Xi and his disciples were endowed with such cultural capital that it was they who were in a position to instruct the people of Daozhou as to whom they should be legitimately proud of, and not the other way around. Thus, it was only when the outsiders arrived at the prefecture looking for traces of Zhou Dunyi’s presence that the people of Daozhou became aware that they possessed a potentially momentous resource.<sup>18</sup> Once they realised what they had, the Daozhou elites wasted little time capitalising on it. Thus, we see Zou Fu’s lamentation in 1171 giving way to surprise in 1175 when he meets a local student who claims to have two pieces of Zhou’s calligraphy.<sup>19</sup>

Zou Fu’s essay explains that, while he had been a teacher in the prefectural school of Daozhou since 1171, it was only after 1175 that he came to obtain the

greatness from the natural/cultural objects of the place with which he was associated. See Cong E. Zhang for Lu You’s quest for Su Shi’s legacies (Zhang 2011, 191).

<sup>17</sup> To put it differently, our “desire is the desire of the Other” (Lacan 1977, 235).

<sup>18</sup> This is comparable to what happened to Charles Strickland’s posthumous works as depicted in the *Moon and Sixpence*. Observing the influx of outsiders in search of Strickland’s works, the islanders who had not been aware of the value of this idiosyncratic artist’s paintings suddenly begin hunting for any piece of work that he might have left on the island (Maugham 1919).

<sup>19</sup> This paragraph is inspired by Anne Gerritsen (2007, 62).

calligraphy of Zhou Dunyi from one Hu Yuanding 胡元鼎. Zou reverently engraved the piece on a stone tablet, which he installed in front of the Daozhou Zhou Dunyi shrine (Zhou 2006, 105).

Zou Fu was a Fujianese Zhu Xi devotee who had no ties to Daozhou before his appointment to a teaching post there; he was an outsider, a Neo-Confucian whose range of activities surely exceeded the confines of Daozhou. By contrast, local elders or students such as Hu Yuanding were most likely from the local elite who might have been unaware of Zhu Xi followers' adulation of Zhou Dunyi. The contact between the two groups reveals the nature of so-called Neo-Confucian "proselytization" procedures (Neskar 1993, 418). By the time Zou Fu returned to Fujian and reported to Zhu Xi what he had seen and heard in Daozhou, the Daozhou local elite had become conscious of the symbolic value of the philosopher to such an extent that some even ventured beyond their borders seeking more prominent Neo-Confucian figures who could appreciate the value of their precious heritage. Consider Zhang Shi's "Postface to the Calligraphy of Master Lianxi:"

To the right are two pieces of calligraphy by Master Zhou Lianxi. I came to Guilin 桂林 (m. Guilin, Guangxi), which is close to the master's hometown. Because He Shixian 何士先 (fl. 1175) came from that locale to pay a visit to me, I entrusted him to seek out the calligraphy of the master. Later, a certain Hu Liangfu 胡良輔 (fl. 1175) brought me these two writings and a rubbing of the stone inscription of the *Zhou Family Genealogy*. Liangfu is a man from the master's affinal family. . . . The stone inscription also records that the Lianxi Retreat was there in the village, west of the Shitang 石塘 Bridge. Thus, it is clear that there had been such a name from the past. The master, late in his life, built a house under Mount Lu. Because there was also a brook, he named that after the one in Daozhou. It was to show that he had never forgotten his roots. Liangfu said that the elders of the town had transmitted [this whole story], and still were able to testify to the master's intention. . . . (Zhou 2006, 105)<sup>20</sup>

We do not know who He Shixian and Hu Liangfu were. What we do know is that both the He and Hu families were in-laws of the Zhou surname of Daozhou; and that Guilin is 200 km away from Daozhou, which, while not close by, is not as far as Zhang Shi's hometown Changsha (440 km away). We also know that He Shixian was not a neutral observer but, in fact, affiliated himself with another Daozhou Zhou Dunyi shrine through donation in 1180 with four other literati (Zhou 2006, 183) and wrote a commemorative essay for it (Zhou 2006, 141); and that Hu Liangfu was possibly Hu Yuanding.

While there is no direct evidence that the two Hus mentioned in the two "Postfaces" are the same person, there are reasons to conjecture that they are at least closely connected: First, both "Postfaces"—Zou Fu's and Zhang Shi's—deal with the same specimens (Zhou 2006, 104); second, since the piece of calligraphy was such a precious artefact, it is not likely that Hu Yuanding would have entrusted it to anyone but a very close family member, if he let it out of his

<sup>20</sup> The exact date of the composition is unknown. Given Zhang Shi's career, it must have been between 1175 and 1178.

grasp at all; third, Hu, in the second postface, repeats nearly verbatim what Zou Fu had stated in his “Rhapsody” on the name issue a couple of years previously, including the key phrase, “he had never forgotten his roots” (*buwang qiben* 不忘其本). These circumstances all suggest either that Hu Liangfu was Hu Yuanding; or, at a minimum, that he was someone who was well aware of the debates going on around his hometown and was a close acquaintance of Hu Liangfu.

Alternatively, considering the following points, we may boldly interpret the two men’s visit to Zhang Shi as a carefully designed diplomatic mission. From the essay, we see that Zhang Shi had not known them prior to the meeting, which suggests that it was not a visit propelled by any personal relationship. The two men from Daozhou clearly understood what kind of arguments they must make in order to convince Zhang Shi, and what pieces of information they should provide in support of their claim. That Hu brought a supporting document, the *Zhou Family Genealogy*, to make his case indicates the level of preparation and deliberation. From this perspective, we can infer the existence and agency of local Daozhou elite society with a shared opinion who decided to dispatch the two men as their delegates to the world of Neo-Confucians. The village elders whose voices Hu Liangfu was citing might also have come from that same sector of society. In any case, the contrast between the two different roles played by the “elders” in the pieces written by the two supporters of the Daozhou campaign is intriguing. The village elders whom Zou Fu’s essay had previously disparaged for being oblivious to Zhou Dunyi’s existence were remarkably transformed less than a decade later into trustworthy witnesses in Zhang Shi’s postface. Or one might say that these villagers had been “awakened” in the intervening years.<sup>21</sup>

It seems plausible that the real motivation for the Daozhou elders dispatching an expedition to Zhang Shi’s location was the enormous gap between Zou Fu’s stature and that of Zhang Shi. The latter was a bright star of the Hunan school of thought; the eldest son of a war hero; a promising young politician who had been given an audience by the emperor; and one of the “three masters of the south-east” whose fame could only be matched by the other two of the trio, Lü Zuqian 呂祖謙 (1137–1181) and Zhu Xi. Also, he was the pivot of the Hunanese literati network of the latter half of the twelfth century (Liao 2011, 102–105). Therefore, Zhang Shi’s appreciation and acknowledgement would have enhanced the value of the calligraphy specimens. However, it is surprising that Hu Liangfu did not merely ask for a postface, but turned the pieces over to Zhang Shi.

... I... had the chance, early in my life, to bow before the image of the Master. Now I have also managed to obtain some of his calligraphy and safeguard it (*cang zhi* 藏之). (Zhou 2006, 105)

What should we make of this? If the piece of calligraphy were that precious,

<sup>21</sup> One might also say that Hu “internalised” Zou Fu’s view. According to Edward Said (1995, intro.), internalisation is a social phenomenon whereby people of lesser power accept as true the images of themselves that their hegemonic neighbours have represented to be the reality.

why did Hu Liangfu part with them? One possible explanation is the notion that every gift incurs an obligation while affording prestige to the giver (Bourdieu 1977, 171–183).<sup>22</sup> David Nivison makes the same point in expounding the meaning of *de* 德 in the ancient Chinese context.

Person A does some generous or considerate thing for B, in a sense sacrificing him- or herself.  
B feels compelled to respond. B feels this compulsion, by a sort of transference, as a ‘moral force’ emanating from A. (Nivison and Van Norden 1996, 33)

If we were to accept that all gifts were not free and required something in return, it would be necessary to investigate what Hu Liangfu received in return for his gift. Although Zhang Shi had been interested in the works of master “Lianxi” for a long time—at least from 1158 when he wrote the first ever commemorative essay for a Zhou Dunyi shrine—he had not been aware of the existence of the homonymic brook in Daozhou, nor of the controversy attached to it. Moreover, the “image” he mentions above is the portrait installed in the Yongzhou shrine, which was originally obtained from Jiangzhou. That the promoters of the 1158 Yongzhou shrine, including Zhang, went all the way to Jiangzhou to obtain a copy of Zhou’s portrait rather than going to nearby Daozhou confirms that, at least as late as 1158, Daozhou’s connection to Zhou Dunyi was not recognised even by its closest neighbour.

Convincing this very influential figure of the Daozhou narrative must have been considered a great achievement in itself for Hu Liangfu, He Shixian, and his Daozhou colleagues. In other words, the prestige accruing to Daozhou from having Zhang Shi recognise these facts would have constituted enough of a return on the gift. For that matter, how much more prestige would accrue when Zhang Shi wrote a commemorative essay for the recently renovated Daozhou Zhou Dunyi shrine, in which he wholeheartedly endorsed Daozhou’s claim? Zhang would indeed compose such an essay for Daozhou, giving full credence to Daozhou’s version of the story, no later than 1178.

### **Daozhou’s Victory**

Daozhou literati’s heroic efforts bore fruit a decade after Lin Li’s controversial essay when Zhu Xi and Zhang Shi renovated and composed commemorative essays for Zhou Dunyi shrines in Jiangzhou and Daozhou, respectively.

Zhang Shi’s 1178 essay for the Daozhou Zhou Dunyi shrine is composed of three disparate parts. The first part conveys what “a certain man of Chongling (Daozhou)” told Zhang Shi about the “fact” that the master had “never forgotten where he was born,” which is a verbatim repetition of the story he heard from Hu Liangfu a few years earlier. The second part, the longest, is a virtually freestanding

<sup>22</sup> Note that there is both continuity and change in Bourdieu’s theory of gift exchange throughout his career; this is the view he espoused in his early years. Although his famous understanding of the economy of symbolic goods continued to form the bedrock of his theory, he nonetheless added a significant moral-prescriptive layer to it in his final statement on this topic (Bourdieu 2000, 191–201; Silber 2009). I thank Cheung Hiu Yu for bringing these texts to my attention.

philosophical essay dealing with the role Zhou Dunyi played in promoting the “True Way.” The final part consists of a brief tribute to the initiator of the project, a prefect named Zhao 趙.

It seems as though one of the goals of Zhang Shi’s essay was to maintain a level of political correctness by giving attention to the three interest groups who participated in the building of the shrine: the people of Daozhou, the prefect, and the Neo-Confucians. The allocation of space among these groups significantly differed from the 1159 Daozhou Zhou Dunyi shrine essay that it superseded. The latter essay, written by a non-Neo-Confucian literatus, Hu Quan 胡銓 (1102–1180), devotes the most space to prefect Xiang 向 at the expense of the other local voices, implying that Xiang’s role was the most important; even the enshrinee is all but ignored. Understandably, Zhu Xi found it unacceptable (Zhu 2002, 21: 1305–1306). Thus, both Neo-Confucians and the people of Daozhou might have been happy to see their voices better highlighted in the new essay.

By the same token, we can infer the satisfaction that the people of Daozhou must have felt upon learning that their version of the brook story was included in Zhu Xi’s 1177 commemorative essay for the Jiangzhou Zhou Dunyi shrine, which effectively outdated and superseded Lin Li’s “problematic” essay.

However, the fact that Zhu Xi gave a favourable account of Daozhou does not necessarily mean that he slighted the people of Jiangzhou. On the contrary, the 1177 Jiangzhou essay adopts a cautious approach so as not to offend the local readers. Zhu Xi devotes only thirteen characters to Daozhou’s narrative, less than a third of the number contained in Zhang Shi’s 1178 Daozhou essay. Even though Zhu’s 1177 essay attests to Zhou Dunyi having named Jiangzhou’s Lianxi after Daozhou’s Lianxi, it says nothing about Zhou’s “intention,” nor his “roots,” nor does it refute Lin Li’s argument directly. Rather, it is presented as if the author is completely ignorant of the debate and merely wishes to eulogise the philosopher. Furthermore, it seems that the essay deliberately avoids any reference to localist narratives. This stands in sharp contrast to Zhang Shi’s essay in which the local voice was foregrounded.

The Sage Ancestor (Emperor Song Taizu) received the mandate. The Five Planets gathered into the constellation Kui 奎, and the movement of culture truly began. Thereafter, the weakened vital energy was strengthened, its fragmented condition became whole, and a pure and bright endowment could be wholly bestowed upon man. Thus, the master [Zhou Dunyi] emerged from this [condition]. (Zhu 2002, 24: 3740)<sup>23</sup>

While Lin Li strove through the medium of vital energy (*qi* 氣) to enhance the congruence between the human inhabitants of Jiangzhou and the local natural-cultural landscapes, Zhu Xi moves the focus into a broader realm that includes the movement of the Five Planets into a certain constellation, the change of dynasties, a new trend in intellectual history, Heaven’s will, and so on. For him, the philosopher’s birth was not the consequence of the condensation of the

<sup>23</sup> The translation is Neskar’s (1993, 351–353), with some minor corrections.



sterling *qi* of any local landscapes but the inevitable consequence of a “bestowal of Heaven” that could be traced to the auspicious movements of the celestial bodies at the beginning of the dynasty.<sup>24</sup> As Nesar argues, this essay may be a piece of “hagiography” that displays not only Zhu Xi’s “philosophical, genealogical, cosmological, social, and political” needs but also his faith (1993, 354).

However, what Nesar does not consider seriously is the possibility that Zhu Xi deliberately detached Zhou Dunyi from any particular “local” context and re-situated him in the much broader, national, universal, and abstract context simply so as not to provoke Jiangzhou’s readership. What would be the point of provoking the elites of Jiangzhou by telling them that their hero was a product of the best *qi* of Daozhou? In other words, the location where his essay was inscribed may well have shaped the contents.<sup>25</sup>

To bolster the argument that Zhu Xi’s grandiose narrative in the commemorative essay for the Jiangzhou Zhou Dunyi shrine was intended not only to inspire awe and reverence in its readers (i.e., “hagiographic writing”) but also to avoid any semblance of siding with Daozhou (i.e. “cautious writing”), at least two assumptions must be substantiated: (1) that Zhu Xi was sympathetic to the Daozhou narrative; and (2) that, this sympathy notwithstanding, he preferred not to offend anyone involved. It seems that both were the case.

First, although it was he who asked Lin to build a shrine to honour Zhou Dunyi, Zhu Xi could hardly have anticipated Lin Li’s argument that the water radical of the character *lian* 濂 should be removed (Zhu 2002, 21:1305–1306). Zhu was critical of Lin’s argument from the outset.

Also, it seems that Zhu Xi had a personal preference for Daozhou’s story. Although he had coined, following the vogue, a good number of studio names and sobriquets, the one he preferred to use most often was “Xin’an” 新安 (m. Wuyuan 婺源, Jiangxi), his paternal ancestral hometown. Zhu, as Zhou had done, lived most of his life in a place far away from his ancestral hometown. But unlike Zhou, Zhu maintained an interest in “hometown” affairs and visited Xin’an several times, never referring to Jianyang 建陽 (m. Jianyang, Fujian), his *de facto* home, as his hometown. It is likely that he deemed it a matter of virtue to remain loyal to one’s “roots.” It is thus possible that he was inclined to depict the master Zhou, whom he revered as a virtual sage, as a hometown-loyalist like himself.

Zhu Xi says in his “Postface to the Second Collation” (Table 1, No. 3) that no sooner had he read He Qi’s poem than he included it in his *Record on the Deep Origin of the Rivers Yi and Luo* in 1173. This suggests that he was receptive to the

<sup>24</sup> Zhu Xi was certainly not against localism. However, given that Song elites in general believed that the *qi* of a man comes from a variety of sources, including constellations, mountains, rivers, parents, and so on, Zhu’s essay’s lack of any localist accounts is intriguing. It could be tantamount to downplaying the significance of the *qi* of local landscapes in constituting the body and the mind of the person in question. By contrast, Ming dynasty commemorative essays for Daozhou Zhou Dunyi shrines abound with localist accounts; they attribute his birth almost exclusively to local mountains, brooks, springs, and rocks, and rarely to Heaven or constellations (Wang Wanxia 2013, 53; 55–56).

<sup>25</sup> Another good example of this “reconciliation” type of commemorative essay is found in Robert Hymes’ case study of Fuzhou; there, a Zhu Xi admirer prefect tried to reconcile Zhu Xi’s thought and that of his arch-rival Lu Jiuyuan, who happened to be the cultural hero of the locality (Hymes 2002, 141–142).

views it expressed even before encountering any substantive evidence.

Second, his alacrity notwithstanding, prior to his composition of the commemorative essay for Jiangzhou Zhou Dunyi shrine in 1177, Zhu Xi did not produce any widely accessible essay on the name issue. In one postface to Zhou Dunyi's works, Zhu is candid about his reluctance to go against the prevailing view (Table 1, No. 2).

That Lin Li had a good amount of political power and was increasingly disappointed with Zhu Xi's scholarship and political activities is another argument for his cautious posture. As time went on, the rift between the two men became sufficiently well-known in the court that, by the 1180s at least, those who sought to make trouble for Zhu appropriated the feud (De Weerd 2007, 38–39). It was ironic that Zhu came to offend Lin while expounding on Zhou Dunyi's notion of the Great Ultimate to him in 1182, which led Lin to impeach Zhu. The impeachment provoked angry responses from Zhu Xi's allies and the emperor consequently felt compelled to demote both of them (Chen and Du 2012).

One may argue that Zhu Xi's publication of the *Record* was itself tantamount to taking a public stance on the issue. However, although it was he who drafted the text, it was not Zhu himself who published the *Record*. He circulated a few copies among his close friends and disciples; a publisher somehow obtained one of these and published it without his consent. Zhu complained, but to no avail.<sup>26</sup>

Lastly, the most important evidence in support of the “cautious writing” proposition comes from Zhu's five other essays for different Zhou Dunyi shrines. None of them, whether written before or after 1177, contain any element that one might regard as “hagiographic.” All six demonstrate careful consideration of the locales' possession of Zhou Dunyi's legacies that qualify them to honour him without mentioning anything along the lines of “bestowal of Heaven.” To say that the 1177 Jiangzhou essay somehow proves that Zhu Xi was engaged in a relentless campaign to sanctify the origin of Zhou Dunyi, one must first explain away the more prevalent secular and localist tone that we find in his five other commemorative essays—a task that would be challenging, if not impossible.

It makes more sense to assume that Zhu Xi's 1177 Jiangzhou essay was an aberration. A plausible explanation for the conspicuous differences in this essay is that, finding himself between the Scylla of Daozhou and the Charybdis of Jiangzhou, he eschewed localism and focussed instead on the translocal perspective in the form of “Heavenly bestowal.”<sup>27</sup> We can surmise that, had the people of Daozhou given him gifts similar to those they gave to Zhang Shi, the tone of the essay might perhaps have been different.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> For the publication and debate on the authorship of the text, see Zhu Xi (2002, 12: 909–911). Zhu Xi also hesitated to publish his commentary on the *Explanation of the Diagram of the Great Ultimate* (Taiji tushuo 太極圖說). He published it in 1188, eighteen years after completion. Zhu explained that the delay was caused by other scholars' criticism of Zhou Dunyi's philosophical orientation (Adler 2014, 38).

<sup>27</sup> For a more theoretical discussion on the habit of “writing between the lines” to avoid any negative political consequence, see Leo Strauss (1952, 22–37).

<sup>28</sup> They actually did proffer such gifts, but only after 1180. Just as Hu Liangfu socialised with Zhang Shi, Zhou Zhiqing, a great grandson of Zhou Dunyi, was interacting with Zhu Xi. When Zhiqing

In any event, the essay did present Daozhou's version of the story, however subdued the tone may have been, and this inclusion may have satisfied the people of Daozhou. They must have become even more satisfied when virtually all commemorative essays for Zhou Dunyi shrines composed after 1180 refrained from mentioning the name issue directly, many simply repeating what Zhu Xi wrote in his 1177 Jiangzhou essay. Also, Zhu Xi may have taken the welcome afforded by the people of Jiangzhou when he visited there in 1181 (Zhu 2002, 24: 3984–3985) as a reward for his discretion.

### The Aftermath

The sudden rise of Zhou Dunyi's reputation in Southern Song literati society owed much to Zhu Xi. Unlike Zhou, Zhu had already earned considerable fame during his lifetime, not to mention his enormous influence in standardising the interpretation of the thought of major Northern Song thinkers. After the publication of his commentary on Zhou Dunyi's masterpieces in 1188, practically all editions of Zhou's *Complete Works* were printed with this commentary included.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, when Zhu, the major stakeholder, made a final judgment on the name issue, the controversy was put to rest (Zhou 2006, 183).

While the debate over the name was over, thanks to Zhu Xi and his chief ally Zhang Shi, the rivalry persisted. Even after 1177, many Zhou Dunyi shrines were constructed or renovated in Jiangzhou, each requiring its own commemorative essay. In such cases, the essay writers had to revisit the issue. For example, when the Vice Grand Councillor Lou Yue 樓鑰 (1137–1213) was asked to write the name plaque for a Jiangzhou Zhou Dunyi shrine in the early 1210s, he had to thoroughly reinvestigate the available materials, including a rubbing of Lin Li's essay, to determine how to write Zhou's studio name correctly. Although he chose *lian* 濂 in the end, he agreed nonetheless with Lin's basic assumption that the character had an independent meaning regardless of where it came from, thereby partly undercutting Daozhou's claim (QSW 263: 350).

Likewise, Daozhou was sensitive to Jiangzhou's frequent commemoration of Zhou Dunyi. When a prefect of Daozhou petitioned the emperor for a handwritten name plaque for Daozhou's Lianxi Academy, he complained that it was not at all fair to endow a name plaque to the Jiangzhou Lianxi Academy before giving one to its Daozhou counterpart.

Jiangzhou literati never stopped capitalising on the Zhou Dunyi connection. When Emperor Duzong (度宗, 1240–1274, r. 1264–1274) increased the prefecture-level civil service examination quota for Jiangzhou by two, he cited the locality's connection to Zhou Dunyi as a justification. Fang Fengchen 方逢辰 (1221–1291),

came to obtain two essays of the philosopher that were excavated by a farmer in 1180, he brought them to Zhu Xi who promptly wrote the postfaces for them and engraved them on a stone tablet (Zhu 2002, 24: 3844–3845). Moreover, Zhiqing's brothers, Zhengqing 正卿 (fl. 1180) and Yanqing 彦卿 (fl. 1180), accompanied Zhu Xi's pilgrimage to Zhou Dunyi's old abode in Jiangzhou in 1181. All these descendants were grandsons of Zhou Tao 周燾 (b. 1062), the second son of Zhou Dunyi, who moved from Jiangzhou to Daozhou for good. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that these great-grandsons were members of Daozhou's local elite.

<sup>29</sup> For the complete list of Zhu Xi's publication on Zhou Dunyi, see Adler (2014, 50–53).

the author of the commemorative essay for the increase of the quota for Jiangzhou in 1270, noted that a certain Jiangzhou prefect, in his initial request for the imperial favour, had submitted a memorial in which he argued that Jiangzhou was Zhou's "hometown" (*guli* 故里). Moreover, the essay remarks that the author received letters from many Jiangzhou local literati arguing that

[Although] Lord Yuan (Zhou Dunyi) was born in Chongling (Daozhou), Jiang [zhou] is Lord Yuan's hometown since he built his studio on the north slope of Mount Lu (Zhou 2006, 178).

The highly successful early-thirteenth century cultural geography, the *Record of the Best Sites in the Realm* (Yudi Jisheng 輿地紀勝), notes that one must be careful not to confuse Lianxi of Daozhou with Lianxi of Jiangzhou since the two are different (Li 2012). The author's cautious tone and potentially pro-Jiangzhou approach must have come from his having lived right next to Jiangzhou Zhou Dunyi shrine in his early years (Bol 2001, 55).

Jiangzhou's interest in Zhou Dunyi became even more apparent in the Ming and the Qing periods when most of the extant local gazetteers were published. A variety of editions of gazetteers concerning either Daozhou or Jiangzhou reveal the uncomfortable relationship between the two. For instance, a fifteenth-century Jiangzhou gazetteer argues that "although the master is originally a man of Daozhou . . . this place of ours (*wo yifang zhi di* 我一方之地) is his hometown (*queli* 闕里) as well" (He 1983, 16: 5a), while an early Qing comprehensive gazetteer for the Huguang 湖廣 region (m. Hubei and Hunan) refutes this argument (Mai and Xia 1986, 11: 67a-b).

Most remarkable is that Zhou Dunyi's value as symbolic capital has survived through the centuries. Even today, scholarly articles arguing in favour of the Jiangzhou claim keep appearing in journals strongly associated with either Jiujiang (Jiangzhou) or the region of Jiangxi (Wu 2005; Zhang 2005; Kong 2010). In 2017, the two prefectures staged separate commemorations of Zhou's millennial anniversary. Thus, there remains a strong motivation for localities to assert a linkage to him.

## Conclusion

This article has dealt with the contest between the two strongest claimants to Zhou Dunyi—Daozhou and Jiangzhou—in roughly chronological order. From Lin Li's 1166 commemorative essay for the Jiangzhou Zhou Dunyi shrine to Zhang Shi's 1178 essay for the Daozhou shrine, we have reviewed virtually all extant sources on the name issue.

As scholars have argued, some local elites must have embraced the philosophical message of Neo-Confucianism, while some must have sought to promote Zhou Dunyi because his *Diagram* provided a cosmological justification for their pursuit of power in their own local settings (Kim 2008). However, what this case study shows is that, in some instances, local elites' loyalty to their hometowns motivated them to cooperate with translocal outsiders with only a tenuous ideological commitment.

This is of course by no means the only case of such competition among Chinese localities for affiliation with a luminary scholar. Bao Weimin and Wei Feng observe that it was not unusual in the Northern Song for people to relocate permanently from one locale to another (Bao and Wei 2007). Just as Zhou Dunyi did, other famous scholar-officials such as Fan Zhongyan 范仲淹 (989–1052), Wang Anshi, Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086), and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) chose to retire to localities several hundred kilometres away from their ancestral hometowns, thus creating potentially strong claims for their new hometowns.<sup>30</sup> Unlike Zhou, however, most of those eminent Northern Song figures made their new homes somewhere around the Northern Song capital city of Kaifeng, thus rendering it impossible under the Jurchen rule for their descent groups to challenge their potential rivals in the Southern Song.

That this dispute erupted in the Southern Song and not during the preceding period must be put down to the Chinese literati's changing view of moving one's home. Abandoning one's ancestral home and relocating permanently—to the capital cities, in particular—was common not only in the Northern Song but also in the Tang.<sup>31</sup> However, this practice grew less common over the course of the Southern Song. Reportedly, Southern Song Hangzhou was no match for the fully-fledged capitals of previous dynasties, such that the city held none of the cachet of its predecessors. Taking advantage of this vacuum, the provinces began to accumulate social, cultural, and symbolic capital of their own. During this period, many of the highest-level officials retired to their provincial hometowns; literati wrote about their immediate provincial surroundings; and local elites invested money in local monuments, which promoted local identities. This trend was followed by a change of norms, as people began to seek their “roots” and profess their “intention” to remain loyal to places to which their families had belonged for generations (Bol 2001; 2003). This transition was so seamless that some Southern Song literati could not grasp why Northern Song dignitaries would have abandoned their hometowns; it seemed to them oddly incongruous with the latter's otherwise “exemplary” lives (Lü and Zhang 2007; Fang 2016).

To Jiangzhou's dismay, this new perspective worked in Daozhou's favour. It was unfortunate for Jiangzhou that Zhou Dunyi left no texts unequivocally expressing his utmost contentment in his retirement place, which was exactly what Ouyang Xiu did. The dearth of textual endorsement from Zhou, coupled with the lack of Zhou surname descendants residing there, has taken its toll on the Jiangzhou claim. That Jiangzhou's opinion always appears collectively or anonymously might be attributable in part to the Jiangzhou literati's loss of confidence.

Lastly, one may still wonder what Zhou Dunyi's studio name really was. For

<sup>30</sup> Bossler (1998) offers a good number of examples throughout her book on Song grand councillors' cultivation and preservation of social networks. Chapter 3, especially, deals with cases of home abandonment.

<sup>31</sup> Nicolas Tackett's work on Tang aristocratic families' long-term migration to the capital region, even at the risk of alienation from their paternal ancestral homes, offers a good explanation of this trend (Tackett 2014, Ch. 1 & 2).

now, we do not know. Moreover, even if a decisive artefact in support of “Lian” 濂 were to be excavated, we would still not know *where* that name originated. Zhou might have transferred the name from Daozhou to Jiangzhou as did Europeans who brought their hometown names to their colonies (e.g. New York, Cambridge, and Oxford).<sup>32</sup> However, it is equally possible that Zhou simply followed the “Yuan Jie” precedent. What we see from his letters and poems is that he knew that Yuan played around with words in his own way, and was even aware of the fact that it was Yuan who named Rang Brook (*Rangxi* 穠溪, Helpful Brook) near his Jiangzhou abode (Kong 2010). Ultimately, Lian Brook (Modesty Brook) may well have been Zhou’s original coinage to couple himself with the renowned Tang period gentleman, just as Daozhou and Jiangzhou literati sought to identify themselves with Zhou Dunyi one hundred years later.

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<sup>32</sup> This was not an uncommon practice in Ming and Qing period (Du 2015, 61–73). See Benedict Anderson (2006, 187) for some European and South Asian cases.

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