

Article

Lineage Construction of the Southern School from Zhongli Quan to Liu Haichan and Zhang Boduan

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Received: 29 November 2018; Accepted: 25 February 2019; Published: 11 March 2019



Abstract: Examining relevant Daoist scriptures and records, this article traces the lineage relationship of Zhang Boduan (d. 1082) to his predecessors. His immediate teacher supposedly was Liu Haichan, based on whose teachings he compiled his main work, the *Wuzhen pian* (Awakening to Perfection). First outlined by the Song scholar Lu Sicheng, the story was later expanded in various collections of immortals' biographies. It is well known that the Southern School of internal alchemy (Golden Elixir) was constructed by Bai Yuchan and his disciples in the early 13th century. I show that this centers on the claim that Zhang Boduan, as Bai's forerunner, received his teachings from Liu Haichan, a line that was then expanded to include the immortals Zhongli Quan and Lü Dongbin. I also suggest that the alchemical teaching of the Zhong-Lü tradition is particularly characterized by its emphasis on the dual cultivation of inner nature and life-destiny, focusing on the key concepts of clarity and stillness as well as nonaction, while centering on the reverted elixir of the golden fluid. The teaching matches the *Daode jing* (Book of the Dao and Its Virtue) instructions to "empty the mind, fill the belly, weaken the will, and strengthen the bones" (ch. 3). This emphasis may well be the reason the Zhong-Lü tradition superseded the Twofold Mystery school flourishing in the Tang and rose to the fore.

Keywords: Zhang Boduan; Liu Haichan; Zhongli Quan; lineage connection; examination

In the Song and Yuan dynasties, internal alchemy became the dominant form of Daoist cultivation. Imitating the Chan Buddhist division of the Tang dynasty in a Northern and Southern School, its leaders in the 13th century created a twofold lineage structure as they competed for favors among the newly ascending Mongol rulers.¹ The various lineages in the North, in the greater Yellow River area, were duly subsumed under the school of Complete Perfection (Quanzhen 全真), founded by Wang Chongyang 王重阳 (1112–1170), an official in the military administration of the Central Asian dynasty of the Jurchen-Jin. In 1159, at age forty-eight, Wang retired from office and withdrew to the Zhongnan mountains 終南山 near modern Xi'an, where he meditated intensely for eight years. In 1167, he moved to Shandong, where he taught cultivation based on his visions and established five religious communities.²

After his death in 1170, his work was continued by his main disciples, the so-called Seven Perfected (*qizhen* 七真). The most important among them was Qiu Chuji 丘處機 (1148–1227), Changchun xiansheng 長春先生 (Master of Eternal Spring), the founder of the Dragongate (Longmen 龍門) lineage. In 1219, Genghis Khan summoned him to his Central Asian headquarters and soon after appointed him as the leader of all religions of China, causing his followers to be exempt from taxes and labor. This, in one stroke, made Complete Perfection the most powerful and popular religious group in North China and contributed greatly to the prominence it still enjoys to this day.³

¹ See Baldrian-Hussein in (Pregadio 2008, p. 760).

² See (Eskildsen 2004, pp. 4–11).

³ See (Goossaert 2001; Eskildsen (2004).

While the exploits of the early masters of Complete Perfection are well documented and have been studied extensively⁴, the Southern School (Nanzong 南宗), centered on holy mountains South of the Yangtze, is much less known. It was constructed by Bai Yuchan 白玉蟾 (fl. 1194–1229) from Hainan, courtesy name Haiqiongzi 海子 (Master of Ocean Jade),⁵ and his disciples in the early 13th century. Its lineage consists of the so-called Five Purple Masters, that is, Daoists with the word “purple” in their religious titles.⁶ The first of these was Zhang Boduan 伯端 (987–1082), courtesy name Pingshu 平叔, religious title Ziyang zhenren 紫阳真人 (Perfected of Purple Yang),⁷ best known as the author of the *Wuzhen pian* 悟真篇 (Awakening to Perfection, DZ 263, ch. 26–30) among other writings.⁸ Zhang having lived a century earlier than Wang Chongyang, plus the fact that Southern School of Chan Buddhism emerged victorious in the Tang—sponsoring the still-dominant schools of Linji and Caodong 曹洞 (Rinzai and Soto in Japan)—placed the Southern School in a highly positive position.

To create further legitimation into the more celestial spheres, moreover, both schools connected their first human patriarchs to the two most popular immortals at the time, Zhongli Quan 吕 and Lü Dongbin 洞. In the case of the Northern School, this was effected by the legend that they visited Wang Chongyang during his intense trance practice, either in person or in a vision, and transmitted their teaching. The Southern School first connected Zhang Boduan with Liu Cao 刘操, courtesy name Haichan 海蟾, a rather nebulous figure of the 10th century whose life is shrouded in mystery, and from him linked to the immortals. How exactly that happened is the topic of in the discussion below.

1. The Immortals

Both immortal patriarchs of the Song schools are members of a group known as the Eight Immortals. Consisting of seven men and one woman who attained immortality, whose legends tell how they inspired and taught each other, they are believed to reside in a high Daoist heaven from where they continue to serve humanity by appearing in séances and providing spiritual inspiration. As a group, they appeared first in theater plays of the 13th century, portrayed as an eccentric and happy lot who respond to pleas in emergencies and grant favors and protection. They have remained highly popular to the present day, representing long life and happiness, and as such appear on congratulation cards for various happy occasions and in shops and restaurants as signs of good luck and enjoyment. They play an active part in Chinese folk culture and have been featured time and again in comic books and popular movies.⁹

Zhongli Quan, as the oldest among them, usually appears first, commonly depicted as a large, stately man with a round pot-belly. According to the hagiographies, he was also known as Han Zhongli, since he lived and served under the Later Han dynasty (2nd c.) and had the courtesy name Yunfang 云房 and the religious title Perfected of Correct Yang (Zhengyang zhenren 正阳真人). Originally from Xianyang 咸阳 near modern Xi'an, he first rose through the ranks but was later demoted when his opinions contrasted with those of the court. Under the Wudi of the succeeding dynasty of the Western Jin (r. 265–290), he became a military general but suffered a massive defeat at the hands of Central Asian invaders. Desperate, and with his troops completely vanquished, he fled into the mountains, where he encountered an old man who guided him to the palace of the celestial deity Imperial Lord of

⁴ See (Komjathy 2007, 2013; Yao 2000).

⁵ On Bai's life and work, see (Boltz 1987, p. 176); Skar in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 203–6). Some sources say that Bai received a good education but never passed the imperial examination. Rather, having killed someone in his youth, he pursued a life of moral excellence and duly engaged in Buddhist meditation, internal alchemy, and Thunder Rites. See (Zhang 2009, p. 62).

⁶ For details on the lineage, see (Boltz 1987, p. 173; Zhang 2009, p. 63); Baldrian-Hussein in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 759–61).

⁷ For Zhang's life and work, see (Boltz 1987, p. 174; Pregadio and Skar 2000, p. 470); Baldrian-Hussein in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 1220–22).

⁸ The *Wuzhen pian* is a key document of internal alchemy. For a full translation, see (Cleary 1987; Pregadio 2009). For a historical survey, see (Pregadio and Skar 2000, pp. 476–78); Baldrian-Hussein in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 1081–84.)

⁹ On the Eight Immortals, their different stories, and role today, see (Yetts 1916; Yang 1958; Wu et al. 2011).

Eastern Florescence (Donghua dijun 帝君). From him, he received the talismans, texts, and teachings of the Daoist religion and he himself in due course became an immortal.

Rather than ascending to heaven, he opted to stay on earth to help others with his immortal powers to make up for his failure in his official duties. However, he did not find people ready and willing to undergo the necessary hardships of spiritual training. Only in the Tang dynasty did he finally find a worthy disciple, none other than the other immortal patriarch Lü Dongbin.¹⁰

Lü Dongbin is by far the most popular among the Eight Immortals. To the present day the only one venerated in temples of his own, he still appears frequently in spirit-writing sessions and serves as inspiring sponsor of many Daoist groups and techniques. Depicted as a Confucian gentleman with aristocratic features and a sword, legends have it that he was born in 796 as Lü Yan 岩 and later adopted the religious title Perfected of Pure Yang (Chunyang zhenren 阳真人). Well educated, he failed to pass the *jinshi* examination in 836. On his way back from the capital, he spent the night at an inn, where he shared a meal with a mysterious stranger. As the millet cooked over the brazier, Lü fell asleep and dreamed that he passed the examination, served in various positions, got married, had a family, rose in rank, then got embroiled in corruption and was banished from the capital. “A solitary outcast, wandering toward his place of banishment beyond the mountains, he found his horse brought to a standstill in snowstorm and was no longer able to continue the journey.”¹¹

At that point he woke up, finding that while he went through an entire official career and family life, the millet had not even fully cooked. Realizing that life was but a fleeting dream and supported by the stranger who was in fact Zhongli Quan, he began training with him in Daoist cultivation on either Mount Hua in the North or Mount Lu in the South, depending on which school wrote the tale. The legend continues with the story of ten tests he had to undergo to prove his selfless nature and sincere dedication to Dao. He had to show that he was generous with his possessions and independent of social approval, had courage in the face of death and other threats or enticements, and was willing to sacrifice himself on behalf of weaker beings. These moral qualities were not required for their own sake or to enhance particular moral character but served to indicate the stamina and determination necessary for the utter overcoming of body and self on the path to otherworldly immortality. Still practiced in Complete Perfection today, they serve the same function as the abuse heaped on aspiring Zen practitioners when they first enter the training monastery: Standing here, freezing, hungry, and miserable—how much do I *really* want to do this? If the answer is, “more than anything”, the candidate is ready.¹²

Eventually approved, Lü Dongbin received many detailed instructions from Zhongli Quan, both in theory and practice, succeeded in creating the internal elixir, and attained the fullness of immortality. Afterwards, both before and after his ascension into heaven, as the story has it, he traveled widely, performing miracles incognito for ordinary people and widely spreading the Daoist teaching, including also to the other members of the Eight Immortals. Song sources describe him as a poet, calligrapher, healer, fortune-teller, alchemist, exorcist, and sword master. His cult seems to have flourished particularly among the underprivileged classes, and many poems critical of society that bear his name appeared on the walls of temples and taverns, especially along the rivers and lakes of the South. His first portrait and first official title, Perfected of Wondrous Pervasion (Miaotong zhenren 妙通真人), go back to the early 12th century, while an entire sanctuary dedicated to his honor, the Yongle gong 永 (Palace of Eternal Happiness) in Shanxi, with extensive mural still surviving today, was erected in the 13th.¹³

In terms of Daoist lineage, the theoretical teachings he received came to be recorded in the *Zhong-Lü chuandao ji* 道集 (Collected Transmissions of the Dao from Zhongli to Lü, in DZ 263,

¹⁰ See Yoshikawa in (Schipper and Verellen 2004, pp. 1283–84).

¹¹ (Yetts 1916, p. 790).

¹² (van de Wetering 1975).

¹³ On the legend and cult of Lü Dongbin, see (Ang 1997; Baldrian-Hussein 1986; Pregadio 2008, pp. 712–14; Katz 2000).

ch. 14–16),¹⁴ while the practical dimensions appear in the *Lingbao bifa* 灵宝法 (Conclusive Methods of Numinous Treasure, DZ 1191; trl. Baldrian-Hussein 1984). Both texts are documented from the mid-12th century and form the backbone of the Zhong-Lü tradition, to which the Southern School linked itself via Zhang Boduan.¹⁵

2. Scholarly Positions

The question of whether Zhang Boduan was the disciple of Liu Haichan and Zhongli Quan is answered variously in academic circles. Those who see no connection include, most importantly, Ding Peiren and Xu Shoulin.

Ding (2007) proposes that the author of the *Lingbao bifa* was a hermit of the Five Dynasties, which makes him much earlier than Zhang or Liu. The line of transmission, then, went from Zhongli Quan through Lü Dongbin and Shi Jianwu 施肩吾 (Huayangzi 阳子) to Li Song 李竦, unlike the later lineage that runs from Zhongli Quan through Lü Dongbin and Liu Haizhen to Zhang Boduan.

Xu (1994, 1995) makes the point that the *Wuzhen pian* mentions a certain Mengye 梦, but in fact, there no such person. This character was supposed to have transmitted the *Zhixuan pian* 指玄篇 (Pointers to the Mystery) to Zhang Boduan; however, Daoist historical records variously name Zhang Bai 白, Chen Tuan, Lü Dongbin, and others as its author. The most likely among them is Lü Dongbin. Further, according to the *Shanxi tongzhi* 山西通志 (Gazetteer of Shanxi Province), although Liu Haizhen was in fact a real person, his lifetime was far removed from that of Zhang Boduan, so that there was no possibility of a mutual transmission between the two.

Those scholars who see a connection of Zhang to the Zhong-Lü lineage include Qing Xitai 卿希泰, Ren Linhao 任林毫, Chen Xiaoqi 肖岐, Hua Yi, Guo Jianzhou 郭建洲, and more. Qing Xitai, when discussing the basic philosophy of Zhang Boduan and his *Wuzhen pian* (Qing 1988, ch. 7, sect. 6), cites a number of documents, such as the *Shanxi tongzhi*, the hagiographic collection *Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian* 世真仙体道通 (Comprehensive Mirror through the Ages of Perfected Immortals and Those Who Embody the Dao, DZ 296), and commentaries to the *Wuzhen pian*. They all note that Zhang Boduan “met Liu Haichan and from him received the way of the reverted elixir of the golden fluid.” Ren Linhao and Chen Xiaoqi similarly follow this transmitted version.

Guo Jianzhou in his dissertation on the subject (Guo 2015) concludes that records disagree as to who exactly Zhang Boduan’s ordination master was. In the late Southern Song, the famous internal alchemist Bai Yuchan 白玉蟾 believed that it was Liu Haichan and, on this basis, constructed a transmission lineage. However, another important alchemist of the same period was Zhang’s third-generation disciple, Weng Shuguang 翁葆光. He claimed that Zhang received the way of the golden elixir from the Elder of Mount Qingcheng (Qingcheng zhangren 青城丈人).

Other scholars rely on Zhang’s sentence in the *Wuzhen pian*, “Mengye of the Western Mount Hua reached the ninth level of heaven: this perfected transmitted the *Zhixuan pian* to me,” and believe that this figure was a real person and Zhang’s teacher. Yet others simply disregard this problem as a false question and believe that Zhang Boduan may not even have had a formal ordination master. If pressed and considering the situation as a whole, they find the Elder of Mount Qingcheng the most likely candidate, thinking that he might have had a close connection to Liu Haichan, or even be Liu Haichan himself.

Neither Liu Haichan nor Zhongli Quan have biographies in official histories. Thus, there are all kinds of stories about their life activities, their transmissions, and their cultivation methods. Commonly recorded in hagiographic and legendary sources, they create many difficulties for academic research. In this paper, I argue that the transmission from Zhongli Quan through Lü Dongbin and Liu Haizhen

¹⁴ On the text, see Baldrian-Hussein in (Schipper and Verellen 2004, p. 801). An earlier edition appears in the *Daoshu* 道枢 (Pivot of the Dao, DZ 1017), a collection from about 1150.

¹⁵ On the Zhong-Lü tradition, see (Baldrian-Hussein 1984, pp. 23–31; Boltz 1987, pp. 139–43). For more on the connection to Zhang Boduan, see (Boltz 1987, p. 173; Eskildsen 2004, p. 92; Pregadio and Skar 2000, p. 471; Zhang 2009, p. 60).

to Zhang Boduan is just a general line of inheritance rather than an indication of a close personal and practical apprenticeship.

3. Zhang Boduan's Daoist Transmission

The first indication of how Zhang got connected into this line appears in the *Ziyang zhenren Wuzhen pian zhushu* 紫阳真人悟真篇注疏 (Commentary and Supplementary Explanation of the *Wuzhen pian* by the Perfected of Purple Yang (Zhang Boduan), DZ 141).¹⁶ Its colophon notes that the commentary was written by Weng Baoguang 翁葆光 (fl. 1173) from Xiangchuan 象川 (Sichuan), also known as Wumingzi 无名子 (Nameless Master).¹⁷ It was transmitted by Chen Daling 达灵 (fl. 1174) from Mount Wuyi 武夷山, and later supplemented by Dai Qizong 戴起宗 (fl. 1332–1337) from Jizhuang 集 (Nanjing), courtesy name Tongfu 同甫 and also known as Kongxuanzi 空玄子 (Master of Empty Mystery).

Weng Baoguang was a man of the Southern Song, a lineage disciple of Zhang Boduan, while Dai Qizong lived under the Yuan. The text also contains a personal preface to the *Wuzhen pian* by Zhang himself. It says:

From early childhood, I was fond of Dao and actively pursued the scriptures and writings of the three teachings as well as the fields of law, mathematics, medicine, divination, military strategy, astronomy, geography, and the prognostication of good and bad fortune. I investigated them all with full dedication and in great detail. Especially the method of the Golden Elixir I studied exhaustively, reading all the various scriptures related to it as well as relevant songs, poems, treatises, and discussions by various authors.

They all agree that by refining various complementary pairs—such as sun and moon, spirit and material souls, the positions *geng* [7th heavenly stem] and *jia* [1st stem], tiger and dragon, mercury and cinnabar, white and black, gold and lead, the trigrams Kan and Li, male and female—one can concoct the reverted elixir of the golden fluid. However, they never explain what exactly true lead and true mercury are. Nor do they outline the exact methods of the firing process or provide pointers to the precise ways of warming and nourishing. All this increased confusion and error among later generations, encouraging disciples to practice as they pleased and causing the wrong transmission and simplistic explanation of earlier scriptures and teachings. Perversions and falsehood arose in a myriad different forms, not only falsifying the content of the immortal scriptures but also misleading later students.

Before I met the perfected master, I had a hard time getting oral instructions, which made me restless in sleep and food and greatly distressed my essence and spirit. Even though I searched far and wide from the seas to the mountains and inquired exhaustively among the wise and foolish alike, none was able to enlighten my understanding of the perfected lineage, to open radiance in my heart and viscera. Finally, in the *jinyou* year of the reign period Xining [1069], I worked under Lu Longtu and went with him when he became governor of Chengdu 成都.

My determination set on no-return and my sincerity ever stronger, there I encountered a perfected master who gave me oral instructions regarding the Golden Elixir, the necessary ingredients, and the precise firing process. His words were very simple, his core teachings were not complicated. One can say, it was like pointing to the river and knowing the source, like noticing one thing and understanding all, like the fog lifting and the sun shining bright, like the dust moving and the mirror radiating. Thus, I came to study the immortal scriptures correctly and learned how to use the proper talismans and contracts.

¹⁶ DZ stands for *Daozang*, the Ming collection of Daoist scriptures. The numbers refer to the annotated catalog in (Schipper and Verellen 2004). This text in particular is presented by Farzeen Baldrian-Hussein (Schipper and Verellen 2004, pp. 817–18). It dates from about 1335.

¹⁷ For more on his life and work, see Baldrian-Hussein in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 1036–37).

About 80 to 90 percent of people may want to pursue the study of immortality, but not even 10 to 20 percent get the true core of the teaching. Once I had received the correct explanations, I could not remain silent and keep them hidden. Thus I compiled 9 times 9 or 81 stanzas of rhymed poems in a collection called *Wuzhen pian*. The sixteen stanzas of four lines with seven characters symbolize the sacred balance of yin and yang, i.e., 2 times 8; the sixty-four stanzas of five-character verse match the number of hexagrams in the *Yijing* 易 (Book of Changes). The one stanza standing alone represents the magnificence of the Great One, while the twelve song lyrics of the supplement, written to the tune *Xijiang yue* 西江月 (Moon over the West River), stand for the regular number of months in a year.

The text specifies all different aspects: the height and shape of the cauldron and vessel, the exact measurements of necessary ingredients, the advance and retreat of the firing process, the order of precedence among host and guest, as well as the nature of life and death, being and nonbeing, good and bad fortune, regret and delight When like-minded seekers read it, they should look to the branches to awaken to the root, discard falsehood to pursue perfection. Composed on New Year's day of the *yimao* year of the reign period Xining [1075], by Zhang Boduan, courtesy name Pingshu, of Tiantai 天台 (Zhejiang). (vol. 2, pp. 914–15)¹⁸

According to this, Zhang Boduan went to Chengdu in 1069 working on the staff of Lu Shen 諫 (1022–1070), courtesy name Longtu, and there met a Perfected from whom he received oral instructions on the concoction of the internal elixir. Working on it with full determination and sole dedication, he succeeded and duly felt that he could not keep silent about the wondrous methods. Therefore, he set out to compile the information into a set of poems he named *Wuzhen pian*. Since he received the instructions in 1069 and his preface is dated to 1075, he must have written the text and completed the alchemical work in those six years. However, the preface only mentions that he received transmission from a perfected master without identifying him by name. Next, the text contains Zhang's personal postface. Here, he says:

In 1069, I received the transmission of alchemical methods from the perfected master in Chengdu, but then I turned my back on my teacher. I transmitted the teachings to three unworthy fellows and was three times struck by disaster, all within two short weeks. After that, I closely observed my teacher's warning. He said, "The other day I gave you the lock and key to personal liberation, but I did not give you permission to hand them on directly. You may well want to explain the teachings and theories later, but most likely you will suffer from people's disbelief." Thus, I came to compile them into my work, the *Wuzhen pian*, thereby to explicate the root and branches of elixir concoction.

Once it was complete, many seekers came to study. I could not bear their plight and explained it to them in proper transmission. However, among those who received the teaching, none had the necessary strength or stamina that would enable them to weather dangers and hardships, nor the wide-open generosity that would allow them to become humane and enlightened masters of Dao. In the beginning, they repeatedly suffered from disease and disasters, but I would not acknowledge the truth in my own heart. Finally, when the third one fell apart, I cut back to previous levels. Today I know for sure that the method of the Great Elixir is plain and very easy. Even dull and simple people can practice it and in due course become transcendent sages. Still, the intention of heaven is subtle and compassionate: it will not allow frivolous transmission to the wrong person.

When I failed to honor my teacher's words and repeatedly leaked the instructions of the celestial pivot, since I still had a body, each time I would be punished by suffering afflictions.

¹⁸ These numbers refer to the 30-volume *Daozang* edition, Shanghai 1988.

Thus, heaven's retribution is swift as much as it is spiritual: it leaves us no choice but be afraid and tremble before it. From now on, I will keep my mouth shut and hold my tongue. Even if faced with being pushed into the boiling cauldron, the sword poised over my exposed neck, I will never ever utter another word!

The *Wuzhen pian* contains subtle instructions on the concoction of the great elixir, the necessary ingredients, and the firing process, all carefully researched and presented. If those who desire to follow them have immortals' bones, they should find that just by looking at them, their understanding and thinking will immediately be clear and they can easily find the meaning of the text. Why would they need my personal instruction? A gift bestowed by heaven, it is not my own transmission. Personal preface by Pingshu, completed on the *wuyin* day of the *wuwu* year of the reign period Yuanfeng of the Song dynasty [1078]. (vol. 2, p. 986)

This postface dates from 1078, which means it is three years later than the preface cited above. It most importantly describes how, after the completion of his work, Zhang Boduan was besieged by numerous students seeking his teaching, whom he could not bear to refuse, and so gave them full transmission. However, because the people he taught were not right, he repeatedly suffered misfortune and afflictions. He thus recognized that he was not correctly following his teacher's words and irresponsibly leaking celestial secrets, and each time was punished by heaven. Despite all this, he still does not state who exactly his teacher was.

4. The Link to Liu Haichan

The connection to Liu Haichan, who in turn became the link to the immortals, appears first in the *Ziyang zhenren Wuzhen pian sanzhu* 紫阳真人悟真篇三注 (Three Commentaries to the *Wuzhen pian* by the Perfected of Purple Yang, DZ 142).¹⁹ This work contains a chapter called "Wuzhen pianji" 悟真篇 (Record of the *Wuzhen pian*), which explains more about Zhang's relationship to his mysterious teacher and also outlined the lineage of transmission in relation to other Daoist cultivation texts. The text says:

Master Zhang Pingshu [Boduan] came originally from Tiantai. When young he passed the *jinshi* examination and entered office, then became embroiled in some affair, and was demoted to Guangnan 广南 [south of the Yangtze] to serve as secretary. During the reign period Zhiping [1064–1067], my grandfather, Lu Shen, courtesy name Longtu, was army commander of Guilin 桂林. Zhang came to serve in his department, and each time he was transferred to a different post, Zhang went with him. Grandfather eventually died in Chengdu, and Zhang was transferred to Qinlong 秦 (Gansu) to work under Ma Mo 默 (fl. 1064–1100), courtesy name Chuhou 厚, whom he later followed to Hedong 河 (Shanxi).

Eventually Chuhou was recalled to the capital. When he was about to depart, Zhang gave him his book and said, "Everything I have ever learned in my life is in here. Please take it and circulate it whenever you meet someone whose intention would match the work." Later Ma Mo came to work as an official in the Ministry of Agriculture in Nanyang 南阳. Among his colleagues was the Chief of Records Zhang Gonglu 公履, courtesy name Danfu 坦夫. When Danfu introduced himself as the son-in-law of Lu Longtu, Ma figured that he might be good at these arts and accordingly gave him the book. Danfu in his turn passed it on to my father, Master Baowen 宝文公. A little boy at the time, I pinched the book and read it in secret, but did not understand it.

Earlier, when Zhang was working in Qinlong, the Yangping 阳平 man Wang Zhen 王箴, courtesy name Gunchen 臣, served in the capital and, following the advice of his older

¹⁹ On the text, see Baldrian-Hussein in (Schipper and Verellen 2004, pp. 822–23). The preface *Wuzhen pian ji* is by Lu Sicheng and dates from 1161 to 1173. It has a direct link to Bai Yuchan. Realistically, one would need other historical materials to prove the connection; however, this goes beyond the scope of this article.

brother, Master Chongxi 冲熙先生, undertook to study Dao. He met Liu Haichan and from him obtained the arts of the Golden Elixir. Chongxi said, “Among all the venerated Daoist masters of the world, none is greater than he. Only Zhang Pingshu knows as much. They both agree that one cannot overcome the hardships of attaining Dao unless one has lots of strength.” He accordingly entered the stream, pledged his wealth, followed the master, harnessed his strength, and eventually succeeded. I was still young at the time, my energy sharp. Although I heard about all this, I did not really believe any of it and never paid any attention to what they were saying about what kind of man Zhang Pingshu really was.

A few years passed and the days went on, and my will and energy began to decline. I managed to keep myself healthy using the arts of learned Huang-Lao masters. I also received the methods of the Golden Elixir from a perfected, who said, “Spirit is the root of life; the body is the resident of spirit. Dao makes the spirit whole; the arts make the body strong. When the spirit is whole and the body strong, you can let go of things and just be natural.” I accordingly cast my fortune with him and took formal vows. When his transmission was complete, he again told me, “The ninefold reverted elixir of the golden fluid is of utmost sageliness and highly secret. You must not lightly reveal it. If you ever meet someone you would like to teach it to, first make sure he swears a solemn vow and pledge. Also, make sure to practice yourself and only pass it on very carefully after you have succeeded yourself.

“You really should experience the great affair in person before you open the teaching to succeeding students. Also, gradually increase the application and practice, thus avoiding any dangers and pitfalls on the way. Doing so, your body and spirit will join the wondrous Dao. This is quite clear! Throughout the transmission from antiquity to today, it has always been like this. Anyone going against it will suffer heavenly retribution. Don’t you know that when Zhang Pingshu passed the methods on to unworthy fellows, he was three times struck by disaster? Make sure to avoid this and never be impulsive!”

Taking all this together, how can the strange perfected master who Zhang studied with in Chengdu be anyone else but Liu Haichan? Similarly, when Chongxi faced the hardships of elixir concoction and connected to a certain Daoist, there is no other alternative: he must have contacted Zhang Pingshu! This matches fully with what I formerly heard from Wang Gunchen. Now that I have read the book, I fully understand it for the first time. Further examining the publicly transmitted *Qinyuan chun* 沁园春 (Springtime in Qin Gardens) by Master Lü and the various poems of Liu Haichan,²⁰ I find nothing that does not jell. Thus I know where the font is coming from, which is quite natural.

Today, many people who love the [alchemical] work have received the book, but there are some variants in text and writings. I doubt that it was transmitted right when it was first completed and before any cuts or additions were made. The text, therefore, has been amended to read, “When lead meets the birth of *gui*, collect it quickly; if metal goes past the full moon, it is not fit to be savored.”

Generally supplementary explanations on how to complete the elixir found in the text reflect what is commonly transmitted in the world, but I’m afraid that some are not very good. There is also a separate edition, entitled *Liaowu zhenru* 了悟真如 (Understanding and Awakening to Perfect Being), which takes all references to smelting metals and casting swords and

²⁰ The *Qinyuan chun* is the only major early work in verse ascribed to Lü Dongbin. It consists of a set of lyrics that can be dated to the mid-11th century. Two commentaries on the verse from between 1260 and 1310 survive in the Daoist Canon (DZ 136; DZ 263, ch. 13). The text is studied and translated in (Baldrian-Hussein 1985). Poems attributed to Liu Haichan include the *Rudao ge* 入道歌 (Song on Entering the Dao) and *Zhizhen ge* 至真歌 (Song of Ultimate Perfection), probably later apocryphal works (Goossaert in Pregadio 2008, p. 687).

simply removes them. In his personal preface to the work, moreover, Zhang Pingshu says, “My work *Wuzhen pian* contains subtle instructions on the concoction of the great elixir, the necessary ingredients, and the firing process, all carefully researched and presented. If those who desire to follow them have immortals’ bones, they should find that just by looking at them, their understanding and thinking will immediately be clear and they can easily find the meaning of the text.”

Without this collection of poems, how would people ever get hold of the wondrous methods of transforming and refining metal and wood? The texts may be simple but their principles are obscure, thus this work was created, helping to continue the great work. Once metal and wood have been reverted and properly refined, the great elixir can be concocted and the immortal embryo gestated. Students should realize that, while the book has been spread far and wide, only the edition held by my family is really authentic. We received it personally from Zhang Pingshu himself. Although I inherited it, my powers are not sufficient, so I asked various like-minded seekers to help me complete it. (vol. 2, pp. 968–69)

This record was compiled by Lu Sicheng 思, the grandson of Lu Shen, also known as Longtu. He notes that Zhang Boduan or, as he calls him, Zhang Pingshu, in the reign period Zhiping under the Song ruler Yingzong (1064–1067), was summoned to serve as a secretary by his grandfather. At the time, Lu Shen was army commander of Guilin. Later, he was appointed to various other locations, and Zhang Boduan always followed him, eventually ending up in Chengdu. There, Lu Shen died, and Zhang transferred to Qinlong to work under Ma Mo, courtesy name Chuhou, who later took him to Hedong.

When Chuhou was summoned back to the capital and ready to leave, Zhang Boduan gave him the *Wuzhen pian* in the hope that he would circulate it among people with close affinity to Dao. Later, when Ma served as an official in the Department of Agriculture in Nanyang, Lu Sicheng’s father-in-law Zhang Danfu worked as Chief of Records. The two were stationed in the same location, and when he learned that Zhang Danfu was Lu Shen’s son-in-law, Ma Chuhou assumed that he could well understand the arts described in Zhang Boduan’s *Wuzhen pian* and therefore transmitted the book to him. Later, Zhang Danfu passed it on to Lu Sicheng’s father, Master Baowen. At that time, Lu Sicheng was just a mere lad. He secretly obtained the book and read it but was unable to fully understand its hidden meaning with regard to elixir cultivation.

Lu Sicheng also mentions a person called Wang Zhen, whom he also names Wang Gunchen, and notes that he followed the advice of his older brother, Wang Chongxi, and engaged in studying Dao. Wang Chongxi, in turn, was the one to encounter Liu Haichan and obtain the arts of the Golden Elixir from him. He was also the one to note that none among the current generation’s students of Dao could fully practice the arts except Zhang Boduan. From all this, Lu Sicheng concludes that the mysterious person, from whom Zhang Boduan, according to his own preface to the *Wuzhen pian*, received the secrets of elixir cultivation, could only have been Liu Haichan.

A rather shadowy figure, Liu first appears in connection with Zhang Boduan in 1217, described as an official of the state of Yan 燕 who lived in the 10th century. In an encounter with Zhongli Quan not unlike Lü’s millet cooking dream, he realized the futility of an official career and dedicated his life to the Dao. Similarly trained by the immortal, he attained transcendence himself and, again like Lü, wandered through the world to perform miracles and teach Daoist cultivation.²¹ The link to him was essential in grafting Zhang Boduan into the line of the Zhong-Lü tradition.

One reason for this is that Wang Chongxi, who claims personal study with Liu Haichan, mentions Zhang Boduan as the one among many followers of Dao who could fully understand the teachings. Well after this, Lu Sicheng reread the *Wuzhen pian* and discovered that it contained expressions much

²¹ Goossaert in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 686–88).

like those found in Lü Dongbin's *Qinyuan chun* and various poems by Liu Haichan, all matching perfectly. Based on this, he recognized a close connection between Lü Dongbin, Liu Haichan, and Zhang Boduan's work, postulating a relation of transmission and original source.

Based on these various documents, it thus seems that the story of Zhang Boduan receiving a transmission from Liu Haichan and on its basis compiling the *Wuzhen pian* originated with the Song scholar Lu Sicheng.

5. Further Elaborations

Afterwards, various collections of immortals' biographies expanded the story. Thus, the *Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian* 世真仙体道通 (Comprehensive Mirror through the Ages of Perfected Immortals and Those Who Embody the Dao, DZ 296) of the early Yuan dynasty²², in its 49th chapter, when outlining the life of Zhang Yongcheng 用成, affirms a lineage connection between Zhang Boduan and Liu Haichan. It says:

Zhang Boduan came originally from Tiantai. As a child, he studied everything, flowing along with currents like clouds and waves. In his later years, he received the Dao of Chaos Prime [Lord Lao, i.e., the Daoist teaching] but could not prepare [the elixir], so he tirelessly asked about it, wandering widely through the four directions. In the 2nd year of the reign period Xining under the Song dynasty [1069], he worked under Commander Lu Longtu in Yidu 益都 and followed him to Sichuan where he encountered Liu Haichan. From him he received instructions on the firing process for the reverted elixir of the golden fluid. As his disciple in Dao, he changed his name to Pingshu and took on the religious title Ziyang 紫阳 (Master of Purple Yang). Once he completed the elixir, he compiled the *Wuzhen pian* and transmitted it to the world

He once said, Daoists center their teaching on life-destiny, thus they speak about this in great detail and only briefly touch on inner nature. Buddhists center their teaching on inner nature, thus they speak about this in great detail and only briefly touch on life-destiny. Inner nature and life-destiny are originally not separate, nor do Daoism and Buddhism originally have two roots. Shakyamuni was born in the western land, yet he also realized the Dao of the Golden Elixir and recognized the dual cultivation of inner nature and life-destiny as the highest vehicle of all: thus he came to be called the Golden Immortal.

The old grandmaster says in his poem: "Why spend six years on a snowy mountain ridge? The only reason is to harmonize *qi* and spirit. A single true breath in a hundred hours, and one finally realizes that the Great Dao lies in the whole body." Similarly Zhongli Quan, Master Zhengyang, notes, "Bodhidharma sat wall-gazing for nine years, then he transcended to the inner court. The world-honored one [Buddha] engaged in deep meditation for six years, then he emerged from the cage of ordinary existence." From this we know that Shakyamuni well understood the importance of the dual cultivation of inner nature and life-destiny.

Practitioners when they first start out, often do not understand the great Dao but want to progress fast. They make their body like a withered tree, their mind like dead ashes, keeping their spirit and consciousness guarded within, concentrating their will and never letting it scatter. As they release their yang spirit from a deep state of absorption, however, they turn into ghosts of clear life force rather than immortals of pure yang. Someone who keeps his will tethered and makes sure his yin life force does not scatter, we call a ghost-immortal.

²² On the text, see Levi in (Schipper and Verellen 2004, pp. 887–92). The author Zhao Daoyi 道一, also known as Master of Complete Yang (Quanyangzi 全阳子), lived in the Temple of Sagely Longevity (Shengshou wannian gong 圣寿万年) on Mt. Fuyun. The collection consists of 53 main fascicles plus five supplementary and six additional sections. Regarding the time of its compilation, it has a preface by Liu Chenweng 刘辰翁 of Luling, dated to the 5th month of the Jiawu year, which could be either 1294 or 1354. Further internal evidence suggests the former as the more likely possibility.

Even though he may be called an immortal, in reality he is nothing but a ghost. Thus, spirit immortals do not practice this way. Shakyamuni similarly said, “The only vehicle to reach great extinction [nirvana] is the Buddhist path. I have no other vehicle to offer.”

He also said, “There are no two vehicles in the world to attain great extinction: the only way is the Buddhist path.” Just as Shakyamuni does not allow for two vehicles, so my teaching does not recognize ghost-immortals. Still, people’s fundamental make-up and capacity are not the same, thus Buddhists speak of the methods of Three Vehicles and Daoists divide their teaching into five types of immortality with 3600 different entrance gates. The Perfected Zhongli Quan said, “Among the 3600 gates of the wondrous divine law, each student picks one as the foundation. How could any of various formulas of spirit immortality you know not be found among these 3600?” This is just what Shakyamuni meant when he said that there was only one Buddhist vehicle leading to great extinction.

Another source has: During the reign period Zhiping under Emperor Yingzong, Lu Shen, aka Longtu, was army commander of Guilin. He ordered the Master of Purple Yang [Zhang Boduan] to serve in his department. Each time the Lu moved was transferred to a different post, his subordinate followed. He eventually died in Chengdu, and Zhang was transferred to Qinlong to work under Ma Mo, courtesy name Chuhou, whom he later followed to Hedong. When Chuhou was summoned back to the capital and about to depart, Zhang gave him the *Wuzhen pian* and said, “Everything I have ever learned in my life is in here. Please take it and spread it whenever you meet someone whose intention would match the work.” Later Chuhou became senior official in Guangnan 广南, and Zhang worked with him again. There, on the 15th day of the 3rd month of the 5th year of the reign period Yuanfeng [1082], he sat in meditation and underwent immortal transformation. At the time he was 99 years old. (vol. 5, pp. 382–83)

This states that Zhang Boduan in 1069 followed Lu Shen to Sichuan, where he subsequently encountered Liu Haichan and received his instructions on the concoction of the reverted elixir of the golden fluid. At this point, he changed his name to Pingshu and adopted the courtesy name Purple Yang. He practiced the proper refinement to great success and compiled the *Wuzhen pian* to spread his knowledge in the world. Zhang Boduan thus received his key teachings from Liu Haichan, and it is generally acknowledged that Liu Haichan stood in a lineage relation with Zhongli Quan and Lü Dongbin. In this manner, Zhang Boduan became a representative of the Southern School with a direct link to Zhongli Quan.

From the *Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian*, we know that Zhang Boduan’s position on the dual cultivation of inner nature and life-destiny (*xingming shuangxiu* 性命双修) was close to that of the Zhong-Lü tradition. That is, they agreed on the necessity of placing equally strong emphasis on the refinement of both dimensions, the physical (life-destiny) and spiritual (inner nature), through the practice of longevity techniques and deep meditative absorptions.²³ The text refers to Zhang quoting Zhongli Quan, the Master of Correct Yang, as saying, “Bodhidharma sat wall-gazing for nine years, then he transcended to the inner court. The world-honored one [Buddha] engaged in deep meditation for six years, then he emerged from the cage of ordinary existence.” This clarifies the Buddhist take on the dual cultivation of inner nature and life-destiny.

It also refers to the *Zhong-Lü chuandao ji* and its five types of immortals—ghost, human, earth, spirit, and celestial—and acknowledges its understanding that if one lets the yang spirit issue from a deep state of absorption, the spirit will attach itself to yin and its residence in the body will be hard to maintain, leading to the unavoidable necessity of frequent reincarnation. If even a single thought is

²³ Some schools place one first, then the other. Zhang Boduan tends to begin with the physical, then move on toward more meditative endeavors. See (Lu 2009, pp. 74–76).

lacking or faulty, one's penetration of the numinous life force lacks firmness. As a result, the embryo mutates, and one ends up in a state among the five types that Zhong-Lü followers describe as that of a ghost immortal. As such, even though one no longer transmigrates through the cycle of rebirth, one has a hard time reaching the immortals' isle of Penglai. Without a proper home to return to, one ends up entrusting oneself to yet another womb just to find a temporary residence.

Zhang Boduan also agrees with the outlook of Zhongli and Lü in that he sees the dual cultivation of inner nature and life-destiny as central in the Great Dao of the Golden Elixir. As Zhang Guangbao outlines:

The system proceeds in a total of twelve stages. Adepts begin by consciously matching yin and yang, condensing and dispersing water and fire, and letting dragon and tiger intermingle. Next, they gather the elixir materials and sublimate them into vapid gold. From here, they enter more advanced levels. These involve reverting jade liquor [saliva] into the elixir and circulating it around to refine the physical body. Following this, adepts harvest the golden fluid from their internal energies and merge it with the growing elixir, then circulate this for further refinement of body and mind. The last three steps are bowing to the primordial powers while cultivating *qi*, practicing inner observation for productive exchange, and—finally—shedding the physical form to ascend into heaven. (Zhang 2009, p. 67)

The overall understanding is that as cosmic energy assembles, there is physical form; when it disperses, there is *qi*. The ultimate goal of the practice is to reach a state where the perfect spirit manifests as physical form: This is called the yang spirit. If one fails to cultivate life-destiny and only works with inner nature, what arises is described as the yin spirit.

Thus, dual cultivation is the method of the highest vehicle. However, since each individual's fundamental make-up and capacity are not the same, Buddhists offer methods of three distinct vehicles, while Daoists describe five types of immortals and 3600 different introductory methods. It is just as Zhongli Quan says, "Among the 3600 gates of the wondrous divine law, each student picks one as the foundation. How could any of various formulas of spirit immortality you know not be found among these 3600?" This statement by the Perfected Zhongli is generally assumed to go back to his work *Pomi zhengdao ge* 破迷正道歌 (Song for Dispelling Doubts Concerning the Correct Dao, DZ 270).²⁴

The text also records that Zhang Boduan, after Lu Shen's death, moved on to work in Qinlong under Ma Mo, also known as Chuhou, and later followed him to Hedong. There, he gave him the *Wuzhen pian*. This matches the information provided in the *Wuzhen pianji* by Lu Sicheng.

6. Constructing a Lineage

Bai Yuchan and his disciples in the early 13th century, in an effort to construct a Southern line, traced their teaching back to Zhang Boduan and his supposed transmission from Liu Haichan. From here, they further linked it to the immortals Zhongli Quan and Lü Dongbin. This is first documented first in the *Haiqiong wendao ji* 海道集 (Haiqiong's Enquiries of the Dao, DZ 1308), compiled by Liu Yuanchang 留元 (fl. 1192–1218) on the basis of Bai Yuchan's sayings and published in the late Southern Song.²⁵ In his preface, Liu says:

When I read Han Changli's 昌黎 *Taoyuan* 桃源 (Peach Blossom Font), I think of the vastness and freedom of the immortals; when I read Bai Juyi's 白居易 *Haishan* 海山 (Seas and Peaks), I think of departing in death. Truly, the human mind has no firm root, but just follows words

²⁴ On the text, see Baldrian-Hussein in (Schipper and Verellen 2004, pp. 831–32). It consists of one short poem in a seven-character verse, attributed to Zhongli Quan and first cited around 1250, then imitated variously. In outlook and terminology, it closely resembles the *Wuzhen pian* as well as later works by Chen Nan, all showing distinct Chan Buddhist influence.

²⁵ On the text, see Yuan Bingling in (Schipper and Verellen 2004, pp. 929–30). It consists of a collection of eight doctrinal texts in close imitation of the *Zhuangzi* and with a distinct Chan Buddhist slant.

in generating insights. Alas! I have heard that one can learn to become a spirit immortal, that with the right efforts one can bypass death. That does not mean I can actually do it, but how I want to learn!

When I was young, I loved the cultivation of immortality and exerted my mind to accomplish it, never being aware of the passing of time. Human years and months are fleeting, head and skull as much as skin and shell decaying all too fast! Encounters with heavenly opportunity, chances to hear of the Dao are rare. When I was a young man, I was fortunate enough to encounter the perfected teacher Haiqiong, that is, Bai Yuchan, also known as Hainan ren 海南人 [Man from Hainan], whose family, I think, came from Xiangmian 襄沭. Sometimes, he would have disheveled hair and walk around barefoot, entering the dusty towns. Other times, he would wear a clear kerchief and Daoist robes, wandering to temples and abbeys. Whenever he was floating around the common people, no one would recognize him. He said, he was twenty-one.

He had read and studied all the writings of the three teachings and discussed all of them with me. His understanding of the classics was like a bottomless spring, erudite to a degree unmatched by the great scholars of the day. He was perfect in his calligraphy of cursive, seal, and official script; his mind was sharp, wondrous, and bright. He could play the zither, excelled at checkers, and could paint, yet used his days to fool around in the world. When he came in contact with anyone, he would be elegant and fashionable the entire time, but however much people came to pay their respects, he would not get close to anyone. Without a single piece of paper on his body, he would drop words from his brush to fill the four directions. Wandering widely along rivers and lakes, his fame filled all under heaven. Those following him were as numerous as hairs [on a dog].

People at the time often noticed that in his bag he never carried a single silver or copper coin, that rice and millet got prepared automatically when he was around. Sometimes he was so drunk, he would bust out yelling at the thunder; even in his sleep, he would dispatch petitions to heaven. He was happy, then furious, laughing and crying at odd times, appearing dull as if completely lacking wisdom, then again spouting words matching rest and activity. And all the while his thoughts on saving the world and aiding humanity were limitless, exhibiting unwearied effort!

Throughout the night he would burn candles and sit [in meditation]; all day long he would wave away obstructions and keep singing. He never washed in the morning; never cooked at night. Year in, year out, he would use his water and fire [emoluments] for useless things. He said that his ears were dumb and his eyes dim, and on occasion used tooth issues as an excuse to leave his guests, never giving any personal instructions. He could get drunk without liquor, appear equally befuddled whether asleep or awake. All the various learned masters and officials strove to publish his works and inscribe his sayings on steles. To this day, he tends to get angry a lot and fear little, strongly trying to stay away from the people of the world, who duly admire him, like a magnet attracting needles!

Eventually he transmitted a book on the elixir of the nine tripods, using gold, lead, cinnabar, and mercury; instructions of the jade knife, fire talisman, and golden liquor of the Great One; and a text regarding the evocation of destiny through the wind and frost of the purple empyrean. I thought I had it in the bag and committed a transgression against heaven, lost myself, and fell into the common world—how could I ever attain it? Verily, one must swear to sacrifice one's body and self in its cultivation! Never complain about the burden of learning! Diligently move from one step to the next! Always collect rewards, warnings, and a deeper understanding, gradually, like carefully carving wood, always letting similarly minded fellows in the Four Seas give support and inspiration!

Bai Yuchan received the teaching from Chen Niwan 泥丸, while Chen got it from Xue Daoguang 薛道光. Xue obtained it from Shi Tai 石泰, who in turn learned from Zhang Boduan. Zhang got the transmission from Liu Haichan, who obtained it from Lü Dongbin. Many more people beyond these knew of him as a person and read his books! What is there for me to be proud of in recording all this? I, Ziyuanzi 紫元子 (Master of Purple Prime), Liu Yuanchang, bow my head and respectfully submit this preface. (33.140)

According to this, Zhang Boduan received the transmission from Liu Haichan, who in turn got it from Lü Dongbin. Zhang in turn handed it down to Shi Tai (d. 1158),²⁶ who later continued the transmission by passing it on to Xue Daoguang (d. 1191),²⁷ Chen Nan 楠 (Chen Niwan) (fl. 1213),²⁸ and Bai Yuchan (fl. 1194–1229). Liu Yuanchang himself, moreover, was Bai's direct disciple.

Two other of Bai's students were the Lushan Daoists Chen Shoumo 守默 and Zhan Jirui 詹瑞. According to the *Haiqiong chuandao ji* 海道集 (Haiqiong's Transmission of the Dao, DZ 1309)²⁹, they were the ones to extend the Southern School all the way back to Zhongli Quan. The text says:

Guanyinzi 尹子 said, "When we speak of transmission, we just refer to things and not to Dao." Lord Lao said, "I do not know its name; if compelled, I call it Dao" (*Daode jing* 道 ch.25) The practices outlined in this collection match the 3600 methods, the ten major schools of nourishing life. They represent a great celestial font transmitted since high antiquity! All my fellow seekers study them with alacrity! The *Lunyu* (Analects of Confucius) has, "The master's discourses about inner nature and the way of heaven cannot be realized by hearing" (ch.5, para.13). Alas! Later generations in all under heaven are not aware of the master's true intent, therefore, they think his teachings are highly complex and difficult to practice.

Now, how would we know that Confucius only taught Yan Yuan 淵 [Yan Hui] as his disciple? When Yan Yuan obtained the teaching, for three months he never failed to behave with perfect benevolence and each day acted as if he was dull. He lived in a humble alley, with a single dish of rice and single gourd of drink, then departed this world at the age of thirty-two (*Lunyu* ch. 6, para.11). If people can understand just how Yan Yuan practiced mind-fasting, they will realize the teachings of the spirit chamber and once they know this, can understand spirit water. Mencius says, "Inner nature is like water" (6A2). This is just it! The *Wuzhen pian* has, "The core of cultivating life is the Golden Elixir; the core of the Golden Elixir is the spirit water of the Flowery Pond [saliva]. and The practice is plain and very easy, Even dull and simple people can practice it and in due course become transcendent sages. As the *Daode jing* has, "My Dao is very easy to know and very easy to practice" (ch. 70).

In the old days, Zhongli Quan received the methods in a cloudy chamber [revelation] and transmitted them to Lü Dongbin, who in turn passed them on to Liu Haichan. He transmitted them to Zhang Pingshu, who gave them to Shi Tai. Shi Tai taught them to the monk Daoguang, who passed them on to Chen Niwan. From here they went to Bai Yuchan, our very own teacher. In the fall of the *yihai* year [1215], we encountered him on Mount

²⁶ On these masters and their role in internal alchemy, see (Pregadio and Skar 2000, p. 471). Shi Tai was a native of Changzhou who served as a minor government official. The story goes that he met Zhang Boduan in Shanxi when the latter was falsely accused of an official misdemeanor. When Shi Tai came to his rescue in disregard of his own welfare, Zhang judged him fit to receive his teachings. See Baldrian-Hussein in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 894–95).

²⁷ Xue Daoguang was an ordained Buddhist monk, who connected to Shi Tai in 1106. See (Zhang 2009, pp. 61–62). He came originally from Yunnan and, after enlightenment, returned to lay life and worked as a tailor, like his master Shi Tai. See Baldrian-Hussein in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 1144–45).

²⁸ Chen Nan, originally from Guangdong, was particularly known for his combination of internal alchemy and healing techniques. Also versed in the Thunder Rites, he transmitted his teachings to Bai Yuchan on Mount Luofu. See Baldrian-Hussein in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 254–55).

²⁹ On the text, see Baldrian-Hussein in (Schipper and Verellen 2004, p. 930). The preface mentions that the author met Bai on Mt. Wuyi in the fall of the *Yihai* year and again on Mt. Lu in the spring of the *Wuyin* year, which means in 1215 and 1218, dating the text after this.

Wuyi 武夷山, and in the spring of the *wuyin* year [1218] saw him again on Mount Lu. In the Taiping xingguo gong 太平国 (Monastery of Great Peace and Flourishing Country) on the mountain was a Daoist by the name of Hong Zhichang 洪知常, courtesy name Mingdao 明道, who also called himself Kanlizi 坎离子 (Master of the Trigrams of Fire and Water). He was extremely well versed in both, internal and operative alchemy. A thousand masters and ten thousand friends—we had pursued and examined them all! A thousand scriptures and ten thousand treatises—we had searched and penetrated them without any success! Then, one day, we connected with him in close affinity, and within half a sentence, [understanding was like] metal carving skin; in the time it would take to eat a soldier's rations, the mysterious pearl began to take shape.

Master Hong soon left to hide his form and obscure his traces, shut his doors and cut off all contact, sit in meditation to advance the firing process, and complete the immortal embryo. Worried that his system would never be transmitted, we decided to publish the various treatises we received from him and from our teacher. They included the *Jindan jiejing* 金丹捷徑 (Shortcut to the Golden Elixir) in 1 scroll, the *Gousuo lianhuan jing* (Scripture of the [Unending] Circle of the Hook and the Lock) in 1 scroll, and the *Lushan kuaihuo ge* 山快活歌 (Song of Joyful Living on Mount Lu) in 1 stanza. We combined them into one work, entitled *Chuandao ji* 道集 (Collected Transmissions of the Dao) with the desire to spread them widely in all under heaven. Respectfully submitted, Chen Shoumo, aka Daoguizi 刀圭子 (Master of the Jade Knife), and Zhan Jirui, aka Zizhizi 紫芝子 (Master of Purple Mushrooms). (vol. 33, p. 148)

According to this preface, Chen Shoumo and Zhan Jirui claim that the Southern School began with a transmission from Zhongli Quan to Lü Dongbin. From there it went to Liu Haichan, Zhang Boduan, Shi Tai, Xue Daoguang (in the text called the monk Daoguang), Chen Niwan, and Bai Yuchan, who in turn passed the teaching on to the two of them.

7. The Complete Line

In addition, the text contains a section entitled *Xianpai* 仙派 (Immortals' Lineage). It gives the following sequence:

Perfect Lord of Correct Yang → Perfect Lord of Pure Yang → Perfect Lord of the Ocean Moon
→ Perfected of Purple Yang → Perfected of the Almond Grove → Perfected of Dao Radiance
→ Perfected of the Niwan Palace → Perfected of the Jade Moon (vol. 33, p. 151)

The Perfect Lord of Correct Yang is Zhongli Quan, while the Perfect Lord of Pure Yang is Lü Dongbin. He transmitted it to the Perfect Lord of the Ocean Moon, that is, Liu Haichan. From him, it went to the Perfected of Purple Yang, who is none other than Zhang Boduan. He passed it on to the Perfected of the Almond Grove, that is, Shi Tai, who transmitted it to the Perfected of Dao Radiance, i.e., Xue Shi. Xue in turn passed it on to the Perfected of the Niwan Palace, Chen Nan, and from here, it went to the Perfected of the Jade Moon, i.e., Bai Yuchan.

Beyond this, Bai Yuchan passed the teaching on to his disciple Wang Jinchan 王金蟾, who transmitted it to Li Daochun 李道 (fl. 1288–1290), courtesy name Yingchanzi 蟾子 (Master of the Lustrous Moon).³⁰ Li's disciple Miao Taisu 苗太素 (fl. 1288–1324), courtesy name Shi'an 庵, moreover, wrote the *Xuanjiao da gong'an* 玄教大公案 (Great Cases of the Mystery Teaching, DZ 1065), edited and published by his disciple, Wang Zhidao 王志道.³¹ The fourth section of the introduction to this work

³⁰ For Li's life and work, see (Boltz 1987, p. 179; Pregadio and Skar 2000, p. 480).

³¹ On the text, see Despeux in (Schipper and Verellen 2004, p. 1179; Baldrian-Hussein in (Pregadio 2008, pp. 745–46). The term for "cases" in the title is the same word as koan in Japanese, the "court cases" used as meditation riddles in Chan Buddhism. The sixty-four lectures echo the style of the ancient Daoist classics.

contains a preface by Ke Daochong 柯道冲, the Daoist of the Dark Abyss (Yuanmo daoren 渊嘿道人), from Jinling 金陵 (near Nanjing). It says:

The transmission of Daoist succession has been going on for a very long time. It began with the Old Patriarch of Chaos Prime who first appreciated the wonder before all forms and, forced to name it, called it Dao, then expressed it in words and supplemented it with descriptions of virtue, composing a total of 5000 words. However, there were also instructions that went beyond language, mysterious ways of pervading the subtle and wondrous, things that could not be expressed in words, too deep to be consciously comprehended. These, too, he pushed into shape and expression.

Once this work, the *Daode jing*, had been transmitted to Yin Xi 尹喜, the Guardian of the Pass 令, ten further masters attained its wonders, including Liezi 列子 and Zhuangzi 庄子, and reaching all the way down to Anqi Sheng 安期生, Li Xianqing 李仙卿, Ge Xianweng 葛仙翁, and the host of perfected. They all transmitted it from one to the next and each compiled their own works and texts. In due course, the line divided into various branches and lineages, spreading throughout the grotto heavens and auspicious spots with no shortage over many generations.

Since the Zhou and Han dynasties, the heirs of Guardian Yin occupied key patriarchal positions, while the Imperial Lord Goldtower (Jinque dijun 金帝君) inherited the Daoist succession. He passed it on to the Imperial Lord of Eastern Florescence, who in turn transmitted it to the immortal lord Zhongli, the Perfected of Correct Yang. He handed it down to the immortal lord Lü, the Perfected of Pure Yang, from whom it went to the immortal lord Liu, known as Haichan. He in turn transmitted it in two lines: in the south, to Master Zhang, the Perfected of Purple Yang and the Five Purple Masters; in the north, to Wang Chongyang and his Seven Perfected. Thus, the single strand of the Daoist succession divided in two.

Only when Li Qing'an 李清庵 [Li Daochun] received the teaching from the Perfected Bai Yuchan's disciple, the Perfected Wang Jinchuan, and formed a unified approach to the gate to the mystery, was the orthodox line of Daoist succession continued. Inheriting the enlightenment of the perfected, it was expressed in many texts and collections and has spread widely in the world. Miao Taisu served him as his teacher, having his core instructions deeply engraved in his heart to the point where his perception of green and blue got blurred. He deeply embraced his Dao and clearly listed the central methods of its ancestral succession in the hope of providing a proper model for future students.

Picking and selecting the pivotal and most wondrous features from the various scriptures, I now ascend to the holy hall and enter the sacred chamber to humbly offer this systematic presentation, not only outlining the patriarchal words but also transmitting their sayings, praising and recording them in all their complexity. Matching the numbers of the *Yijing*, I arranged the materials in sixty-four lectures plus three central focus points.

My own student Wang Cheng'an 王庵 and his fellows compiled and edited the work, calling it the *Xuanjiao da gong'an*. Word for word it illuminates the roots; sentence for sentence it recovers the ancestral lineage. In substance and function it embraces oneness and perfection; in completeness and merging chaos it encompasses the three teachings. It guides people to the cosmic grid established by the sage-ruler Fuxi 伏羲, there to frolic with the mysterious sages prior to all signs and forms. How marvelous!

Emulating the perfected recluse Master Tang from Huayang 阳 who donated money toward the printing of the book, I wish to enhance its circulation and expand its relevance! Anyone sincerely dedicating himself to this work will gain unlimited vision and be able to observe with sevenfold penetration and eightfold thoroughness, expand into the four great directions

and six pervasions. Thus, the Daoist succession will be radiant and bright, continuing forever without interruption! How amazing is that! Preface respectfully submitted by Ke Daochong, the Daoist of the Dark Abyss, from Jinling. (vol. 23, p. 889)

This preface states that the transmission of Daoist succession began with the Patriarch of Chaos Prime, that is, Laozi. Laozi transmitted the *Daode jing* to Yin Xi, the Guardian of the Pass. After him, there were ten masters who received its wondrous teaching, including Liezi and Zhuangzi, and reaching all the way down to Anqi Sheng, Li Xianqing, Ge Xianweng, and the host of the Perfected. They all transmitted it one to the next and each compiled their own works and texts. In due course, the line divided into various branches and lineages, continuing the succession. Since the Zhou and Han dynasties, the heirs of Guardian Yin occupied key patriarchal positions, while the Imperial Lord Goldtower inherited the Daoist lineage. He passed it on to the Imperial Lord of Eastern Florescence, who in turn transmitted it to the immortal lord Zhongli, the Perfected of Correct Yang. He handed it down to the immortal lord Lü, the Perfected of Pure Yang, from whom it went to the immortal lord Liu, known as Haichan. He in turn transmitted it in two lines: In the South, to Master Zhang, the Perfected of Purple Yang and the Five Purple Ones; in the North, to Wang Chongyang (Twofold Yang) and his Seven Perfected. Thus, the single strand of the Daoist succession divided into two.

After this, Li Qing'an, that is, Li Daochun, received the succession from the Perfected Bai Yuchan's disciple, the Perfected Wang Jinchan, and formed a unified approach to the gate to the mystery, thus continuing the orthodox line of Daoist succession. Miao Taisu, courtesy name Shi'an, served him as his teacher. His core instructions engraved deeply in his heart, he endeavored to list the central methods of ancestral succession in the hope of providing a proper model for future students. His own disciple, Wang Cheng'an, and his fellows completed the editing and named it *Xuanjia da gong'an*, hoping that the Daoist succession will be radiant and bright, continuing forever without interruption. We can chart the lineage connection as follows:

- A. Laozi → Yin Xi → Lord Goldtower → Eastern Florescence → Zhongli Quan → Lü Dongbin → Zhuangzi, Liezi, other masters
- B. Lü Dongbin → Liu Haichan → Zhang Boduan plus the Five Purple Masters → Wang Chongyang plus the Seven Perfected
- C. Zhang Boduan (including Bai Yuchan) → Wang Jing'an → Li Daochun → Miao Taisu → Wang Zhidao

8. Conclusions

The above is a brief survey of the relationship between Zhang Boduan and Liu Haizhen and Zhongli Lique. We found that from Tang through Song and Yuan, Daoist legends abounded about Zhongli Quan, and especially the story of his transmission of the system of internal alchemy to Lü Dongbin and Liu Haichan circulated widely. Thus, the school of Complete Perfection, which dominated in Northern China, intentionally attributed its doctrines and alchemical methods to these three figures.

Going beyond this to the South, we found that the Southern school of the Golden Elixir, as founded by Zhang Boduan, also linked its ancestral pedigree to them. A good example is the line connected to Bai Yuchan. Miao Shanshi was the disciple of Li Daochun, who in turn followed Wang Jinchan, a direct recipient of the teachings from Bai Yuchan. Although Miao Shanshi claimed that the alchemical methods he transmitted were different from those outlined in the *Zhong-Lü chuandao ji* and the *Lingbao bifa*, after all, he agrees with Zhang Boduan that the teachings of the Southern school ultimately went back to the three masters Zhongli, Lü and Liu.

Since all major schools of this period stood under the influence of the alchemical methods associated with Zhongli Quan and Lü Dongbin, it must be acknowledged that they held an important position in the history of Taoism. The fact that Zhang Boduan linked his teachings to these figures can thus be seen as a cultural symbol in the development of Daoism since the Song, Jin, and Yuan dynasties. The emergence of this cultural phenomenon is not accidental but reflects overall development of the

religion during this period, which has set the stage ever since. It is symptomatic of the overall trend leading away from pure philosophical exploration of the Twofold Mystery school and the smelting of metals and taking of elixirs under the auspices of operative alchemy prominent under the Tang. In its stead, there was an increasing emphasis on meditative refinement in the mode of internal alchemy and the dual cultivation of inner nature and life-destiny, as presented most prominently in the teachings associated with Zhongli Quan and Lü Dongbin.

Those who followed the path of the Golden Elixir as represented by these two and their successors, such as Liu Haichan, tended to place great importance on the dual cultivation of inner nature and life-destiny, what they called the “core of clarity, stillness, and nonaction; the essentials of the reverted elixir of the golden fluid.” That is to say, the former—clarity, stillness, and nonaction—signified a focus on the cultivation of mind and inner nature, causing them to be free from dust and obstructions, like bright moonlight shining on the water; the latter—the reverted elixir of the golden fluid—indicated their concern with practices related to life-destiny, involving the stabilizing of the abdomen and strengthening of the bones. The two are further combined with the *Daode jing* instructions to “empty the mind, fill the belly, weaken the will, and strengthen the bones” (ch. 3). Seen from this perspective, this potent combination explains why the alchemical teachings of Zhongli Quan and Lü Dongbin were so successful, going far beyond the Twofold Mystery of the Tang and other more speculative systems and operative methodologies prominent in medieval Daoism.

Funding: This research was funded by Beijing Shehuikexueguihua Bangongshi grant number 14ZX003.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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