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Beyond the Temple Walls: Quanzhen Daoism in Ming Dynasty Northwest Henan

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Abstract

This study examines the social history of Quanzhen Daoists in the Ming dynasty, focusing specifically on the northwestern part of Henan. The analysis argues that the local persistence of Quanzhen Daoism in this region was driven by a multifaceted strategy of collaboration. Drawing on stele inscriptions from the Luoyang-Xin'an area, the work explores how these collaborations operated at both clerical and communal levels. Internally, Quanzhen Daoists of the Longmen lineage collaborated to sustain their tradition by building a transregional temple network for mutual support and meticulously documenting lineage succession through local temples. Externally, they embedded themselves in local society by partnering with diverse community actors—forming alliances with local elites to mediate land disputes, providing ritual services to lay associations, and participating in the management of popular cults. By identifying collaboration as a key adaptation mechanism, this research presents a rural case study from the Ming dynasty that bridges scholarly models of internal lineage construction and external social engagement, emphasizing the agency of rank-and-file clerics in shaping Daoist institutions from the grassroots up.

Keywords: Quanzhen Daoism, Longmen lineage, stele inscriptions, religious localism, Henan

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Introduction

Over the past two decades, scholarship on Daoism has increasingly emphasized its local contexts, shifting attention from courtly Daoism and elite practitioners to the ways Daoist traditions interacted with local cultures.[1] Scholarly consensus, building on the work of scholars like John Lagerwey, posits that by the Song dynasty, Chinese society had become "temple-centric." This model suggests that local life was organized not primarily around state-sanctioned Buddhist or Daoist institutions, but around territorial temples dedicated to local gods, often associated with spirit-medium (*wu* 巫) culture.[2] These temples served as the nuclei for communal identity, ritual activity, and social organization. The relative power of these temples shifted over time and varied by region, creating a dynamic "ritual sphere" where different traditions mixed, borrowed from, and competed with each other. A pivotal transformation within this ritual sphere was the rise of territorially based lineage from the mid-Ming onwards, as shown in the research of Kenneth Dean and Zheng Zhenman in Fujian. Their work reveals the multiple pathways through which ancestral halls emerged, often evolving from Buddhist graveside shrines, commemorative halls within monasteries, or local god temples where an ancestor was identified with the deity.[3] Crucially, elite kinship groups skillfully utilized their patronage of local cults to accumulate symbolic capital and secure imperial recognition, while simultaneously shoring up local power against state intervention.

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1 Daniel L. Overmyer, "Ritual Leaders in North China Local Communities in the Twentieth Century: A Report on Research in Progress," *Minsu quyi* 民俗曲藝 153 (2006): 203–263. Vincent Goossaert, "Resident Specialists and Temple Managers in Late Imperial China," *Minsu quyi* 民俗曲藝 153 (2006): 25–68. David Johnson, *Spectacle and Sacrifice: The Ritual Foundations of Village Life in North China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

2 John Lagerwey, "The Emergence of a Temple-Centric Society," *Minsu quyi* 民俗曲藝 205 (2019): 29–102.

3 Kenneth Dean, "The Rise of a 'Temple-Centric' Society in Putian in the Song and Later Transformations of the Ritual Sphere," *Minsu quyi* 民俗曲藝 205 (2019): 103–159.

As we will see in the discussion below, it is within this complex landscape of territorial cults, formal religious orders, and powerful local kinship groups that Quanzhen 全真 Daoism had to navigate its own profound transformation.

Emerging in the twelfth century, the Quanzhen movement was transformed under Mongol patronage in the Yuan dynasty into a powerful and institutionalized monastic order with extensive landholdings and imperial privilege. It became a dominant force in north China and undertook major cultural projects such as building pilgrimage centers and assuming quasi-government functions in postwar social reconstruction, as detailed by Jinping Wang.[4] This institutional strength was built upon a cohesive collective identity, which Vincent Goossaert argues was actively "invented" through shared ascetic lore and a universal symbolic naming system.[5] This narrative of a strong and unified order is often contrasted with its supposed "decline" during the Ming dynasty, when its imperial favor gradually faded.[6] The Ming imperial court denied the autonomy it had enjoyed, placing its temples under the supervision of the state-favored Zhengyi 正一 order. However, recent scholarship has demonstrated that this in fact was not a period of disappearance of Quanzhen, but of strategic adaptation. On the institutional level, this loss of national standing forced a structural adaptation. The unified Quanzhen order of the Yuan period loosened and coalesced into various independent lineages (*pai* 派) based on master-disciple

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[4] Jinping Wang, *In the Wake of the Mongols: The Making of a New Social Order in North China, 1200–1600* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 63–117.

[5] Vincent Goossaert, "The Invention of An Order: Collective Identity in Thirteen-Century Quanzhen Taoism," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 29, no. 1 (2001): 111–138.

[6] Lagerwey demonstrates in his study of the parallel development of the "double orthodoxy" of Daoxue (Neo-Confucianism) and Daojiao (Daoism) that the Ming imperial court and enfeoffed princes acted as the major patrons of the Zhengyi Heavenly Master Daoism, building temples (especially to Zhenwu), producing Daoist literature, and employing Daoist ritualists. See John Lagerwey, "The Ming Dynasty Double Orthodoxy: Daoxue and Daojiao," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 25 (2016): 113–129.

genealogies.[7] This shift is documented in epigraphical sources from the mid-Ming onwards, which show the emergence of specific lineages, such as the Huashan lineage (*Huashan pai* 華山派) in north China[8] and a local Longmen lineage (*Longmen pai* 龍門派) in Yunnan.[9] Our study of the stele inscriptions in Henan will also prove this. Furthermore, on the social level, the late imperial period witnessed a significant expansion of Daoist groups mostly in the urban settings, often centered on spirit-writing (*fuluan* 扶鸞)[10] and the worship of immortals like Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓.[11] Many of these lay groups, known as *daotan* 道壇, explicitly claimed a Quanzhen identity. They used Longmen lineage names for their members and integrated self-cultivation with charity and ritual services. Goossaert's study of the lay Jin'gaishan network exemplifies this phenomenon, in which non-celibate elites, organized in charitable halls, adopted Quanzhen identity and rituals, demonstrating a flexible and service-oriented mode of Daoist engagement deeply embedded in the local social life. Further beyond the monastic walls, Xun Liu's work shows that Quanzhen monastic leaders remained dynamic social agents, pioneering modern education, running extensive philanthropic operations, and cultivating deep patronage

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7 Zhang Guangbao 張廣保, "Mingdai Quanzhen jiao de zongxi fenhua yu zipu de xingcheng" 明代全真教的宗系分化與字譜的形成, in *Quanzhen Dao yanjiu* 全真道研究, ed. Zhao Weidong 趙偉東, vol. 1 (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2011), 189–217; Richard G. Wang, *Lineage Embedded in Temple Networks* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022), 8.

8 Fan Guangchun 樊光春, "Ming-Qing shiqi xibei diqu Quanzhen Dao zhuyao zongpai shuli" 明清時期西北地區全真道主要宗派梳理, in Zhao, *Quanzhen Dao yanjiu*, vol. 1, 218–236.

9 Wang, *Lineage Embedded in Temple Networks*, 221–250; Richard G. Wang, "A Local Longmen Lineage in Late Ming-Early Qing Yunnan," in *Quanzhen Daoists in Chinese Society and Culture, 1500–2010*, eds., Xun Liu and Vincent Goossaert (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 2013), 235–268.

10 Vincent Goossaert, "The Jin'gaishan Network: A Lay Quanzhen Daoist Organization in Modern Jiangnan," in *Daoism in Modern China: Clerics and Temples in Urban Transformations, 1860–Present*, eds., Vincent Goossaert and Xun Liu (London: Routledge, 2021), 83–119.

11 Vincent Goossaert, "Urban Daoists, from 1860 to the present," in *Daoism in Modern China: Clerics and Temples in Urban Transformations, 1860–Present*, 18–19.

networks with local elites. This clerical activism was central to their local persistence.[12] Besides their social initiatives, individual Quanzhen Daoists were also proactively involved in constructing their religious identity. Bony Schachter in his work presents a detailed study of the late-Ming Quanzhen priest Zhou Xuanzhen 周玄真 (1555–1627) and his role in the editorial history of the Daoist scripture *Tianhuang zhidao taiqing yuce* 天皇至道太清玉冊. He argues that Zhou used the act of printing as a primary means to construct and broadcast his religious identity as a Quanzhen master within the politically charged environment of the late Ming.[13] All of these scholarships demonstrate a multifaceted tradition comprising not only a clerical and monastic order, but also a vast world of local temple managers, hereditary priests, and thriving lay networks.

This study builds upon these scholarly foundations and examines how Quanzhen establishments survived by embedding themselves within the existing social and religious fabric of territorial cults and local temple networks through the examination of stele inscriptions from northwest Henan. These inscriptions, mostly from the late imperial era, have recently become accessible through the National Library of China's digitization project. By examining these newly available materials, this study aims to provide fresh insights into the region's religious and cultural dynamics and to deepen our understanding of Daoism's local development from a bottom-up perspective. Grounding in epigraphy, this study treats stele inscriptions not merely as commemorative texts but as rich historical documents that reveal the social and

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[12] Xun Liu published a series of studies on this aspect of the Quanzhen Daoists. See his works: "Daoist Yao Aiyun and Modern Education and Other Reforms in Late Qing Nanyang," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 51, no. 2 (2023): 229–277; "Proliferating Learning: Quanzhen Daoist Activism and Modern Education Reform in Nanyang (1880s–1940s)," *Extrême-Orient Extrême-Occident*, no. 33 (2011): 53–90; and "In Defense of the City and the Polity: The Xuanmiao Monastery and the Qing Anti-Taiping Campaigns in Mid-Nineteenth Century Nanyang," *T'oung Pao* 95 (2009): 287–333.

[13] Bony Schachter, "Printing the Dao: Master Zhou Xuanzhen, The Editorial History of the Jade Slips of Great Clarity and Ming Quanzhen Identity," *Daoism: Religion, History and Society* 道教研究學報：宗教、歷史與社會 10 (2018): 1–86.

economic dynamics of local religious life. As Goossaert notes, "Stele inscriptions . . . are public statements, with legal value (they were accepted in court in case of lawsuits regarding temple property and rights) and often recording contractual arrangements (donations, management contracts, etc.)."[14] Following this approach, this paper analyzes inscriptions as records of practice, seeking evidence of how Quanzhen Daoism thrived through a multifaceted collaboration in the local society during the Ming dynasty.

Henan, a historically significant region in north-central China, is known as one of the cradles of Chinese civilization. Its cities, Luoyang and Kaifeng, were imperial capitals for several dynasties. During the Ming dynasty, Henan was a fief of the Prince of Yi 伊, whose seat was in Luoyang. Religiously, Henan is rich in both Buddhist and Daoist heritage, with significant sites such as the White Horse Temple (*Baima si* 白馬寺), the Longmen Grottoes (*Longmen shiku* 龍門石窟), and various Daoist mountains including the first Daoist "Cave Heaven" (*dongtian* 洞天)—Mount Wangwu (*Wangwu shan* 王屋山). However, despite Henan's rich history and religious culture, there is still a great deal of historical and cultural materials waiting to be explored. Existing research has mainly focused on famous religious mountains,[15] notable figures,[16] and well-known sites.[17]

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[14] Vincent Goossaert, "Quanzhen, What Quanzhen? Late Imperial Daoist Clerical Identities in Lay Perspective," in *Quanzhen Daoists in Chinese Society and Culture, 1500–2010,* eds., Xun Liu and Vincent Goossaert (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 2013), 34.

[15] Wangwu shan daojiao bianweihui 王屋山道教編委會, *Wangwu shan daojiao* 王屋山道教 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 2014). Thomas Jülch, ed., *Buddhism and Daoism on the Holy Mountains of China* (Leuven; Paris; Bristol, CT: Peeters, 2022).

[16] Lucas Weiss, "Rectifying the Deep Structures of the Earth: Sima Chengzhen and the Standardization of Daoist Sacred Geography in the Tang," *Journal of Daoist Studies* 5 (2012): 31–60.

[17] Shotoku Kuramoto 倉本尚徳, "The Vow to Become Amitabha Buddha: The 'Jiujing zhuangyan anle jingtu chengfo mingji' Found in the Longmen Grottoes' Yaofang Cave" 阿弥陀仏となる誓願——龍門石窟薬方洞「究竟荘厳安楽浄土成仏銘記」小考, *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 印度學佛教學研究 64, no. 2 (2016): 731–736; Amy McNair, *Donors of Longmen: Faith, Politics, and Patronage in Medieval Chinese Buddhist Sculpture* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006).

Recent studies, such as Richard Wang's investigation of the Daoist master Liu Yuanran 劉淵然 (1351–1423), have highlighted the development of Daoist lineages through local temple networks.[18] Wang's work traces Liu's dual role as a high-ranking Daoist priest at the Ming court and an influential figure in local society across China. In contrast, this study focuses on lesser-known Daoists who were active primarily within their local territories in northwest Henan. These Daoists belonged to the Quanzhen tradition, which, according to Zhu Yuanzhang's official proclamation in 1374, was labeled as a solitary and self-focused tradition:

> "Chan and Quanzhen focus on cultivating oneself and nurturing one's nature, purely for one's own sake. In contrast, the Jiao and Zhengyi emphasize achieving salvation, particularly tailored for the filial sons and compassionate parents. They benefit human relations and enrich customs; their merits are indeed great."[19]
>
> 禪與全真，務以修身養性，獨為自己而已。教與正一，專以超脫，特為孝子慈親之設，益人倫，厚風俗，其功大矣哉。

However, this characterization of Quanzhen as an inward-looking tradition has been challenged.[20] Studies show that Quanzhen Daoists remained active at the local level, engaging with lay communities and local cults.[21] This paper builds on this argument

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18 Wang, *Lineage Embedded in Temple Networks*.

19 Zhu Yuanzhang, 'Daming xuanjiao', DZ467, 1a. In this paper, scriptures from *Zhengtong Daozang* 正統道藏 are numbered according to *The Taoist Canon: A Historical Companion to the Daozang* (Daozang Tongkao 道藏通考), eds., Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004). The number followed refers to the page and the specific spot on the page where the quote appears. In fact, the central government had had a close supervision of the religious sphere. The Great Ming Code set strict regulations for Buddhism and Daoism in regard to the establishment of Buddhist or Daoist temples at local level, as well as the ordination of Buddhist or Daoist novices. See, Jiang Yonglin, *The Mandate of Heaven and The Great Ming Code* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011), 70–99.

20 Zhang Fang 張方, *Mingdai Quanzhen Dao de Shuai er Fuxing: Yi Huabei diqu wei zhongxin de kaocha* 明代全真道的衰而復興——以華北地區為中心的考察 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2018).

21 Zhao Weidong 趙衛東, "Quanzhen Dao yu minjian Xinyang zhijian de hudong: yi Jinan Changqing Mashan gema Fengshihou miao wei ge'an de yanjiu" 全真道

by examining the activities of Quanzhen Daoists in Henan during the Ming dynasty. The majority of the inscriptions discussed are from counties near or under the jurisdiction of Luoyang, including Xin'an 新安, Mengjin 孟津, Yanshi 偃師, Luoning 洛寧, Yiyang 宜陽, Yichuan 伊川, and Song County 嵩縣. While some inscriptions document land donations for religious purposes, most commemorate events such as temple construction, renovations, and ritual services. Through these inscriptions, this study addresses the following key questions: How did local temple building take place? Who initiated and participated in these projects? What rituals were provided, and what purposes did they serve? What was the relationship between the Daoists and local lay people? What larger implications do these activities have for understanding Quanzhen Daoism during the late imperial period? The discussion is divided into three sections: the first examines the participation of local Daoists in religious activities, especially the construction of transregional temple networks; the second identifies the Daoist groups active in the region and their lineage transmission; and the third explores their role in socio-religious affairs, such as land disputes, ritual services, and local cults.

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1. Temple Network and Transregional Collaborations

In his study of the Ming novel *Fengshen yanyi* 封神演義, Mark Meulenbeld discovers a world where local communities are organized through networks of temples and martial rituals known as "Thunder Rites" (*leifa* 雷法) in the Ming dynasty.[22] According to Meulenbeld, Daoism provided the liturgical framework that helped integrate local territorial cults into larger regional and even national networks. As we will see in this section, a transregional temple network exists, as early as the fifteenth century, in the northwestern part of Henan, starting at Xin'an. Xin'an is situated at the intersection of Henan and Shanxi 山西 provinces, on the south bank of the Yellow River.

與民間信仰之間的互動——以濟南長清馬山隔馬豐施侯廟為個案的研究, in Zhao, *Quanzhen Dao yanjiu*, vol. 1, 165–188.

[22] Mark Meulenbeld, *Demonic Warfare: Daoism, Territorial Networks, and the History of a Ming Novel* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015).

Map 1 Xin'an County 新安縣, Henan 河南
(Source: *Xin'an County Gazetteer* 新安縣誌)

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The county comprises eleven towns and is a shallow, hilly area, known for its numerous mountains with a strong Daoist presence, one such being the Wangwu Shan, located in the neighboring county of Jiyuan 濟源.

In the north of Xin'an, a mountain stretches about 70 kilometers and is 829 meters above sea level. The highest mountain on the south bank of the Yellow River, within 55 kilometers northwest of the county,[23] this mountain has multiple names, such as Jingzi 荊紫 or Jinzi 金子. In 1498, a stele was erected in the Jinggou village 井溝村 of Shijing town 石井縣 (Map 1), a town right next to the mountain, to celebrate the renovation of a hall dedicated to Zhenwu 真武 (Perfect Warrior), a Daoist high god, on the mountain. The inscription describes the circumstances leading up to the restoration of the hall:

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[23] *Xin'an Xianzhi* 新安縣誌 [Gazetteer of Xin'an County], comp. Qiu E 邱峨 (1914), *juan* 1, 51: "縣西北一百一十里黃河南岸境內山之最高者."

"In the northwest of Xin'an county, there is a mountain called 'Jinzi,' where the ancient traces of the Hall of Perfected Warrior lie. On a day of leisure, Quanzhen followers Liu Jianci and the Fenxiu [i.e., Daoist][24] Yang, joined me in climbing the mountain to enjoy the views from its peak. To the east, it connects to the celestial domain of the Lady of Azure Essentials; to the west, it joins with the gold-forging peaks of the Black Eyebrows; in front, it rises the Ice Well of the Rotten Axe-handle; behind, it embraces the Yellow Waters of the Celestial Altar.[25] In the center towers a solitary peak, where rests the Stone of Heart-steadying through Praying to the Dipper, and the sacred ground where one offers oneself to consecrate the sages. Here, spiritual essence gathers and excellence accumulates; here, the workings of Heaven and Earth have fused into perfection. It is joyously called the Lesser Celestial Altar. Therefore, Daoist fellow Cui Yi, elder brother Chen Kuan, Cui Jing, and others each made their donation to renovate and build the Miluo Pavilion, the Hall of Effective Responses, the Golden Mother Shrine, and the Court of Cultivating Perfection. However, after completing the painting and sculpturing, years of neglect led to its abandonment. It was not until the spring of the Ding Si year [1457] that Wei Zongmin, a Daoist from the Purple Gold Altar, was invited to continue the renovation of the lower hall and the repair of the upper hall. Many benefactors and believers provided financial and physical support, a contribution that must not go unrecorded. I wish to inscribe it on this virtuous stone to honor the previous efforts enduringly. As I am in my twilight years, following the auspicious signs and responding to the mystical, I record the matters of [such and such]. . . . "[26]

新安縣治西北有山，名曰「金子」，古跡真武堂。全真劉建次、楊焚修暇日同予陟山玩頂眺之，東接青要夫人之躔，西聯黛眉造金之峰；前聳冰井爛柯，後擁天壇黃水；中矗孤峰，有禮斗定心之石，捨身奠聖

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[24] "Fengxiu" (焚修) literally means "burn incense and cultivate oneself" and is used as a title to refer to Daoist practitioners.

[25] "Azure Essentials" is the literary translation of "Qingyao." "Black Eyebrows" is the literary translation of "Daimei." "Rotten Axe-handle" is the literary translation of "Lanke." "Celestial Altar" is the literary translation of "Tiantan." They all are the names for mountains in the Xin'an county.

[26] "Chongxiu Zhenwu tang ji" 重修真武堂記 [Record of the Reconstruction of the Hall of the Perfected Warrior], stele dated 1498, Jingou village, Shijin xiang, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

之區。鍾靈蓄秀，造化融成，喜曰小天壇也。遂與道契崔玘、同兄陳寬、崔敬等各捐己資，修營締構，建彌罗小閣、靈驗大殿，金母祠、修真院，塑綵已完，年荒人散。至丁巳春，延紫金壇道士衛宗敏重修下堂，補葺上殿。檀越眾信施財施力，不可無記，願文諸貞石，耿遠前功，余年昏耄，按瑞應靈異，記有□□事耳。

As cited above, the first half of the inscription described the mountain's geographical features, the hall's structure, and the people involved in its renovation project. The project was completed in two phases. Phase one was initiated by a group of local Daoist followers who pooled resources together. Among those patrons, some are identified as the followers of the Quanzhen school. Wu Zhen, in her investigation of the local development of Quanzhen Daoism in Jun County 濬縣, reveals a remarkable adaptive strategy employed by the Huashan lineage. She argues that these Daoists ensured their survival not by focusing on their own monasteries, but by becoming the hereditary managers of public temples dedicated to other deities.[27] Initially, they served as keepers of the official county City God Temple (*Chenghuang miao* 城隍廟), and from there, they took control of the new and immensely popular cult of *Bixia Yuanjun* 碧霞元君, establishing it in its own temple. Wu's core analytical point is that the Huashan Daoists used their internal and private lineage system as a socio-economic tool to maintain continuous control over these public religious resources for centuries. Wu's study thus illustrates a strategy of adaptation through co-opting and managing popular public cults. The evidence from Xin'an and its surrounding counties, as we will see, however, points to a different yet complementary model of Quanzhen's local engagement. Instead of managing temples for other gods, the Longmen Daoists, a branch of Quanzhen Daoism that venerates Qiu Chuji 丘處機 (1148–1227) as its founding patriarch, in this region focused on strengthening their own tradition from within. They achieved this

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[27] Wu Zhen 吳真, "Huabei defang shehui Zhong de Quanzhen daoshi: yi Huashan fapai gengxu yu gonggong miaoyu jingying wei zhongxin" 華北地方社會中的全真道士：以華山法派賡續與公共廟宇經營為中心, *Daoism: Religion, History and Society* 道教研究學報：宗教、歷史與社會 2 (2010): 204–218.

by building transregional networks between their own Quanzhen institutions, collaborating across county lines on projects like the Zhenwu Hall renovation, as the stele inscription above clearly shows that, when the temple fell into disrepair and became dilapidated, a Daoist priest named Wei Zongmin 衛宗敏 (n.d.) from a place called Zijintan 紫金壇 ("Purple-Gold Altar") was invited to facilitate the process. In fact, Zijintan is the name of the peak of Shennong Shan 神農山, not in Xin'an but in its neighboring Qinyang County 沁陽縣. This line indicates that the renovation project was not a local affair exclusive to Xin'an. Instead, it was a joint effort, which was further proved by the last paragraph of the inscription, which lists the names and affiliations of the major contributors:

> "Su Zhenxiong and Cui Chongfu, abbots of [the Perfect Warrior Hall]; Zhao Xuanzhen, Head of the Daoist Affairs Department of Xin'an; Chen Tianming, Zhang Tongjian, and Wang Chongqing, abbots of the Pure Harmony Abbey; Li Fuying, abbot of the Pure Vanity Palace; and Liu Jingyun, abbot of the Purple Tenuity Palace."[28]
>
> 住持蘇真雄、崔崇福。新安縣道會司道會趙玄真，清和觀住持陳忝明、張通鑒、王崇慶，清虛宮住持李復瀛，紫薇宮住持劉凈雲。

Aside from the Zhuchi 住持 (i.e., temple managers) of the Zhenwu tang and the Head of the Daohui si 道會司 (Department of Daoist Affairs), who were both based in Xin'an, the other contributors were representatives from Daoist temples in neighboring counties. For instance, the Qinghe guan 清和觀 (Pure Harmony Abbey) is located in Qinyang County, while Qingxu gong 清虛宮 (Pure Vanity Palace) and Ziwei gong 紫微宮 (Purple Tenuity Palace) are on Wangwu Shan in Jiyuan County. While the Daoist affiliations of figures such as Wei Zongmin, Su Zhenxiong, and Cui Chongfu remain unclear, there is strong evidence that the other temples were managed by Quanzhen Daoists. For example, a stele inscription from the Yuan dynasty records the founding history of the Qinghe guan, tracing its origins to the Daoist nun Li Shouyuan

[28] "Chongxiu Zhenwu tang ji" 重修真武堂記, 1498.

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李守元 (n.d.). Li became a disciple of Yunshui Sanren 雲水散人 Li Shoumiao 李守妙 (n.d.) under the guidance of the prominent master Jingranzi 靜然子 (n.d.) of Hongyang Shan 洪洋山. The same inscription also mentions another disciple of Jingranzi named Guo Shouchun 郭守純 (n.d.), who is described as follows:

> "Originally from Liang County in Ruzhou, of the Zhao family, she [Guo Shouchun] from a young age, despite being a woman, possessed the moral integrity and resolve of a great man. She embarked on a voyage across the boundless sea of desires, abandoning worldly attachments, as if sailing in a bottomless boat. Wielding a bladeless sword, she swiftly severed the roots of karmic entanglements.[29] Traveling thousands of *li* in search of teachers and exploring various places to study the Dao, she lived a life amidst the mists and clouds, sustained by simple means, carrying only a bottle and bowl. She journeyed to the immortal palaces of Hongyang Mountain and became a disciple of Jingranzi, whom she revered as her Daoist father. There, she comprehended the marrow of Quanzhen doctrines and realized the fundamental principles of the Great Teaching."[30]
>
> 本貫汝州梁縣趙老人氏，伏自弱冠，雖曰女流，有大丈夫之節操。泛沒底舟，頓拋欲海；捉無刃劍，急斬業根。千里求師，諸方問道，煙霞活計，瓶鉢生涯，遊洪洋山之仙宮，拜靜然子為道父，達全真之骨髓，悟大教之根源。

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This description strongly suggests that Li Shouyuan and her teachers belonged to the same Quanzhen lineage descended from the Quanzhen master Jingranzi. While evidence about the subsequent history of the temple is lacking, it is reasonable to infer that it likely remained under the management of Quanzhen Daoists up to the period under discussion. Beyond Qinghe guan, the other two

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[29] Both the terms "bottomless boat" and "bladeless sword" are Buddhist metaphors. "Bottomless boat" originates in a Chan context, signifying a meditative state of liberation achieved by transcending attachments. "Bladeless sword" is a metaphor for transcendent wisdom that cuts off ignorance without causing harm and is sometimes associated with the bodhisattva Manjushri.

[30] "Chuangxiu Qinghe guan ji" 創修清和觀記 [Record of the Construction of the Qinghe Abbey], in *Jin Yuan Quanzhen dao shike xinbian* 金元全真道石刻新編, ed. Wang Zongyu 王宗昱 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2005), 166–167.

temples mentioned in the Zhenwu tang inscription—Qingxu gong and Ziwei gong—have well-documented connections to Quanzhen traditions. Both temples are historically linked to Song Defang 宋德方 (1183–1247) and his successors during their early development.[31] By the latter half of the Ming dynasty, the management of these temples had transitioned to the Longmen lineage.[32] Consequently, key figures like Li Fuying 李復瀛 (n.d.), associated with Qingxu gong, and Liu Jingyun 劉淨雲 (n.d.), associated with Ziwei gong, were identified as Longmen Daoists.

Therefore, we discovered from the above inscription a network of temples supported by various groups of Quanzhen Daoists, the majority of whom were affiliated with the Longmen lineage. Twelve years after the completion of the renovation, another stele inscription documented the construction of an additional Yuhuang miao 玉皇廟 (Jade Emperor Temple) on the same mountain, making the original Daoist temple complex even larger. The author of this inscription is recorded as "Gao Daoan 高道安 of the Longquan guan 龍泉觀 (Dragon Spring Abbey) in Yanzi 郾子."[33] Yanzi is an abbreviated name for Yancheng County 郾城縣 of Henan. According to a Qing gazetteer, a Daoist temple called Longquan gong 龍泉宮 (Dragon Spring Palace) was found in Yancheng.[34] However, compared with Jiyuan County and Qinyang County, Yancheng, located in Central Henan, is geographically much farther away from Xin'an. Unfortunately, we have not found any record of how the connection was made between the Daoist temples in Xin'an and Yancheng, but the appearance of such a remote connection suggests a religious network built

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[31] Zhao Weidong 趙衛東, "Henan Jiyuan Quanzhen dao zongpai chuancheng kao" 河南濟源全真道宗派傳承考, *Daoism: Religion, History and Society* 道教研究學報：宗教、歷史與社會 5 (2013): 84–85. "Qingxu gong beiming" 清虛宮碑銘 [Stele Inscription of the Qingxu Palace], in *Daojia jinshi lue* 道家金石略, ed. Chen Yuan 陳垣 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1988), 790–791.

[32] Zhao, "Henan Jiyuan Quanzhen dao," 90–92.

[33] "Chongjian Yuhuang miao ji" 崇建玉皇廟記 [Record of the Reconstruction of the Jade Emperor Temple], stele dated 1510, Jingou Village, Shijin Xiang, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

[34] *Yancheng Xianzhi* 郾城縣誌 [Gazetteer of Yancheng County], comps. Jing Qidun 荊其惇 and Fu Honglin 傅鴻鄰 (1659), *juan* 7, 4.

across several counties. And it is highly likely that this transregional temple network was largely collaboratively supported and sustained by the Quanzhen Daoists.

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Map 2 Luoyang and Subordinate Counties
(based on contemporary map of Henan)

2. Lineage Transmission and Temple Upholding

After looking at the collaborative endeavors of the Quanzhen Daoists across different counties, we will now shift our focus to the southwestern edge of Xin'an County. There lies a mountain known as Lanke Shan 爛柯山 (Mountain of the Rotten Axe-handle), at the foot of which lies a small town called Tiemen zhen 鐵門鎮 (Iron Gate Town). Although far away from the county center, Tiemen

zhen has a Daoist temple called Dongzhen guan 洞真觀 (Cavern Perfection Abbey) that serves as the seat of Xin'an's Department of Daoist Affairs (*Daohui si* 道會司).[35] The name of Lanke Shan came from a mythical story about a Jin 晉 dynasty woodcutter named Wang Zhi 王質 (n.d.), who accidentally encountered two immortals in the mountains. According to the legend, one day, Wang Zhi went to the mountains to cut firewood but stopped by a cave to watch two people playing a chess game. However, even before one round of the game was over, Wang Zhi's axe-handle became rotten. When he returned home, he realized that hundreds of years had passed. An entry in *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 provided a short biography of Wang Zhi:

> Wang Zhi, a native of Dongyang. He went into the mountains to cut wood, and there he encountered a number of young boys playing chess and singing joyfully in a stone chamber. Zhi set down his axe and stayed to watch them. One of the boys gave Zhi an object resembling a bundle of nuclei and instructed him to put it in his mouth and swallow its juice, which then alleviated his feelings of hunger and thirst. The boy said, 'You have been here for a long time; you may return now.' When Zhi picked up his axe, the handle had completely rotted away. Zhi then returned home, realizing that several hundred years had passed.[36]
>
> 王質者，東陽人也。入山伐木，遇見石室中有數童子圍棋歌笑。質聊置斧柯觀之，童子以一物如束核與質，令含咽其汁，便不覺饑渴。童子云：汝來已久，可還。質取斧柯，爛已盡。質便歸家，計已數百年。

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Thereafter, the mountain became known as Lanke (lit., "rotten axe-handle"),[37] and the cave where the two immortals played chess

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[35] *Xin'an Xianzhi, juan* 2, 6.

[36] *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤, DZ1032, 754c.

[37] However, the name of Lanke Shan is more famously related to another mountain in the Jiangnan region. A four-volume *Record of the Lanke Shan* (*Lanke shan zhi* 爛柯山誌) was compiled in 1906 which describes a mountain located in Kecheng 柯城, a city in the modern-day Quzhou 衢州, Zhejiang province. The same mythical story of the Jin woodcutter Wang Zhi's immortal encounter was found in the beginning of the text, explaining the source of the mountain's name. The following texts continue to introduce the mountain in various aspects, such as anecdotal stories and related poems in the past

was referred to as the Cave of Wang Qiao 王喬 (lit., "tall trees"). Dongzhen guan was established to venerate this immortal encounter and was said to have been upheld by a Quanzhen Daoist called Sun Chunhe 孫純和 (n.d.).[38] While no further information about Sun Chunhe is available beyond the designation of "Quanzhen," this title confirms the presence of Quanzhen Daoists in the region.

A half-century later, over ten additional steles were erected at the temple, beginning in the second year of Wanli's 萬曆 reign (1574) and continuing through the second year of Chongzhen's 崇禎 reign (1629). These inscriptions, spanning 55 years and predominantly from the Wanli era, serve as invaluable resources for investigating the history of the temple's management and activities. The inscriptions document two primary categories of religious activities: temple renovations and ritual performances. They also meticulously record the names of individuals who contributed and participated in these projects and ceremonies. Therefore, they provide critical clues for rediscovering the history of the Daoists associated with the temple and their active engagement with the local community.

In 1574, a stele erected in the temple documented a donation by a certain Mr. Liu 劉公, who predicted his own premature death and thus turned to the Master Sun 孫真人 (i.e., Sun Chunhe) for help. Sun advised him to donate generously to make the Yellow Register paintings and to hold a *Huanglu yanling dajiao* 黃籙延齡大醮 (Great Life-extending Offering of Yellow Register) at the temple. After the ritual was completed, Mr. Liu's life was allegedly extended for twenty-four years. Later, he even obtained a government position at the county-level. The inscription continues to comment that,

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dynasties. According to *Yunji qiqian*, Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (639–735), the great Daoist master in the Tang dynasty, included Lanke Shan into the category of Seventy-two Earthly Paradise, ranking the thirtieth. The brief note under the entry specifically pointed out that the location of the mountain is in the Xin'an 信安county of Quzhou, and it is the place where Wang Zhi retired. See: *Yunji qiqian*, 202b: "在衢州信安縣，王質先生隱處."

[38] "Fengti Henan fu Lanke shan tiefu shi" 奉題河南府爛柯山鐵斧詩 [Poem respectfully inscribed for the Iron Axe of Lanke Mountain in Henan Prefecture], stele dated 1522, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

> Out of sincerity, [Mr. Liu] requested artists to paint the sacred images of the Yellow Register of two halls and bestowed them to the Palace of Encountering Immortals of the Cave of Wang Qiao [i.e., Dongzhen guan]. Daoist master Yang Qinghe enshrined them perpetually in the Hall of Cloud [i.e., Hall of Assembly, where public rituals are performed]. This is a truly meritorious family that will undoubtedly receive blessings and good fortune. As a result, a Great Life-extending Offering of Yellow Register was also held to extend their lifespan to endure forever and cultivate good fortune without deviation; to flourish descendants so that they will gather around their knees, and pray that meritorious fruits and good wills be everlasting. All requests have been granted with transformation and cultivation, and therefore this inscription is made.[39]
>
> 是發誠心，命工彩畫黃籙聖像二堂，施於福地王喬洞遇仙宮，道士楊清和雲堂永遠供奉。此乃實為積善之家，必獲有餘之慶。是以又建黃籙延齡大醮，增壽年之有永，培福果之無差，延子孫後裔而遶膝，祈功果善念以悠長，凡所希求，俱蒙化育，是故記之。

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At the end of the inscription, the name of the "huazhu" 化主[40] is recorded as Yang Qinghe 楊清和 (n.d.), and his disciple (*mentu* 門徒) is called Jiao Yilun 焦一倫 (n.d.). The "Zhuchi" 住持 of the temple is recorded as Yi Qingchun 伊清淳 (n.d.).

The next year, in 1575, another stele was created to commemorate the completion of a Jiao ritual at the temple. The inscription concluded with two names of the Daoists of the temple: *Dongding huanglu dian fenxiu dizi zhuchi* 東頂黃籙殿焚修弟子住持 (Abbot of the Easter Peak Yellow Register Hall and Disciple Practicing Devotional Incense-burning), Guo Qingxian, 郭清閑 (n.d.) and his disciple, Shao Yishen 邵一深 (n.d.).[41]

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39 "Shishe Huanglu beiji" 施捨黃籙碑記 [Record of the Donation for the Yellow Register [Retreat]], stele dated 1574, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

40 "Huazhu" 化主 usually refers to the Daoist priest in charge of fundraising for the temple.

41 "Jienian xiujiao beiji" 節年修醮碑記 [Record of the Annual Performance of the Jiao Rite], stele dated 1575, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

One year later, another stele was erected to commemorate rebuilding the western hall of the temple. The project was initiated and led by the Daoist Lian Yijiao 廉一教 (n.d.), who undertook fundraising efforts across the region. His dedication and the collective efforts of the lay patrons resulted in the casting of several new statues of gods, including the Thunder God and Zhenwu. At the end of the inscription, a long list of names of the Daoist participants was provided:

> Registered Daoists: Wang Qingru, Li Qingshu, Li Yinen, Yang Yihong, [characters lost] Yiben, Wang Yiguang, Guo Yitian. Disciples: Lian Yanghe, Jia Yangshi. Grand-disciples: He Laidao, Yang Lai'er.[42]
>
> 書冊道士：王清儒，李清書，李一能，楊一洪，□一本，王一廣，郭一田。門徒：廉陽河，賈陽石。徒孫：賀來道，楊來兒。

Over the next five decades, eight additional steles were erected to commemorate significant events at the temple, most of which documented the performance of the Jiao rituals. For example, two steles from 1596 recorded two separate Jiao rituals held on behalf of different groups of pilgrims who traveled from various parts of Henan to Lanke Shan. According to the inscriptions, two groups of Daoists officiated these rituals. The first group included Shao Yangwu 邵陽梧 (n.d.) and his disciple Zhang Laimei 張來美 (n.d.),[43] while the second group consisted of Liang Yangxiang 梁陽相 (n.d.) and his disciples Guo Laixu 郭來許 (n.d.) and Wang Laizhao 王來詔 (n.d.).[44]

In 1611, another stele documented a Jiao ritual performed for several groups of pilgrims who had completed pilgrimages to

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[42] "Chongxiu xidian ji jinzhuang shengxiang beiji" 重修西殿暨金妝聖像碑記 [Record of the Reconstruction of the West Hall and Gilding of the Saintly Images], stele dated 1576, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

[43] "Lanke shan jianjiao sanci wanman ji" 爛柯山建醮三次完滿記 [Record of the Threefold Complete Performance of the Jiao Offering at Lanke Mountain], stele dated 1596, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

[44] "Xiujiao beiji" 修醮碑記 [Record of the Performance of the Jiao Offering], stele dated 1596, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

multiple Daoist sacred sites, including Wangwu Shan and Wudang Shan. The inscription's final sentence identified its author as Shao Fude 邵復德 (n.d.), a Daoist disciple affiliated with Dongzhen guan.[45] The following year, another stele was dedicated to commemorating a major renovation of the temple.[46] This inscription provided a detailed list of participants, including lay patrons and Daoists associated with the temple, whose names are presented below (Table 1):

Table 1 Names of Daoists in Dongzhen guan (1612)

Role	Names	Notes
Daoist priests 道眾	Yi Yibao 伊一寶, Fan Yiyao 樊一遙	Listed as the first row
	Wang Yangxuan 王陽選, Liu Yangzhi 劉陽支, Liang Yangxiang 梁陽相, Zhang Yangshun 張陽順, Qin Yangwei 秦陽威	Below the first row
	Han Laichen 韓來臣, Wang Laihui 王來會, Fei Laijia 費來佳, Guo Laixu 郭來許	Below the second row
	Liang Laixi 梁來錫, Li Fuxing 李復興, Ma Lailiang 馬來亮	Below the third row
Fundraising Leaders 化首	Dang Yiben 黨一本, □□□ [character lost]	Listed as the first row
	Li Yang'en 李陽恩, Liu □□ 劉□□ [character lost], □ Yangsheng □陽昇 [character lost]	Below the first row
	Li Laiqiang 李來強, Yang Laixiao 楊來曉, Zhao Laixian 趙來先, Wang Laijing 王來敬, Xing Laizhong 刑來重, Zhao Lai'an 趙來安, Dang Laigang 黨來剛	Below the second row
	Wang Fuhuai 王福懷, Wang Fuwen 王福穩, Wang Fuguo 王福國	Below the third row
Abbot	Zhao Yangxing 趙陽幸	

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[45] "Fudi Wangqiao dong Dongzhen guan xiujiao sannian wanman beiji" 福地王喬洞洞真觀修醮三年完滿碑記 [Record of the Three-Year Complete Performance of the Jiao Offering at the Dongzhen Abbey of the Grotto of Wang Qiao in the Blessed Land], stele dated 1616, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

[46] "Chongxiu Sanqing Yuhuang Sanguan Sisheng sanmen beiji" 重修三清玉皇三官四聖三門碑記 [Record of the Reconstruction of the Three Gates of the Three Pure Ones, Jade Emperor, Three Officials, and Four Sages], stele dated 1612, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

In the table above, a total of thirty Daoists are listed. Among them, four Daoists have "Yi 一" as the middle character in their names. Although the name following Dang Yiben is missing, its placement next to Dang Yiben suggests that this individual likely belonged to the same generation as Dang himself. Additionally, nine Daoists, including the abbot, have "Yang 陽" as their middle character, and thirteen Daoists have "Lai 來" as their middle character. One Daoist has "Fu 復" as the middle character of his name, while three Daoists have "Fu 福." If we refer to the lineage poem of the Longmen lineage, the first twenty characters are: "Dao De Tong Xuan Jing 道德通玄靜, Zhen Chang Shou Tai Qing 真常守太清, Yi Yang Lai Fu Ben 一陽來復本, He Jiao Yong Yuan Ming 合教永圓明."[47] This lineage poem provides the generational naming convention for Longmen disciples. Since the middle character typically represents the ordination name of a Quanzhen Daoist, the presence of "Yi 一," "Yang 陽," "Lai 來," and "Fu 復" in the Daoists' names listed above aligns with the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth generations of the Longmen lineage. Besides, it is also plausible that the character "Fu 福" is a mistaken transcription of "Fu 復," given the phonetic similarity and context.

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[47] Li Yangzheng 李養正, ed., *Xinbian Beijing Baiyunguan zhi* 新編北京白雲觀誌 (Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 2003), 438. The convention of using lineage poems to provide generation characters for ordained Quanzhen Daoists became prominent during the late Ming and early Qing periods. See, Wang Ka 王卡, "Zhuzhen zongpai yuanliu jiaodu ji 諸真宗派源流校讀記," in *Quanzhen dao yu Lao-Zhuang xue: Guoji xueshu yantaohui lunwenji (Shangce)* 全真道與老莊學——國際學術研討會論文集(上冊), eds., Xiong Tieji 熊鐵基 and Mai Zifei 麥子飛 (Wuhan: Huazhong shifan daxue chubanshe, 2009), 49–75.

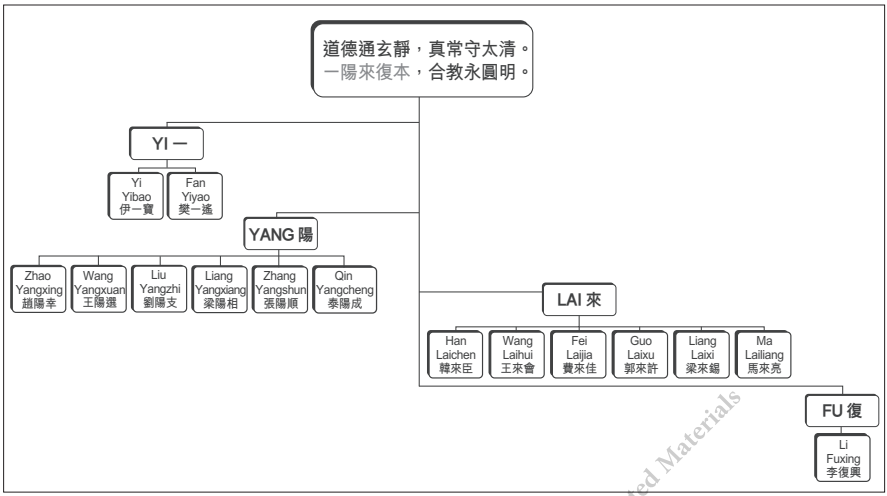

Figure 1 Generation chart of the Daoists in Dongzhen guan (1612)

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Based on the earlier inscriptions, we can infer that Dongzhen guan was managed by the tenth generation of the Longmen Daoists, identifiable by the ordination name "Qing 清" as their middle character, at the start of Wanli's reign. This lineage continued through subsequent generations until the late Ming dynasty.[48] Even in the early Qing Dynasty, the temple remained under the management of the Longmen disciples, as evidenced by the records of Daoist temple managers such as Zhang Yilin 張一林, Zhao Yangxing 趙陽星, and Li Yangqiu 李陽秋.[49]

The presence of Longmen Daoists is not limited to Xin'an, but also extends to its neighboring counties, which is not surprising given the close temple network we identified in the first section.

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[48] "Fengdao xiujiao beiji" 奉道修醮碑記 [Record of Venerating the Dao and Performing the Jiao Offering], stele dated 1629, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province. The Daoists on record are Liu Laiying 劉來應 and his disciple Wang Fuwen 王復穩.

[49] "Lanke shan Wangmu dian xianxi beiji" 爛柯山王母殿獻戲碑記 [Record of the Theatrical Performance Offered at the Hall of the Queen Mother at Lanke Mountain], stele dated 1699, Dongzhen Temple, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province. The character "Yang" in the names was written as "揚," but it is plausible that it was a mistaken transcription of "陽."

For example, in 1516, Wu Ben 悟本 (n.d.), the Head of the *Senggang si* 僧綱司 (Department of Buddhist Administration) of Henan, wrote an inscription on behalf of a Daoist named Zhang Qinglin 張清林 (n.d.). According to the inscription, Zhang, a native of Yiyang 伊陽, left the family to become a Buddhist monk in his youth. Later, he left Buddhism for Daoism, and began his pilgrimages to several Daoist sacred mountains, including Wudang Shan and Tiantan Shan 天壇山 (i.e., Wangwu Shan). When he traveled to the Lianhua dong 蓮花洞 (Lotus Cave) in Yique 伊闕 (modern-day Longmen 龍門), he decorated Buddha statues with gold. After his work was done, he traveled barefoot to Luoyang, wandering day and night, wishing to build something but unable to find the opportunity. By chance, several residents from the northeast of the city invited him to build a temple in that area. Zhang Qinglin accepted their request and thus initiated the project. The then Prince of Yi, Zhu Xuyuan 朱訏淵 (1478–1526), noticing his sincere intentions, generously donated materials such as gold, timber, and tiles to assist in the construction. Word spread far and wide, with more people donating their wealth to support the endeavor. Consequently, bronze statues of the Three Officials were cast, and within days, the main hall, corridors, bell tower, and outstanding structures were successively completed. In the spring of 1516, just as the grand construction was completed, Zhang Qinglin passed away suddenly. The Prince granted a burial site on the sunny side of Mang Shan 邙山, where a pagoda was erected in his honor. His disciples, Zhang Yilong 張一隆 (n.d.) and Ou Yihai 歐一海 (n.d.), continued to worship him.[50] Although Wu Ben never specifically mentioned Zhang Qinglin's Daoist affiliation, the middle character "Qing 清" in his name and the middle character "Yi 一" in his disciples' names suggested that they likely belonged to the tenth and eleventh generations of the Longmen lineage.

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[50] "Sanguan miao zhuchi yushi Zhang Qinglin tazhiming" 三官廟住持羽士張清林塔誌銘 [Pagoda Inscription for the Daoist Master Zhang Qinglin, Abbot of the Sanguan Temple], stele dated 1516, Xiaqing gong, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

In 1568, the second year of Longqing's 隆慶 reign, a stele documenting the renovation of the Temple of the Dark Emperor (*Xuandi miao* 玄帝廟) in Mengjin County listed three Daoists' names as their fundraising leaders, which are Peng Zhenjian 彭真見 (n.d.), Su Zhenmen 蘇真門 (n.d.), and Chen Changtong 陳常桐 (n.d.).[51] According to the lineage poem, they likely belonged to the sixth and seventh generations of the Longmen lineage, identifiable with the ordination names "Zhen 真" and "Chang 常" as their names' middle characters.

Despite the spread of the Longmen lineage in Luoyang and its subordinate counties, they were not the sole representative of the Quanzhen Daoists. Another inscription, composed five years earlier in Luoning County 洛寧縣, provided a more detailed record of another lineage of the Quanzhen Daoists' involvement in building and refurbishing a local temple. The inscription traced the initial construction of the temple, Longquan guan 龍泉觀 (Dragon Spring Abbey), to Ma Yu 馬鈺 (1123–1183), titled Danyang 丹陽, the first of the seven disciples of the Quanzhen patriarch, Wang Chongyang 王重陽 (1112–1170). According to the narration, Ma Yu built the temple in the seventeenth year of the Zhiyuan 至元 era (1264–1294) of the Yuan dynasty and stayed there for self-cultivation for a few years. Before leaving the site, he left an instruction to be buried in the southeast of the cave and a pagoda to be built on the grave. Later, his former wife Sun Bu'er 孫不二 (1119–1182) came to look for the temple. Ma Yu moved her to the hermitage he built in the temple. Both lived ascetically, collecting firewood and water without engaging with each other, solely dedicated to the Dao. Sun also devoted herself to cultivation, ultimately becoming an immortal. She was buried beside the pagoda, and thus the hermitage was named. By the first year of the Hongzhi 弘治 era (1488–1505), a group of lay followers, led by Chai Hui 柴會 (n.d.), funded the reconstruction of the temple with an alchemist Zhang Daoqing 張道清 (n.d.) overseeing the work. By the eighteenth year of the Hongzhi era, a

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[51] "Chongxiu Xuandi miaoji" 重修玄帝廟記 [Record of the Reconstruction of the Temple of the Dark Emperor], stele dated 1568, Miaohou Village, Matun Town, Mengjin County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

Quanzhen Daoist named Wang Jiaoluan 王教鑾 (n.d.) was invited to preside over the unfinished temple construction. Wang worked tirelessly and generously funded the project. Inside the temple, statues were crafted and installed, including the Three Pure Ones, Four Emperors, Two Empresses, Three Officials, Thunder Patriarch, Dark Emperor, Immortals, and Jade Maidens, totaling twenty respected positions. The inscription continues to introduce the history of Wang Jiaoluan:

> Wang Jiaoluan originally served at the Mother Goddess Temple in [characters lost] bao and inherited his ancestors' virtuous roots. From a young age, he became a disciple of Zhao Chongxiao, a Daoist of the Yuntai Abbey on Mount Hua, who taught him the Quanzhen teachings. After receiving his ordination certificate, he traveled widely, seeking truth to understand the Dao. He once held a position at [characters lost], and he rebuilt the Movable Mountain Temple at the foot of Mount Hua. Living a life detached from worldly concerns, he was highly virtuous and greatly respected and loved by donors from all directions. Devoted to filial piety, he returned to his secular family to take care of his mother. Now he was invited to the abbey to help complete this grand project.[52]
>
> 王教鑾□□□保娘娘廟人也，承祖宗善根，自幼投拜華山雲臺觀道人趙崇霄爲師，授全真教，關煩度帖，雲遊四方，參真悟道，嘗供職□□□，重修華山下移山廟一座，逍遥物外，頗有德行，拾方施主無不敬愛。思母盡孝，還至俗家。請至到觀，供成盛事。

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Although the narrative does not specify Wang Jiaoluan's affiliation, the character "Jiao" 教 in his name and "Chong" 崇 in his master Zhao Chongxiao's name, coupled with Zhao's location on Hua Shan, suggest he was likely part of the Huashan lineage. The Huashan lineage poem begins with "Zhi Yi Wu Shang Dao 至一無上道, Chong Jiao Yan Quan Zhen 崇教演全真," indicating that Wang Jiaoluan and his master Zhao Chongxiao probably belong to the seventh and sixth generations of the lineage.

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[52] "Chongjian Sanqing dong shibeiji" 重建三清洞石碑記 [Stone Stele Record of the Reconstruction of the Three Pure Ones Temple], stele dated 1511, Xunyu Village, Guxian Town, Luoning County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

3. Conflict, Coalition, and Collaboration

Building on earlier sections, we now recognize the presence of Quanzhen Daoists in the Luoyang-Xin'an area and their efforts to establish lineages and temples beyond regional boundaries. Their endeavor to sustain a local presence required active engagement with the community. In this section, we will explore specific examples that illustrate their regional involvement, beginning with land disputes, such as encroachments on temple property.

In one of the inscriptions mentioned earlier, created in 1568 for the Dark Emperor Temple in Mengjin County, the author Guan Yizhong 管以中 (n.d.), who self-claimed as a Confucianist (*ruzhe* 儒者), remarked,

> Entrusted by my uncle, I was requested to write this record. Thus, I wrote to instruct the villagers, saying, 'This is what your fathers and brothers have accomplished. When one drinks water, one should always remember one's forebears' virtues. If those who guard it consider using this to accumulate resources to strengthen one's power, by [illegal] annexation of the temple buildings, this is to think of them as mere firewood and rubble, as walls and barriers, then it amounts to nothing more than fishing for carp in a well. Everyone said [characters lost]. This place, originally where the deity is worshipped, is also made possible to manifest the way of serving the lord. In the spirit of honoring the esteemed, the benevolence of loving our kin is thereby broadened.[53]
>
> 仍託□叔父乞予書以紀，因囑鄉人而告曰，斯爾父兄之所成也，飲水□□爾先德，若守者假是以積資強者謀，是以兼併棟宇，思以為薪木□礫，思以為垣壁，是井穀射鮒而已，僉曰□，曰玆本事神之所，而得以展事君之禮，於尊尊之義，而因以廣親親之仁。

Besides moral indoctrination, Guan's remark appears to imply that conflicts over land or property, like the annexation of religious buildings, were common in the local community. This inference is further supported by another inscription documenting a case of encroachment on temple land. Found in Song County, this stele

[53] "Chongxiu Xuandi miaoji" 重修玄帝廟記, 1568.

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inscription recounts the history of building a temple for the Daoist trio-gods, the Three Officials, and also describes a previous dispute over local land property. In the initial year of the Zhengde 正德 era (1506), two lay patrons, Geng Teng 耿騰 (n.d.) and Geng Sheng 耿勝 (n.d.), purchased a piece of land measuring six acres from Geng De 耿德 (n.d.) for three taels of silver and five strings of coin. The land, which was taxed at four *sheng* 升 of grain, was bounded by a lake to the south and rivers on the other three sides. Later, they donated this land to a local Daoist priest named Wu Daoxuan 吳道玄 (n.d.), who then initiated the construction of a temple on this land through fundraising from various sources. However, in 1573, the Geng descendants, Geng Tuo 耿馱 (n.d.), Geng Min 耿駿 (n.d.), and their nephews Geng Chen 耿臣 (n.d.) and Geng Hou 耿厚 (n.d.), seeing the temple's beautiful and prominent location, disregarded their ancestral donation and the contributions from various benefactors to the temple, and declared their intention to sell it for their own benefits. The abbot, Duan Xuangao 段玄高 (n.d.), and others who had invested in the temple's upkeep and renovations opposed this sale. Amidst this contention, a respected local official, Zhang Yun [character lost] 張雲□ (n.d.), and his son (whose name is partially lost), along with Zhang Enyan 張恩言 (n.d.), proposed a resolution. Acknowledging their deep respect for Daoist values and the importance of the temple to the community, they gathered funds from the local community, amounting to 3,600 strings of coin, to redeem and officially transfer the ownership of the temple land to Duan Xuangao, Wang Jingfu 王凈福 (n.d.), and others. This act ensured the land would permanently serve as a sacred site for local worshippers. An additional 7,200 strings of coin were paid to secure a full and undisputable transfer of ownership rights, ensuring no future conflicts over the property. Following the resolution of the dispute, significant renovations and expansions were undertaken, including the construction of six golden halls dedicated to the Three Officials, additional Daoist living quarters, and a mountain gate, all surrounded by newly built walls. These improvements were funded by donations from the local community. To honor the community's collective effort and the temple's importance, and to avoid future conflicts, a stele was erected. It

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serves to permanently record the contributions and settle any disputes involving the Geng family, ensuring the temple continues as a place of worship and community for future generations. At the end of the inscription, a list of Daoist names was provided:

> Abbot: Duan Xuangao. Disciple: Wang Jingfu. Grand disciples: Liang Zhenshan, Wen Zhenmei, Zhang Zhenguo, Feng Zhenjin. Great-grand disciples: Liu Changshun, Lin Chang [character lost]. Uncle-master: Pei Tongxiu.[54]
>
> 住持：段玄高。門徒：王靜福。徒孫：梁真山，温真梅，張真果，馮真金。重孫：劉常順，林常□。師叔：裴通秀。

This list indicates that at least five generations of Longmen Daoists have actively cared for the temple. Their middle name character comes from the first ten characters of the lineage poem: "Dao De Tong Xuan Jing 道德通玄靜, Zhen Chang Shou Tai Qing 真常守太清." Additionally, the successful resolution of the Sanguan Temple land dispute demonstrated the power of a strategic alliance between a Daoist institution and influential members of the local community, the local official Zhang, and his family. However, this outcome was by no means guaranteed. Historical records show that when such alliances failed to form, or when local elite interests were directly opposed to the temple's, the results could be catastrophic for a Daoist institution. The history of the Tongbai Palace (Tongbai gong 桐柏宫) in Zhejiang, as detailed by Jacopo Sacrin, provides a counterexample. Prior to its full restoration during the Qing dynasty, the Tongbai Palace and its affiliated Daoists often fell victim to the local elite. Scarin's study shows that land encroachment by local families during the Ming dynasty was a primary cause of the temple's complete demise.[55] The local gentry justified their seizure of temple property by arguing that the revenue was needed

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[54] "Chongxiu Baoxiang shan Sanguan zushi miao ji" 重修寶象山三官祖師廟記 [Record of the Reconstruction of the Temple of the Three Officials and Zhenwu at Mount Baoxiang], stele dated 1581, Sanguan miao, Sanguan miao Village, Daping Town, Song County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

[55] Jacopo Scarin, *The Tongbai Palace and Its Daoist Communities: A History* (Venice: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, Venice University Press, 2023), vii.

to "supplement the state allowance"[56] for salaried students, highlighting the vulnerability of clerics who lacked powerful local allies. Scarin recounted a dire story of a Daoist recluse, Fan Qingyun, who was forced to endure extreme hardship. According to the sources, local families who had seized the land "treated [him] as a slave . . . waiting for him to pass away, [so that they might] swallow up the whole [temple] land."[57] By comparing the success in securing the land of Sanguan Temple with the failures documented in Tongbai Palace's history, we now gain a more nuanced understanding of the Quanzhen Daoists' position in local society. Their survival and prosperity relied not solely on internal factors but on maintaining a delicate balance of power outside the temple walls. Success was driven by their capacity to build strong alliances, the robustness of their lineage networks, and the particular political and economic pressures exerted by the local clan.

To stay connected with local communities, the Daoists often offer ritual services that address the needs of the faithful. As previously mentioned, a stele inscription was established in 1574 at Dongzhen Abbey in Xin'an to honor the donation of two sets of Yellow Register Paintings and the Yellow Register ritual. Three years later, another stele was inscribed in the Shangqing Palace (Shangqing gong 上清宮) in Luoyang to commemorate a similar contribution. Titled the "Record of the Origins of the Yellow Register Ritual" (*Huanglu yuanqi yiwen ji* 黃籙緣起儀文記), this inscription is more detailed and reveals how Quanzhen Daoists strengthened their local patronage networks by emphasizing the sacred history and efficacy of their rituals. The story begins by tracing a legendary origin of the Yellow Register ritual from the Han dynasty and then recounts a story from the Tang dynasty. A man named Liu Ji 劉楫 (n.d.) was told by a fortune-teller that he would not live long. On his travels, he encountered a group of ghosts of fallen soldiers who begged him for salvation. Liu Ji then visited a Daoist master Sun 孫 at the Shangqing Palace and sponsored a Yellow Register Retreat for these souls. Afterward, Master Sun dreamed that a celestial being

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[56] Scarin, *The Tongbai Palace and Its Daoist Communities: A History*, 126.
[57] Ibid., 137.

descended and announced that Liu Ji, for his hidden merit, would be granted an extension of his life by three cycles (thirty-six years). When Liu Ji later met the same fortune-teller again, the man was astonished, confirming that Liu's hidden merit had indeed manifested and that he would live a long life. Ultimately, Liu Ji not only enjoyed a long life but also had a successful official career and a large family, passing away at a ripe old age. The inscription then connects this historical tale to a patron of the time, a local devotee named Chen Yu 陳雨 (n.d.), who, after hearing the tale, was deeply inspired and decided to fund the creation of "a full set of Yellow Register [Paintings] for perpetual enshrinement" 盡造黃籙一堂，永遠供奉.[58] The Daoists involved in this event are identified as Li Benran 李本然, the abbot, Ma Jingyuan 馬靜淵, the ritual master, and three disciples: Wei Xiqin 魏希琴, [character lost] Xihua □希畫, and Xi Xiqi 習希棋. Ritual practice has been a fundamental aspect of the Quanzhen tradition since its beginning. A key feature of early Quanzhen rituals was the focus on aligning external ceremonies with the practitioners' internal spiritual condition.[59] Ritual acts, such as talismans and incantations, were seen as manifestations of the practitioner's inner energy (*neiqi* 內氣) and spiritual attainment.[60] Besides personal cultivation practices, Quanzhen Daoists also hold large-scale ceremonies to pray for blessings and to send off the souls of the dead.[61] These Daoist ceremonies, which have a long and complex history of development, are often collectively called "Offering" (*jiao* 醮) and "Retreat" (*zhai* 齋).[62] The Yellow Register

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58 "Huanglu yuanqi yiwen ji" 黃籙緣起儀文記 [Record of the Liturgical Text on the Origins of the Yellow Register Retreat], stele dated 1577, Shangqing Palace, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

59 Liu Zhongyu 劉仲宇, "Zaoqi Quanzhen jiao yishi chutan" 早期全真教儀式初探, in *Daojia wenhua yanjiu* 道家文化研究, vol. 23, ed. Chen Guying 陳鼓應 (Beijing: Shenghuo dushu xinzhi sanlian shudian, 2008), 144–166.

60 Ibid., 148.

61 Ibid., 153–157. Zhang Zehong 張澤洪, "Jin-Yuan Quanzhen Dao zhaijiao keyi chutan" 金元全真道齋醮科儀初探, in Chen, *Daojia wenhua yanjiu*, vol. 23, 167–191.

62 For a comprehensive study on the Daoist rituals, see Lü Pengzhi 呂鵬志, *Tangqian Daojiao yishi shigang* 唐前道教儀式史綱 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008).

Retreat is the most significant ritual to deliver the dead.[63] Even after losing imperial prestige, the Quanzhen Daoists continued to maintain ritual service as a key part of their religious identity and a vital tool in their local survival and strategic plans for growth. However, if we examine the inscription's narration closely, we will see that it was not only a record of the ritual service but also revealed several strategies they used to maintain local patronage. For example, the narrative in the inscription is not a dry doctrinal explanation but a vivid story that makes the benefits of the Yellow Register ritual tangible in terms of blessings most valued by patrons: longevity, a successful career, and a flourishing family. Moreover, the inscription skillfully creates a direct link between the historical tale and the contemporary act of donation. Chen Yu's patronage was a direct result of being inspired by the tale of Liu Ji. This forms a causal chain within the narration: hearing the tale of efficacy leads to developing a sense of reverence, which further leads to taking the action of patronage. In other words, this not only records Chen Yu's merit but also establishes a model for future devotees, implying that by following his example, they too could receive similar blessings. Additionally, in the story, Liu Ji's success with the blessings depends on the assistance of a Daoist expert such as ritual master Sun, who performed the ceremony for him. This highlights Daoists' role as indispensable intermediaries between humans and the divine. The end of the inscription meticulously lists the names of the donors, from the main patron, Chen Yu, and his entire family (i.e., father, mother, wife, sons, and grandsons) to the heads of various local

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[63] For studies on Yellow Register Retreat, see: Shirley Sze Wan Leung 梁斯韻, "The Development and Transformation of the Yellow Register Retreat in the Southern Song Dynasty: A Case Study of Jiang Shuyu's Standardized Rituals of the Supreme Yellow Register Retreat" 南宋黃籙齋儀的發展與變革——以蔣叔輿《無上黃籙大齋立成儀》研究為例 (Ph.D diss., The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2015); Zhang Chaoran 張超然, "Zhaike yu jingfa: Song-Yuan huanglu zhaifa yanjiu" 齋科與經法：宋元黃籙齋法研究, in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Taoist Ritual in Chinese Local Society in Comparative and Historical Perspective* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2015), 329–358; Lai Chi Tim 黎志添, "The Daoist Identity of the Yellow Register Retreat in the Southern Song: A Case Study of Jin Yunzhong's Great Rites of Lingbao," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 20 (2011): 63–93.

associations (*sheshou* 社首) and other devotees from the village and surrounding areas, further suggesting that the temple's ritual services were not only for individuals but also acted as a catalyst for community cohesion. A successful ritual or a major donation could unite scattered devotees into a community of merit, with the Daoist temple and its abbot, in this case, Li Benran, naturally becoming the center of this social network.

In addition to fostering individual prosperity and communal cohesion during peaceful times, local Daoists also actively participated in local efforts in combating public crises. A stele inscription was created in 1607 to commemorate the establishment of a lay association of plague gods (*Wenshen she* 瘟神社) in Mengjin County.[64] Coauthored by two Confucian students and calligraphed by a Daoist, the inscription states that when a devastating plague swept across China in 1588, it left a permanent mark on the area north of Mount Mang, prompting a local gentleman, Wang Mingzi 王明 (n.d.), to take action. Moved by the suffering he saw around him, he established a Plague God Temple nearby. Inside the temple, five statues of the Plague Gods were worshipped alongside the Medicine King (*yaowang* 藥王) Sun Simiao 孫思邈, who lived as a famous physician during the Sui and Tang dynasties. Years later, to give thanks for the plague's recession, a lay association of forty-eight members, led by the local Wang 王 and Jiang 蔣 clans, sponsored a three-year cycle of ceremonies. This entire effort, from the ritual performance to the final inscription of the commemorative stele in 1607, was overseen by the Daoist Wang Zhensu 王真素 (n.d.). Goossaert has examined the dynamic and complex relationship between Quanzhen Daoists and local cults in Jin'gaishan, showing that a key strategy for Quanzhen expansion was the integration and management of existing local temples.[65] The Plague God Temple serves as a rural parallel of Goossaert's urban cases: founded by a lay community to address a specific local need, it was then served by a resident Daoist specialist. In this role, Wang Zhensu acted as

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[64] "Wenshen she bei" 瘟神社碑 [Stele of the Plague God Shrine], stele dated 1607, Han Guangwudi ling, Mengjin County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

[65] Goossaert, "The Jin'gaishan Network."

an indispensable service provider for a lay devotional congregation (*she* 社), another form of collaboration termed by Goossaert as "contractual."[66] Although the inscription did not explicitly specify the contractual relationship between Wang Zhensu and the lay community, it was the community that founded the temple and organized the association. It is likely they hired Wang as a clerical manager to live in the temple and oversee its affairs, demonstrating the link between the lay employer and their resident ritual specialist. Goossaert characterizes this as a scenario where the community entrusts a professional Daoist to manage its local cult and rituals. In short, as this inscription illustrates, during a time when modern medicine was unavailable, this Daoist cleric played a key role in the community's response by providing essential ritual services to help alleviate the collective trauma caused by the epidemic. This suggests that Daoists' involvement in local society was not only built on alliances with lay patrons but also deeply rooted in their collaboration with and management of local cults.

The collaboration between Daoists and local Confucian students or degree-holders in penning the stele inscriptions raised another interesting inquiry about the relationship between local Daoism and local elites. In fact, it is very common that many inscriptions are drafted by the educated local elites, ranging from "*xiangsheng*" 庠生 or "*shengyuan*" 生員 (i.e., enrolled students in local Confucian academies, sometimes called *xiucai* 秀才) to "*jinshi*" 進士 (i.e., candidates who passed the imperial examination). Sometimes, local officials also participated in producing inscriptions, such as the county magistrate (*zhixian* 知縣) and judicial officer (*dianshi* 典史). While it might be a polite gesture for the Confucian students or scholar-officials to draft inscriptions for local religious institutions, it is also likely that they demonstrated a collaborative spirit rather than a conflicting attitude. Lai Chi Tim, in his investigation of over one hundred temple inscriptions found in Guangzhou, argues that many Confucian scholar-officials actively supported, funded, and legitimized local temples and popular cults. They did this by framing the cults' social function through the classical concept of "shendao

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[66] Goossaert, "Resident Specialists and Temple Managers in Late Imperial China."

shejiao" 神道設教—"establishing teachings via the Way of gods."[67] The logic behind it is that these elites believed the "Way of gods," especially the popular belief in divine reward for good deeds and punishment for evil, was a powerful and effective tool for moral education and maintaining social order. They did not see it as a threat but as a complement to the official governance of the state. Participation in these religious activities was likely more about practical local governance than personal belief. The inscription introduced at the beginning of this section exemplifies the idea of "*shendao shejiao*." According to the author Guan Yizhong, a local Confucianist, "This place, originally where the deity is worshipped, is also made possible to manifest the way of serving the lord. In honoring the esteemed, the benevolence of loving our kin is thereby broadened." This strongly suggests that, in the eyes of the local elites, the act of worshipping gods is akin to venerating the secular ruler. Another inscription from Xin'an provides additional evidence of the collaborative spirit shared among various social and religious groups. The inscription was created to commemorate the reconstruction of a temple dedicated to the local Dragon Gods. After recounting its legendary origin, the inscription states that,

> The gods rely on people for their sacrificial offerings, and people revere the gods to receive their response. If people do not revere the gods of heaven and earth, from where would their food and clothing come? It is truly by the gods' power that we are protected. When disasters like drought occur, people pray; they ask for wind and the wind comes; they pray for rain, and the rain is bestowed. This is due to the sincerity of the people's mind, which the gods swiftly reward.[68]

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[67] Lai Chi Tim, "'Shendao shejiao'—Cong Guangzhou fu defang miaoyu beike wenxian tansuo Ming-Qing shidafu dui minjian shenci miaoyu de lichang"「神道設教」——從廣州府地方廟宇碑刻文獻探索明清士大夫對民間神祠廟宇的立場, in *Di sijie guoji hanxue huiyi lunwenji: fu'an de lishi–dang'an kaojue yu qingshi yanjiu (shang ce)* 第四屆國際漢學會議論文集：覆案的歷史——檔案考掘與清史研究（上冊）, ed. Chen His-yuan 陳熙遠 (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 2013), 315–353.

[68] "Chongxiu lingxian jiulong gongmiao zhi ji" 重修靈顯九龍宮廟之記 [Record of the Reconstruction of the Numinous Nine Dragons Palace], stele dated 1458, Longjian Village, Tiemen Town, Xin'an County, Luoyang City, Henan Province.

> 矧以神依人而血食，人敬神而感應，為人不敬天地神明，然衣食何由而所得，實乃神力之所祐也。或有遇災旱，所以祈者，然求風而風生，禱雨而雨施，乃人之誠敬之心，神必報之以速。

This inscription is another textbook example of Lai Chi Tim's study of elites in the Ming-Qing Guangzhou region, who justified supporting local cults by claiming that the "Way of gods" complemented the "Way of the King" in teaching morality and maintaining order, since the dragon cult's main role was to prevent drought to benefit the people. At the end of the inscription, a list of participants is provided:

> Written by Gong Wenyi of Nanchang, the County Magistrate of Xin'an. Seal script for the header, calligraphy, and carving by Zhao Yu, a stipendiary student of the Confucian academy. [Name missing], the Judicial Officer of Xin'an. Lü [characters missing], the Scribe of the Courier Station. Yi Gui, the Head of Buddhist Affairs. Lang Ran, the Abbot Monk. Jia Ying, Instructor at the Confucian Academy. [Name missing], the Postmaster of the Hangu Pass Station. Zhao Xuanzhen, the Head of Daoist Affairs. Gong Mian, Instructor of Yin-Yang arts. Lü Ying, the painter. Wang Rong and Wang Sheng, the stonemasons.[69]

> 新安縣知縣南昌龔問益撰，儒學廩膳生員趙郁篆蓋書丹并鐫。新安縣典史□□□，遞運所太史閭□□，僧會義貴，住持僧郎然。儒學訓導賈瑛，函關驛驛丞□□□，道會趙玄真，陰陽訓術鞏冕。丹青呂瑛，石匠：王榮、王昇。

This list of participants reveals a broad coalition of the local power structure. The project's legitimacy is established by the County Magistrate, who authored the text. His involvement signifies an endorsement by the state, which saw this local cult not as a threat but as an asset to good governance. By ensuring the gods were properly honored, the magistrate was fulfilling his duty to protect the people's livelihood. Confucian students and instructors provided the cultural capital for the project through their calligraphy and

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[69] "Chongxiu lingxian jiulong gongmiao zhi ji" 重修靈顯九龍宮廟之記, 1458.

composition, implying that the local gentry viewed it as a legitimate and worthy endeavor that reinforced communal values and stability. The participation of official leaders from both the Daoist and Buddhist communities suggests that the established religious orders were not in competition with the local dragon cult but instead were integrated partners within the region's broad religious sphere. Therefore, by supporting the local cult of the dragon gods, the magistrate, the gentry, the Daoists, and the Buddhists were all participating in a collective act of "*shendao shejiao*."

Conclusion

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Following the suppression of religious activities during the Cultural Revolution, Daoism began a gradual restoration in the 1980s. In her research on the contemporary Thunder Drum lineage, Karine Martin highlights the significant efforts made by Quanzhen Daoists in this period of revival. She notes that their success relied on a combination of reconstructing local temples, holding official roles within Daoist associations, and maintaining small and unofficial temples for local communities.[70] Martin's study reveals that this modern restoration was driven by a family-like lineage of Daoists working in coordinated collaboration with local government and laypeople.[71] The historical patterns of adaptation and local engagement that enabled this modern revival are not new; as this study has shown, they are deeply rooted in the strategies developed by Quanzhen Daoists centuries earlier.

This paper has argued that the persistence of Quanzhen Daoism in Ming-dynasty northwest Henan was driven by a multifaceted strategy of collaboration, which operated at both the clerical and communal levels. After losing the imperial favor they enjoyed during the Yuan,[72] these Daoists did not simply decline; instead, they

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[70] Karine Martin, *Monastic Daoism Transformed: The Fate of the Thunder Drum Lineage* (St. Petersburg, FL: Three Pines Press, 2025), 36–76.

[71] Ibid., 58–72.

[72] This is not to say Quanzhen lost support from all authorities. Support from local authorities, from feudal princes to local governments, is found in many places, including Shanxi, Shandong, and Gansu. See Zhao Weidong 趙偉東, ed., *Shandong Daojiao beike ji* 山東道教碑刻集 (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 2010), 185;

proactively embedded themselves into the local landscape through a series of internal and external partnerships. Internally, Quanzhen clerics of the Longmen lineage fostered their own institutional cohesion by meticulously documenting their lineage succession on stone and building transregional networks for mutual support. Externally, and perhaps more crucially for their survival, Quanzhen Daoists embedded themselves in local society by collaborating with various community actors. This engagement took several forms: they acted as community mediators, forging strategic alliances with local elites to guard temple land against encroachment; they functioned as essential service providers, offering ritual services like the Yellow Register ritual to local lay associations; and they participated as integrated partners in the broader ritual sphere by joining local efforts to support popular cults, such as those for Plaque Gods and Dragon Gods, especially in times of public crisis like plagues and famines.

In short, collaboration is the key in all aspects of their local engagement. Through collaborative efforts with lay patrons and fellow Daoists, they forged extensive networks that allowed them to thrive in local contexts even as they adapted to changing social and political conditions. This perspective shifts the focus away from the influence of elite patronage or state policies to highlight the agency of local religious communities in sustaining and transforming Daoist practices. One thing noteworthy, though, is that while their internal clerical identity was clearly defined by their Longmen lineage, their public-facing role was often that of a competent Daoist, a trusted ritual expert whose specific affiliation was less important to patrons than their ability to serve the community's needs. By focusing on these diverse dimensions of collaboration, this study bridges the findings of scholars who focus on internal lineage construction with those who study external social engagement. We now see these, not as separate activities, but as two sides of the same strategy: internal

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Zhang Jinping 張晉平, ed., *Jinzhong beike xuancui* 晉中碑刻選粹 (Taiyuan: Shanxi guji chubanshe, 2001), 180; Qiu Fei 仇非, *Xinxiu kongtong shanzhi* 新修崆峒山誌 (Lanzhou: Gansu renmin chubanshe, 1996), 66, 77. Richard Wang's studies have shown that many Ming feudal princes revered Daoism and became major financial supporters of Daoist activities. See Richard G. Wang, *The Ming Prince and Daoism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2022), 3–31.

clerical cohesion enabled and was reinforced by successful external community partnerships.

This study, while providing new insights, has certain limitations stemming from its source base. Its reliance on stele inscriptions means the picture it presents may be an idealized one. As public and commemorative documents, steles are designed to celebrate success and communal harmony and are less likely to record failures or internal conflicts. Furthermore, while this paper focuses on the social function of ritual, the inscriptions provide little detail on the liturgical content or the actual performance of the ceremonies themselves. That being said, this study has focused on the epigraphic record, in large part because other genres of materials for the specific rural areas examined here are not as widely available as they are for major urban centers or famous historical figures. However, where possible, future studies should also consult local gazetteers, legal documents from county archives, and the personal collected writings of local elites. These sources could provide less idealized accounts of temple life, revealing details about economic management, legal disputes, and the personal beliefs that motivated patronage. As Goossaert has emphasized in his studies of Quanzhen Daoism, the history of religious orders like Quanzhen is not just the story of individual masters but of a broader social process. It has its own logic, rather different from the politically convenient notion of "decay" that is often posited for modern Chinese religious institutions. This logic can be seen over the long term if one looks at all the available evidence, especially the records of the religious communities themselves: doctrinal, literary, and historiographical printed texts, but also inscriptions and documents such as deeds, registers, regulations or even account books. In this regard, the historian's focus is not on the famous masters, but more on the rank-and-file clerics. They may not have written great poems or admirable treatises, but they did their duty with regard to the lay people supporting them. Their careers and the services they offered (rituals, teachings, and community work) measured up to what was expected from a Quanzhen cleric, and it is that regularity that entrenched their order in Chinese society.[73]

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[73] Goossaert, "Quanzhen, What Quanzhen?"; Goossaert, "Resident Specialists and Temple Managers in Late Imperial China."

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廟牆之外：明代河南西北地區的全真道

劉婧瑜

摘要

研究聚焦於明代全真道在豫西北地區的社會史，強調其存續主要依賴多元化的合作策略。研究利用洛陽及周邊縣市的碑刻資料，分析這些合作策略如何在教團內部以及社區層面展開。從內部來看，全真龍門派的道士透過合作來維繫傳統，他們建立跨區域的宮觀網絡，同時也透過本地宮觀的管理來傳承法脈。在山門以外，他們與地方社區建立了多方面合作，包括與地方精英結盟以調解土地糾紛、為居民和社群提供儀式服務，以及參與民間信仰的管理。這些案例證明，「合作」是全真道適應地方社會的重要機制。此次研究提供了一個來自明代豫西北山區的案例，連結了學界關於全真道在地方內部法脈傳承與外部社區參與的研究模式，突出了普通道士在自下而上的道教組織塑造過程中的積極作用。

關鍵詞：全真道、龍門派、碑刻、地方宗教、河南

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