

## Gods and Ancestors: Cases of Crossover

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*In the sixteenth century, the alliance of Confucian ritual with the state relegated village practices to the category of the "indigenous" ... In this complex situation, the lay vision of "civil society" appears as another form of religion, and to affirm that, before it appeared, there was no society distinct from the state comes down to saying society sacrificed to false gods ... An historical perspective on this ritual change therefore implies envisaging the construction of concurrent orthodoxies and the interaction of the state with local society in this process... In China, there was no church from which to liberate the government, just religions in competition, among which the belief in the state was pre-eminent.<sup>1</sup>*

In an article published in *Sinologie française* in the year 2000, Yang Yanjie (楊彦杰) explores the crossovers we found in southwestern Fujian between two categories generally thought of as "airtight": ancestors and gods.<sup>2</sup> Having first recalled the standard definition of the word "ancestor" as referring to all those men and women who, having married and had at least one son, may legitimately be worshipped on a domestic altar or in an ancestor hall, he looks at five cases of ancestors who are also (or instead) worshiped as local gods. For Yang, such "ancestor gods" are a pre-Ming phenomenon which, following Chan Ying-hoi (陳永海),<sup>3</sup> he links at least in part to the currency of Taoist initiation names (*langhao* 郎號) and the influence of the She (畲族) and the Yao (搖族) in the region. In the present essay, after examining the most interesting cases of crossover we have found among the Hakka, I

shall describe the remarkable case Yang and I have recently discovered in Zhao'an County (詔安縣) in south-eastern Fujian, and then summarize Chang Jianhua's research on ancestors and earth gods in Huizhou (徽州) in Song and Yuan times. Comparative analysis of these three modes of crossover will then form the basis for a more general reflection on the nature of the ancestors and the gods in late imperial China.

### I. Hakka Ancestor Gods

The first two cases described by Yang Yanjie involve Lüshan (鹿山) Taoist tales of founding ancestors chasing away an evil earth god and taking its place; the third concerns the sole female immortal He Xiangju (何仙姑), who is evinced by a local Buddhist saint; the fourth is a Taoist hermit who becomes a local god; and the fifth is an historical personage claimed locally as an ancestor and worshiped like a local god. We shall examine each in turn, and then add a few other cases encountered among the Hakka of Fujian and Guangdong.

The first case concerns Tu Dalang (涂大郎) and Lai Balang (賴二郎), founding ancestors, respectively, of Tufang (涂坊) and Laifang (賴坊), two allied villages in south-eastern Changting County (長汀縣) (south-western Fujian). A version of their tale is told in a 1941 edition of the Tu clan register:

*It is said that in the time of our ancestor there was a perverse devil (邪魅) who, acting as god of the soil, did harm (依社為害). Every year he required the sacrifice of a maiden boy and girl in exchange for peace and prosperity. Else, all households would suffer misfortune. Our ancestor said: "An orthodox god in charge of a territory (神明正直, 主宰一方), having consumed its blood offerings, should then guarantee the people's dwellings and ensure their food supply. Who ever heard of gods that harm the people and enjoy maiden boys and girls? There can be no doubt but that this is a demon (鬼物).*

Together with Lai Balang and Gong Liulang, Tu Dalang goes to Lüshan (驪山) to "learn the methods" (學法):

*When they had mastered the methods, they returned home, overturned the temple altar (翻其廟壇), uprooted the tree of the earth god (伐其社樹), and threw it into the stream. Till this day the traces remain. Having recovered their tranquillity, the people worshiped them as earth gods (遂奉為社). They sculpted the divine image of the two ancestors (塑二公神像) and made annual sacrifice to them (歲時致祭). Their numinous responsiveness is without equal (靈感無並). At the end of the Ming, when roving bandits invaded from Guangdong, the two ancestors drove them off with their spirit soldiers (以神兵追逐).<sup>4</sup>*

According to local legend, the two ancestors, before going to Lüshan, promised the chief local gods "a thousand years of floats and ten thousand of decorated lanterns" (千年故事, 萬年花燈) if the gods would protect them on their journey. This is the origin of one of two major festivals in Tufang, namely, the parade of floats and lanterns that takes place in the first month. The second is a Taoist sacrifice in honor of the two ancestor-gods, in the first nine days of the ninth month. The chief local gods are called the Three Buddhas and Ancestral Masters (*Sanyao zushi* 三佛祖師) and are identified as Dingguang (定光), Fuhu (伏虎), and Guanyin (觀音), and I have therefore summarized the situation as "Confucian' ancestors [who are] by turns 'Buddhist' devotees, Taoist' exorcists, and 'popular' gods of the soil."<sup>5</sup> Neither the Three Buddhas nor the two ancestors have a temple of their own. Rather, small statues of them circulate in the village, moving every six months to a new house, usually, a lineage segment house whose central space is an ancestor hall. The Three Buddhas also move yearly between the two allied villages of Tufang and Laifang.

Yang's second case concerns Li Wulang (李伍郎) of Changxiao

(長校) in southern Qingliu County (清流縣), said to have come in the year 1088 to Changxiao.<sup>6</sup> According to Li Shengbao, who is writing in his native village, “the people of Changxiao not only consider Li Wulang to be their founding ancestor, they also worship him as a god: That is, there is no higher object of veneration (是村人至高無上之崇拜對象).”<sup>7</sup> Li Wulang is confronted by the same dilemma as Tu Dalang, namely, an earth god who requires the annual sacrifice of a maiden boy and girl. When it comes his turn to make the sacrifice, he “kneels constantly and begged for a reprieve, and sometimes walked to and fro on the covered bridge (屋橋).”<sup>8</sup> One day he is suddenly accosted by an old man with a beard, who whisks him off to Maoshan (茅山) “practice the military arts” (練武). Li Wulang passes his test just in time to come back and kick the evil earth god off the covered bridge into the water below. “From thenceforth, there was no longer a man-eating earth god on the covered bridge of Changxiao. There was just the imprint of Wulang’s foot on the stone wall where he had kicked. The people of Changxiao never again sacrificed to the earth god.” After Wulang’s death, the villagers sculpted his image and worshiped him as a god. At the end of the Yuan, according to a passage cited by Li Shengbao from the lineage register, “bandits swarmed, and they invaded the village repeatedly. The people lit incense and prayed to their ancestor: Suddenly they saw soldiers on the mountains all around and heard the sound of gongs and drums... Only then did they realize the divine power of their ancestor (始知公之神靈).”<sup>9</sup>

The statue of Wulang is placed in the innermost room of the lineage hall, together with that of the Lord of Wealth, Sire Zou (鄒公), on whom, see below). On the third day of the first month, Wulang is carried into the hall’s main room, where he is washed and his clothes changed in preparation for his birthday celebration on the fourth. On the thirteenth, a major sacrifice is made on Wulang’s behalf. In memory of his trip to Maoshan (Reed Mountain) to “study the methods,” chickens are placed on three bowls each of the blood of a pig, a goat, and a chicken. These nine bowls are then buried at the village water exit. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of the first month, and again on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of the sixth month

Dalang’s statue is paraded, together with that of the Lord of Wealth, through the village to receive offerings at six separate points and then around the village several times. Finally, to the deafening sound of firecrackers and powder guns, the statues are rushed back into the temple.

The case of He Xiang, He the Immortal Maiden, would seem at first glance to be radically different from the first two, as it appears to concern one of the Eight Immortals.<sup>10</sup> According to a tale collected in 1993 by Zhou Lifang (周立方), when the Buddhist monk Dingguang arrived at Lion Cliff Cave (獅岩洞) in southern Wuping County (武平

*The Immortal Maiden He already occupied it, so Dingguang used magic to create a flood. He told the immortal He to go out and look and, sure enough, the river was full of water buffalo and pigs, and many people had drowned. While He Xiang was outside, Dingguang sat down in her place, and when she came back, he refused to budge. So Maiden He leaped to the top of the cave and said: “If you don’t go, I’ll urinate on you!” And that is why water trickles down the side of the cave.”<sup>11</sup>*

Closer examination, however, reveals a number of similarities: the host immortal turns out to be the daughter of a local founding ancestor, one He Dalang (何大郎). When Dingguang steals her place, Dalang impressed, makes Lion Cliff over to him and gives him land to support a temple and monks. According to “A Record of Dalang’s Move to Southern Cliff” (大郎公遷南巖遺記) local villagers told Dalang when he arrived that “this is a cave for ghosts and a lair for demons (鬼洞精穴).” The author of the record explains the cliff was used by bandits:

*They killed people there, and on cloudy days when it rained, the ghosts gathered and howled: it was a cave for*

ghosts. Human blood soaked the trees: it was a lair for sprites. When our ancestor came, he sacrificed a goat and asked an exorcist to convert them to the path of the gods (請法師化為神道). With thunder fire he burned the mountain and drove out or destroyed the ghosts and sprites (驅滅鬼精).<sup>12</sup>

At the very least, then, we may say that the context of the story is quite similar to that of the first two: founding ancestors who have recourse to exorcism to rid the area they wish to occupy of bloodthirsty gods. But He Xiangyu herself does not fit the category of ancestor because she “neither drank wine nor ate meat, but hid her tracks on the cliff.”<sup>13</sup> In her case, the *doufa* (鬥法) magic warfare typical of these rituals gets transposed into a competition between Buddhist and Taoist vegetarians.

Yang Yanjie's fourth example is Ouyang zhenxian (歐陽真仙), the True Immortal Ouyang, who is the focus of one of Qingliu's (清流縣) most vital cults, with a massive pilgrimage to his mountain in the seventh month and, in the county seat, a month of Taoist sacrifices. The god's statue was carried in from the mountain on the third day of the fourth month (4/3) and carried back on 5/3 by whichever ward was in charge that year. During his month-long stay, the statue circulates through the town's ten wards for local sacrifices. On the last day of the central altar, a Taoist performed a Universal Salvation ritual. Ouyang's cult has in fact spread well beyond Qingliu: Jiang Chunfu, a native of Yongding County (永定縣), recalls as a child seeing the immortal's name written in the center of the red papers pasted by local farmers on their domestic altars or in their kitchens. When he participated in the pilgrimage of the seventh month in 1997, the temple keeper told him one to two thousand people from all over west-central Fujian had been coming daily since the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Like He Xiangyu, Ouyang is also claimed by a local lineage, which says he was a grandson of the founder. A temple was built in the village and an annual festival held on 2/22.

Yang's final case is Sire Xiao (蕭公), the son of the founding ancestor of the Xiaos of the small southern Qingliu village of Dongshan (東山).<sup>14</sup> This son is identified as Xiao Yu (蕭瑜), an early Tang official. His statue, together with that of his wife, presides in a small but quite beautiful temple at the village water exit, just in from a covered bridge. There used also to be a statue of the dog said to have saved him from a fire by nuzzing at the sleeping Xiao's leg. Sire Xiao woke up and angrily bit and killed the dog before he realized what was happening. In memory of the dog, during the first five days of the annual festival from the fifth to the 16<sup>th</sup> of the first month, all the villagers eat a specially prepared “dog congee (狗粥).” After worshipping Sire Xiao in his temple on the ninth and the dog on the tenth, all three statues are carried, first to Xiao Yu's father's hall some two kilometres away and then to the village hall in the middle of the village dedicated to the 12<sup>th</sup>-generation founder of Dongshan itself. From the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup>, after a sacrifice to the dragon head inside the hall, the Xiao parade with dragon lanterns which they link together in front of the hall. On the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup>, by the river in front of the temple, a ritual to save the solitary souls (*shun* 孤魂) is performed, and on the following day, at the same site, the sacrifice is concluded by sending off epidemic gods (*nenshen* 瘟神).

There are actually quite a few more cases of ancestors functioning as gods in the Hakka regions. One is the Sire Zou we encountered above. According to Ma Chuanyong of the famous village of bookmakers and sellers, Mawu (馬屋), Sire Zou was the chief god worshipped in a temple variously known as both Sire Zou (鄒公廟) and Alliance of the Six Temple (六約廟). Jointly founded in the Ming by all of Sibao township (四堡鄉), it contained six gods referred to as sires Zou (鄒公), Ma (馬公), Lai (賴公), Yan (嚴公), Wang (王公), and Yang (楊公).<sup>15</sup> Zou is said to be Zou Yinglong (鄒應龍) of the Southern Song, who miraculously saved the Mas 11<sup>th</sup>-generation ancestor Ma Xun (馬馴) when the latter was on his way to the capital to pass the exams. When Zou appeared to him that night in a dream, Ma Xun—who was to go on to become a high official and, in 1496, produce the first lineage register in Mawu—promised he would make a

statue of him upon returning home and would invite him yearly on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first month to Mawu. This was indeed done, and the statue of Sire Zou was placed next to that of Sire Ma—said to be the Han general Ma Yuan (馬援) and also “our ancestor.”<sup>17</sup> On the 14<sup>th</sup> of the first month, in the morning, the statues of all the gods of Mawu including those of sires Zou and Ma, were carried to Sire Zou’s temple just outside Mawu. There a parade of floats, orchestras, and all the gods formed and then, “in imitation of Ma Xun going out on inspection,”<sup>18</sup> went out through the village. The next day, again in the morning, Sire Zou alone was—and still is—paraded, this time stopping at each house for an offering. The name of this ritual is “welcoming the Lord of Wealth, Sire Zou (迎鄒公福主).” It may be added that the neighboring Zou lineage provides 60% of Ma consorts.<sup>18</sup>

Such “sire” gods are in fact legion in the area. Not infrequently they come in groups of threes, as Gong, Liu-, and Yanggong in the Shaowu area, or Xiao-, Zhang-, and Raogong in Mingqi County (明岐縣). I suspect that all of these “sires” can be traced to local lineages, but we have done the footwork only for Sire Rao (饒公). We first encountered him together with sires Xiao and Zhang on Jade Dragon Peak (Yulongfeng 玉龍峰) some 20 kilometers north of the county seat. Sire Zhang, we were told, had “obtained the Way” on this mountain and each of the three statues “belongs” to a specific village at the foot of the mountain. Sire Rao, for example, belongs to Lower Gully Pond (Xiakengtang 下坑塘), a village inhabited by Xies and Wus. They go to fetch their god on the sixth of the first month and bring him back on the 16<sup>th</sup>. For the duration of the festival, Sire Rao is placed in a Guandi temple in Lower Gully. According to a Xie lineage register dated 1878 the Wus and the Xies had a joint ancestor hall on Jade Dragon Peak. It adds the following intriguing remark: “Lineage halls in the past all had statues of the gods for accompanying sacrifices (昔時之祠皆塑神像祀祀).”<sup>19</sup>

Sire Rao is thus worshiped as a local god by people of a different surname, but he is also worshiped as a god—and not as an

ancestor—by Raos from his native village of Tailingtou (台頭頂 Terrace Peak). Terrace Peak is a small unilineage village of some 300 Raos in the pressed hills of eastern Mingqi. Every year in the second month, they go to Balanced Peak (均峰)<sup>20</sup> to welcome sires Rao and Zhang to their village festival. According to the lineage outline part of their 1743 register, Sire Rao is their fifth-generation ancestor. A note adds: “This is Lincong, who cultivated perfection and became a Buddha; a memorial tablet to his enfeoffment as Grand Master who Aids Orthodoxy (既雲從宗真成佛，奏封佑正大師).”<sup>21</sup> He is said in a text dated 1697 to have been born in the year 810 and to have, “from youth, been solitary and practiced vegetarianism; when he grew up, he built a reed hut on Balanced Peak.”<sup>22</sup> Aged 73, he prepared a funeral pyre, came home to take leave of his elder sister, then returned to the mountain to set himself afire. He was forthwith “worshiped as a local god (宗之為土神).” Throughout the area, prayers for rain or shine had miraculous results (四方雨暘祈禱，其有靈應).” Four sites of worship were built on the mountain. At the end of the Song, he appeared to Wen Tianxiang (文天祥) and provided thirst-quenching tea for his entire army. Wen asked his grand received the title given above.

A very different kind of divine ancestor is the Gupo (姑婆)<sup>23</sup> worshiped by the Chens of Dongkeng (東坑 East Gully) village in Jinglu County.<sup>24</sup> Said to be “the most venerated god in Dongkeng,” she was a village daughter who was married out to a Li in the fairly distant village of Liushui (流水 Running Water). When her husband died shortly after their marriage, she vowed to remain a widow and care her parents-in-law with devotion. One day she failed to return from a sortie into the hills to cut firewood. In accord with custom, her family of origin was informed. Having searched for her unsuccessfully in the hills, and assuming she had committed suicide by throwing herself in the river, the Chens dragged the river, but all they found was a stick. Thus they brought back to Dongkeng and placed in the main lineage hall. Every year, on 7/9, the people of Dongkeng would begin to eat vegetarian food, and a team would set out for Running Water to fetch Gupo’s “divine soul” (*shenhun* 神魂).<sup>25</sup> The trip there and back took

four days. As the party approached on the 12<sup>th</sup>, representatives of the Chen lineage went outside the village to welcome their native daughter back. Her small palanquin having been placed in the ancestor hall on a central table covered with vegetarian offerings, a sacrificial wai was held out that attributed the village's good fortune to Gupo and referred to the festival as that of the Central Prime (Zhongyuan 中元). That night an opera troupe began to perform and would continue to perform through the 17<sup>th</sup>, except on the 15<sup>th</sup>, when a sacrifice (*jiao* 醮) was done by a Buddhist monk invited from the nearest large temple. At midnight after Taoists had finished exorcising the village, every family killed a pig, a goat, and a duck, in preparation for a midday feast on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Leaving Minxi, we will look at one example each from Yuebei (北 north-western Guangdong), Yuedong (粵東 north-eastern Guangdong), and Gannan (southern Jiangxi). Tam Wai Lun, in his study of Nine Peaks (九峰) in Lechang County (樂昌縣),<sup>26</sup> gives two examples of Taoist ancestors worshiped as gods. The first concerns the Xie lineage of Chailiao (茶料), whose tradition of hereditary *Yuan* Tam traces back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when one Zhaoshou (號丙四郎) (1524-1606), Taoist alias Bingsiliang (號丙四郎), came from Ruyuan (樂源) County to settle in Chailiao.<sup>27</sup> According to Tam's local informant himself a Taoist from the Xie family born in 1919, the Xie lineage contained, above, a statue of Guanyin and, below, the tablets of the ancestors. But in front of these, there were also four statues of Taoist from the family, namely, Zhaoshou himself, Zhaoshou's son, and his grandfather and great-grandfather of the informant. All the Taoists in the Xie tradition had *langhao* (郎號) like those of Zhaoshou.

Contrary to the second case, from the Fu (扶) lineage of Shanghai (上廊), there is no indication the Xie Taoists were also worshiped as gods by other lineages. The Fuses, who claim to have come from Fujian in the early Ming, are divided into three branches, all of which are Taoists. Two of them had their statues in the Fu lineage hall, and one of these, Sirc Qishan (岐山公), also called Fu Gen Yilang (扶根一郎), in the late Ming/early Qing, was also worshiped by local boat people, who

in statues of him on their boats. According to the Fu lineage register noted by Tam, Sirc Qishan was an eighth-generation ancestor. On his deathbed, he summoned his fellow clansmen and told them that he would come to their help whenever they called on him, and Tam did in fact hear many tales of his miraculous interventions on their behalf.<sup>28</sup> He does these saving acts through his troops of spirit soldiers.

Zhang Quancing supplies three examples from near the Wuhua county seat in Yuedong.<sup>29</sup> In his home village of Hutian, 80% of the named Zhang, the Sire Zhang Temple (張公廟) is dedicated to a Zhang who is said to have been a Ming-era commandant who drove off pirates. He is also said to be the son of a local founder in Changle County (長樂縣), to have learned exorcism at Maoshan, and to have been enfeoffed after his death. He carries on his healing work by possessing mediums who act on his behalf. Across the river from Hutian, in Huangpu, some 4,000 Lis worship a Sire Li (李公) identified as none other than the founder of Taoism, Laojun (老君). A third large village also essentially unlineage village inhabited by Zhongs worships Sire Zhong Wan Shisanlang (鍾萬十三郎), said to have learned exorcism from the Immortal Master of Snow Mountain (雪山仙師), a fellow student with the Master of Maoshan. While non-Zhong worshippers refer to him as Zhong Wangong, Zhongs call him "great uncle" (叔公丈); he also works through mediums. During these temples' annual festivals, the mediums must ascend a sword ladder and be carried about in a sword-filled palanquin. Many mediums from the area may come to ascend the ladder, but only the temple's own mediums can parade in the sedan chair.

The Gannan example is recounted by Zhang Sijie in his article on ancestor worship among the river people of Ganzhou.<sup>30</sup> The Xiaos (蕭氏) of three Gannan counties who lived from floating logs on the Gan River would gather every 1/15 in Shahekou, a suburb of Ganzhou City where they have their main ancestral hall. To prepare for this ritual, a 10-meter long papier-maché boat is prepared with, on the upper deck, a figurine of Xiao Jue (蕭覺), a Five Dynasties high official claimed as

the Xiaos founding ancestor. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, a number of staves carried into the hall from the home of the person in charge that Among them are common gods like Guanyin and Wenchang, but a number of ancestor gods, including Xiao Jue, called Old Old Ancestor (老老祖), and Fabian laozu (法邊老祖), where Fabian is a “memorial name” (*zuming* 奏名). The aim of this ritual is to “ban epidemics and snare poisons” and then send them off by burning boat at the riverbank early on the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>. Then all return to the hall to decide by means of divining blocks who will receive them in the coming year.

## II. Zhao'an

When Yang Yanjie and I arrived in Zhao'an County on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2005, what is described above represented the state of our knowledge about ancestor gods in southeastern China. On the basis of the article just detailed, it seemed safe enough to generalize as Yang did in his article on the subject: typically, we were in the presence of indigenous ancestors who, after participating in the Sinicization of the territory, driving out indigenous earth gods, came to be worshiped themselves. Such as we were about to learn that Zhao'an, half-Hakka, half-Min, did not fit our picture. Our first inkling that, in Zhao'an, things were different came in a meeting with local history buffs and culture workers on 29<sup>th</sup> August. After a brief introduction to the county, founded in 1530, with a population now of 580,000, they summarized as follows: population of Zhao'an: “Shen half the county (沈半縣), Liao half the hills (廖半山), Lin half the coast (林半灘), Xu have the county seat (徐半城).” We were, to put it in plain terms, in the presence of many lineages such as we had never encountered in Hakkaland.

An encounter that evening with Fu Chongyi (傅崇毅), 73-year-old literatus, would add considerably to our sense of being in the presence of something radically different: “Here,” he said,

*one of the most distinctive practices is called ‘doing the ancestor god (做祖神).’ The Shens (沈姓), for example, do*

*this in Easttown (東城) on 7/24, in honor of Shen Yong (沈永). He’s still there now. From 7/1 to sometime in the ninth month, the god-ancestor goes from place to place. The Xus (許姓) do the same thing with their ancestor during the first and the second months, and the Chens (陳姓) also carry theirs. Here, moreover, we have a practice called ‘running to pay tribute to the king’ (跑貢王): originally, to pay homage to Chen Yuanguang (陳元光), people ran to meet him. Later, this explanation was forgotten.*

Fu also introduced us to two key local concepts, namely, the *jiashu* (家塾), local name for a territorial unit with its own earth god, and *ditou* (地頭廟), which we were soon to learn meant “primary local temple.” With these basic concepts and succinct descriptions of local practices, Fu Chongyi had in effect set our Zhao'an research agenda.

The next day, we were able to examine the recently edited lineage registers of the Xus and the Shens. That of the Xus, called *Nanzhao* (南詔許氏家譜) and dated 1995, contained, pages 279-81, a list of 31 villages and lineage halls visited by Xu Tianzheng (許天正) during on 1/5 and ending on 2/14. An accompanying map showed the villages strung out along all the county's main roads throughout the coastal plain. The *Shenshi zongpu* (沈氏宗譜) (1992), pages 37-38, provided a similar list of 71 halls and villages visited by the Marquis of Martial Virtue (武德侯 Shen Yong) every year between 6/29 and 10/28. That afternoon, for the first time, we heard from 81-year old Chen Wenyu (陳文郁) the story of these god-ancestors:

*Originally, Chen Yuanguang and his six generals were all worshipped in the True Lord Temple (真君廟) dedicated to the Perfected Wu (吳真人).<sup>31</sup> One day a fire broke out, and each of the lineages concerned rushed in to save whatever could be saved. The result was that the gods all ended up in the possession of lineages other than their own.*

*At first they fought (to get back their own ancestors), but in the end they had recourse to the divining blocks to settle matters. Then each lineage placed the statue it had saved in its primary local temple.*

*Here at Southgate (南門), he went on, is King Chen Temple (陳王廟), where the Xus are in the majority. At Eastgate, it is Li Boyao (李伯瑤), at Northgate the Temple of the King (王公廟), and at Westgate the Temple of the City God (城隍廟).*

Later that afternoon, we visited Eastown (東城村), a unilinguistic village contiguous with the county seat. We soon discovered it carried in, together with Ou Zhe (歐哲), from the Worthy Minister Temple (功臣廟) near South Altar (南壇) to the Hall for the Veneration of Family (尊親堂), Eastown's main ancestor hall, to which an opera being put on for his birthday on 7/25. The Shens of Eastown number some 6,000 and say they are descended from Sire Qiu (秋), second of eight brothers (the eighth brother has descendants in the Hakka town of Guanbi).<sup>33</sup> Ou Zhe's statue having been saved from fire by the Shens, he is their "local protector god" (*baabu shen* 保界神) with his birthday on 2/18. The Ous of Raoping County (饒平縣) live across the border in Guangdong, come yearly on 3/1 to worship their ancestor, but in spite of this regular contact, there was little intermarriage between the Shens and the Ous.

An interview that evening with Xu Bozhu (許柏柱) provided me with another version of the tale:

*Chen Yuanguang had six generals, of whom the most important was Xu Tianzheng, who came to Nanzhao.<sup>34</sup> When the temple was destroyed by the Heaven-and-Earth Society, the Lins grabbed the statue of Xu and worshiped him thenceforth as their territorial god (ditou shen 地頭*

*神).*<sup>35</sup> *The Lins used to have to ask the Xus for permission to carry him out. Xu is now at Northgate, Li at Eastgate, and Shen at South Altar.*

Before going further, let us stand back a moment and try to sort out this tale of Chen Yuanguang and his generals. As is well known, Chen Yuanguang is worshiped throughout the Zhangzhou region and in Taiwan as "the saintly king who founded Zhangzhou" (*kai Zhang Yuanguang* 開漳聖王): after succeeding his father, Chen Zheng (陳政 66-67), in the war against the "southern barbarians," along the north-eastern coast of Guangdong in particular, in the year 683 Chen Yuanguang requested that the prefecture of Zhangzhou be created in order better to ensure order along the coast. Upon his death of battle around in the year 711, he was in turn succeeded by his son as prefect of Zhangzhou, and what was in effect a Chen-run "administrative garrison" survived until 819.<sup>36</sup> According to the historian, Chen Yuanguang came south with nine generals;<sup>37</sup> locally, as we have seen, they were six: Xu Tianzheng (許天正), Ou Zhe (歐哲), Shen Yong (沈 詒), Ma Ren (馬仁), Li Boyao (李伯瑤), and Zhang Boji (張伯籍). Among them, subsequent fieldwork revealed, Shen Yong and Li Boyao played special roles, and they alone wear masks.

Curiously, explanation is given of this fact only for Shen Yong. He was such a handsome young general, it is said, that it was feared he would be too attractive to women to be able to fight. In one version, the fact is specifically that he and the female "lord of the (barbarian) fort" (*Caizhu* 寨主) would be enamored of each other, and Shen Yong would be able to press the attack. When the successful warriors went back north to report their victories to the emperor, Shen Yong forgot to remove his mask, and the emperor burst out laughing. Thereafter, he could no longer remove the mask. The mask does in fact make Shen Yong look ferocious, with two impressive fangs protruding from his mouth. Indeed, the nature of his mask makes one think spontaneously of Nio rituals and their gods. That this aspect does play a part in local religious life may be seen from the fact that Shen Yong is worshiped as



a protector god by at least two lineages, the Wus and the Ghens. According to the story recounted above, there would have been only one statue to save and hence one lineage to protect.

The Wus are concentrated around Northgate (北關) in the county seat, around their “big temple” (*damiao* 大廟), also called “the Wu lineage family temple” *Wu shi jiamiao* 吳氏家廟) and Temple Perfect Lord (Zhenjun miao 真君廟), by which is meant Wu Tao (吳陶), or Wu the Perfected (吳真人) (more commonly known as *Baoping* 保生大帝). Thus this temple is at once the “chief local temple (*ditou miao* 地頭廟)—a territorial temple involving six “wards” (*jiashe* 甲社)—and a kind of Wu lineage temple. The Wus consider Wu Tao to be their ancestor, but his three statues can also be carried to non-Wu homes for a medical consultation, with one proviso, that “the ancestor return to the temple before 11/1 for a ritual to ask for peace” (祖公要入廟作平安). When Wu Tao is not in the home temple, the two “medicine lads” (*yaotang* 藥童) who stand to either side of him can be consulted in his place. The Wus must also change his robe every third year and then, in the fifth year, parade the robe and do a ritual to (re-)animate the principal statue of the Perfected Wu.

This temple, albeit on a different site, is also the temple whose burning led to the original dispersal of the gods. In this version of the event, it is the Wus who saved the statue of Shen Yong, and they affirm both that, after the burning, this temple alone had a statue of Shen Yong and that he is their protector god. His birthday is celebrated locally on 2/22, but he is also carried out in connection with the Duanwu festival, on 5/5, when they engage in the practice called “running to pay tribute to the king.” When asked why, of the six generals of Chen Yuanguang, the temple contained only images of Shen Yong and Li Boyao, the response of the temple keepers was this: “The Marquis of Military Virtue is a general. He protects us because he can drive away perverse spirits (驅妖).”<sup>38</sup> The 12,000 Wus of Xitan (西潭 Westlake), 16 kilometers north of the county seat, “carry their ancestor” the Perfected Wu on 6/25 and Shen Yong, their protector god, on 7/25,

the date most frequently given as Shen Yong’s birthday. Interestingly, it is at this time, and not on 6/25, that the local Wus put on opera. As in the county seat, they also place Li Boyao in their temple, and he is also carried out for the opera.

The 6,000 Chens of Jiazhou (甲洲), a peninsula that juts out into the sea, claim to have arrived there at the end of the Song, in the 17<sup>th</sup> generation after Chen Yuanguang, and to be now in the 32<sup>nd</sup> generation since arrival. They were originally divided into five “wards” (*jiashe* 甲社), each of which had its own main ancestor hall (*ci* 祠) and earth god temple (*tudi miao* 土地廟). They also worship Chen Yuanguang in their “chief local temple,” the Temple of Pine Mountain (松山廟), referred to at once as a “family temple” (*jiamiao* 家廟), an “ancestor temple” (*zujiao* 祖廟), and a “dragon temple” (*longmiao* 龍廟), because it is built on a “dragon site” (*longxue* 龍穴). The description of this temple in a 1997 book on Chen “origins and development” says the statue of Chen Yuanguang is placed in the middle, flanked by statues of Shen Yong on the left and Li Boyao on the right. These two are called respectively “the big and second emissaries” (*da er shigong* 大二使公) and are both considered “very responsive” (非常靈應).<sup>39</sup> Every year on 2/9 the Jiazhou Chens used to go to Midstreet (中街) in the county seat to fetch a statue of their ancestor and carry it to their village to celebrate his birthday on the tenth of the month.<sup>40</sup> They sent him back again on the twelfth. In the same temple, they still sacrifice to Li Boyao on 2/22 and to the Marquis of Military Virtue on 7/25, and they also do a “prayer for peace” on an auspicious day in the 11<sup>th</sup> month. Now divided into four natural villages, they select a village each year to take charge of these rituals, as well as of the festival of Mazu (媽祖), celebrated in her temple on 3/23. For the rituals on 2/10, 3/23, and 7/25, all important local gods, including the “ancestor god” (*zujiao* 祖神), must gather in that year’s village for rituals and opera. The other three villages also put on opera for the ritual of the eleventh month and draw lots to decide which of the lesser gods will go to which village.

Thus the Chens of Jiazhou, like the Wus of Northgate and

Westlake, worship not only their own ancestor but also Shen Yong and Li Boyao. Shen in particular is considered their “chief local god” (*di shen* (地頭神)), but we were reminded that both Shen and Li wear masks in the Military Temple (武廟) at Westgate (西門) in the county seat. These masks, they said, inspire such fear that children dare not even look at them.

Having seen that Shen Yong does indeed function as a local god, we may now look at him as ancestor, beginning with a description of his visit to Shide (世德 Virtue over the Generations), the site of Shen Yong’s first stop on his three-month circuit.<sup>41</sup> Shen Hongfa began by telling us that the year 2006 was very special because it contained an intercalary seventh month (the first such since 1968). As this is the month of Shen Yong’s birthday (7/25), such an occasion requires greater expense and a more massive parade and festival than usual. The process in 2006 began for Shide at the end of the sixth month, when they went to “get incense” (*ba xianghuo* 把香火) from Shidu.<sup>42</sup> In the past they went, rather, to the “ancestor temple” (*zuminiao* 祖廟) in Easttown, the Temple of Virtuous Ministers (see above).<sup>43</sup> Having gathered in front of the local ancestor hall—a convenient place for a large group to gather, they set out around 9 a.m. after the firing of three powder cannons (*baobao* 炮). The parade order was as follows: (1) Two persons with an exorcistic function lead the parade: on the left, a man with a red bucket of water and a willow sprig used to sprinkle water on the road; on the right, someone who throws a mixture of salt and rice. “The road must be cleaned, because we may encounter filthy things along the way.” (2) Two persons carrying a large gong on a red oil-painted wooden beam: “strike the gong to open the way” (*ming kai dao* 鳴鑼開道). This activity our informant linked to the wars of Chen Yuanguang against the Jin—a mistaken historical reference corrected by one of our local collaborators, Huang Jiaxiang (黃嘉祥), the local monograph office, to Chen’s suppression of the “eighteen caves” of the local barbarians.<sup>44</sup> Called a “horse-head gong” (*ma tou ma* 馬頭鑼), it refers to the army of the god. (3) Two children carrying horizontal red banner on which is written, “Virtue over the generations

produces good fortune” (世德發祥). (4) The flag brigade: triangular flags of many colors. (5) A percussion group or an orchestra. (6) The village’s “big flags” (大旗), on which is written “Shide ward” (世德坊). These are huge, 3-meter long white triangular flags with a black border. Shen Hongfa said his native village of Damci (大美)<sup>45</sup> had 400 such flags. (7) The parade segments of each of the four participating *jiashe*: a) a board on which is written the name of the ward; b) children carrying baskets of flowers and red lanterns (two separate teams of ten each); c) an orchestra; d) 40-50 ward flags of the large variety; e) percussion group(s).<sup>46</sup> (8) An opera troupe composed of four soldiers, a winner of highest academic honors (*zhuangyuan* 狀元), a gentleman, and a lady. (9) A percussion group. (10) The palanquin-carriers. (11) The elders of the organizing committee. The four wards of Shide, which share an earth god temple, always parade in the same order. Each ward has its own organizing committee of volunteers whose primary function is to divide up the work and decide how much each household should pay (30 RMB in 2006). “Most,” he said, “would borrow the money if they do not have

When they arrived at the ancestor temple—they had to arrive before noon, the organizing committee entered the temple to burn incense and invite the god out orally. They had also to invite out a two-meter high halberd made of camphor wood, as that was the weapon Shen Yong always used. There was also a series of ten boards such as are carried in front of any high official: “silence!” (肅靜) “stay clear!” (迴避). Firecrackers and powder guns (*chougu* 銃) greeted the god as he emerged from the temple, and the parade set off to a barrage of percussion. In each village they crossed along the way, a table with offerings of fruit and cakes had been set out to welcome them. If they passed a temple which wished to participate, that temple had to send out a team of eight to take over the palanquin and go in front of their temple to make salutations. Shide’s route to the Easttown temple took it only through Shen villages, but when Hongzhou (洪洲), 32<sup>nd</sup> on the list, was within the past to fetch Shen Yong, they had to cross two non-Shen villages. These villages did not appreciate at all being thus traversed by

the Shen parade, “but they had no choice. Once they refused, and the Shens destroyed all their crops. Then several buffalo died, and they agreed, thereafter, to allow the parade to cross their territory.”

When the parade returned to Shide, the local earth god temple being too small, Shen Yong was set out inside the “gate of the earth” (*zhaimen* 寨門) in a special tent (*peng* 棚). The earth god temple incense burner was placed in front of the god, and individual households came to set out their offerings and worship. Already before the parade departed in the morning, all the gods of the local temple were brought out and placed in the tent, from where they too would be able to watch the opera. When “ancestor-grandpa” (*zongong* 祖公) arrived, he was placed in front of the other gods. After this individual worship, about noon, the ward which by rotation was in charge of the festival<sup>48</sup> “presented the good fortune” (*shangfu* 上福): a pig was slaughtered and prepared pig draped over a wooden frame and popped rice (*gao* 發糕), which symbolizes “development” (*fa*). Thereafter, the meat of good fortune was divided” (*fen furou* 分福肉) and distributed by drawing of lots to all participating households.

There were in fact two statues of the ancestor which were carried: one military and one civil. Accompanied by his wife, the civil statue went first, preceded by the god’s weapons and followed by a horse. Behind the horse was the military statue who, being larger than the civil version, was called “big ancestor” (*dazu* 大祖); he had no wife. Participants normally also included lion dance troupes, who were invited by the wards and therefore took up the rear of their respective wards. Upon arrival at the “village entry” (*cunkou* 村口), the parade stopped. All the young participants went into the village, while the orchestra lined up on either side of the road. Then, to the sounding of the giant gong and the beating of a large drum, the carrier of the great flag rushed in, led by the carriers of the gong. The flag entered the tent, while the gong went to the village entry to accompany each successive group of participants. Once all four wards had run in, the gods were run in, first the civil statue with his wife, and then Big Ancestor. This is the ritual sequence

“...running to pay tribute to the king.”

If the carrying of the ancestor in Shide would seem to be organized upward, in the two other villages we investigated, Dongji (東里 East Ward) and Dongcheng (東城 Eastown), it is by lineage segment. East Ward is itself inhabited by the second segment of the elder branch of the Eastown Shens.<sup>49</sup> After three generations of single sons, in the 15<sup>th</sup> generation, Ancestor Nanfeng (南峰公) had four sons, origin of the four lineage sub-segments in East Ward. Counting even smaller segments, they are divided into 15 segments altogether, and when they divide, they do so by strict order of seniority. Each segment decides who will be in charge and publishes its own accounts. If the population of several villages is counted, they number about 1000 households; in East Ward itself there are about 4000 people. In their village temple, called East Ward Temple (東里廟), the Kings of the Three Mountains (*Sanshan guowang* 三山國王) are the chief deities, set in the center back of the temple, with Xu Tianzheng to their left. In front, the Marquis of Military Virtue thrones on the left, with Ou Zhe on his right. Xu and Ou are their “local gods” (*ditou shen* 地頭神).

Shen Ruhuai (沈汝淮)<sup>50</sup> represents the 29<sup>th</sup> generation since the founding Ancestor Qiu (秋公), himself 19 generations removed from Shen Yong, who is counted as generation 48. Ancestor Qiu was one of eight sons of the Fujian founding ancestor, who lived in Tingzhou (汀州 west-central Fujian) and died in Jianyang (建陽 northwest Fujian). Shen Ruhuai’s main source for compiling the lineage register was a series of manuscript registers he had collected. At no time before him had there ever been a printed lineage register, and not even Eastown itself had ever had a unified register, just “segment manuscripts” (*fangtou* 房頭本 房頭手抄本). Four main lineage segments, which separated from the fifth generation, used to participate in the carrying of Shen Yong. Together, they represent around 200,000 people, or one-third of the county’s total population.

When asked about the antiquity of the carrying ritual, Shen Ruhuai

said that the statue originally held by the Xus had been authenticated by the Yuan. During the Cultural Revolution, it had been stolen by the Lin and brought to Linjia (林家). All other statues, including the Shens, had been burned. The Shens had originally hid theirs under a pile of yams, but a cadre from Eastown had denounced them. The cadre had died soon after. All Shens had to worship their ancestor on 7/25, but Sheng Yong's statue was always in Eastown at that time because "it is a village and strong, near the county seat, with many literati." It also had a number of martial arts schools, and their teachers taught these in throughout the area. In an intercalary seventh month, since Sheng "intercalates the gods, not the demons" (*runshen bu rungui* 閩神不降), this is a major opportunity. In the past, there was land to pay for a festival; in 2006, the cost would be 50 RMB per household.

Much more detail could be given, but enough has been said to show that: (1) the founding ancestors are indeed worshiped as gods; (2) the lineages are nonetheless clearly distinguished, by way of the tale of the temple burn-down, from local protector gods, always of a different surname; (3) local lineages are at once massive, highly articulated, and benefit of an incredible lineage records. Given the history of violence in Zhao'an—pirate-related violence, anti-Qing violence (in particular in Heaven-and-Earth Society), lineage *xiedou* 械鬥—given as well the lack of printed genealogies before the 1990s, it seems highly unlikely that Zhao'an lineages are blood-line lineages. They are, rather, military alliances disguised as lineages, and this is the context in which we can best make sense of the worship of founding ancestors who were military generals involved in the campaigns that wrested the Zhangzhou region from its indigenous populations.

Before leaving Zhao'an, it is worth pointing out that Gupo are also to be found there. It is in the county seat itself we were told of Wangma (王媽), Ma Wang, from a village four kilometres outside town. When in town one day to sell firewood, she entered a ward temple (*Guomiao* 地頭廟) dedicated to Sire Wang (王公) to shelter from the rain. There she prayed to Sire Wang and, finding him handsome, said

herself: "If I could marry someone as handsome as that, I would be delighted." The next day, she died.<sup>51</sup> Locals call her Ama (Ma), but her name villagers, of the surname Shen, call her Gupo, and there were two marriages of her in the village. People pray to her for a son, and she had a town festival day on 8/14, at which time she was offered three days of opera, and the Shens of her native village were invited to lunch.

### In Huizhou (徽州) in the Song and Yuan

In his superb work on the Ming transformation of the lineage, *Shanglin songzhu yanjiu* (明代宗族研究), Chang Jianhua (常建华) examines three early centers of these changes: Huizhou in Anhui Province, Xinghua (興化) (Putian 莆田) in Fujian, and Ji'an (吉安), especially Taihe (泰和), in Jiangxi. Xinghua and Ji'an lineages in the Ming would appear to be of the classical sort: focused on ancestors, especially, in line with Cheng Yi's (程毅 1033-1107) recommendations, founding ancestors. Only in Huizhou do we find clear cases of crossover, and that, precisely, in the early period, before the onerousgoing Confucianization of ancestor worship and lineage construction.<sup>52</sup>

The first example given by Chang is that of the Wangs, one of Huizhou's most prominent lineages. Their story begins with Wang Hua (汪華). According to his Ming-era descendant, Wang Shunmin (汪舜斌), Wang Hua was a local who raised troops at the end of the Sui to restore order in the area and then gave himself the title King of Wu (吳王). In 621, having recognized the Tang, he was made chief military commander (*songguan* 總管) of a vast area and prefect of She (歙州刺史) with the fief title Duke of Yue (越國公). After his death, says Wang Shunmin, the people received permission to set up a hall (祠):

*Over the generations his worship was ever more sincere and his spirit ever more manifest. Invisibly, he aided the country and brought good fortune to the people (福於民). The Song and Yuan gave him further titles. In the Zhenghe era (1111-1117), the temple name Manifestation of Loyalty*

was granted; in the Deyou era (1275) this was changed to Loyal and Virtuous. The Ming founding emperor, in correcting the register of sacrifices (正祀典), restored the title he had while alive, Duke of Yue.<sup>53</sup>

The hall had thus become a temple in the Song, and many people other than the Wangs came to worship Wang Hua in “procession halls” (*xingci* 行祠): Wang Hua was an officially sanctioned object of public worship.<sup>54</sup> Another native son of the Ming, Cheng Minzheng (程敏政, c.s. 1466), having first situated worship in such procession halls between the public temple and the private hall, concludes: “Because no people do not dare usurp the name of the god of the earth and grant a robe, they call it an ‘earth god of duty’ (*yishe* 義社).”<sup>55</sup>

The Wangs also set up halls next to the graves—just east of the county seat—of two even earlier ancestors, Wang Che (汪澈), said to have been the local founder who had arrived in the Han, and his grandson, Wang Daoxian (汪道獻), a Jin-era official. In 906, a grave was set up for Wang Hua, with statues of all three founders. Wang Hua also had a grave on another hill, where yet another hall was built and was worshiped with an “impersonator” (*shì fū*).<sup>56</sup> Other Wangs in Wuyuan County’s Dafan (婺源大畈), set up a hall with a statue of the local founder in a (Buddhist?) temple called Gratitude for Grace (感德院). Destroyed in 1352, it was rebuilt in the early Ming “just east of the local earth god” (里社之東偏).<sup>57</sup> Yet another Wang group, in the neighboring county of Xiuning (修寧), built a temple for the Duke Yue on a hill east of the county seat in 1154. Rebuilt in 1497, it is clearly stated by Wang Shunmin to have been a place of public worship (邑公祭之所).<sup>58</sup>

Cheng Lingxi (程靈洗), considered a Six Dynasties ancestor of the Chens of She County, is said to have been worshiped from right after his death in association with the altar of the local earth god: “The local made an altar just below his grave to worship him. It was confused with the earth god, with whom the ancestor was associated. When in

trouble in time of flood, drought, illness, or epidemic, there was an immediate response” (里人壇其墓下以祭，里之社與壇接。尤以公旱疾癘禱之即應).<sup>59</sup> In the early thirteenth century, Cheng Bi bought land next to the grave, built a temple, received court recognition of the cult, and convinced his fellow clansmen to contribute lands to the temple for an annual ritual: “The people of the entire area, organized in the earth god groups, annually welcomed the god into Chakou for worship” (每歲合一鄉六社之人迎神至汊口祀).<sup>60</sup>

A third example is the Zheng lineage: a 1519 account of their ancestor hall says their Tang-era founding ancestor successfully defended the area against bandits: “the people were grateful and, when needed, worshiped him by the earth god” (鄉人德之，祀祀之於社).<sup>61</sup> The Zhengs of Xin’an worshiped a Han colonel (*taimui* 太尉) as their founding ancestor in Colonel Temple (太尉廟). Destroyed by Huang Chao, it was rebuilt in 1131 with statues of the Colonel in the middle and of two other local founders to either side. A local official, the famous Hong Gua (洪适), was then asked to write the history of the temple. Hong Gua recounts that “they wanted it known they had just converted a temple into a hall.” But several tens of elders (*xianglao* 鄉老) also told Hong Gua that, “Before the temple was rebuilt, every year there were droughts and floods, and one epidemic followed another. When it had been rebuilt, our harvests were abundant and the people at these mountains did not collapse nor rivers devastate.” Hong Gua concludes in his own voice: “Thus, while this is a Zheng ancestor hall, it is really the incense fire of a whole area (實乃一方香火). I humbly request that the prefecture accede to the people’s desire and grant a temple plaque.”<sup>62</sup>

Chen Li (陳櫟 1252-1334), illustrious literatus of Xiuning, describes the Chens’ late-Tang founder as at once ancestor and god. His descendants were numerous, he writes, and lived in their own Chen village (陳村). Their founder, Lord of Li Mountain (高山府君), having disguised himself as a fisherman (托於魚釣),

accumulated virtue and acts of charity. The locals praised him as a good man and, after he died and was buried south of the county seat on Li Mountain, over the years the people of the area, seeing him as a god (一方之民神之), built a temple next to his grave (乃創廟墓旁). He was invoked by means of a medium (尸而祝之), and for all matters of flood and drought they prayed to him. In spring they dared not begin to plant if they had not sacrificed to the Lord, nor dared they eat the harvest in the fall without first sacrificing to him. His descendants do not worship him with the fervor of the people of Li Mountain, about like a poor village that cannot be compared to a rich town.

Moreover, among the major lineages, some ancestors have temple sacrifices, as is the case with Cheng Zhongzhuang (程忠壯); others have grave worship, like the Sun Wang. While alive, some had the nobility of great generals, others faced south and called themselves "orphan": When they died, they became gods (沒而為神), as it should be (因其所宜也). In the case of His Honor, he had no status while alive but hid in the mist and waves as a fisherman. After he died, he acted as a god to his descendants (沒乃神於後) and, as the eternal ancestor of well-planted fields (永為樹藝之田祖), was extraordinarily numinous (其亦靈異也已).<sup>63</sup>

The late Tang ancestor of another major lineage, the Lings (沙溪) of Sand Creek (沙溪) in She County, "met an immortal who gave him a drug to throw into a well and convert it into a sweet spring. The inhabitants then created an earth god altar for him (里人為立社) for Lis of Fuxi (孚溪) in Qimen County, when they built an ancestor next to the grave of their founder in the Yuan, "associated with an earth god" (配以社). As Chang Jianhua points out, this last case, which occurred at the end of the Yuan,<sup>64</sup> is just the opposite of the Qimen case, whereas, before, the ancestors were associated with or even became

the earth god, it is now the earth god who is associated with the ancestor.

In a recent article, Chang gives one further example of a crossover: the Wanli era (1573-1620), the Fangs of Huizhou converted a temple honoring their founding ancestor, Fang Chu (方儲), a *fangshi* (方士) of Fujian, into a lineage temple (*tongzong ci* 統宗祠). This temple had normally been called Zhenying miao (真應廟), or Temple of the Responses of the Perfected One, a name given it "by the Taoist scholar Huizong (徽宗) in 1117."<sup>65</sup> He also mentions that the Fangs of Lintang (臨塘) in Xiuning, when they built a lineage temple in 1117 for their founding ancestor, a Tang official, also built a temple for worship of the earth god in front of it. I suspect the site was in fact chosen because of its association with the local earth god, for it was said "at the mouth of the river":<sup>66</sup> this is normally referred to in Chinese as *shuikou* (水口), a technical geomantic term referring to the site where a river flows out of a village. It is in any case invariably true that earth god altars are built in Hakka parts of south China.<sup>67</sup>

Fieldwork done in May and August of the year 2009 has led to the discovery that this configuration—statues of distant "founding ancestors" worshiped together in the temples of territorial gods and then carried out with them in annual processions that bring them for worship to the ancestral halls—continues to exist in a number of villages in She County.

#### Discussion

What emerges quite clearly from this comparative survey is that all cases of crossover occur in the early phases of lineage history, what I have elsewhere called its myth-history.<sup>68</sup> While not all cases involve founding ancestors—figures claimed as local founders—a good share do. In Huizhou and Zhao'an, these claimed founders are mostly historical personages, preferably high officials, some from as far back as the Han. The likelihood of them actually being the ancestors of the local lineage is close to nil, and yet they are more than figureheads or points of the imagination. Being worshiped as local gods, they had to

fill the bill by answering prayers. The proof of their numinous efficacy may be seen in the fact they were worshiped well beyond lineage confines. At the same time, local history is very much reflected in the differences between the early ancestors of each area surveyed: primarily Taoist masters in Hakkaland; regional military heroes in Zhao'an; high officials in Huizhou.<sup>69</sup> Something of their past and future history is salient in these differences: starting from a cultural base already strongly influenced by literati values in the Tang and Song, Huizhou would contribute significantly to the invention of the modern lineage, with its registers and halls. Zhao'an, throughout its history, would be a place of violence and resistance, of *xiedou* and piracy. And Hakkaland remained in some places like north-western Guangdong right down to the present day, a region from which the last remnants of "ethnic" populations had not yet been cleansed.

A second recurrent feature is the earth god. Some ancestors are worshiped in association with the earth god, or vice versa, some ancestors are the earth god, in some cases after having chased away an evil predecessor. The only explanation for this feature is that, from its beginnings, the earth god represents territory, and without territory there are neither ancestors nor lineage.

Our survey thus brings us back to the opposition of complementaries first clearly described by David Faure in his *The Structure of Chinese Rural Society*. In a recent article, Faure emphasizes less the structural than he does the historical explanation of the twilight of the (ancestor) gods. He notes, for example, that the Fengs (馮) of the Gaozhou (高州) region, to the west of the Pearl River Delta,

*claim descentance from the husband of the famous woman warrior of the Tang, Madame Xian (洗), while groups from Foshan (佛山) of the surname Xian, in their genealogy compiled starting in the Ming, show no desire to be associated with this legendary woman, even though they consider themselves to be among the first settlers in*

*the region. Once again, it is history and the comparison of local practices that can help explain the way in which the pattern evolved. We may recall here that the region of Gaozhou lay on the earliest trade routes with Hunan, well before the West River became the primary route during the Southern Song (approximately in the thirteenth century).<sup>70</sup>*

But if the eclipse of ancestors as gods is clearly a historical phenomenon linked to the sixteenth century "ritual revolution," and if Neo-Confucians did indeed seek to "relegate village practices to the category of the 'indigenous,'" <sup>71</sup> my own reading of the evidence on cases of crossover would privilege the structural observations of Faure's book: there are two Chinese villages and societies, two Chinese cultures, that of the gods and that of the ancestors, that of space and that of time, or of myth-history and history. Throughout China, we need in general only to scratch lightly the surface to find ourselves back in the time of myth-history, before the time of the ancestors of orthodoxy.

In conclusion, two examples: the first is the Eastern New Territories of Hong Kong described by Faure in his book. What he discovered there is villages built around beautiful ancestor halls, with humble earth god altars on the village edge. But when it came time, each year, to engage in the village's most expensive festival, the Taoist god (神), it was in honor of the earth god it was done.<sup>72</sup> The village of territoriality, celebrated in festival time, was in stark contrast with the village of lineage, manifest in village architecture. The same is true of Putian (莆田) in Liancheng County (連城縣): it is by far the richest of the thirteen villages involved in the rotating worship of Grandpa Gehu (姑胡公太), and also the village with the most literati in its history.<sup>73</sup>

When we first visited Peitian in 1993, the village school head made a point of telling us that, "In Peitian, we have less consideration for the gods than for the ancestors" (在培田神明不如祖先). But Peitian's greatest pride—and greatest non-productive expense—is occasioned by the arrival of Gehu in the village every thirteenth year. Moreover, at that time, its identity as Peitian is eclipsed in favour of its joint identity with

its neighboring sister village of Shengxing (昇星): Wujiafang (吳家坊) or Wu Family Ward. The two villages, which claim a common founding ancestor, have never gotten along and never really conducted joint worship of the common ancestor. But when Gehu comes, they *work* together to organize the parade of welcome and then, after a year's stay, the parade of departure. Again, it is the most important local festival which brings the first Peitian to the surface, that of territory and its gods.

In sum, the cases of crossover examined in this paper should be seen as one type of a larger phenomenon that the ritual revolution of the sixteenth century pushed into the background. They are but one kind of god local society ceases to produce. In fact, the production of local saints of all kinds—divinized Taoists, Buddhists, officials, military heroes, and medium-invented gods—ceases, or at least slows down significantly. What does not stop is the festivals in their honor:

*By the end of the Song, with the exception of temples dedicated to Guandi and Mazu, all the temples at the heart of major festivals in the six counties under consideration had been founded... The temples in question were almost all dedicated to local people of such ilk as cowherds, alchemists, and heroic officials who died fighting bandits.*<sup>74</sup>

This is why the study of local festivals is of such special importance to the recovery of the “lost chapter” in the history of local society: that of territorial China.

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- 1 David Faure, "La solution lignagère. La révolution rituelle du XVIIe siècle et l'Etat impérial chinois," *Annales, Histoire, Sciences sociales* 6,6 (Nov.-Dec. 2006): 1314-1315.
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- 3 Chai Winghoi, "The Decline of Ordination and the Emergence of the Hakka Lineage in Changde County," Hsieh Jiann and Chang Chak Yan, eds., in *The Proceedings of the International Conference on Hakkenology* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1994), 799-818. Also "Ordination Names in Hakka Genealogies: A Religious Practice and Its Decline," in David Faure and Helen Siu, eds., *Down to Earth: The Territorial Bond in South China* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1995), 65-82.
- 4 Photocopy of a lineage register collected in Tufang in 1992. For the full text in Chinese, see Lao Gewen 勞格文 (John Lagerwey) and Zhang Hongxiang (張鴻祥), "Tufang de jingji, zongzu yu jieqing" (塗坊的經濟與宗族與節慶), in *Changting xian de zongzu, jingji yu minshu, jian xia* 《長汀縣的宗族經濟與民俗·卷下》, Yang Yanjie (楊彥杰) ed., Traditional Hakka Society Series, vol. 16 (Hong Kong: Traditional Hakka Society; EFEO; Overseas Chinese Archives, 2002), 606-607. For a full translation, see John Lagerwey, "Notes on the Symbolic Life of a Hakka Village," in *Minghan ziyang yu Zhongguo wenhua guoji yanjiu hui lunwen ji* 《民間信仰與中國文化國際研討會論文集》 (Taipei: Hanxue yanjiu zhongxin, 1994), 742-743. The article in Chinese, pages 607-608, provides as well an extremely humorous oral version of the tale.
- 5 Lagerwey, "Notes on the Symbolic Life," 745.
- 6 Li Shengbao (李升寶), "Qingliu xian Changxian" cun de zongzu chuantong diaocha" (清流縣長校村的宗族傳統調查), in *Qingliu xian de zongzu, miaohui yu jingji* 《汀州府的宗族廟會與經濟》, Yang Yanjie ed., Traditional Hakka Society Series vol. 6 (Hong Kong: Traditional Hakka Society; EFEO; Overseas Chinese Archives, 1998), 264.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 280.
- 8 As is often the case in Hakka parts of Fujian, this covered bridge was at the village water exit, site of the earth god altar.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 280-82.
- 10 No one we encountered actually made that claim, and I therefore assume the homonymy is simply a coincidence.
- 11 Quoted in Lagerwey, "Dingguang gufo: Oral and Written Sources in the Study of a Saint," *Cahiers d'Asiologie-Asie* 10 (1998): 111.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 111, note 94.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 112.
- 14 On the county seat festival, see Li Shengbao, "Qingliu xian chengqu miaohui jijin," (清流縣城區廟會集錦), in *Mingxi de chengxiang miaohui yu canhua wenhua* 《閩西的城鄉廟會與村落文化》, Yang Yanjie ed., Traditional Hakka Society Series vol. 4 (Hong Kong: Traditional Hakka Society; EFEO; Overseas Chinese Archives, 1997), 69-77. On the pilgrimage and Ouyang's local lineage, see Jiang Chunfu (江春福), "Dafengshan yu Ouyang zhenxian" (大豐山與歐陽真仙), in *Qingliu xian de zongzu, miaohui yu jingji* 《汀州府的宗族廟會與經濟》, Traditional Hakka Society Series vol. 6, 416-440.
- 15 See Tong Jingen (童金根), "Qingliu xian Dongshan Xiaoshi de zongzu chuanshuo ji

qi miaohui" (清流縣東山蕭氏的宗族傳說及其廟會), in *Minxi de chengxiang minzu yu canliao wenhua* (閩西的城鄉廟會與村落文化), Yang Yanjie ed., Traditional Hakka Society Series vol. 4 (Hong Kong: Traditional Hakka Society; EFEO; Overseas Chinese Archives, 1997), 208-31.

16 Ma Chuanyong (馬傳永), "Liancheng xian Sibao xiang Mawu cun minjian xisi" (連城縣四堡鄉馬屋村民間習俗), in *Minxi de chengxiang minzu yu canliao wenhua*, Yang Yanjie ed., Hakka Traditional Society Series vol. 4, 330, 334-336. Although Ma does not say so, I suspect the "Six Contracts" refers in fact to the six gods, who probably originally represented six allied lineages (p. 309). Ma does say that people of these surnames were all among the earliest inhabitants of what is now Mawu, as well as Huangs, Lins, and Dengs).

17 *Ibid.*, 328.

18 *Ibid.*, 338.

19 *Chewlin Niechi jingyu* (《陳留謝氏房譜》) 3.2b. At 6.1a, the register lists the "god land" of the four teams in charge of Sire Rao' (魏公四班神田).

20 This mountain temple is some 15 kilometers from the village. Only Terrace Peak village and three other small hamlets, we were told, have the right to invite Sire Zhang and Rao to their local festivals. But people come from considerable distances to "fetch fire" (取火) at the time of its festival on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the seventh month, Sire Rao's birthday.

21 *Shayang Raochi jiahu* (《沙陽饒氏家譜》), 1.1b.

22 *Ibid.*, 11.3b. The dates in this text are clearly imaginary: he is said below to have died under Ningzang (r. 1195-1224) in the year 1015 (大中八年), a *jiaxu* year (it is not).

23 Gupo 姑婆, which refers explicitly to the sisters of ego's grandfather and therefore may be translated "great aunt," is here used in an honorific, familiar sense, like Gongtai (公太), "grandpa," for male gods.

24 See Jiang Chuntu and Chen Lizhong, "Qingjiu xian Yupeng xiang Dongfeng cun minsu diaocha," in Yang Yanjie ed., *Minxi de chengxiang minzu yu canliao wenhua* (Hakka Traditional Society Series vol. 4), 370, 374-76.

25 *Ibid.*, 374. As on page 370 the authors say that it is said locally that both villages had divine seats (*shenwei*) for Gupo, we may suppose that what was transported was a seat tablet, not a statue.

26 Tam Wai Lun (譚偉倫), "Jiufeng shanqu Kejia de zongjiao xingtai chutan" (九峰山區客家的宗教形態初探), in *Shaoyou lu de zongjiao, shishi yu jingji, jian xia* (韶州府的宗教、社會與經濟, 卷下), Zeng Hanzhang (曾漢祥) and Tam Wai Lun (譚偉倫) eds., Traditional Hakka Society Series vol. 10 (Hong Kong: Traditional Hakka Society; EFEO; Overseas Chinese Archives, 2000), 312-17.

27 Ruyuan still has a significant population of Yao.

28 *Ibid.*, 317.

29 Zhang Quanqing (張泉清), "Yuedong Wuhua xian Huacheng zhen miaohui daiguan" (越東五華城鎮廟會大觀), in *Meizhou diqu de minzu yu canliao wenhua* (梅州地區的廟會與宗族), Fang Xuejia (房學嘉) ed., Traditional Hakka Society Series vol. 1 (Hong Kong: Traditional Hakka Society; EFEO; Overseas Chinese Archives, 1996), 16-22.

30 Zhang Sijie (張嗣介), "Shahekou de Xiaoshi zongci Conghechang ji jizu su" (沙河石

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Reflected Wu is one of the most widely revered of Minnan gods, especially in the Xiamen region, which contains his two, competing founding temples, in Baijiao (白礁) and Qingjiao (青礁) respectively. Said to have been a doctor, pupil of the famous Sun Simiao (孫思邈), he is consulted above all for medical advice, given in the form of free prescriptions. His temple is still the most important in the Zhao'an county seat today.

He thought it was perhaps in the 19<sup>th</sup> century during the Taiping rebellion, or else during the *wokou* (倭寇) pirate invasions of the Ming. The version most frequently heard says the fire took place in the context of anti-Qing resistance at the end of the Ming. Some even say explicitly that the resistance was that organized by the Heaven-and-Earth Association (天地會).

There are actually two groups of Shens in contiguous villages in Guanbi (which is solidly Hakka). One of them, because it does not eat dog meat but must offer a dog to its chief local god, invites the other group to lend them a hand in killing the dog for the sacrifice. This, of course, suggests She origins for the first group.

31 Nanzhao is the county seat.

32 An interview conducted on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2006 in the Perfect Lord Temple (Zhenjunmiao) provided a different version of these events: the people of Northgate (Beiguan 北關, where the Zhenjunmiao is found) first saved Xu Tianzheng and placed him outside the temple. Then the Lins arrived, saw it there by the wayside and took it back to their village, Qiaodong's Linxiang (橋東林鄉), where it became their *shenhu*. Beiguan people meanwhile, having run back in, saved Shen, whom they placed in the Zhenjunmiao, and Li, whom they placed in the Hujigong (護濟宮):

Chen Yizhou (陳易洲), ed., *Kai Zhang sheigong wenhua* (開漳聖王文化) (Fuzhou: Haifeng, 2005), 8-15.

33 *Ibid.*, 29-30.

34 This refers to the Duanwu festival "tribute run," performed separately on the same day by Hujigong with Li Boyao: both masked ancestor gods are thus out "chasing away perverse spirits" on 5/5, the day throughout South China, for driving away the spirits of pestilence.

35 *Zhao'an Jiaochou Chenshi yanliu fazhan shi* (《詔安甲洲陳氏遠流發展史》) (1997), 159.

36 His real birthday, they said, was on 2/15, but it was the biggest group of Chens, from Qianxiang, who feted the ancestor on that day.

37 Our information came primarily from Shen Hongfa (沈鴻發), aged 41, whom we interviewed on 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2006.

38 Shide is in the northeast corner of the county seat; about 2000 Shens live there. Shide is a Shen village several kilometres from the county seat, on the sea coast. After the Cultural Revolution, the Shens together sculpted a new image of Shen Yong and paraded it as in the past in the year 1982, causing an enormous (political) uproar. The statue was at first placed in a distant site and, at some point, "welcomed" by Shidu. Shidu then decided unilaterally not to allow the statue to be carried out, giving rise to

the new practice of fetching incense.

- 43 Our description below will concern the traditional procedure of "carrying the Ancestor."
- 44 This is a reference to the famous legend of the conquest of southern Fujian, called *Ping'an shiba dong* (平閩十八洞).
- 45 According to the 1992 list of villages and dates, Damei was eleventh on the list and received Shen Yong on 7/17-18.
- 46 Shen Hongfa, who now lives in the fourth ward, said his ward had invited six percussion groups in 2006.
- 47 This word is used locally to refer to any direct male ascendant prior to ego's father.
- 48 In Shide, this is not an annual rotation but one by successive festivals in the course of a year.
- 49 Our interview on 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2006, was conducted with several people, among whom the lineage head, Shen Yonghai (沈永海), age 52, Shen Gongsan (沈拱三), 76, and Shen Shuming (沈淑明), 70.
- 50 Age 75, he is the author of the 1992 *Dongzhong Shenshi zongpu* containing the map and list of the ancestor-carrying villages. We interviewed him in the afternoon of 26 August, 2006.
- 51 We recorded a virtually identical tale in the village of Zhangjiaying (張家營) in the Hakka county of Liancheng in southwestern Fujian: there, a daughter of the Zhang lineage saw the local god on parade when he came to her village. She likewise found him handsome, swooned, and died, and then became his wife. As a result, when the god comes every thirteenth year to stay for the year in Zhangjiaying, the Zhangs have the right to paint a new portrait of the god, together with his two wives.
- 52 Chang Jianhua, *Alinghai zongpu yanjiu*, 36-55, reprinted with minor modifications in his article "Song Yuan shiqi Huizhou cimin jizu de xingshi ji qi bianhua" (宋元時期徽州祠廟祭祖的刑式及其變化), in *Huixue* (徽學) 2000 (Hefei: Anhui University, 2001), 38-51.
- 53 *Ibid.*, 36-37.
- 54 As examples of major god festivals (*yingshen saihui* 迎神賽會) in Huizhou, Wang Zhenzhong (王振忠), *Huizhou shehui wenhua shi tanwei* (徽州社會文化史探微) (Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, 2002), 152, cites Liu Ruji (劉汝明) *Liao Pi gong dian* (陶甓攻牘) (1911) on a group of eighteen earth god groups (東海十八社) in Jixi county (績溪縣) who rotated responsibility for the annual worship of the Duke of Yue (按年輪祀越國公). On page 153, he cites the same book to the effect that, on the 1/18, the Duke of Yue was worshipped in the county seat of Qimen (祁門縣). Pages 174-176, Wang cites various local monographs from the six counties—among which Qimen and Jixi—of traditional Huizhou prefecture in order to demonstrate that the Duke of Yue is "the most famous of all local gods in Huizhou" (徽州最負盛名的地方神).
- 55 The term translated "duty" (尸義) is usually translated "charity," and refers to institutions of charity such as were recommended by Fan Zhen.
- 56 Chang, *op. cit.* 38, mixes Ming and Qing sources with dizzying alacrity, making it difficult to get a clear sense of chronology.
- 57 *Ibid.*, 41.

39 *Ibid.*, 42.

40 Fauré, 46. Chang attributes this statement to a Jiajing-era (1522-1566) text by Cheng Lu (程祿).

41 *Ibid.* Chang is citing Cheng Minzheng. Chakou is a Cheng village.

42 *Ibid.*

43 *Ibid.*, 46-47.

44 *Ibid.*, 47.

45 The text of Cheng Minzheng as quoted by Chang gives a date which is impossible: "Zhi Zheng (至正) (1341-1367) *gongshou* (更申) (1320)."

46 Chang Jianhua, "Sacrifices aux ancêtres, structuration des lignages et protection de l'ordre social dans la Chine des Ming. L'exemple des Fan de Xiuning," *Annales, Histoire, Sciences sociales* 6.6 (Nov.-Dec. 2006), 1320.

47 *Ibid.*, 1338, 1354.

48 In my "Patterns of Religion in West-Central Fujian," *Asian aff.* 129 (2001), 87, I mention the case of Wu Dingsheng (吳定生), an earth god said in the local Wu lineage register to be at once their founder and the founder of Ninghua County (寧化縣).

49 Notes on the Symbolic Life," 760-761.

50 Cf. David Fauré's conclusion in "La solution lignagère", 1316: "Because the regions of China were integrated into the state in different periods, we should expect that local society will reflect, in its ritual practices, the different strata of each such effort of integration into the state."

51 Fauré, "La solution lignagère," 1310. Cf. John Lagerwey, "Patterns of Religion," 106-107: "The most obvious feature of this table is the large number of 'immortals' 仙 and 'grandpa' (公) gods in Qingliu and Mingqi, the two youngest counties... In fact, we know them from fieldwork to be legendary Taoists, most probably of the Lushan school. All this adds up to a far more vital Taoist tradition in the two latest counties to enter the administrative grid... In the older counties, by contrast, we find a number of divinized former prefects and magistrates... and Taoism is represented not by local unknowns such as Raogong or Huangxian but by Mei Fu of the Han dynasty."

52 Fauré, "La solution lignagère," 1314, cited *in extenso* at the beginning of this paper.

53 Fauré, *The Structure of Chinese Rural Society*, chapter 5.

54 See Yang Yanjie, "Gebu houwang: yue kun zongzu de difang tushen" (蛤蜊侯王: 一個跨宗族的方土神), in *Minxi Keyu zongzu shehui yanjiu* (閩西客家宗族社會研究), Traditional Hakka Society Series, vol. 2 (Hong Kong: Traditional Hakka Society, EFEO; Overseas Chinese Archives, 1996), 237-273.

55 Lagerwey, "Patterns of Religion," 73.