

# Northern Song Intellectual Discourse on Yang Xiong's *Taixuan jing*\*

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## ABSTRACT

In the eleventh century, the life and thought of the Han dynasty thinker Yang Xiong became an important topic of debate. Confucian literati of the Northern Song dynasty produced more writings devoted to Yang and his thought than during any other period in Chinese history. These facts raise two important questions. First, what role did Yang Xiong's thought play during the Northern Song? And second, why did literati become interested in Yang Xiong at this time? This study analyzes how Northern Song thinkers viewed one of Yang's major works, the *Taixuan jing*, in an effort to determine both why Yang's ideas assumed renewed importance and what literati had to say about him. I argue that Northern Song writings on Yang's *Taixuan jing* can be categorized into two distinct strains. The first strain focused on several issues related to Yang's character and conduct, which influenced how Northern Song thinkers conceived of worthy status. The second strain centered on the theoretical doctrines found within the *Taixuan jing*, which served to inform Northern Song conceptions of the *Yijing* and the relationship between humanity and the cosmos.

**Key words:** Yang Xiong, *Taixuan jing*, the Northern Song dynasty, literati thought, cosmology

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## 1. Introduction

During the Northern Song dynasty, the political and intellectual legacy of the Han dynasty thinker, Yang Xiong 揚雄 (53BC-18), became an important topic of debate among Confucian literati. Indeed, the Northern Song bore witness to the production of more writings devoted to Yang than any other period in Chinese history. In addition to dozens of commentaries on Yang's *Fayan* 法言 and *Taixuan jing* 太玄經,<sup>1</sup> Northern Song authors composed a substantial number of poems and polemical essays about Yang's life and thought. These works were moreover penned by several of the most important intellectuals of the age such as Liu Kai 柳開 (947-1000), Li Gou 李覯 (1009-1059), Sun Fu 孫復 (992-1057), Su Xun 蘇洵 (1009-1066), Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021-1086), Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037-1101), Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086) and Chao Yuezhi 晁說之 (1059-1129). This study examines how these and other influential thinkers from the Northern Song interpreted one of Yang's most important writings, the *Taixuan jing*, in an effort to clarify what literati of the period had to say about Yang and why he mattered. It argues that, during the eleventh century, Confucian intellectuals took an interest not only in the theoretical substance of the *Taixuan jing*, but also in what its composition revealed about Yang as a thinker and model Confucian. As we shall see, both the quality of Yang's character and the content of his thought were controversial, and many Northern Song thinkers harbored strong opinions about Yang and his relevance to contemporary intellectual issues.

Despite the important role that Yang Xiong played in eleventh century discourse, and the existence of a wealth of relevant source material, only a handful of studies have sought to determine how Northern Song thinkers viewed Yang and his writings. In the

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<sup>1</sup> According to Zhu Yizun's 朱彝尊 *Jingyi kao* 經義考, several dozen commentaries on the *Fayan* and *Taixuan jing* were produced during the Northern Song. This output dwarfs the number of commentaries on these texts produced in the Tang and Five Dynasties as well as the Southern Song. See Zhu Yizun, *Jingyi Kao Dianjiao Buzheng* 經義考點校補正, vol. 8 (Taipei: Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica, 1997), juan 269, pp. 111-143; juan 278, pp. 358-367. For an account of Song editions and Song commentaries on the *Taixuan jing*, see Liu Shaojun 劉韶軍 and Xie Guian 謝貴安, *Taixuan Da Daili Yanjiu* 太玄大戴禮研究 (Wuhan: Wuhan Publishing, 1991), pp. 15-56.

most comprehensive of these studies, Liu Chengguo investigates the influence Yang exerted over Tang and Song *guwen* 古文 thinkers.<sup>2</sup> Liu argues that Yang's influence over *guwen* was profound; it concerned not only literary style, but also intellectual matters such as the human nature and the recognition that Confucius and Mencius shared the same *dao*. An earlier, and less substantial, treatment of this topic can be found in Li Xiangjun's examination of Northern Song conceptions of Yang's thought and character. Li's study describes how various literati assessed not only Yang's learning, but also his support for the Xin dynasty and his place in the *guwen* lineage of former worthies.<sup>3</sup> And Jin Shengyang, in a brief survey of *Taixuan* learning from the Han dynasty to the present, explores how a wide range of thinkers interpreted the text. However, due in part to the article's historical breadth, Jin's analysis of the Song is overly cursory, and he fails to sufficiently interrogate how Song intellectuals viewed the *Taixuan jing* or investigate why it became an important topic of debate.<sup>4</sup>

In this article, I build upon the above studies by examining Northern Song interpretations of Yang's *Taixuan jing* and by analyzing the debates that arose over it. As is well known, in the *Taixuan jing*, Yang advanced a comprehensive doctrinal system, modeled in part on the *Yijing*, that was designed to account for the creation of the cosmos, the passage of time, and the intricacies of human affairs.<sup>5</sup> Like the *Yijing*, the *Taixuan*

<sup>2</sup> Liu Chengguo 劉成國, "Lun Tang Song jian de 'Zun Yang' Sichao yu Guwen Yundong" 論唐宋間的「尊揚」思潮與古文運動, *Literary Heritage* 文學遺產, 3 (2011), pp. 68-81.

<sup>3</sup> Li Xiangjun 李祥俊, "Bei Song Zhuru Lun Yang Xiong" 北宋諸儒論揚雄, *Chongqing Social Sciences* 重慶社會科學, 12 (2005), pp. 31-34.

<sup>4</sup> Jin Shengyang 金生揚, "Taixuan Yanjiu Shi Qianlun" 《太玄》研究史淺論, *Journal of Xihua University (Philosophy & Social Sciences)* 西華大學學報 (哲學社會科學版), 27.1 (2008), pp. 16-18.

<sup>5</sup> On the doctrinal content of the *Taixuan jing*, see Suzuki Yoshijirō 鈴木由次郎, *Taigen'eki no Kenkyū* 太玄易の研究 (Tokyo: Meitoku, 1964), pp. 41-60; Xu Fuguan 徐復觀, *Liang Han Sixiang Shi* 兩漢思想史, vol. 2 (Taipei: Student Book, 1999), pp. 475-500; Wang Qing 王青, "A Study on the *Tai Xuan*" 《太玄》研究, *Chinese Studies* 漢學研究, 19.1 (2001), pp. 77-102; Huang Kaiguo 黃開國, "Xi *Taixuan* Goujia Xingshi" 析《太玄》構架形式, *Confucius Studies* 孔子研究, 4 (1989), pp. 79-83; Wen Yongning 問永寧, "Du Xuan Shi Zhong: Shilun *Taixuan* Suoben de Yuzhoushuo" 讀玄釋中——試論《太玄》所本的宇宙說, *Studies of the Zhouyi* 周易研究, 49 (2001), pp. 67-73; Michael Nylan and Nathan Sivin, "The First Neo-Confucianism: An Introduction to Yang Hsiung's 'Canon of Supreme Mystery' (T'ai Hsuan Ching, c. 4 B.C.)," in Charles Le Blanc and Susan Blader (eds.), *Chinese Ideas about Nature and Society: Studies in Honour of Derk Bodde* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1987), pp. 41-99; Brook Ziporyn, "Spatio-temporal Order in Yang Xiong's *Taixuan Jing*," *Early Medieval China*, 2 (1995-1996), pp. 40-84. For an analysis of how Yang incorporated heaven, earth and man into

*jing* was a divination manual, which provided a template for identifying various temporal-spatial situations as well as a series of guidelines for how to act within them. Yet, despite the similar content and function of the two works, there were also significant disparities between them, the most important of which was their use of different numerical schemas. In contrast to the *Yijing*, which was based in a binomial schema that used varying combinations of six *yin* (broken) and *yang* (unbroken) lines to arrive at the text's sixty-four six-line hexagrams, the *Taixuan jing* employed a trinomial schema comprised of lines representing heaven (unbroken), earth (broken once) and man (broken twice) to construct the work's eighty-one four-line tetragrams. During the latter half of the eleventh century, the relative value of, and the relationship between, these two numerical schemas would become an important point of contention among Confucian literati.

The present study examines two strains of literati discourse in which the *Taixuan jing* figured prominently. The first strain centered on two issues related to Yang's character and conduct found in Ban Gu's *Hanshu* biography—his decision to call the *Taixuan jing* a “Confucian classic” (*jing* 經), and his support of Wang Mang's usurpation of the Han.<sup>6</sup> Although Song views of Yang's political conduct receive mention in the studies by Li and Liu, neither scholar focuses on arguments that employed the *Taixuan jing* to substantiate their positions. As we shall see, several Northern Song thinkers, particularly those influenced by *guwen* 古文, invoked the *Taixuan jing* to either defend Yang's decision to call his work a “Confucian classic,” or argue that the text was actually a veiled political critique of Wang Mang's usurpation.

In the second strain of discourse on the text, we see a more pronounced interest in the validity, or lack thereof, of the doctrines and concepts found within its pages. This more theoretically oriented line of debate, which became prominent during the second half of the eleventh century, addressed two key issues: first, whether the *Taixuan jing* concerned the *dao* or numerical techniques (related to divination and the calendar); and

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the *Taixuan jing*, see Huang Kaiguo 黃開國, *Yang Xiong Sixiang Chutan: Yiwei Xuanjing de Ruxue Lunli Dashi* 揚雄思想初探——一位玄靜的儒學倫理大師 (Chengdu: Bashu Shushe, 1989), ch. 5, pp. 89-129.

<sup>6</sup> On Yang's *Hanshu* biography, see Xu Fuguan, *Liang Han Sixiang Shi*, vol. 2, pp. 439-453. For more detailed accounts of Yang's life, thought and literary legacy, see David R. Knechtges, *The Han Rhapsody: A Study of the Fu of Yang Hsiung, 53 B.C.-A.D. 18* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Liu Shaojun and Xie Guian, *Taixuan Da Daili Yanjiu*, pp. 75-152.

second, whether the text conformed to the *dao* of the *Yijing* or contravened it. Although the intellectuals who participated in this second mode of discourse also wrote essays defending Yang's political conduct, their positions in this regard simply rehashed the claims made by earlier thinkers. They differed from their predecessors in that they placed a far greater stress on the theoretical aspects of Yang's thought.

A close analysis of these two strains of discourse shows that Yang's *Taixuan jing* became a topic of intense intellectual interest during the Northern Song. The text played a significant, if hitherto unexplored, role in eleventh century debates over how to determine worthy status and conceive of the cosmos. In addition, the increasing prominence of the second strain of discourse in the latter half of the eleventh century reflects an important development in the Northern Song intellectual milieu. This development was characterized by a heightened interest in theoretical topics such as the human nature, the problem of how to define the *dao*, and the relationship between humanity and the cosmos. In this intellectual environment, the doctrinal content of Yang's *Taixuan jing* began to overshadow issues related to Yang's personal character, and discussions of the text came to focus to a much greater degree on the validity of the ideas advanced within it.

## 2. The First Strain of Discourse

Song Confucians who were interested in both defending Yang's political conduct and calling attention to his concrete efforts to advance the Confucian way were heavily influenced by Han Yu's 韓愈 (768-824) claim that Yang was in many respects a model Confucian scholar. In a series of letters to one of his most important disciples, Zhang Ji 張籍 (768-830), as well as in theoretical essays such as "On the Origin of the Way" (*Yuandao* 原道) and "Reading Xunzi" (*Duxun* 讀荀), Han championed Yang's efforts to promote the way of antiquity. While conceding that Yang fell short of the accomplishments of Confucius and Mencius, Han still viewed Yang as one of the few individuals over the course of Chinese history that could serve as a model. Yang was worthy of emulation, Han contended, not because he completely grasped the true way, but rather because he wrote to defend and promote the way during a period when it was in decline. He

moreover did so in a manner that revealed his moral character and unique personality.<sup>7</sup>

Han's praise of Yang and his works proved controversial for some of his peers as well as later followers. Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773-819), for example, famously critiqued Yang and other Han thinkers such as Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒, Liu Xiang 劉向 and Ban Biao 班彪 for linking auspicious portents to the reception of the mandate to rule.<sup>8</sup> The late Tang *guwen* adherent, Pi Rixiu 皮日休 (c. 834-883), disagreed more forcefully with Han's assessment of Yang, and argued that his actions did not merit the elevated status Han accorded him.<sup>9</sup> Pi pointed out that Han had failed to take into account Yang's political indiscretions, in particular his support for Wang Mang's usurpation, and that such indiscretions precluded his establishment as a worthy. Similarly, Pi's contemporary, Lu Guimeng 陸龜蒙 (d. 881), argued that Yang's political conduct disqualified him from consideration as a model for later Confucians.<sup>10</sup> Lu contended that Yang's lack of disciples was a direct consequence of his betrayal of the Han and support of the Xin. In Lu's opinion, the Sui dynasty thinker Wang Tong 王通 was a much better candidate for worthy status.<sup>11</sup>

In the early Song, the controversy surrounding Yang's status became a topic of debate within *guwen* circles.<sup>12</sup> In spite of the objections voiced by Pi and Lu, Yang eventually came to be included in a lineage of Confucian worthies consisting of Mencius,

<sup>7</sup> Han makes this claim in his "Reply to Liu Zhengfu" (*Da Liu Zhengfu shu* 答劉正夫書). He also discussed the value of Yang's *Taixuan jing* in his "Letter to Feng Su on *Wen*" (*Yu Feng Su lunwen shu* 與馮宿論文書). See Han Yu 韓愈, *The Literary Collection of Han Changli* 韓昌黎集 (Taipei: Heluo Publishing, 1975), pp. 121-122, 115.

<sup>8</sup> See Liu's "On Auspicious Signs" (*Zhenfu* 貞符). Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元, *The Complete Literary Collection of Liu Hedong* 柳河東全集 (Taipei: The World Book, 1999), pp. 23-30.

<sup>9</sup> This critique is found in Pi's "Postface to the *Fayan*" (*Fayan houxu* 法言後序). See Dong Gao et al 董誥等 (eds.), *Quan Tang Wen* 全唐文 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1983), juan 796, p. 8351.

<sup>10</sup> See Lu's "Preface Sending off the Eremite Dou Lu on his Visit to the Grand Councilor" (*Song Dou Lu chushi ye chengxiang xu* 送豆腐處士謁丞相序). Ibid, juan 800, p. 8406.

<sup>11</sup> For a detailed examination into how Wang Tong was viewed during the Tang and Song dynasties, see Wong Kwok-yiu, "Between Politics and Metaphysics: On the Changing Reception of Wang T'ung in the T'ang-Sung Intellectual Transitions," *Monumenta Serica*, 55 (2007), pp. 61-97.

<sup>12</sup> On the history of the *guwen* movement during the Song, see Peter K. Bol, *This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), chs. 5-6, pp. 148-211; Ho Chi-peng 何寄澎, *Bei Song de Guwen Yundong* 北宋的古文運動 (Taipei: Youth Cultural, 1992).

Xunzi (sometimes), Wang Tong, and Han Yu.<sup>13</sup> The *guwen* discourse surrounding this lineage of worthies was based in three key claims: first, that there was one true *dao* of the sages established in antiquity; second, that this *dao* was transmitted to posterity through written texts; and third, that later Confucian worthies used writing to defend and continue this *dao* during periods when it was under attack. The promotion of this lineage called attention to certain problems in Yang's character and conduct, which prompted several proponents of *guwen* such as Wang Yucheng 王禹偁 (954-1001), Liu Kai 柳開, Zhiyuan 智圓 (976-1022), Sun Fu 孫復, Li Gou 李覲, Zhang Wangzhi 章望之, Shi Jie 石介 (1005-1045), and Zhao Xiang 趙湘 (959-993) to compose essays voicing opinions either for or against Yang's status as a Confucian worthy. As mentioned above, their writings concerning Yang focused on two key issues: first, Yang's use of the term "classic" in the title of his *Taixuan jing*; and second, his support for Wang Mang's Xin dynasty.<sup>14</sup> As we shall see, these two issues were closely related in that they were deemed to reflect deficiencies in Yang's character that, some thought, disqualified him from worthy status. In my analysis below, I focus on writings by the above authors that incorporated discussions of the *Taixuan jing* into their defenses of Yang.

The first Song author to argue for Yang's place in the lineage of former worthies was Liu Kai 柳開. Liu was a strong proponent of this lineage, and his collected works are filled with references to it.<sup>15</sup> The important role that lineage played in the construction of Liu's conception of *guwen* caused him to defend the integrity of its

<sup>13</sup> The most comprehensive study of *guwen* lineages is found in Ho Chi-peng 何寄澎, *Tang Song Guwen Xintan* 唐宋古文新探 (Taipei: Da'an Publishing, 1990), pp. 251-286. For an analysis on Tang writings on lineage, see Sueoka Minoru 末岡實, "Tōdai 'Dōtōsetsu' Shōkō: Kan Yu o Chūshin to Shite" 唐代道統說小考——韓愈を中心として, *Hokkaidō Daigaku Bungakubu Kiyō* 北海道大學文學部紀要, 62 (1987), pp. 29-54.

<sup>14</sup> One of the key pieces of evidence that Yang's critics used to impugn his support of Wang Mang was a memorial entitled "Critiquing the Qin and Praising the Xin" (*Ju Qin mei Xin* 劇秦美新), which was preserved in the *Wenxuan* 文選. For a translation and detailed analysis of this memorial, see David R. Knechtges, "Uncovering the Sauce Jar: A Literary Interpretation of Yang Hsiung's Chū Ch'in mei Hsin," in David T. Roy and Tsuen-hsuei Tsien (eds.), *Ancient China: Studies in Early Civilization* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1978), pp. 229-252.

<sup>15</sup> Liu in fact intimated in certain writings that he was destined to succeed Han Yu as the next worthy in this lineage in his "First Reply to Zang Bing" (*Da Zang Bing diyi shu* 答臧丙第一書). See Zeng Zaozhuang 曾棗莊 and Liu Lin 劉琳 (eds.), *Quan Song Wen* 全宋文 [hereafter *QSW*], vol. 6 (Shanghai: Lexicographical Publishing House, 2006), juan 121, pp. 294-296.

members with determined vigilance. Liu in fact composed two essays dedicated to dispelling critiques of Yang Xiong, his “On the *Han History*’s Biography of Yang Xiong” (*Hanshi Yang Xiong zhuan lun* 漢史揚雄傳論) and “Explaining Master Yang’s Critique of the Qin and Praise of the Xin” (*Yangzi ju Qin mei Xin jie* 揚子劇秦美新解). In the former piece Liu employed a novel argument to address the problem of the *Taixuan jing*’s title, asserting that it was appropriate for Yang to call the work a “Confucian classic” (on par with the works in the traditional Confucian canonical corpus) because he was in fact a sage. Liu advanced this position in the essay’s opening lines:

Ziyun composed the *Taixuan* and the *Fayan*. The [*Hanshu*] biography asserts that individuals who are not sages and who compose classics are comparable to the rulers of Wu and Chu who illegitimately usurped the title of king. Heaven thus destroyed them.<sup>16</sup> Alas! In composing these texts, was it the case that Yang was not a sage? If he were not a sage, then he would not have been able to speak the words of the sages and illuminate the sages’ *dao*. Since he was able to speak the words of the sages and illuminate the sages’ *dao*, then he was a sage. If Ziyun were not a sage, then how could he have written texts and composed classics? Since he was able to write texts and compose classics, then Ziyun was a sage. How do the sages differ from Ziyun? How do the classics differ from the *Taixuan* and the *Fayan*? Although the sages have different appearances and use different words, their virtue and principle are of a type in that they only concern the *dao*.<sup>17</sup>

子雲作《太玄》、《法言》，本傳稱非聖人而作經籍，猶吳楚之君僭號稱王，蓋天絕之。嗚呼！且子雲之著書也，非聖人耶？非聖人也，則不能言聖人之辭，明聖人之道。能言聖人之辭，能明聖人之道，則是聖人也。子雲苟非聖人也，則又安能著書而作經籍乎？既能著書而作經籍，是子雲聖人也。聖人豈異于子雲乎？經籍豈異于《太玄》、《法言》乎？聖人之貌各相殊，聖人之辭不相同，惟其德與理類焉，在乎道而已矣。

<sup>16</sup> This claim is found in the last part of Ban Gu’s biography. See Ban Gu 班固, *Hanshu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1997), juan 87b, p. 3585.

<sup>17</sup> *QSW*, vol. 6, juan 125, p. 356.

Liu continued the essay by asserting that the comparison Ban Gu made between Yang and the rulers of Wu and Chu was flawed. As a sage, Yang's writings were of great benefit to the age, and thus heaven did not destroy him as it destroyed those Warring States leaders.<sup>18</sup> He further contended that Ban was a terrible historian and that his disparagement of Yang derived from the jealousy he harbored towards Yang's superior abilities.

In his "Elegy to Master Yang" (*Diao Yangzi* 弔揚子), a later proponent of *guwen*, Li Gou 李覲, utilized a similar line of argument to defend Yang against his critics. Unlike Liu, Li did not promote the lineage of former worthies in his writings, and the one piece where he discusses its function and purport in detail is fairly critical of its use.<sup>19</sup> Despite this, however, he did hold certain members of this lineage, particularly Yang Xiong and Wang Tong, in high regard, and he composed two separate essays extolling their intellectual achievements. With regards to Yang Xiong, Li valued his *Taixuan jing* much more highly than the *Fayan*, and in his "Elegy to Master Yang," he asserted that the former text illuminated the *dao* and proved that Yang was indeed a sage.<sup>20</sup> He wrote:

As regards the term sage, it means to penetrate. It is used to name [individuals] when appropriate; how could it refer to a set group of individuals? In antiquity, Tang gave the title "Original Sage" to Yi Yin.<sup>21</sup> It stuck and thus the *Books of Shang* did not eliminate it. Yi (Yin's) purity and (Liu Xia) hui's harmony also caused Mencius to view them as sages.<sup>22</sup> If you say that Ziyun was not a sage, how is this not due to obstinacy? When Han Tuizhi said that [Yang] was

<sup>18</sup> In his "Third Reply to Zang Bing" (*Da Zang Bing disan shu* 答臧丙第三書), Liu asserted that Yang, like Confucius and the other worthies, had been endowed by heaven with a sagely capacity. His sagacity was thus innate rather than learned. Ibid, juan 121, pp. 297-301.

<sup>19</sup> Li's "Reply to Li Guan" (*Da Li Guan shu* 答李觀書), which discusses the difficulties involved in modeling the conduct of the former worthies. See Li Gou 李覲, *Li Gou Ji* 李覲集 (Taipei: Hanjing Wenhua, 1983), juan 28, pp. 320-321.

<sup>20</sup> In the fifth essay of his *Shanding yitu xu lun* 刪定易圖序論, Li also briefly referenced calendrical theories from the *Taixuan jing* to refute the connection between the hexagrams and the calendar espoused by Liu Mu 劉牧. Ibid, juan 4, pp. 63-65.

<sup>21</sup> Referencing the *Tanggao* 湯誥 chapter of the *Book of Documents*.

<sup>22</sup> See *Mencius*, 5b.1.

greatly pure with minor flaws, his discussion stopped at the *Fayan*.<sup>23</sup> The [degree of] detail involved in the question answer format of that text is comparable to entering a palace and first perceiving the space between the inner and outer walls. The grandeur of the ancestral shrine's illumined hall then is [only fully] realized in the *Taixuan*. [This work] combines heaven, earth and man, and uses the five phases. It adopts standards and numbers from boundless heaven.<sup>24</sup>

夫聖者通之謂兮，可名而名之，豈有常人？昔成湯號伊尹曰元聖兮，固商書之所不刪。夷之清而惠之和兮，孟氏亦以為聖焉。謂子雲之非聖兮，何啻乎膠柱而操絃。韓退之云大醇而小疵兮，所論止于法言。茲對問之細碎兮，如入宮見其墀垣。伊太廟明堂之巨麗兮，則盡在于太玄。兼三材而用五行兮，取度數於渾天。

Li continued with a description of the text and how the moral lessons it contained demonstrated that Yang would not turn his back on the Han to support the Xin. Invoking lines from the *shi* 視 tetragram, he maintained that Yang's peers were jealous of his abilities and they thus slandered him with charges of betrayal.<sup>25</sup> Li concluded the elegy by critiquing earlier commentaries and by asserting that if heaven indeed had a design for the *Taixuan jing*, it would bestow him with long life and vigor so that he could promote Yang's *dao*.

Whereas Liu Kai and Li Gou defended Yang against charges of aggrandizement by claiming that he was in fact a sage, other supporters adopted a less controversial approach. The relatively obscure *guwen* proponent Zhao Xiang 趙湘, for example, in the last of his three essays defending Yang, asserted that there was no prohibition against later Confucian thinkers calling their works Confucian classics. He employed this argument to

<sup>23</sup> Referencing Han Yu's "On the Origin of the Way" (*Yuandao* 原道).

<sup>24</sup> Li Gou, *Li Gou Ji*, juan 29, p. 329. The term "boundless heaven" (*huntian* 渾天) refers to a theory about the structure of the cosmos that Yang promoted in the *Taixuan jing*. This theory held that heaven encompasses earth in a way that is similar to how an egg white surrounds the yolk.

<sup>25</sup> The quoted passage states: "Kingfishers in flight have their wings ensnared. The furs of fox and sable rob their very selves of life." Michael Nylan, (trans.), *The Elemental Changes: The Ancient Chinese Companion to the I Ching* (Albany: SUNY, 1994), p. 278.

refute the suggestion contained in the *Hanshu* that Yang was punished for his arrogance in calling the *Taixuan jing* a classic by being denied heirs.<sup>26</sup> Zhao wrote:

When comparing the various Confucians [of the time] to Yang, [we can conclude two things]: first, that [their writings] did not measure up to Yang's [*Taixuan*] *jing*; and second, that they were resentful of his worthiness. If [a text] adopts the governing standards of the hundred kings, as well as [the virtues of] benevolence, righteousness, ritual and music, then it is a [Confucian] classic. If you claim that Xiong in writing a [Confucian] classic lacked the status of a sage and therefore received punishment, then this would mean that those who are not sages should not speak of benevolence, righteousness, ritual and music. And that if you are not a sage and speak of them, you will be punished. Alas! If the punishment for those who speak of benevolence, righteousness, ritual and music is limited to this, then what of those who do not speak of these things? ...I have never heard the sages state that writing a classic is a crime. If it were, the sages would have said it, and not forced posterity to do so. That later Confucians, and not the sages, said this, [means that] their words are without basis. Apart from resenting Yang, what [other motive could they have had]?<sup>27</sup>

諸儒之于雄也，不如雄經，一也；嫉雄賢，二也。經緯百王，仁義禮樂，則經矣。若謂雄非聖作經而獲罪，是仁義禮樂非聖人不當言，非聖人而言是，亦獲罪矣。嗚呼！言仁義禮樂者，罪止于此，不言者，其罪如何？……作經之罪，吾未聞諸聖人。作經有罪，聖人當言，不當使後人言之。聖人不言，而諸儒言之，言之而無據，非嫉雄而何？

Like Liu and Li, Zhao asserted that Han criticisms of Yang for writing a Confucian classic were baseless and motivated by jealousy. Unlike them, however, he did not attempt to elevate Yang's status, but rather lowered the criteria distinguishing classics from non-classical works.

<sup>26</sup> Referencing the fact that Yang's only son died young.

<sup>27</sup> *QSW*, vol. 8, juan 170, p. 362.

In addition to castigating Yang for composing a classic, critics of Yang's character also reproached him for supporting Wang Mang. As a result, Yang's defenders attempted to explain the purport behind writings that appeared to sanction Wang's usurpation, arguing that a careful reading of their content revealed either that Yang was actually disparaging Wang, or that these lines were later interpolations made by Yang's enemies.<sup>28</sup> One of the most interesting defenses of Yang's conduct in this regard, which put forth an intriguing interpretation of the *Taixuan jing*, is Sun Fu's 孫復 "Defense of Master Yang" (*Bian Yangzi* 辨揚子). Like Liu Kai, Sun was a strong proponent of the lineage of former worthies, and he discussed the importance of emulating the worthies' use of writing to defend the *dao* in several of his works.<sup>29</sup>

Sun began his "Defense of Master Yang" by asserting that, contrary to conventional opinion, Yang's purpose in writing the *Taixuan jing* was not to elaborate the *dao* of the *Yijing*, but rather to criticize Wang Mang.<sup>30</sup> Unlike many of his contemporaries, Yang was ashamed to serve the Xin, and he accepted a minor government position so that he could devote his time to preserving the sages' *dao*. It was at this time, according to Sun, that he decided to write the *Taixuan jing*:

As Ziyun had the capacity to critique Mang's usurpation, and moreover feared that some in the future would follow in Mang's footsteps by once more releasing evil upon man, he thereupon [decided to] contemplate the progression of the heavens and the seasons above, as well as the calculations informing

<sup>28</sup> The former claim is made by Liu Kai in his "Explaining Master Yang's Critique of the Qin and Praise of the Xin" (*Yangziju Qinmei Xinjie* 揚子劇秦美新解), the latter in Zhang Wangzhi's "Postface to Yang Xiong's Biography" (*Shu Yang Xiong zhuan hou* 書揚雄傳後). The Tiantai monk Zhiyuan also wrote an essay on this topic entitled "Expanding upon Pi Rixiu's Postface to the *Fayan*" (*Guang Pi Rixiu Fayan houxu* 廣皮日休法言後序), which argued that Yang simply made a mistake in praising Wang Mang. He maintained that the misguided faith Yang placed in Wang did not disqualify him from worthy status, for he, like all worthies, made mistakes. The key was that he recognized his error and worked to rectify it. *Ibid.*, vol. 6, juan 126, pp. 378-380; vol. 58, juan 1275, pp. 343-344; vol. 15, juan 310, pp. 232-233.

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, Sun's "Confucian Disgrace" (*Ruru* 儒辱), "Letter to Supervising Secretary Kong" (*Shang Kong jishi shu* 上孔給士書) and "Inscription for the 'Faith in the *Dao* Pavilion'" (*Xindao tang ji* 信道堂記). *Ibid.*, vol. 19, juan 401, pp. 309-310, 313-314.

<sup>30</sup> The Qing dynasty literatus Chen Benli 陳本禮 (1739-1818) would later advance a more detailed version of this argument in his *Revealing the Secrets of the Taixuan* (*Taixuan chanmi* 太玄闡秘).

their waxing and waning, flourishing and decline; he [moreover chose to] infer the beginnings of advance and retreat, preservation and loss, and success and failure with regards to human affairs below. Through [this contemplation and inference] he created the *Taixuan*... [It] greatly illuminates the principles of heaven and man, beginnings and endings, conformity and contravention, as well as the distinctions between ruler and minister, superior and inferior, departing and arriving. Those who accord with the text receive fortune; those who contravene it, misfortune. This provides a warning to those who would go against heaven and man, assassinate the ruler and steal the state. This was Ziyun's original intent. How could it have been the case that he created it by taking the measure of the *Yijing*?<sup>31</sup>

子雲既能疾莽之篡逆，又懼來者蹈莽之迹，復肆惡於人上，乃上酌天時行運盈縮消長之數，下推人事進退存亡成敗之端，以作《太玄》……大明天人終始逆順之理，君臣上下去就之分，順之者吉，逆之者凶，以戒違天拂人，戕君盜國之者，此子雲之本意也，孰謂準《易》而作哉？

Sun thus defended Yang by claiming that the *Taixuan jing* was written to criticize Wang's usurpation and warn future generations against following in his footsteps. The text was not an attempt to provide a counterpart to the *Yijing*, but rather was designed as a veiled critique of Wang's political transgressions.<sup>32</sup>

As the above examples demonstrate, the majority of intellectuals who decided to write about Yang in the first century of the Song chose to defend his character and conduct.<sup>33</sup> While they discussed the circumstances surrounding Yang's composition of

<sup>31</sup> *QSW*, vol. 19, juan 401, p. 304.

<sup>32</sup> On the history and meaning of the claim that Yang wrote the *Taixuan* by "taking the measure of the *Yi* (*zhunyi* 準易)," see Feng Shu-fun 馮樹勳, "Taixuan yu Yi de 'Shutu Toggui' Guanxi" 《太玄》與《易》的「殊塗同歸」關係, *National Cheng Chi University Chinese Literature Journal* 政大中文學報, 17 (2012), pp. 66-69.

<sup>33</sup> An exception to this general trend can be found in Wang Yucheng's "Second Reply to Zhang Fu" (*Zaida Zhang Fu shu* 再答張扶書), which critiqued Yang's *Taixuan jing* as "empty rhetoric" (*kongwen* 空文). This letter was written in an effort to dissuade Zhang Fu from modeling his writing on the *Taixuan*. Yet, despite the negative assessment found in this letter, it is important to point out that Wang also defended Yang and including him in the lineage of former worthies in his "Second Reply to Huang Zongdan" (*Da Huang Zongdan shu er* 答黃宗旦書二) and his "Letter Sent to Reminder Song" (*Tou Song shiyi shu* 投

the *Taixuan jing* in detail, they by and large did not assess the content of the text. Even the pieces by Li Gou and Sun Fu, which briefly mentioned certain concepts from the *Taixuan jing*, did not attempt to demonstrate the merit of Yang's theoretical constructs; instead, the goal of their essays was to defend Yang's character and prove that he was worthy of emulation. As noted above, *guwen* thinkers who promoted the lineage of former worthies accepted the claim that its members wrote texts to defend the *dao* against heterodox schools of thought. They by and large did not investigate the specific doctrines found in the works of each of the worthies, but rather accepted on faith that the worthies together continued the *dao* of the ancient sages. This being the case, they placed a greater degree of emphasis on character than content, and given the problematic nature of Yang's biography, they attempted to justify Han Yu's praise for him and defend him against charges of misconduct.

Although a number of commentaries on Yang's *Taixuan jing* were composed during the early Song,<sup>34</sup> it was not until the middle of the eleventh century that theoretical essays devoted to Yang's doctrines began to appear in large numbers.<sup>35</sup> It is important to note that the first strain of discourse described above did not disappear, and many individuals who wrote on Yang's ideas in the latter half of the eleventh century also composed essays defending his conduct.<sup>36</sup> Yet, there also emerged a concurrent discourse,

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宋拾遺書). See *QSW*, vol. 7, juan 150, pp. 390-391, 396-398; juan 151, pp. 414-416.

<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, the vast majority of these early commentaries, which were written by individuals who did not play an influential role in the politics and intellectual discourse of the period, are no longer extant. Brief excerpts from two such commentaries, written by Song Weigan 宋惟幹 and Chen Jian 陳漸, are preserved in Sima Guang's *Taixuan jizhu*. In addition, the views of Wu Mi 吳秘, who presented his commentaries on the text to the throne in 1057, are also referenced within Sima's work. However, in all three cases, it is difficult to get a precise sense of how these men interpreted the *Taixuan* due to the small number and brevity of the excerpts found therein. See Yang Xiong 揚雄, *Taixuan Jizhu* 太玄集注 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1998).

<sup>35</sup> Song Weigan also composed an essay on the text, entitled "Discussing the Purport of the *Taixuan*" (*Taixuan tanzhi* 太玄譚旨), which survives to the present. In the essay, Song describes the basic structure and purpose of the work, and further asserts that the *Taixuan* was written to complement the *Yijing*. See *QSW*, vol. 7, juan 139, pp. 190-191. As I will discuss below, in the extant historical record, writings that address doctrinal matters found in the text become more prominent from the middle of the eleventh century. At this time, thinkers of higher political and intellectual standing, such as Sima Guang, Su Xun, Shao Yong and Chao Yuezhi, began to write theoretical essays on the *Taixuan jing*. In the second half of the paper, I focus my analysis on their writings.

<sup>36</sup> An important development that may have increased literati interest in Yang was his elevation into the

which in many respects came to eclipse the first, devoted to specific doctrinal issues found in Yang's various writings. As is well known, at this time Song thinkers began to focus to a much greater degree than had been the case earlier in the dynasty on questions regarding the human condition and the relationship between the cosmos and human affairs. Yang's conception of the nature developed into an important benchmark against which Song thinkers judged earlier notions or developed their own theories.<sup>37</sup> Similarly, the view of the cosmos found in Yang's *Taixuan jing* attracted the interest of many intellectuals, and the doctrinal value of the text became a topic of debate. As we shall see, the debates over the text focused on whether the *Taixuan jing* revealed the *dao*, particularly as found in the *Yijing*, or contravened it. In the following section, I analyze a number of essays that came down on either side of this issue.

### 3. The Second Strain of Discourse

One of the first thinkers to push back against the *guwen* picture of Yang Xiong as it had developed from the Tang to the Song was the Chan monk, and practitioner of *guwen*, Qisong 契嵩 (1007-1072). Although several Tang intellectuals wrote essays critical of Yang, as the above analysis demonstrates, during the first century of the Song the majority of *guwen* proponents followed Han Yu's lead in holding him up as a model. In two of his "Against Han" (*Fei Han* 非韓) essays, written in the 1050s, Qisong attempted to undercut their position by criticizing Han's portrayal of Yang.<sup>38</sup> He differed from earlier critics in that he did so through an analysis of the doctrinal foundations of Yang's *Taixuan jing*. For Qisong, the major reason Yang fell short of worthy status was not

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official pantheon of Confucian scholars receiving imperial sacrifices in 1074. For an in depth analysis of this matter, see Huang Chin-shing 黃進興, "Xueshu yu Xinyang: Lun Kongmiao Congsizhi yu Rujia Daotong Yishi" 學術與信仰：論孔廟從祀制與儒家道統意識, *New History* 新史學, 5.2 (1994), pp. 1-82.

<sup>37</sup> Essays from this period that discuss Yang's conception of the human nature include: Su Shi's "On Yang Xiong" (*Yang Xiong lun* 揚雄論), Sima Guang's "Defending Good and Evil Being Mixed [in the Nature]" (*Shan e hun bian* 善惡混辨), and Wang Anshi's "On Yang and Meng" (*Yang Meng* 揚孟).

<sup>38</sup> For an analysis of these essays, see Huang Chi-chiang, "Ch'i-sung (契嵩) as a Critic of Confucianism Represented by Han Yu (韓愈)," *Chinese Studies*, 16.1 (1998), pp. 289-324.

because of his personal character and conduct, but rather because of the ideas he advanced.<sup>39</sup>

In the eleventh “Against Han” essay, Qisong lambasted the conception of Yang that Han presented in his “Letter to Feng Su on Wen” (*Yu Feng Su lunwen shu* 與馮宿論文書). Qisong began the essay by citing the portion of the letter where Han described writing as a competitive endeavor.<sup>40</sup> Han Yu invoked the views of the Han dynasty philosopher Huan Tan 桓譚 (c. 43BC-28) in support of his position, and he endorsed Huan’s claim that Yang’s *Taixuan* surpassed Laozi’s *Daode jing*. Following a caustic critique of this conception of writing, which he felt contravened the position of the sages, Qisong launched into an attack on Han’s portrayal of Yang Xiong. In contrast to Han, as well as other *guwen* proponents who maintained that Yang transmitted the *dao* of the sages, Qisong asserted that the numerical foundation for Yang’s theories, which served to undergird the *Taixuan jing*’s philosophical system, was derived from the *Daode jing*:

Ziyun studied with Yan Zun (Junping) throughout his life, thus his *Fayan* abundantly praised Junping. [Yet] Junping was the individual who ordered the [text of] the *Laozi*. When Ziyun created the *Taixuan*, he thereupon used [the principle of] one giving rise to three as the basis for establishing his system.<sup>41</sup> This was also [derived from] an investigation of the *Laozi*’s “One gives rise to two; two gives rise to three.”<sup>42</sup> Thus, Ziyun said: “I have adopted Laozi’s

<sup>39</sup> Qisong’s critique of Yang’s views in these essays was part of his larger effort to defend Buddhism against *guwen* attacks by exposing critical flaws in *guwen* conceptions of the *dao* and antiquity. For an analysis of Qisong’s efforts in this regard, see Douglas Skonicki, “A Buddhist Response to Ancient-style Learning: Qisong’s Conception of Political Order,” *T’oung Pao*, 97 (2011), pp. 1-36.

<sup>40</sup> This notion of writing as a means of defeating one’s enemies proved to be highly influential in Song *guwen* circles, particularly among thinkers who promoted the lineage of former worthies such as Liu Kai, Sun Fu and Shi Jie. As mentioned above, they praised the worthies for using writing to combat those who opposed the sages’ *dao*.

<sup>41</sup> This numerical basis for the *Taixuan* is attested to in the *Xuantu* 玄圖 portion of the text, as well as in the Tang dynasty commentator Wang Ya’s “Discourse on the *Xuan*” (*Shuoxuan* 說玄). See Yang Xiong, *Taixuan Jizhu*, pp. 212, 234. Zhu Xi would also assert that the *Taixuan* was influenced by early Daoism. See Li Jingde 黎靖德 (ed.), *Zhuzi Yulei* 朱子語類, vol. 5 (Taipei: Wen Chin Publishing, 1986), juan 67, p. 1674.

<sup>42</sup> *Daode Jing*, juan 42.

statements on the *dao* and virtue.”<sup>43</sup> The fundamental purport of Yang's work was derived from the *Laozi*, and thus [Han's] claim that the *Xuan* surpassed Master Lao demonstrates that he has not thought about this matter.<sup>44</sup>

子雲平生學問於蜀人嚴遵君平，故其《法言》盛稱於君平，君平乃治《老子》者也。及子雲為《太玄》，乃以一生三為創制之本，是亦探《老子》所謂「一生二，二生三」者也。故子雲曰：「老子之言道德，吾有取焉耳。」雄書之宗本既出於《老子》，而謂《玄》勝老氏，亦其未知思也。

Qisong continued the essay with a sustained critique of a second assertion found in Han's "Letter to Feng Su on Wen" regarding Yang; namely, that Yang's disciple, Hou Ba 侯芭, was correct in claiming that the *Taixuan* surpassed the *Yijing*.<sup>45</sup> In rebutting this assertion, Qisong engaged in a protracted discussion of the content of the *Taixuan* and its relationship to the *Yi*. He began by showing how the different components of the text were modeled on the *Yi*, and cited a passage from Yang's *Hanshu* biography, which attested to the link between the two texts. He continued by asserting that the seemingly unique aspects of the *Taixuan* were in fact inspired by the works of the Western Han *Yi* specialists Jing Fang 京房 and Jiao Yanshou 焦延壽.<sup>46</sup> Following this extended

<sup>43</sup> *Fayan*, 4.6.

<sup>44</sup> *QSW*, vol. 36, juan 777, p. 317.

<sup>45</sup> Qisong wrote: "Yet, how could Huan Tan really have been able to know Ziyun? The fact that Master Han used Huan's words is already laughable. But he also said that [Yang's] disciple Hou Ba really knew him and felt that his teacher's work surpassed the *Zhouyi*. This is yet another great error by Master Han." 「然桓譚豈為能知子雲乎？而韓子乃援桓譚之言，則已可笑矣，乃又曰其弟子侯芭破知之，以為其師之書勝《周易》，此又韓子之大繆矣。」 *Ibid*.

<sup>46</sup> That Han theorists such as Jing and Jiao, who advanced the *guaqi* 卦氣 method of interpreting the *Yijing*, influenced Yang's construction of the text has become widely accepted in contemporary scholarship. See Xu Fuguan, *Liang Han Sixiang Shi*, vol. 2, pp. 478-485; Huang Kaiguo 黃開國, "Taixuan yu Xi Han Tianwen Lifa" 《太玄》與西漢天文曆法, *Jianghuai Tribune* 江淮論壇, 2 (1990), pp. 61-66; Brook Ziporyn, "Spatio-temporal Order in Yang Xiong's *Taixuan Jing*," pp. 53-54. On the *Yijing* theory of Jing Fang and Jiao Yanshou, see Gao Huaimin 高懷民, *Liang Han Yixue Shi* 兩漢易學史 (Taipei: The Commercial Press, 1960), pp. 126-166; Richard J. Smith, *Fathoming the Cosmos and Ordering the World: The Yijing (I-Ching, or Classic of Changes) and Its Evolution in China* (Charlottesville/London: University of Virginia Press, 2008), pp. 67-73. For a dissenting view, which denied that Yang was influenced by the *guaqi* method, see Feng Shu-fun, "Taixuan yu Yi de 'Shutu Toggui' Guanxi," pp. 63-65.

preliminary argument aimed at demonstrating the derivative nature of the *Taixuan's* doctrinal system,<sup>47</sup> Qisong finally arrived at the gist of his critique; namely, that the text was not grounded in the *dao*, but rather was the product of human artifice. He expressed this position in the following manner:

As regards the *Yi*, it partook of the *Hetu* and *Luoshu* in attaining completion. This is the utmost spiritual method of heaven and earth that is so-of-itself. It is not something that the sages created; however if one is not a sage then one cannot illuminate it. Although the time (following the *Yi's* appearance) spanned the three periods of antiquity, the sages who were able to reveal its [meaning] were nine, and of these only Fu Xi, King Wen and Confucius had achievements that really stood out. As for Ziyun's text, where did it initially come from? How did he obtain it? As for the individual who made it into a text, how could he compare to Fu Xi, King Wen or Confucius? Thus, the method of the *Xuan* more than likely resulted from the workings of man's mental processes, and so it cannot be spoken of together with the *dao* of heaven and earth that is so-of-itself. The worthiness of Ziyun does not measure up to that of Fu Xi, King Wen, and Confucius. Although a naive child would know that this is so, Master Han felt that Hou Ba really knew him, and claimed that the *Xuan* surpassed the *Yi*. How extremely deluded!<sup>48</sup>

夫《易》者，資《河圖》《洛書》以成之，蓋天地自然至神之法，非聖人之創制也，然非聖人亦不能發明之。雖其時世更歷三古，藉聖人發揮者九人焉，唯伏羲、文王、孔子事業尤著。若子雲之書，其始何出，而何得之？其為書之人，何如於伏羲、文王、仲尼乎？然《玄》之法蓋出於人之意思經營之致耳，與夫天地自然之道固不可同日而言哉。子雲之賢不及伏羲、文王、孔子，雖童蒙亦知其然也，而韓子以侯芭為頗知之，而謂《玄》勝《易》，何其惑之甚也！

<sup>47</sup> Qisong argued that despite his use of a different numerical system, the inspiration for the *Taixuan's* tetragrams and appraisals came from the hexagrams and *yao* lines of the *Yijing*. He moreover contended that the ideas of Jiao Yanshou influenced the calendrical and divinatory methods found in the text.

<sup>48</sup> *QSW*, vol. 36, juan 777, pp. 317-318.

In this and the previous passage, Qisong advances two important points. First, he contends that the *dao* found in Yang Xiong's *Taixuan jing* differed from that of the ancient sages. Not only was this work influenced by the *Daode jing*,<sup>49</sup> it moreover failed to grasp the *dao* of heaven and earth upon which the *Yijing* was based.<sup>50</sup> Qisong thus punched a hole in the *guwen* claim that the members of the lineage of former worthies, including Yang, espoused the one true *dao* of the sages. Second, he indicates that while the content of the *Taixuan jing* was modeled on the *Yijing*, it nonetheless differed from that work in that it was the product of human artifice.<sup>51</sup> The unmistakable implication was that the *dao* of the *Yijing* and that of the *Taixuan jing* were not the same.

The distinction Qisong drew between the *daos* of the *Yijing* and the *Taixuan jing* would become an important issue in debates over the text. Like Qisong, thinkers critical of the *Taixuan* frequently chose to ground their attacks on the work in comparisons with the *Yi*. Put simply, the text's critics asserted that the differences between the two texts, particularly regarding numerical techniques, revealed that Yang had misunderstood the *dao*.<sup>52</sup> Taking the doctrines and concepts found in the *Yi* as an evaluative standard, they attacked the *Taixuan jing* for diverging from the positions propounded within it.

One of the best known proponents of this polemical strategy was the famous Neo-Confucian (*daoxue* 道學) thinker Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033-1107). As is well known, Cheng Yi played an extremely important role in the establishment and dissemination of *daoxue*. He moreover composed a commentary on the *Yijing*, and several concepts from that text informed his philosophical positions, particularly regarding the relationship

<sup>49</sup> Su Shi also critiqued Yang for being influenced by Laozi in his "On Han Yu Being Superior to Yang Xiong" (*Han Yu you yu Yang Xiong* 韓愈優於揚雄).

<sup>50</sup> Qisong's argument here comports with his sustained attack on *guwen* thinkers for missing the true foundation of the *dao*. See Douglas Skonicki, "A Buddhist Response to Ancient-style Learning: Qisong's Conception of Political Order."

<sup>51</sup> This same claim was advanced by Ming dynasty scholar Ye Ziqi 葉子奇 in the preface to his *Taixuan Benzhi* 太玄本旨. See Ye Ziqi, *Taixuan Benzhi, Jingyin Wenyuange Siku Quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書, vol. 803 (Taipei: The Commercial Press, 1983), p. 109.

<sup>52</sup> On the relationship between the *Yijing* and the *Taixuan*, see Wen Yongning 問永寧, "Shilun *Taixuan* yu Gu Yi de Guanxi" 試論《太玄》與古易的關係, *Journal of Shenzhen University (Humanities & Social Sciences)* 深圳大學學報 (人文社會科學版), 23.4 (2006), pp. 25-28; Feng Shu-fun, "*Taixuan* yu *Yi* de 'Shutu Toggui' Guanxi."

between the cosmos and humanity.<sup>53</sup> Cheng did not discuss the *Taixuan jing* extensively, but his views on the text are expressed in two brief exchanges contained in his recorded conversations. The first exchange contains the following dialogue:

Question: “Why did [Yang] write the *Taixuan*?”

Answer: “This [text] is simply redundant. Instead of [giving in] to his compulsion to write the *Xuan*, it would have been better if [Yang] had elucidated the *Yi*. Shao Yaofu’s numerical techniques resemble those of the *Xuan* but are different.<sup>54</sup> Numerical techniques are just general [tools]; it depends on how people use them. It is also possible to write ten *Xuans*, so what is the big deal with one?<sup>55</sup>

問：「《太玄》之作如何？」曰：「是亦贅矣。必欲撰《玄》，不如明《易》。邵堯夫之數，似玄而不同。數只是一般，但看人如何用之。雖作十《玄》亦可，況一《玄》乎？」

In the above passage, Cheng echoed claims made by Qisong regarding the failure of the *Taixuan jing* to shed light on the *Yijing*. He moreover denigrated Yang’s numerical techniques, which informed the divination and calendrical methods found in the text, asserting that they did not get to the heart of the *dao*. In the second exchange, Cheng continued this line of critique, maintaining that the *Taixuan*’s better fit with the calendar was of no benefit:

<sup>53</sup> For Cheng’s conception of the *Yijing*, see Kidder Smith, Jr., “Ch’eng I and the Pattern of Heaven-and-Earth,” in Kidder Smith, Jr., Peter K. Bol, Joseph A. Adler, and Don J. Wyatt (eds.), *Song Dynasty Uses of the I Ching* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 136-168; Jiang Haijun 姜海軍, *Cheng Yi Yixue Sixiang Yanjiu: Sixiang Shi Shiyexia de Jingxue Quanshi* 程頤易學思想研究——思想史視野下的經學詮釋 (Beijing: Beijing Normal University, 2010). For an analysis of his conception of the relationship between the human and natural worlds, see Peter K. Bol, *This Culture of Ours: Intellectual Transitions in T’ang and Sung China*, ch. 9, pp. 300-316.

<sup>54</sup> Zhu Xi also asserted that Shao Yong’s learning resembled Yang’s. See Li Jingde (ed.), *Zhuzi Yulei*, vol. 7, juan 100, pp. 2545-2546.

<sup>55</sup> Cheng Hao 程顥 and Cheng Yi 程頤, *Er Cheng Ji* 二程集 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1981), p. 231.

[Yang's] fundamental purport in writing *Taixuan* was to illuminate the *Yi*; however, given that it particularly obscures the *Yi*, it is actually of no benefit. [It amounts to] constructing a [second] house beneath the actual house, or putting a [second] mattress on top of the [actual] mattress. Yang simply attained numerical techniques from the *Yi* and implemented them. Although it matches with calendrical methodology, it is still of no benefit.<sup>56</sup>

作《太玄》本要明《易》，却尤晦如《易》，其實無益，真屋下架屋，牀上疊牀。他只是於《易》中得一數為之，於麻法雖有合，只是無益。

Although Cheng's comments in these two passages seem off-handed and somewhat inconsequential, they actually strike to the heart of the doctrinal foundations upon which the *Taixuan* was constructed. As is well known, Yang Xiong conceived of the *Taixuan*'s tetragrams in numerical terms, and he based the numerical system of the text in the number three, which differed from the binary system used in the *Yi*.<sup>57</sup> Cheng contends here that, despite being inspired by the *Yi*, Yang's use of number was arbitrary, and thus of little use. Underlying this critique was Cheng's belief that the key to understanding the *Yijing* lay in grasping the moral principles (*yili* 義理) found within its pages. For Cheng, the numbers of the *Yi* were grounded in principle;<sup>58</sup> however, rather than illuminating the principles underlying the *Yi*'s numerology, Yang chose instead to create an entirely new system. Due to this decision, Cheng concluded that his *Taixuan jing* was at best inessential, and at worst an impediment to understanding the *dao* of the *Yi*.

Like Qisong and Cheng Yi, Su Xun 蘇洵 based his critique of the *Taixuan* in a comparison with the *Yijing*. Su in fact composed two multi-part essays on the *Taixuan jing* in order to not only adumbrate his criticisms, but also to convince others that he

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, p. 251.

<sup>57</sup> On Yang's numerical system and the role it played in the *Taixuan jing*, see Michael Nylan and Nathan Silvan, "The First Neo-Confucianism: An Introduction to Yang Hsiung's 'Canon of Supreme Mystery' (T'ai Hsuan Ching, c. 4 B.C.)," pp. 78-83.

<sup>58</sup> Cheng advances this claim in "On the *Yi*" (*Yishuo* 易說), where he asserts that the emergence of number is derived from principle (*li* 理) and material force (*qi* 氣). In his "Reply to Zhang Hongzhong" (*Da Zhang Hongzhong shu* 答張閔中書), he refuted Zhang's claim that "the purport of the *Yi* is derived from numbers" (*Yi zhi yi ben qi yu shu* 易之義本起於數), asserting instead that it was ultimately grounded in principle. See Cheng Hao and Cheng Yi, *Er Cheng Ji*, pp. 615, 1030.

understood the structure and mechanics of the text.<sup>59</sup> Su hailed from Shu 蜀,<sup>60</sup> which, as Yang's birthplace, had a strong tradition of *Taixuan* learning. During the Song, the natives of Shu were responsible for a large number of commentaries on the text. Although Su does not specifically mention it in his writings on the *Taixuan*, it is reasonable to assume that he had been exposed to Yang's thought during his time there.

Su began the first essay in his three-part "On the *Taixuan*" (*Taixuan lun shang* 太玄論上) by describing the capacity of individuals to recognize and attain the purport of the sages through textual mediums. He postulated a series of connections between writing, speaking and the mind, arguing that each of these areas had to be consistent. Based on his reading of the *Fayan* and *Taixuan jing*, Su concluded that Yang had failed to understand the sages:

The *Taixuan* is a work that Xiong attached to Confucius, but he did not get it in his mind. If Xiong had gotten it in his mind, I know that he would not have written the *Taixuan*. Why?<sup>61</sup>

《太玄》者，雄之所以自附於夫子，而無得於心者也。使雄有得於心，吾知《太玄》之不作。何則？

Su divided his answer to this question into two parts. First, he implicitly compared Yang to people with outsized ambitions who, because they failed to get it in their minds, tried to convince others of their competence through bluster. Second, he maintained that Yang

<sup>59</sup> Although George C. Hatch has noted that there is no verifiable evidence attesting to Su's authorship of these essays, I see no reason to doubt that Su in fact composed them. They are included in the Southern Song edition of Su's collected works, the *Jiayou ji* 嘉祐集, compiled by Xu Qianxue 徐乾學 in 1147, but absent from the Qing edition of Su's writings, the *Su Laoquan xiansheng quanji* 蘇老泉先生全集, prepared by Shao Renhong 邵仁泓. See Yves Hervouet (ed.), *A Sung Bibliography* (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1978), pp. 388-389. The Southern Song intellectuals Lin Xiyi 林希逸 (1193-?) and Chen Zao 陳藻 (1151-1225) moreover mention Su's essays by name in two separate pieces entitled "Taixuan" 太玄. See *QSW*, vol. 335, juan 7735, pp. 388-390; vol. 287, juan 6518, pp. 110-111.

<sup>60</sup> On Su Xun's life and thought, see George C. Hatch, Jr., "The Thought of Su Hsün (1009-1066): An Essay on the Social Meaning of Intellectual Pluralism in Northern Sung," Ph.D. Dissertation (Washington: University of Washington, 1978). Hatch's dissertation remains the best study of Su's intellectual positions; however, he does not discuss Su's essays on the *Taixuan jing* in any detail.

<sup>61</sup> *QSW*, vol. 43, juan 924, pp. 115-116.

had failed to grasp the reason why the sages created the *Yijing*, asserting that the *Taixuan jing* missed the purport of that text with regards to both the *dao* and *shu* 數 (techniques; here, referring to the numerical systems used in divination and calendrical calculations).<sup>62</sup>

Regarding the *dao*, Su contended that it was represented in the sixty-four hexagrams found in the text of the *Yi*. He maintained that the sages' principle in composing the *Yijing* was that "the sixty hexagrams are not increased, and the sixty-four hexagrams are not decreased" (六十卦而無加，六十四卦而無損).<sup>63</sup> He pointed out that Yang's use of the intercalary appraisals (*ji* 躋 and *ying* 贏) contravened this guideline,<sup>64</sup> it moreover conflicted with statements Yang made in the *Taixuan jing* itself. On the basis of this analysis, Su concluded that the *dao* of the *Taixuan* failed to measure up to that of the sages.

Following this dismissal of the value of the *Taixuan's dao*, Su conducted an in-depth examination of the numerical techniques found in the text. He maintained that the sage's intent concerning the calendar could be found in the theory of "six days and seven

<sup>62</sup> In the "On the *Taixuan*" essays, Su asserted that the sages intended for the *Yijing* to be useful in calculating the calendar and in divining the future. In his "On the Six Classics" (*Liu jing lun* 六經論), however, Su offered a somewhat different view, asserting that the sages' intention in writing the *Yijing* was to shroud their teachings in mystery in order to convince the people to respect and follow them. The divination techniques used in the text represented a means of granting an aura of mystery and profundity to their teachings, which they used to make the people honor their *dao*. In my opinion, there exists a tension in the way Su interprets the *Yi* in these two sets of essays. In "On the *Taixuan*," the *Yi* is taken as a standard that cannot be deviated from, whereas in "On the Six Classics," it is viewed as an expedient tool that was created in order to control the populace. For a discussion of the conception of the *Yi* advanced in "On the Six Classics," see George C. Hatch, Jr., "The Thought of Su Hsün (1009-1066): An Essay on the Social Meaning of Intellectual Pluralism in Northern Sung," pp. 240-249.

<sup>63</sup> *QSW*, vol. 43, juan 924, p. 116. Su here is referring to the theory popularized by Han theorists such as Meng Xi 孟喜, Jing Fang and Jiao Yanshou, that of the text's sixty-four hexagrams, *kan* 坎, *li* 離, *zhen* 震, and *dui* 兌 represented the four seasons. These four hexagrams were separated out from the other sixty hexagrams, and their *yao* lines were matched to the twenty-four solar terms that traditionally constituted an important part of the calendrical cycle. For an excellent discussion of how this system worked, see Gao Huaimin, *Liang Han Yixue Shi*, ch. 4, pp. 104-174.

<sup>64</sup> In the *Taixuan*, each tetragram had nine appraisals (*zan* 贊), which were divided in half to represent 4 and ½ days, the result being that the 81 tetragrams and 729 appraisals in the text only accounted for 364 and ½ days. In order to reach the 365 and ¼ days of the solar calendar year, Yang inserted two "intercalary appraisals," the *ji* 躋 and *ying* 贏 appraisals. As Su points out, this solution was somewhat awkward, as these appraisals were not attached to any of the tetragrams. On Yang's calendrical theory, see Huang Kaiguo, "*Taixuan* yu Xi Han Tianwen Lifa," pp. 62-64.

divisions” (六日七分) popularized by the Han dynasty *Yijing* scholars Meng Xi, Jiao Yanshou and Jing Fang.<sup>65</sup> Yang’s eschewal of this theory demonstrated that his calendrical calculations were not based in solid astronomical science, and that the implementation of his calendar would eventually lead to errors in the yearly cycle. In addition, Su pointed out that Yang’s intercalary appraisals did not conform to the measurements of the twenty-eight constellations of traditional Chinese astronomy. For these reasons, he maintained that, as was the case with his *dao*, Yang’s numerical techniques were far inferior to those of the *Yi*.<sup>66</sup>

Yet, despite the above criticisms, Su did not feel that the *Taixuan jing* was completely without merit. In the remaining two “On the *Taixuan*” essays, Su conducted a more in-depth examination of the calendrical theory and divination method found in the text. As in the first essay, Su grounded his discussion in detailed comparisons of the *Taixuan* with the *Yijing*. His perspective in these essays differed in that he offered suggestions for remedying the faults in Yang’s calendrical calculations and divination techniques. Following these very technical discussions, he concluded that even if Yang’s methods diverged from, and were inferior to, those found in the *Yi*, they could be improved upon, and made useful, by implementing a few minor modifications.<sup>67</sup>

Su’s final work on the *Taixuan*, his “Comprehensive Cases from the *Taixuan*” (*Taixuan zongli* 太玄總例), was written in response to protests he received following his distribution of “On the *Taixuan*.” This work contains a series of short essays on numerous topics related to the *Taixuan*, such as the four positions comprising each tetragram, the

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. There were differences in the methods advanced by these three men, but the “six days and seven divisions” system basically required matching the group of sixty hexagrams to different calendrical periods, with each hexagram representing 6 and 7/80 days. For an explanation of how this theory differed from that used in Yang’s *Taixuan jing*, see *ibid*, p. 65.

<sup>66</sup> Zhu Xi would later endorse Su’s critique of the text’s numerical calculations. See Li Jingde (ed.), *Zhuzi Yulei*, vol. 8, juan 137, p. 3261.

<sup>67</sup> On Su’s suggestions regarding the divination method found in the text, see Wen Yongning 問永寧, “Shilun *Taixuan* de Shifa” 試論《太玄》的筮法, *Shanxi Jiaoyu (Lilun Ban)* 陝西教育 (理論版), 8 (2006), pp. 222-224. His modifications to the calendrical system are explained in detail in his “Comprehensive Cases from the *Taixuan*.” They involved slight adjustments to the period of time assigned to each tetragram so that the intercalary appraisals could be eliminated. The Southern Song literatus Lin Xiyi offers a positive appraisal of Su’s suggestions for improving the work in his “*Taixuan*.” See *QSW*, vol. 335, juan 7735, pp. 388-390.

nine appraisals, the eighty-one tetragrams, and the methods of divination and prognostication used in the text. Unlike the “On the *Taixuan*” essays, these pieces are more explanatory than polemical, and they seem to have been intended to demonstrate that Su’s interpretation of the text was valid and that his suggestions for improvement were practicable.

Although critical of the text’s *dao* and *shu* (techniques), Su clearly harbored a more positive view of the *Taixuan* than either Qisong or Cheng Yi, and he conceded that despite its flaws, the text’s *shu* still had some salvageable value. His suggestions for improving the divination and calendrical techniques found in the text aroused controversy, and, according to Lü Tao 呂陶 (1031-1107), they began to dominate discussions of the text and cause people to overlook the *dao* propounded within it. Lü was a native of Shu and a close associate of Su Shi. He began his “On Yang Xiong” (*Yang Xiong lun* 揚雄論) by noting that debates over the *Taixuan* had come to focus on two opposing views regarding the text’s numerical theories. The first view held that the numerical principles informing the construction of the tetragrams and the progression of the calendar were based on natural numbers, and thus could not be altered, while the second view (presumably Su Xun’s) maintained that they could be increased or decreased. Lü, who held a positive opinion of Yang, found this debate exasperating, for he felt that it disregarded the main purport of the text.<sup>68</sup> He attempted to reveal this purport by invoking a comparison with the *Yijing*:

Alas! Is this all there is to Xiong’s composition of the *Xuan*? I answered: this is not all. In the past, the creation of the *Yi* was due to [the sages] worrying about later ages. They deeply investigated the foundation of heaven and earth, and obtained it in numerical techniques. However, numerical techniques could not be used to teach, and so they depicted them in the hexagrams, imitated them in the images, doubled them in the *yao*, and appended comments to them. Then it was possible to perceive the function of heaven, earth and man therein.

<sup>68</sup> Towards the end of the essay, Lü conceded that these disputes, particularly concerning Yang’s calendrical calculations, could be traced back to inconsistencies and errors within the text itself. However, in spite of this, he asserted that the *dao* of the text should still be valued.

Thus it is said: “What establishes the *dao* of heaven is called *yin* and *yang*; what establishes the *dao* of earth is called soft and hard; and what establishes the *dao* of humanity is called benevolence and righteousness.”<sup>69</sup> Thus the *Yi*’s production was derived from numerical techniques yet in its completion, the numerical techniques were also hidden. What the sages used to save this people of ours is called *dao*. The function of the *dao* is found in the teaching. Those odd and even [numbers] associated with heaven, earth and the five phases are not applicable to the function of the *dao*. [As for] Xiong’s text, is it about numerical techniques? Or, is it about the *dao*?<sup>70</sup>

嗚呼！雄之為《玄》，止於是而已乎？曰未也。昔之作《易》，蓋有憂患於後世矣。深探天地之本，而得之於數，然數不可以為教，乃畫之以卦，擬之以象，重之以爻，繫之以辭，而後見三才之用焉。故曰：「立天之道，曰陰與陽；立地之道，曰柔與剛；立人之道，曰仁與義。」然則《易》之生也出於數，而其成也，數亦隱矣。聖人之所以濟乎斯民者曰道也。道之用，在乎教也。彼天地五行之奇偶者，不適夫道之用也。雄之書，其為數乎？抑為道乎？

Lü proceeded to answer this question by noting how the text focused on both calendrical calculations and human affairs. He maintained that, like the sages, Yang composed his classic in order to elucidate the function of the *dao* to current and future generations. The text was thus not simply about numbers.<sup>71</sup> Lü moreover expressed hope that future proponents of the text would place greater value on its teachings regarding the *dao*, and refrain from engaging in disputation over its calendrical calculations.

Lü thus sought to reorient the debate surrounding the text away from disputes over numerical techniques and towards the *dao*. In contrast to Qisong, Cheng Yi, and even Su Xun, Lü held that the *dao* found in the *Taixuan* had value and could be used to instruct

<sup>69</sup> This is a quote from the *Shuogua* 說卦 section of the *Yijing*.

<sup>70</sup> *QSW*, vol. 73, juan 1606, p. 377.

<sup>71</sup> Lü stressed this point by distinguishing between the text’s substance (*ti* 體) and function (*yong* 用). The substance of the *Taixuan* lay in how it matched with calendrical calculations, while its function was found in how the numerical system of the text described the *dao*. In contrast to Cheng Yi, who held that the numerical system of the *Yi* was grounded in principle and thus could not be altered, Lü suggests that the different numerical system of the *Taixuan* was in fact based in the same *dao* as the *Yi*.

the people in moral affairs. He contended that the purport of the *Taixuan* lay not in the specific conceptual vocabulary employed in the text, but rather in how Yang used this vocabulary to elucidate the *dao* of the sages. In this way, he sought to put an end to debates over the text's *shu*, downplay the doctrinal differences between the *Taixuan* and the *Yi*, and demonstrate that Yang's text comported with the *dao*.

This approbatory stance towards the text's *dao* was echoed by other intellectuals in the second half of the eleventh century. At this time, several prominent thinkers who were deeply interested in the cosmos and the calendar began to defend Yang's composition of the *Taixuan jing* and promote the *dao* found within its pages. Given the critiques described above, which interpreted doctrinal disparities between the two texts as indications of Yang's failure to understand the *Yi*, the defenders of the *Taixuan* either attempted to reconcile discrepancies between the two texts, or contend that such discrepancies were superficial and that the two works were in fact grounded in a common *dao*.

The most famous proponent of the *Taixuan jing* in the eleventh century was, without question, the great historian Sima Guang 司馬光. In addition to writing commentaries on both the *Fayan* and the *Taixuan*, the most important statement of his cosmological views, the *Qianxu* 潛虛, was by his own admission indebted to the latter work.<sup>72</sup> Sima moreover composed two essays on the *Taixuan* in which he explained his general view of the text and its relationship to the *Yijing*.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>72</sup> See Sima's "Postface to the *Qianxu*" (*Qianxu houxu* 潛虛後序). Sima also wrote prefaces to his commentaries on the *Fayan* and *Taixuan jing*, as well as two essays defending Yang's personal conduct and conception of the nature, entitled "Defending Yang" (*Bian Yang* 辨揚) and "Defending Good and Evil Being Mixed [in the Nature]" (*Shan e hun bian* 善惡混辨) respectively. On the textual history of the *Qianxu*, as well as the relationship between this text and Sima's view of the *Yijing*, see Lin Su-fen 林素芬, "Sima Guang Yixue Sixiang Lice" 司馬光易學思想蠡測, *Dong Hwa Journal of Humanities* 東華人文學報, 13 (2008), pp. 67-110.

<sup>73</sup> Brief discussions of Sima's conception of the *Taixuan* are found in the following works: Yang Xiong, *Taixuan Jizhu*, pp. 2-9; Tian Xiaozhong 田小中, "Sima Guang *Taixuan Jizhu Yanjiu*" 司馬光《太玄集注》研究, *Journal of Chongqing University of Arts and Sciences (Social Sciences Edition)* 重慶文理學院學報(社會科學版), 32.6 (2013), pp. 30-34; Dong Genhong 董根洪, *Sima Guang Zhexue Sixiang Shuping* 司馬光哲學思想述評 (Taiyuan: Shanxi Renmin Chubanshe, 1993), ch. 2, pp. 75-93; Chen Keming 陳克明, *Sima Guang Xueshu* 司馬光學述 (Wuhan: Hubei Renmin Chubanshe, 1990), pp. 249-256; and Yang Tianbao 楊天保, "Yi Xuan Zhun Yi Liang Qiankun: Sima Guang, Wang Anshi Yixue Jingshen zhi Bijiao" 以《玄》準《易》兩乾坤——司馬光、王安石易學精神之比較, *Studies of the*

In the first essay, entitled “Reading the *Xuan*” (*Du Xuan* 讀玄), Sima recounted his early impressions of the *Taixuan* and how those impressions changed over time. He began by noting that he did not have access to the *Taixuan* during his youth, and that his view of the text had been shaped by the negative assessment found in the *Hanshu*. He wrote:

I too personally blamed Xiong for not lauding the *Yi* and for instead creating the *Xuan*. The *dao* of the *Yi* is complete regarding the intermingling of heaven and man. What could Xiong possibly add to it? However, he wrote another text. Not knowing how it was supposed to be used, I too concluded that it was inappropriate for Xiong to compose the *Xuan*. As I grew older, I studied the *Yi* and struggled with its dark profundity, which was difficult to grasp. [At that time], I thought that the *Xuan* was the work of a worthy, [yet] when compared with the *Yijing*, its meaning was certainly shallow and its *wen* simple. [As the old adage goes], those who ascend Mt. Qiao definitely traverse low-lying areas; those who go toward the sea must follow the Jiang and Han rivers. Thus I vowed to first work on the *Xuan* and then gradually advance to the *Yi*, thinking this would perhaps allow me to stand on tiptoe and catch a glimpse of [the *Yi*]. I thereupon pursued [this strategy] for many years and began to attain insight [into the text]. At first, it was formless and indecipherable, as if impossible to enter. Then I focused and changed my thinking; I put aside worldly affairs and read it dozens of times from beginning to end. [This allowed me] to attain a slight glimpse into its main features. I then sighed deeply, put the text down and exclaimed: “Alas! Yang Ziyun truly is a great Confucian! Following the death of Confucius, who besides Ziyun understood the sage’s *dao*? Mencius and Xunzi are not worthy of comparison. How much the more is this so of the remaining [Confucian worthies]?”<sup>74</sup>

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*Zhouyi* 周易研究, 92 (2008), pp. 27-32.

<sup>74</sup> Yang Xiong, *Taixuan Jizhu*, p. 1. In his commentary on a passage in the *Fayan* that discusses the distinction between transmitting and creating, Sima described the manner in which Yang grasped, and continued, the *dao* of the sages. According to Sima, what Yang transmitted was the benevolence and righteousness of the sages, and what he created were the tetragrams. Sima concluded his comments by

余亦私怪雄不贊《易》而別為《玄》，《易》之道其於天人之緼備矣，而雄豈有以加之？迺更為一書，且不知其焉所用之，故亦不謂雄宜為《玄》也。及長學《易》，苦其幽奧難知，以為《玄》者賢人之書，校於《易》其義必淺，其文必易。夫登喬山者必踐於塊埤，適滄海者必沿於江漢，故願先從事於《玄》以漸而進於《易》，庶幾乎其可跂而望也。於是求之積年，始得觀之。初則溟滓漫漶，略不可入，迺研精易慮，屏人事而讀之數十過，參以首尾，稍得闕其梗槩。然後喟然置書嘆曰：「嗚呼！揚子雲真大儒者邪！孔子既沒，知聖人知道非子雲而誰？孟與荀殆不足擬，況其餘乎？」

We can read Sima's position here, I think, as a response to claims such as those advanced by Cheng Yi, which held that the *Taixuan* was useless for understanding the *dao* of the *Yijing*. Sima seeks to rebut this assertion, and preserve the text's close association with the *Yi*, by contending that the *Taixuan* served an important pedagogical function: it made it easier for individuals to grasp the profundity of the *Yi's dao*.

Sima continued "Reading the *Xuan*" by adumbrating the key points of the text, particularly regarding the nature of *xuan*. As one of his most pithy statements on the *Taixuan*, it is worth taking a close look at the entire passage:

Reading the text of the *Xuan*, [I found that] it illuminates the principles of human [affairs] and exhausts the depths of the spiritual [world]. When large it encompasses the universe, when small it enters a hair. It combines the *daos* of heaven, earth and man into one. Embracing its root reveals the source from which humanity emerged. It gives birth to and nurtures the myriad things and also acts as their mother. It is like traversing land that goes on forever, or draining a sea that is impossible to exhaust... If we examine it at the beginning of the undifferentiated origin, the *xuan* had already been born; if we investigate it in the present, the *xuan* proceeds; if we exhaust it in the seasons

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stating: "This [passage] states that Master Yang created the text of the *Taixuan*. What he transmitted was simply the *dao* of the former sages." 「言揚子所作《太玄》之書，其所述者，亦先聖人之道耳。」 Yang Xiong 揚雄, *Yangzi Fayan* 揚子法言, *Jingyin Wenyuange Siku Quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書, vol. 696 (Taipei: The Commercial Press, 1983), p. 300.

of heaven and earth, the *xuan* cannot perish. Examine it against the circumstances of the myriad things and it is not omitted; measure it against the condition of ghosts and spirits and it is not defied; weigh it against the words of the six classics and it does not contravene [them]. If the sages were reborn and saw the *Xuan*, they would certainly be relieved, smile, and think that [Yang] had understood their minds. This then is how I know that the *Xuan* lauded the *Yi* and that [Xiong] did not create a separate text in order to compete with the *Yi*. How could Liu Xin and Ban Gu's understanding have been so shallow, and their criticism so excessive!<sup>75</sup>

觀《玄》之書，昭則極於人，幽則盡於神，大則包宇宙，小則入毛髮，合天地人之道以為一，括其根本，示人所出，胎育萬物而兼為之母，若地履之而不可窮也，若海挹之而不可竭也……考之於渾元之初而玄已生，察之於當今而玄非不行，窮之於天地之季而玄不可亡，叩之以萬物之情而不漏，測之以鬼神之狀而不違，槩之以六經之言而不悖，藉使聖人復生，視《玄》必釋然而笑，以為得己之心矣。乃知《玄》者所以贊《易》也，非別為書以與《易》角逐也，何歆、固知之之淺而過之之深也！

The definition of *xuan* Sima provides in this passage resonates with that contained in the *xuanli* 玄攤 section of the *Taixuan jing*, as well as that concerning *yi* 易 or “change” found in fourth verse of the first “Appended Statements” (*Xici zhuan shang* 繫辭傳上) chapter of the *Yijing*. Sima depicts *xuan* as an entity or force which possesses concrete existence in the cosmos, and which is revealed through the pages of the text. Like “change” in the *Yijing*, it encompassed both the cosmos and humanity; it moreover underlay the creation of the myriad things and the passage of the seasons. Sima concluded the passage by defending Yang's decision to compose the text, arguing that he wrote it to complement the *Yijing*, not compete against it.

Sima developed this position regarding the complementarity of the two texts in the latter half of the essay, where he asserted that, despite surface dissimilarities, the *Taixuan* nonetheless elucidated the *dao* of the *Yijing*. He then proceeded to advance several analogies to illustrate his conception of how it did so. In the first, he compared the *Yi* to a

<sup>75</sup> Yang Xiong, *Taixuan Jizhu*, pp. 1-2.

net and the *Xuan* to a spear, arguing that hunters kept both tools in their arsenal because of their efficacy in capturing prey. In the second, he compared these texts to pillars holding up a roof on the verge of collapse. And in the third, he identified the *Yi* with heaven, and the *Taixuan* with stairs that led up to it. He concluded this section of the essay by stating: “You intend to ascend to heaven, yet you would discard the stairs [leading there]?”<sup>76</sup>

Sima thus disagreed with critics of the text who asserted that the *Taixuan jing* failed to illuminate the *dao* of the *Yijing*. He held that the two texts were fundamentally compatible, and that they could be used together to learn about the *dao*. In his second major essay on the *Taixuan jing*, the “Discourse on the *Xuan*” (*Shuo xuan* 說玄), Sima shed light on the complementary nature of the two texts by laying out in detail the numerous parallels that existed between them. The majority of the parallels he identified concerned the organization and function of the texts as well as the structural features of the hexagrams and tetragrams. Sima held that each of the different parts of the *Taixuan* had a counterpart in the *Yijing*, and he invoked these structural parallels as proof that the two texts elucidated the same *dao*. This is evidenced by the concluding line of the essay, which states: “Different paths return to the same place; the myriad ways of thinking are [in the end] consistent. They are all rooted in *taiji*, *yinyang*, *sancai*, the four seasons and the five phases, and return to the *dao*, virtue, benevolence, righteousness and ritual.”<sup>77</sup>

Sima's positive view of the text was shared by his close friend, Shao Yong 邵雍, who composed a work on the relationship between the *Yi* and the *Taixuan* entitled the “Diagram on [how] the *Taixuan* Takes the *Yijing* as its Measure” (*Taixuan zhun Yi tu* 太玄準易圖). As is well known, Shao, like Sima, took a keen interest in the cosmos.<sup>78</sup> He advanced a number of distinctive theories to account for the creation of the universe, the

<sup>76</sup> 「子將昇天而廢其階乎？」 Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>77</sup> 「殊塗而同歸，百慮而一致，皆本於太極兩儀三才四時五行，而歸於道德仁義禮也。」 Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>78</sup> Whether Shao was influenced by Sima's work on the *Taixuan jing* cannot be conclusively demonstrated; however, the two men did develop a close relationship while Sima was in Luoyang. Concerning this relationship, see Mori Hiroyuki 森博行, “Shiba Kō Shō Yō Kōyū Roku” 司馬光、邵雍交遊錄（上、中、下），*Ohtani Joshi Taikokubun* 大谷女子大國文, 33 (2003), pp. 34-52; 34 (2004), pp. 1-21; 35 (2005), pp. 1-22.

passage of time, and the relationship between humanity and the natural world.<sup>79</sup> While the *Taixuan zhun Yi tu* is no longer extant, a preface attributed to Shao survives, and in it he proposes a new metaphor for conceiving of the connection between the two works. Unlike Sima, who simply noted parallels between the different methods employed in the *Taixuan* and *Yijing* without attempting to explain the rationale behind them, Shao argued that the methods of the two texts were grounded in numerical systems derived, respectively, from heaven and earth.<sup>80</sup> He described his position in the following manner:

As regards the [relationship] between the *Xuan* and the *Yi*, it is similar to that between earth and heaven. Heaven presides over *taiji*, whereas earth unites primordial *qi*. Primordial *qi* revolves and creates heaven, earth and man. In the *Xuan* this is called the three origins. The three origins revolve and create the nine provinces; the nine provinces revolve and create the twenty-seven departments; the twenty-seven departments revolve and create the eighty-one tetragrams. Each tetragram has nine appraisals, which are divided between night and day. The functions of hard and soft can then be perceived. Thus there are seven hundred and twenty-nine odd appraisals in the *Xuan*, which correspond to the measure of three hundred sixty-six days [in the year]. The foundation for writing the text was thus derived from primordial *qi*.<sup>81</sup>

夫《玄》之於《易》，猶地之於天也。天主太極，而地總元氣。元氣轉而為三統，在《玄》則謂之三元。三元轉而為九州，九州轉而為二十七部，二十七部轉而為八十一首。首有九贊，贊分晝夜，而剛柔之用見矣。故《玄》之贊七百二十九而有奇，以應三百六旬有六日之度，蓋本出乎元氣而作者也。

<sup>79</sup> On Shao's philosophical system, see Anne D. Birdwhistell, *Transition to Neo-Confucianism: Shao Yung on Knowledge and Symbols of Reality* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989); Don J. Wyatt, *The Recluse of Loyang: Shao Yung and the Moral Evolution of Early Sung Thought* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996).

<sup>80</sup> Although Shao is usually included as one of the founding figures of Neo-Confucianism, it is important to note that his cosmological theory differed in important respects from that of Cheng Yi and his brother Cheng Hao. The Chengs, whose influence over the later development of the movement far exceeded that of Shao, disapproved of Shao's reliance on number as a means of understanding the cosmos.

<sup>81</sup> *QSW*, vol. 46, juan 986, p. 51.

Shao here describes the origin of the numerical system employed by the *Taixuan*, which was rooted in the number three, as stemming from earth and primordial *qi*. In his telling, the revolution of primordial *qi* gave rise to the *santong* 三統 (heaven, earth and man) which were represented in the *Taixuan* by the three different lines that comprised the tetragrams—an unbroken line (heaven), a line broken once (earth), or a line broken twice (man).<sup>82</sup> Following this, he explained the different parts of the text and how they were linked to the number of days in the year.

Shao continued the preface by elucidating how the *Yijing* was grounded in *taiji*, which he associated with heaven. Unlike the trinomial system of the *Taixuan*, the *Yi*'s numerical system was based in a binary system, grounded in *yin* and *yang*:

*Taiji* gives rise to *yin* and *yang*; *yin* and *yang* give rise to the four images; the four images give rise to the eight trigrams,<sup>83</sup> the eight trigrams are accorded with and doubled to make the sixty-four hexagrams. Thus the *Yi* has the eight trigrams *qian*, *kan*, *gen*, *zhen*, *xuan*, *sun*, *li*, *kun*, and *dui*, which preside over the eight main solar divisions. Moreover, the twenty-four *yao* of the four correct hexagrams *kan*, *li*, *zhen* and *dui*, preside over the twenty-four [types of] *qi*.<sup>84</sup> And, the twelve hexagrams *fu*, *lin*, *tai*, *dazhuang*, *guai*, *qian*, *gou*, *dun*, *pi*, *guan*, *bo* and *kun* preside over the seventy-two (five day) temporal periods. [Solar] divisions, *qi* and temporal periods each had that which controlled them; however, that which presides over the measures of the universe had yet to appear. [The sages] thereupon discarded the four correct hexagrams, and adopted the remaining sixty hexagrams, pulling and extending them to create the three hundred sixty *yao*. Each *yao* presided over its day, and then the universe's three hundred sixty degrees, the *dao* of the seasons' advance and retreat, and the movement of *yin* and *yang* were complete. The foundation for

<sup>82</sup> These lines represent the three regions (*sanfang* 三方) of the text, which Shao here denotes with the term "three origins" (*sanyuan* 三元).

<sup>83</sup> Shao here references the eleventh verse in the "Appended Statements" commentary to the *Yi* (*Xici shang* 繫辭上).

<sup>84</sup> The eight main solar divisions (*bajie* 八節) denote the most important of the twenty-four types of *qi*, or solar divisions (*ershisi qi* 二十四氣), that divide the year. The term *jieqi* 節氣 is usually used to describe these twenty-four solar divisions.

writing [the *Yi*] was thus *taiji*.<sup>85</sup>

太極生兩儀，兩儀生四象，四象生八卦，八卦因而重之為六十四。故《易》有《乾》、《坎》、《艮》、《震》、《巽》、《離》、《坤》、《兌》八卦，以司八節。又以《坎》、《離》、《震》、《兌》四正之卦二十四爻，以司二十四氣：以《復》、《臨》、《泰》、《大壯》、《夬》、《乾》、《姤》、《遯》、《否》、《觀》、《剝》、《坤》十有二卦，以司七十二候。節也，氣也，候也，既各有統矣，然周天之度未見其所司也，於是又去四正之卦，分取六十卦，引而伸之為三百六十爻，各司其日，則周天三百六十度，而寒暑進退之道，陰陽之運備矣。蓋本乎太極而作者也。

In these two passages, Shao offered a defense against positions such as those advanced by Cheng Yi, which castigated the *Taixuan* for departing from the numerical system of the *Yijing*. He rebutted such critiques by asserting that the differences between the two texts were purposeful and not arbitrary; Yang intentionally grounded the system of the *Taixuan* in earth in order to complement that of the *Yi*, which was rooted in heaven. Shao took this as evidence that Yang's text was not written to compete with the *Yijing*, and he concluded that it was entirely appropriate to use these two works together.<sup>86</sup> Shao devoted the remainder of the preface to a description of the different cosmological spheres to which these systems corresponded as well as the mutual interaction that occurred between them. He praised Yang's decision to write the text, and maintained that despite their different foundations, both the *Yi* and the *Taixuan* nonetheless returned to a common origin.

There is evidence that the theories that Sima and Shao advanced regarding the *Taixuan* and its relationship to the *Yijing* influenced the views of their contemporaries. Chapter six of the "Latter Record of Things Mr. Shao Has Seen and Heard" (*Shaoshi wenjian houlu* 邵氏聞見後錄) contains a fairly lengthy passage that describes how Chen Guan 陳瓘 (1057-1122) began to study the *Taixuan* after reading the works of Sima and

<sup>85</sup> *QSW*, vol. 46, juan 986, p. 51.

<sup>86</sup> Interestingly, the two numerical systems described here differed from that proposed by Shao in the *Huangji jingshi shu* 皇極經世書, which was based in the number four, and he makes no attempt to reconcile these two systems with his own.

Shao.<sup>87</sup> In addition, Chao Yuezhi discussed the merits of both men's positions in his "Postscript to the Record of Celestial Movements in the *Yi* and *Xuan*" (*Yixuan xingji pu houxu* 易玄星紀譜後序).

Chao was a member of the famous Chanzhou Chao family 澶州晁氏,<sup>88</sup> and in his youth he studied with Sima Guang.<sup>89</sup> Following in the footsteps of his teacher, Chao took a great interest in Yang Xiong, whom he discussed in several of his writings. Chao's most important work on Yang was a two-part biography, written to exonerate Yang from the negative account found in the *Hanshu*. In the biography, Chao described Yang's astronomical views in detail, particularly his espousal of the *huntian* 渾天 method against proponents of the *gaitian* 蓋天 method.<sup>90</sup> He argued that Yang's endorsement of the *huntian* method was correct, and further asserted that the *Taixuan jing* was based in it. He also cited two exchanges from the *Wenshen* chapter of the *Fayan* in which Yang defended his composition of the *Taixuan jing* and explained that it was written to promote the virtues of benevolence and righteousness.<sup>91</sup>

The detailed account of Yang's astronomical views found in this biography reflected the author's own intellectual interests. Chao was a serious student of both the *Taixuan* and the *Yijing*, particularly the calendrical theories of the Han dynasty thinker Jing Fang.<sup>92</sup> He moreover wrote a number of essays on astronomical and calendrical theory,

<sup>87</sup> See Shao Bo 邵博, *Shaoshi Wenjian Houlu* 邵氏聞見後錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1997), pp. 43-45. Chen discussed the relationship between the *Yijing* and the *Taixuan* in his *Fugu bian xu* 復古編序, where he, like Sima and Shao, asserted that Yang wrote the *Taixuan* to praise the *Yi*, not compete with it. See *QSW*, vol. 129, juan 2785, p. 115.

<sup>88</sup> A relative from a different branch of the Chao clan, Chao Buzhi 晁補之 (1053-1110), also composed a short essay on the *Taixuan* in which he praised the text and asserted that it provided concrete evidence that Yang had indeed continued the *dao* of the sages. See *QSW*, vol. 129, juan 2727, pp. 207-208.

<sup>89</sup> For a detailed biography of Chao, see Zhang Jian 張劍, *Chao Yuezhi Yanjiu* 晁說之研究 (Beijing: Academy Press, 2005), pp. 81-133.

<sup>90</sup> This view has been challenged by contemporary scholars such as Wen Yongning and Huang Kaiguo, who have convincingly argued that the influence of both the *huntian* and *gaitian* methods can be discerned in the *Taixuan jing*. See Wen Yongning, "Du Xuan Shi Zhong: Shilun *Taixuan* Suoben de Yuzhoushuo;" Huang Kaiguo, "*Taixuan* yu Xi Han Tianwen Lifa."

<sup>91</sup> *QSW*, vol. 130, juan 2817, p. 295. Chao also cited the *Taixuan fu* 太玄賦 in the biography, but since that text is widely considered to be written by another author, I will not discuss it here.

<sup>92</sup> Chao was a proponent of recovering the old text of the *Yijing*, which involved separating the commentaries from the original text. For an analysis of Chao's conception of the *Yijing*, see Zhang Jian, *Chao Yuezhi Yanjiu*, pp. 136-140; Yang Xinxun 楊新勳, *Songdai Yijing Yanjiu* 宋代疑經研究 (Beijing:

and he evaluated the positions that Sima and Shao espoused regarding the *Taixuan* in this context. He began his *Yi Xuan xingji pu houxu* with the following assessment of their views:

When I was at Mt. Song, I obtained Wengong's (Sima Guang) *Taixuan jijie* and read it. I more deeply grasped that Yang Ziyun at first wrote the *Xuan* for [the purpose of elucidating] King Wen's *Yi*, and that he tentatively relied on the Gaoxin and Taichu calendars for its foundation. These two calendars have strengths and weaknesses regarding their astronomical calculations,<sup>93</sup> and since they cannot be utilized effectively in the present, they are not worth discussing. Wengong moreover grounded his creation of the *Xuan* calendar in the *Taichu* calendar.<sup>94</sup> While he harbored a very industrious intent, [the work] was overly brief and difficult to understand. I then attained Mr. Kangjie's (Shao Yong) *Xuantu*, which displayed the stars and constellations, distinguished between [different types] of *qi* and seasonal periods, and divided night and day. Both the *Yi* and the *Xuan* played a part therein, and it was exceedingly detailed. Moreover, I worried that the transmission of his writing and the placing of his wording would be easily corrupted, and that with the passage of time, no one would know its original guise. Even though my hands wanted to drop the matter, my will would not let it. I thereupon read [the text] during the day and thought about it at night; I adopted calendars from the diagrams, combined and classified them. I then knew that Ziyun modeled the tetragrams on the hexagrams and that they were not a product of his personal bias. It was probably the case that he had no choice [but to make them] to get the mechanism [underlying] the stars and seasons.<sup>95</sup>

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Zhonghua Book Company, 2007), pp. 114-115.

<sup>93</sup> These calculations concern the manner of dealing with the quarter day left over in the three hundred sixty-five and  $\frac{1}{4}$  day calendar year.

<sup>94</sup> Whether Sima actually completed a calendar based on the *Taixuan* is unclear. In addition to the citation above, his *Taixuan* calendar is also referenced in Xue Jixuan's 薛季宣 (1134-1173) "Appraising Master Jiao's *Forest of the Yi*" (*Xu Jiaoshi Yilin* 敘焦氏易林), where it is compared with Shao Yong's *Taixuan tu* 太玄圖.

<sup>95</sup> *QSW*, vol. 130, juan 2805, p. 82.

說之在嵩山，得溫公《太玄集解》讀之，益知揚子雲初為文王《易》而作《玄》，姑託基於高辛及太初二曆。此二曆之斗分強弱，不可下通於今，亦無足議。溫公又本諸《太初曆》而作《玄曆》，其用意加勤矣，然簡略難明。繼而得康節先生《玄圖》，布星辰，辨氣候，分晝夜，而《易》、《玄》相參於中，為極悉矣。復患其傳寫駢委易亂，歲月斯久，莫知其躅，手欲釋而意不置，乃朝讀夜思，取曆於圖，合而譜之，於是知子雲以首準卦，非出於其私意，蓋有星候為之機括，不得不然。

After summarizing the numerical systems used for astronomical calculations in the *Yijing* and the *Taixuan*, Chao discussed the merits of the latter work. He argued that while the content of the *Xuan* differed from the *Yi*, it was nonetheless valuable because it helped to shed light on areas that the *Yi* left unstated. He concluded the postscript with the following passage concerning the relationship between the two texts:

Alas! If one does not understand the *Yi*, then one will not know how to use the *Xuan*. And, for those who do not comprehend the *Xuan*, their [attempts to understand] the *Yi* are futile. How can they not work hard at it! Students today only know to value [a text's] wording, and yet none know the source of its wording. Would they [be willing to] devote effort to this? Someone said: "Master Ouyang did not read the *Xuan*. What effect did this have [on his understanding] of the *Yi*?" I replied: "As you are not Master Ouyang, what do you think you should do!"<sup>96</sup>

嗚呼，苟不明乎《易》，則亦無以《玄》為。而不通乎《玄》者，則又乃徒為《易》也，可不勉諸！今之學者知尚其辭耳，而莫知其辭之所自來，寧顧此邪？或曰：歐陽公不讀《玄》，而于《易》何如？曰：子非歐陽公，奈何！

As with Sima Guang and Shao Yong, Chao thus concluded that the contents of the *Taixuan jing* and the *Yijing* were mutually complementary. For Chao, the value of Yang's

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, p. 84.

work lay in its capacity to illuminate astronomical patterns as well as the relationship between humanity and the universe. For these reasons, Chao asserted that the *Taixuan jing* was required reading, and he urged his contemporaries to incorporate it into their regimens of study.

As the above analysis demonstrates, discussions of the *Taixuan jing* in the second half of the eleventh century focused to a large degree on the content of the text and its relationship to the *Yijing*. While literati still wrote essays defending Yang's character, this interest in his ideas played an increasingly important role in the intellectual debates of the time. As had earlier been the case regarding Yang's character and conduct, Song literati disagreed over the doctrinal value of the *Taixuan jing*. The fault line of their disagreements concerned the question of whether the text (and its *shu* 數) elucidated the *dao* of the *Yijing*, or contravened it. Although Sima, Shao and Chao advanced arguments in support of the text, in the long run, they failed to convince the majority of their peers that the *Taixuan jing* was in fact indispensable to understanding the *Yijing*. Their defenses of the text and arguments championing its content and function were grounded in the establishment of parallels between it and the *Yi*. By basing their appraisal of the text in such parallels, they left themselves open to Cheng Yi's charge that, at best, the text was superfluous.<sup>97</sup>

With the growth of *daoxue* during the late Northern and early Southern Song, the *Taixuan jing* became relegated to the sidelines of intellectual debate. Important Southern Song Neo-Confucians such as Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200), Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵 (1139-1193) and Chen Chun 陳淳 (1159-1223) criticized the *Taixuan* for many of the reasons outlined above; namely, they maintained that the text diverged from the numerical system of the *Yijing*, and provided nothing of value that was not already present within that work.<sup>98</sup> Zhu Xi in fact asserted that if Yang's three-based numerical system accurately captured the structure and processes of the universe, then the ancient sages would have

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<sup>97</sup> It is also important to note that Sima, Shao and Chao emphasized the importance of images and numbers (*xiangshu* 象數) in their interpretations of the *Yijing*, whereas Cheng Yi's reading of the text was premised in the tradition that stressed moral principles (*yili* 義理).

<sup>98</sup> In his *Jingyi kao*, Zhu Yizun provides excerpts from many *daoxue* critiques of the text. See Zhu Yizun, *Jingyi Kao Dianjiao Buzheng*, vol. 8, juan 268, pp. 71-103.

surely noted it.<sup>99</sup> Lu Jiuyuan, on the other hand, maintained that the text contravened *yin* and *yang*, and disturbed traditional Confucian mores. He moreover castigated individuals who relied on the *Taixuan* to interpret the *Yijing*.<sup>100</sup> And Chen Chun, in a lengthy essay entitled “Taking Issue with the *Taixuan*” (*Taixuan bian* 太玄辨), adumbrated several areas in which the text departed from the *Yijing*, and concluded that its *dao* was not worth taking seriously.<sup>101</sup> While Yang’s thought would continue to be discussed into the Southern Song and beyond,<sup>102</sup> due in part to these critiques by prominent *daoxue* intellectuals, his *Taixuan jing* would never again captivate the interest of literati to the same degree as it had during the eleventh century.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this article, I have sought to shed light on two strains of discourse concerning Yang Xiong’s *Taixuan jing* that were current in the Northern Song. The first strain concerned issues of character and conduct related to the *guwen* lineage of former worthies. While Han Yu’s praise of Yang Xiong ensured that he would take his place in this lineage, Song thinkers found it difficult to overlook the negative assessment of his personal record found in the *Hanshu*. Several Song *guwen* adherents composed essays to defend Yang from what they saw as the unjustified attacks against his character advanced by Ban Gu and later individuals who agreed with Ban’s assessment. As noted in the above analysis,

<sup>99</sup> See Li Jingde (ed.), *Zhuzi Yulei*, vol. 8, juan 137, pp. 3260-3262. Zhu Xi provides an extensive critique of Yang Xiong’s thought in this chapter of the *Zhuzi yulei*. According to the editors of the *Siku quanshu*, Zhu’s negative assessment of Yang’s thought had a noticeable effect. In their introduction to the *Fayan jizhu* 法言集注, they asserted that Yang’s works were regarded lightly following Zhu Xi’s critiques. For a study of Zhu’s views of the text, see Tian Xiaozhong 田小中, “Zhu Xi Lun *Taixuan*” 朱熹論《太玄》, *Studies of the Zhouyi* 周易研究, 83 (2007), pp. 47-53.

<sup>100</sup> See Lu’s “Letter to Wu Dounan” (*Yu Wu Dounan* 與吳斗南). Lu Jiuyuan 陸九淵, *Lu Jiuyuan Ji* 陸九淵集 (Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 1980), pp. 201-202.

<sup>101</sup> *QSW*, vol. 295, juan 6734, pp. 342-346.

<sup>102</sup> During the Southern Song, Sichuan intellectuals such as Li Tao 李燾 (1115-1184) and Zhang Yin 張續 wrote prefaces and/or postscripts for commentaries on the *Taixuan*. In addition, there exist a handful of examination questions (*cewen* 策問) on the text and its relationship to the *Yijing*. Finally, it is important to note that the theoretical merits of the *Taixuan jing* were discussed by Southern Song thinkers such as Ye Shi 葉適 (1150-1223), Zhang Xingcheng 張行成, and Li Xinyi.

*guwen* thinkers such as Liu Kai, Li Gou, Zhao Xiang and Sun Fu marshaled a variety of different arguments in order to exonerate Yang from the charges of inappropriately calling the *Taixuan jing* a classic and supporting Wang Mang. In the second half of the article, I described a separate strain of discourse, which focused to a much greater degree on the doctrinal content of the *Taixuan jing*. I argued that writings devoted to assessing the doctrines found in the text began to appear with greater frequency during the latter half of the eleventh century, a period when literati became increasingly interested in scrutinizing received notions of the *dao* and the relationship between the cosmos and humanity. These writings for the most part focused on the question of whether the *Taixuan jing* elucidated, or ran counter to, the *dao* of the *Yijing*. Whereas Qisong, Su Xun, and Cheng Yi advanced different arguments in support of the latter position, Sima Guang, Shao Yong and Chao Yuezhi threw their weight behind the former claim.

The explosion of interest among eleventh century literati in Yang's *Taixuan jing* is perhaps best interpreted in the context of what Peter Bol has aptly called the Northern Song search for a "new foundation."<sup>103</sup> As Bol has convincingly demonstrated, at this time intellectuals began to reassess the teachings passed down from the Tang and seek out new theoretical models that could ground their very different conceptions of the world and the inherited textual tradition. In this environment, many Confucian thinkers looked to the works of earlier philosophers, particularly those of Mencius and Yang, for insight. As a result, Yang's personal conduct and theoretical doctrines assumed a new significance, and they became an important issue in eleventh century intellectual debates. While the popularity of Yang's doctrines eventually receded with the rise of *daoxue*, it is clear that his intellectual positions played a significant role in shaping Northern Song views regarding moral character, the connection between the cosmos and humanity, and the relationship between classical texts and the *dao*.

(責任校對：林佩儒)

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<sup>103</sup> See Peter K. Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), ch. 2, pp. 43-77. I refer here to the general intellectual atmosphere of the mid-eleventh century that Bol described using this phrase. Although the Bol sees this search for a new foundation as ultimately leading to the rise of Wang Anshi's New Learning and the development of *daoxue*, he also notes a variety of different stances espoused by leading thinkers of the eleventh century that preceded the establishment of these two major intellectual systems.

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## 北宋思想家對於揚雄《太玄經》的看法

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### 摘 要

漢代揚雄 (53BC-18) 的作品與思想在北宋成為當時士人關切與爭論的重要議題，對其論著數量遠超過其他朝代。因此引起筆者對以下兩個問題的興趣：一、揚雄思想在北宋所扮演的角色；二、為何它會在那個時期對儒家士人具有那麼大的吸引力？本文藉著探討北宋思想家對於揚雄《太玄經》的看法來解釋這兩個問題，一方面注重揚雄重要性復興的現象，另一方面檢視北宋士人論議揚雄的內容。筆者發現北宋士人關於《太玄經》的討論可以分成一種著重揚雄的人品及行為的論述，影響北宋士人如何決定哪些儒者在傳統中的重要地位；另一種則更重視《太玄經》中的概念及理論，在《易經》的重要性以及天人之間的關係議題的思考上影響北宋士人。

**關鍵詞：**揚雄，《太玄經》，北宋，士人思想，天人論

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