Reenchanting Buddhism via modernizing magic: Guru Wuguang of Taiwan's philosophy and science of 'superstition'

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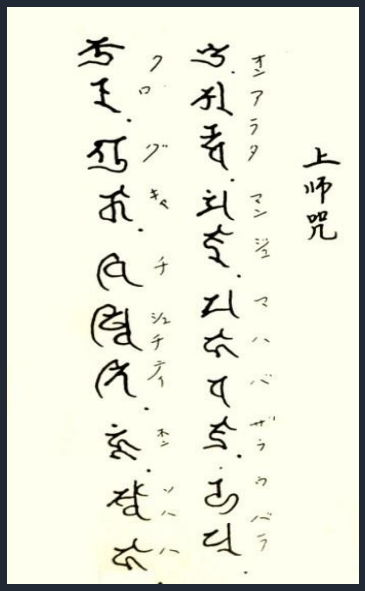

Cody Bahir

Reenchanting Buddhism via Modernizing Magic

Guru Wuguang of Taiwan's Philosophy and Science of 'Superstition'

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Abstract

This study focuses on the life, exploits and ideology of Guru Wuguang (1818-2000), a dizzyingly eclectic and extremely influential Taiwanese Buddhist figure who studied Daoist alchemy, multiple forms of Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan Buddhism, as well as biology, thermodynamics, philosophy, theology, and occulture. This is done in order to understand what happens when a tradition 'purified' from its 'mythical' elements reincorporates itself in the tension between its 'enchanted' past and 'scientific' present. Wuguang is famous throughout the Chinese-speaking Buddhist world for resurrecting Zhenyan, a school of esoteric Buddhism said to have flourished in China during the Tang Dynasty. The academic community has largely ignored Wuguang, making this the first in-depth exploration of this figure, whose influence is truly global. Building upon David McMahan's work on Buddhist modernism, Jason Josephson's secular-religious-superstitious trinary, scholarly discourse concerning Weberian disenchantment, and employing the Religious Economy Model, I argue that Wuguang's teachings represent an intentionally reenchanted form of Buddhist modernism aimed at harmonizing magic with modern science and philosophy. While scholarly discourse on Asian magic in the modern world has been confined to popular religion, this study additionally focuses on 'High-Church Buddhism' by analyzing Wuguang's magico-scientific interpretation of complex Buddhist doctrine. This was accomplished by identifying each facet of Wuguang's eclecticism, tracing its provenance, and illuminating Wuguang's innovative use thereof while exploring his influence. Primary data were collected through textual and historical research, as well as onsite fieldwork conducted from 2011 to 2016.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother of blessed memory, and my father, may he live till the age of 120.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my many informants, both anonymous and named, who welcomed me into their communities and allowed me to try and see the world through their eyes. I also wish to express my gratitude to my dear friends and colleagues, Jeffrey Kotyk and Joseph P. Elacqua, who were always there to read my drafts and offer invaluable emotional support.

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Samenvatting
Stellingen
Curriculum Vitae

Notes on Romanization

Excluding a number of special cases, all Chinese words have been transcribed into Mandarin Pinyin. The exceptions to this are Taiwanese place names and personal names which have been rendered in accordance with their standardized form. Japanese words and names have been romanized in the modified Hepburn system with identical exceptions.

Due to the Sino-Japanese character of this dissertation, when broadly speaking of doctrines and practices of Buddhist sects that cross the Chinese/Japanese linguistic divide, both the Mandarin and Japanese pronunciations have been transliterated. Thus, the characters 真言 and 禪 are respectively transcribed as Zhenyan/Shingon and Chan/Zen. However, when referring to a particularly Han or Japanese group within these larger categories, only the pronunciation used in that particular group's context is given.

List of Abbreviations: in alphabetical order

Abbreviation	Full Form	Characters
GKTM	Great King of Tantra Maṇḍala	大教王曼荼羅
KMT	Kuomingtang	國民黨
MCS	Modern Chan Society	現代禪
MPPM	Mahā Praṇidhāna Parvata Mantrayāna	马来西亚佛教真言宗大願山
MSBL	Mantra School Bright Lineage	真言宗普賢流
PRC	People's Republic of China	中華人民共和國
ROC	Republic of China	中華民國
SSBA	South Seas Buddhist Association	南瀛佛教會
SSBJ	South Seas Buddhist Journal	南瀛佛教會報
TOE	Theory of Everything	
TOUB	Temple of Universal Brightness	光明王寺

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Unless otherwise noted, all images were created by the author. Photographs that have been reproduced have been done so with the copyright holders' permission.

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Introduction

'Magic,' 'religion,' and 'superstition' are three terms that occultists, clerics, charlatans and skeptics have spent countless hours attempting to define. Commonly, these three notions occupy multiple typological categories juxtaposed with one comprised of 'science' and 'the secular.'[1] This dissertation analyzes one attempt to draw the boundaries between these categories in a holistic fashion that mutually harmonized all four. This attempt was undertaken by a Buddhist monk from Taiwan, Guru Wuguang 悟光上師 (Dharma-name Quanmiao 全妙, secular name Zheng Jinbao 鄭進寶 1918-2000)—whose name translates as 'enlightened luminosity.'

The discourse that Wuguang joined took place in East Asia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was dominated by a typological trinary consisting of secular-religious-superstitious[2] in which 'magic' did not exist as an independent category.[3] Each concept represented by these categories (as well as the fourth 'non-category') was a newcomer to East

[1] To the best of my knowledge, the most informative and comprehensive work on how scholars have attempted to differentiate these categories remains Randall Styers, *Making Magic: Religion, Magic and Science in the Modern World*, American Academy of Religion Reflection and Theory in the Study of Religion (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[2] Jason Ā. Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 163. Josephson argues—I believe quite convincingly—that it was not only the contemporary semiotic *values* of the terms for these categories that were adopted in East Asia during this time (see next two notes), but also the Sino-Japanese *notions* that the terms represent. Stated plainly, the very idea of 'religion'—as well as the 'secular' and 'superstition' —did not exist in East Asia before the modern era. It must be noted that Michael Pye disagrees. Online review: https://www.academia.edu/6044410/Josephson_Jason_%C4%80nanda_The_Invention_of_Religion_in_Japan (accessed Jan. 9, 2015). Whether or not the East Asian appropriation of these categories represents their East Asian birth is irrelevant to this study, as it focuses on how they were applied, not how/when they originated. I rely on Josephson due to his deepening our understanding of how these categories were conceptualized by correctively remapping this discursive context along the lines of a trinary rather than a simple secular/religious binary.

[3] This trinary was the Sino-Japanese appropriation of the 'magic–religion–science triad' that evolved in Western intellectual spheres. Unlike the Western triad, the Sino-Japanese appropriation thereof did not reify 'magic' as *sui generis*. See Wouter J. Hanegraaff, "Magic," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Western Mysticism and Esotericism*, ed. Glenn Alexander Magee (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 393-404. In addition to differing in terminology and meaning, the fact that 'magic' is the first category within the earlier, Western triad (whereas its closest counterpart 'superstition' is the last category within the East Asian trinary) reflects the view of nineteenth century Euro-American social evolutionists who believed that religion evolved from magic. See Rodney Stark, "Reconceptualizing Religion, Magic, and Science," *Review of Religious Research*, vol. 43, no. 2 (2001): 107.

Asian intellectual discourse.[4] Once adopted, East Asian elites classified the religious and intellectual traditions of their lands in terms of this trinary. Phenomena perceived as beneficial to the future of their respective nations were placed into the category of 'secular' and idolized while phenomena blamed for Asia's having fallen behind the technologically advanced West were cast into the category of 'superstition' and demonized. The middle category, 'religion,' served as a safe haven for ideologies and activities that, although not necessarily useful in forwarding the modernization of East Asia, were not blamed for her relative backwardness.[5] It was within the confines of this neutral category that Buddhists, Daoists and practitioners of folk religion[6] strove to establish their traditions. To accomplish this they set about disenchanting these traditions by

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[4] The Sino-Japanese terms: 'religion,' 宗教 (Ch. *zongjiao*, Jpn. *shūkyō*), 'superstition' 迷信 (Chn. *mixin*, Jpn. *meishin*), 'secular' 世俗 (Chn. *shisu*, Jpn. *sezoku*) and 'science' 科學 (Chn. *kexue*, Jpn. *kagaku*) are all recent innovations that were first concretized in Japan during the nineteenth century by rendering them into Chinese characters. This enabled Chinese speakers to simply borrow the Japanese translations instead of coming up with their own. See Akira Iriye, *China and Japan in the Global Setting* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 34. *Zongjiao*/*shūkyō* that came to be used for 'religion' had been previously used in Japan since the early part of the Tokugawa period 徳川時代 (1603-1868) by Confucians as a technical term denoting the ideal behavior of a wise rule, as detailed in Hans M. Krämer, "How 'Religion' Came to Be Translated as Shūkyō: Shimaji Mokurai and the Appropriation of Religion in Early Meiji Japan," *Japan Review 25* (2013): 106. *Mixin*/*meishin* also has a premodern usage, but one that differs from the modern equivalent of superstition. Buddhists had used it to denote how people are misled by their own attachments. Premodern critics of Daoism had used it polemically to assert that Daoist practitioners used mysterious rites to mislead people. See Rebecca Nedostup, "The Transformation of the Concept of Religion in Chinese Modernity," in *Religious Diversity in Chinese Thought*, ed. Perry Schmidt-Leukel et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 167. *Shisu/sezoku* was used by premodern Buddhists to refer to the superficial, mundane truth in contradistinction to the ultimate truth. See Josephson, *The Invention of Religion*, 152. For the evolution of *kexue*/*kagaku* refer to Suzuki Shūji, "Dreams of 'Science' and 'Truth,'" in *The Emergence of the Modern Sino-Japanese Lexicon: Seven Studies*, ed., tr. Joshua A. Fogel (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), 181-203. Although 'magic'—which goes by multiple terms explored in this dissertation—did not exist as an independent category, the concept that 'magic' existed as a phenomenon separable from 'religion,' is a Christian construct that was adopted in East Asia. See Stephen G. Covell, *Japanese Temple Buddhism: Worldliness in a Religion of Renunciation*, Topics in Contemporary Buddhism (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 12-14; Winston B. Davis, *Dojo: Magic and Exorcism in Modern Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 210.

[5] Josephson demonstrates that these categories were in fact legal, in addition to ideological or ethnographic. The 'secular' was equated what was 'real,' while 'superstition' was equated with the 'delusional.' See Josephson, *The Invention of Religion*, 3-4 and 259-262.

[6] 'Folk religion' 民俗宗教, also referred to as 'popular religion,' is an umbrella term for local cults that do not neatly fit within the confines of established religious categories such as Buddhism, Daoism and modern Shintō. While multiple folk religious groups in close geographical proximity oftentimes share numerous similarities, they are not considered a singular unified tradition due to their non-centralized and heterogeneous nature. See Philip Clart, "The Concept of 'Popular Religion' in the Study of Chinese Religions: Retrospect and Prospects," in *The Fourth Fu Jen University Sinological Symposium: Research on Religions in China: Status quo and Perspectives*, ed. Zbigniew Wesolowski (Xinzhuang: Furen Daxue chubanshe, 2007), 166-203.

reinterpreting them with a demythologizing hermeneutic. The result was that depictions of scientifically inexplicable phenomena were either presented as metaphor or entirely cast aside and deemed 'superstitious.' This gave birth to a new, disenchanted form of Buddhism referred to by scholars as 'Buddhist modernism'—an umbrella term that encompasses the most prominent forms of Buddhism in contemporary Taiwan.

In response to the modernist disenchantment of Buddhism, Wuguang sought to redeem magic from the category of 'superstition.' To do so, he emulated the ways his Buddhist predecessors and contemporaries had disenchanted Buddhism in order to reenchant it. I refer to his reenchanting technique as 'sophisticating,' meaning 'to mix with something foreign or inferior' or 'to adulterate.'[7] The word 'sophisticated' itself, which comes from the Greek *sophia* for 'wisdom,' refers to something that is 'refined' or 'highly developed.'[8] These dual implications of adulteration and refinement are present in Wuguang's hermeneutic, with the former serving as a means to achieve the latter. The base material which Wuguang sophisticated was comprised of magical practices exiled to the category 'superstition' found within esoteric Buddhism, Taiwanese folk religion and Daoism. The foreign ingredients with which he adulterated these were science and modern philosophy. Wuguang added these foreign elements in order to rescue beliefs and practices related to magic that East Asian modernist circles had demythologized and demonized by presenting them as scientifically and intellectually sound.

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[7] This is based on 'sophisticate's' usage as a transitive verb meaning, "to mix (commodities) with some foreign or inferior substance; to render impure in this way; to adulterate." See, "Sophisticate, v.," *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, December 2015), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/184762?rskey=g7WbHZ&result=3 (accessed Jan. 9, 2016).

[8] This is based on 'sophisticated's' adjectival value meaning, "mixed with some foreign substance; adulterated; not pure or genuine" and "of equipment, techniques, theories, etc.: employing advanced or refined methods or concepts; highly developed or complicated employing advanced or refined methods or concepts." See, "Sophisticated, adj.," *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, December 2015), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/184763 (accessed Jan. 9, 2016).

Wuguang's ability and desire to sophisticate what had been labeled 'superstitious' were rooted in his eclectic background. Wuguang was a: Chan 禪 monk, faith healer, exorcist, alchemist, holder of an honorary doctorate in philosophy, lesser archbishop 少僧正 in the Japanese Buddhist ecclesiastical hierarchy 僧階 and Shingon 真言 priest.[9] He was also a student of: Kundalini Yoga, Tibetan Karma Kagyu Buddhism, Socratic philosophy, Western esotericism and Christianity.[10] Despite his being so deeply involved in such *recherché* traditions and spiritual technologies, he embraced science, studied biology and physics and even looked forward to—and optimistically attempted to prophesize—future scientific discoveries. His claim to fame is his resurrecting an 'extinct school' of esoteric Buddhism referred to in Chinese as Zhenyan 真言 and Japanese as Shingon—a word that is an early Chinese translation of the Sanskrit word 'mantra.'[11]

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[9] Photographs of Wuguang's honorary doctorate, ecclesiastical position and Shingon ordination certificates can all be seen in Wuguang, *Fojiao zhenyanzong jishenchengfo guan* 佛教真言宗即身成佛觀 [Contemplation on Becoming a Buddha in this Body] (Kaohsiung: Paise wenhua, 1991), front endpapers. For the other credentials mentioned here see Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

[10] Wuguang respectively references Plato's Allegory of the Cave and Phædo in his book, *Chande jianghua* 禪的講話 [Speaking of Chan/Zen] (Jiayi: Wuzhishan guangmingwang si jiayi daochang, 1991), 17 and 55. Wuguang's familiarity with Western occultism is evidenced by the symbol he created to signify his sect (Chapter 5). Due to the relationship forged between Swedenborgians as well as members of the Theosophical Society—of which D.T. Suzuki was a member—and Meiji-era Buddhist modernists, this familiarity is understandable. The most famous Theosophist to deeply involve himself with Buddhism in Japan and elsewhere was Colonel Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907). See Stephen Prothero, *The White Buddhist: The Asian Odyssey of Henry Steel Olcott,* Religion in North America Series (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996) and "Henry Steel Olcott and 'Protestant Buddhism,'" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 63, no. 2 (1995): 281-302; Judith Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West Orientalism, Occidentalism, and the Columbian Exposition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 155; Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, "Theosophy and Buddhist Reformers in the Middle of the Meiji Period: An Introduction," *Japanese Religions* 34, no. 2 (2009): 119-131 and "Suzuki Daisetsu and Swedenborg: A Historical Background," in *Modern Buddhism in Japan*, ed. Hayashi Makoto et al. (Nagoya: Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture, 2014), 112-143. For Wuguang's studies into the other subjects mentioned here, refer to Chapter 2.

[11] Tang Dynasty Zhenyan—also referred to as Tang Esotericism 唐密—is a form esoteric Buddhism that continues to captivate the imaginations of scholars and practitioners of Buddhism alike. According to traditional East Asian religious historiography, Zhenyan flourished in China during the Tang Dynasty 唐朝 (618-907) in the nation's capital of Chang'an 長安 (modern day Xi'an 西安). However, sometime in the early Song Dynasty 宋朝 (960-1269) its chain of initiation was interrupted and its spiritual technologies became subsumed under other Buddhist movements, folk religion and Daoism. Prior to this fissure, of Zhenyan's initiation chain was transported to Japan by the Japanese figure Kūkai 空海 (a.k.a. Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師; 774-835), who had studied the esoteric

The more mundane side of his life was equally complicated. Before acquiring the above credentials he made a living as a bamboo furniture maker, construction worker and as a merchant sailor who reportedly had "a reputation for pugnacity that was known all along the South China coast."[12] He was married and had six children. This multifaceted life earned him the additional title of "heavenly vagabond" 太空流浪人.[13] Largely unknown elsewhere, this complex character is famous throughout the Chinese-speaking Buddhist world for having founded an influential revivalist Buddhist sect that has spread to numerous locations throughout East Asia, spawned offshoots, rivals and even inspired the formation of other religious movements, in addition to influencing popular Asian and Western Buddhist figures. His followers proclaim that the natural world testified to his saintliness, as butterflies followed him when he walked and when traveling a gentle drizzle of rain would suddenly spring from the sky whenever he arrived at his destination, as though to welcome him.[14] They also report that he visited them in their dreams, both while alive and posthumously, when they suffered from physical or psychological ailments, and upon awakening these ailments were inexplicably gone.[15] When instructing these same devotees—who include wealthy business people, university professors, engineers and similarly

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Dharma under the Chinese Master Huiguo 惠果 (746-805) while on a trip to China. After this, the teachings Kūkai received from Huiguo became the basis for Shingon. See Charles Orzech, "Seeing Chen-yen Buddhism: Traditional Scholarship and the Vajrayāna in China," *History of Religions* 29, no. 2 (1989): 87-144. Although this is the traditional account, Robert Sharf has called the existence of Tang Dynasty Zhenyan into question in Robert H. Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise*, Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism, 14 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), 263-278. However, the existence or non-existence of this school during the Tang Dynasty is irrelevant to this study as it concerns a modern movement.

[12] Shinzen Young, *Break Through Pain: A Step-by-Step Mindfulness Meditation Program for Transforming Chronic and Acute Pain* (Boulder, CO: Sounds True Inc., 2004), 75.

[13] Guo Yongkun 郭永坤, "*Da Kaohsiung fojiaohui suoshu siyuan tuanti jianjie* 大高雄佛教會所屬寺院團體簡介, [Profile of the Member Monasteries of the Buddhist association of Kaohsiung" (2010). Online: http://nknush.kh.edu.tw/~volunteer/te001.htm (accessed Dec. 6, 2015).

[14] Interview with disciple who often traveled with Wuguang, Aug. 2014.

[15] Interview with one of Wuguang's oldest disciples, Aug. 2014. It should be noted that this individual is not an MSBL priest and is in fact a faculty member in a scientific discipline at a Taiwanese university.

modernized individuals—he openly smoked cigarettes and spat red saliva from chewing betel nut.[16]

Although undoubtedly born out of his unique character, Wuguang's eclecticism was also a product of his place and time. He was born in a small, rural agrarian mountain village in southern Taiwan. Taiwan, like Wuguang himself, is a relatively minor place from a global perspective whose peripheral nature conceals its importance to the study of how religion has been transformed to suit the needs of the modern world. This importance is embodied within Taiwan's contemporary urban landscape—that boasts the greatest per capita number of both convenience stores[17] and Buddhist temples on the planet[18]— and is rooted in her political past. Within the span of a mere four hundred years, this land of the old and new has been successively colonized by four different world powers from Europe and Asia: Spain, Holland, China (twice) and Japan.[19] This rapid oscillation of sovereignty coincided with leaps in globalization, secularization and science symptomatic of modernity—each of which deeply impacted the shape of religion across the world. Of the ruling powers that claimed Taiwan and left their imprint upon the island's religious topography, the impressions made by her two closest East Asian neighbors, Japan and China, are the deepest. While Taiwan was in each of their hands, they themselves were in the midst of earth-shattering transitions whose reverberations led to comprehensive restructurings of their religious traditions, processes that gave birth to

[16] Master Daqing 大卿導師, "*Qianxu* 謙虛 [Modest Remarks]," Dharma Lineage Website, 2006: http://www.dharmalineage.org/Docs/%E8%AC%99%E8%99%9B.htm (accessed Jan. 9, 2015).

[17] Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), "Grocery Retail Trends in Taiwan 2013," (Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance, 2013): 4 and 9. Online: http://www.aquaculture.ca/files/documents/ GroceryRetail Taiwan.pdf (accessed Oct. 30, 2015).

[18] Hua-Chen Jenny Lin, "Crushed Pearls: The Revival and Transformation of the Buddhist Nuns' Order in Taiwan" (PhD diss, Rice University, 2010), 115.

[19] For the periodization of Taiwan's history in reference to colonialism see, Ching Cheong, *Will Taiwan Break Away? The Rise of Taiwanese Nationalism* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2001), 120.

disenchanted and rationalized forms of Buddhism that had been purged of superstition that represent early forms of Buddhist modernism. But this is but one side of Buddhist modernism.

In composing this dissertation, it is my aim to explore the hitherto largely unexplored phenomenon of Buddhist modernism's reenchanted, magical side, something I attempt through examining the life, times and career of Wuguang. While ample scholarly attention has been paid to disenchanted forms of Buddhist modernism—a Buddhist response to modernity—subsequent reenchanted responses to this response have yet to be thoroughly explored. And yet, it is Buddhist modernism's magical side that represents the most visibly vital contemporary state of the tradition. The scholarly community has likewise all but ignored Wuguang, as—outside of my work[20]—he has only been discussed in a single English paragraph[21] and two Chinese MA theses.[22] This is despite the fact that he was the direct ideological heir of Japanese, Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist modernist developments that have received robust scholarly attention, and was the founder of an international Buddhist organization that has in turn spawned at least five others. This dissertation thus aims to break new ground in the field of Buddhist Studies[23] by exploring a reenchanted form of Buddhist modernism and bringing to light one of its important architects. Additionally, while there are numerous academic treatments of early Japanese and

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[20] Cody R. Bahir, "Buddhist Master Wuguang's (1918-2000) Taiwanese Web of the Colonial, Exilic and Han," *E-Journal of East and Central Asian Religions* 1 (2013), 81-93. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.2218/ ejecar.2013.1.737 and "Reformulating the Appropriated and Relinking the Chain: Challenges of Lineage and Legitimacy in Contemporary Chinese Zhenyan," in a forthcoming book on Sino-Tibetan Buddhism, ed. Fabienne Jagou, title, publisher and pagination TBD.

[21] Chen Bing, "The Tantric Revival and its Reception in Modern China," in *Images of Tibet in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, ed. Monica Esposito, 2 vols. (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2008), 1.394.

[22] Gu Zhengli 顧正立, "Study on Shingon Buddhism of Guangmingwang Temple at Wuzhishan, Kaohsiung"高雄市五智山光明王寺之真言宗信仰研究," (MA thesis, Huafan University, 2012); Li Yongbin 李永斌, "Master Wu Light Esoteric Ideological Research 悟光法师密教思想研究," (MA thesis, Northwest University, 2011).

[23] Jonathan A. Silk states that, "Buddhist Studies as an umbrella term for the disinterested or non-apologetic inquiry into any aspect of Buddhism or Buddhist traditions generally refers to the modern, academic study of Buddhism in all forms." See Jonathan A. Silk, "Buddhist Studies," in *Encyclopedia of Buddhist Studies*, ed. Robert E. Buswell Jr. (New York: Macmillan Reference, 2004), 94.

Chinese Buddhist modernisms, there is a dearth of material on the nascent forms of Taiwanese Buddhist modernism that emerged during the first half of the twentieth century. Due to the fact that Taiwan's sovereignty oscillated between Japan and China during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the sculptors of this early form of Taiwanese Buddhist modernism were directly and simultaneously influenced by the forms of Buddhist modernism that were taking shape in both Japan and China. As Wuguang was directly responding to these Taiwanese modernist developments, this dissertation illuminates multiple facets of both disenchanted and reenchanted forms of Buddhist modernism that have remained outside the mainstream of scholarly attention.

Section I: Research Questions and Motivations

While conducting this study I have sought to resolve specific questions whose answers offer insight into a single, much larger question: how have magically-inclined, modernist East Asian clerics reacted to the earlier modernist demythologization and castigation of their religious practices? In other words, what happens when a tradition 'purified' from its 'mythical' elements reincorporates itself in the tension between its 'enchanted' past and 'scientific' present? Previous scholarly discussions on Asian religiosity have yet to address this question.

David McMahan, upon whose work I directly build, has limited his discussions on Buddhist modernist reenchantment to the Western 'mindfulness movement,' asserting that it is "derived from a hybridizing of Buddhist mindfulness with modes of consciousness derived in part from modern literary sensibilities that give new attention and valorization to the details of ordinary life."[24] This usage—which is applied to forms of Buddhism outside of this study's

[24] David L. McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 24. Also see his, article, "The Enchanted Secular: Buddhism and the Emergence of Transtraditional 'Spirituality,'" *The*

scope—has nothing to do with magical practices. In fact, it is unrelated to reenchanting *Buddhism*, as it is "ordinary life" that is being reenchanted *through* concepts rooted in Buddhist modernism. Michael Pye, Winston Davis and Katja Triplett—who have dealt with magic and modern Buddhism in East Asia—have focused on the persistence and survival of magic within 'popular Buddhism,' rather than clerical attempts to reclaim it.[25] The foci of these significant contributions, however, preclude their potential to bestow on us an understanding of how complex Buddhist doctrines related to, ontology, metaphysics, phenomenology and soteriology have been reinterpreted in light of the disenchanting hermeneutic of Buddhist modernism in order to reenchant the tradition. Their aims and foci lay elsewhere.

The only scholarly works of which I am aware of that dissect modern East Asian clerical interpretations of magic are Pamela Winfeld's article, "Curing with *Kaji*: Healing and Esoteric Empowerment in Japan" and Katja Triplett's chapter, "Healing Rituals in Contemporary Japanese Buddhism as Acts of Individual and Collective Purification."[26] While Winfeld's article discusses the Buddhist doctrines interpreted, her focus is not on science or reenchantment.

Eastern Buddhist 43, no. 1-2 (2012): 1-19. This same conceptualization of Buddhism as a tool to reenchant modern life is found in Jørn Borup, *Japanese Rinzai Zen Buddhism: Myōshinji, a living religion*, Numen Studies in the History of Religions, 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 188.

[25] See Michael Pye, "Rationality, Ritual and Life-shaping Decisions in Modern Japan," in *Japan and Asian Modernities*, ed. by Rein Raud (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 1-27; Michael Pye and Katja S. Triplett, "Religiöse Transaktionen: Rational oder Irrational?," in *Workshop Organisation und Ordnung der Japanischen Wirtschaft IV: Themenschwerpunkt: Wahrnehmung, Institutionenökonomik und Japanstudien*, eds. Werner Pascha and Cornelia Storz, Duisburger Arbeitspapiere Ostasienwissenschaften, 55 (Duisburg: Inst. für Ostasienwiss, 2004), 27–38; W. Davis, *Dojo*, 297-298.

[26] Katja S. Triplett, "Healing Rituals in Contemporary Japanese Buddhism as Acts of Individual and Collective Purification," in *Purification: Religious Transformations of Body and Mind*, eds. Gerhard M. Martin and Katja Triplett, T & T Clark Theology (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 107-117; Pamela D. Winfield, "Curing with *Kaji*: Healing and Esoteric Empowerment in Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 32, no. 1 (2005): 107-130. One figure who Triplett and Winfeld both discuss was a high-ranking Shingon priest named Oda Ryūkō 織田隆弘 (1913-1993). Oda embraced both science and magical aspects of Shingon esoteric rituals and published works explaining their harmony in both Japanese and English. See his book, *Kaji: Empowerment and Healing in Esoteric Buddhism* (Tokyo: Kineizan Shinjō-in Mitsumonkai, 1992). Oda is also discussed in Jason Ā. Josephson, "An Empowered World: Buddhist Medicine and the Potency of Prayer in Japan," in *Deus in Machina: Religion, Technology, and the Things in Between*, ed. Jeremy Stolow (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 117-141.

Triplett, who does touch upon science, frames her subject as a form of "fundamentalism" and thus—in my view—misses the mark.[27] Neither of these scholars closely read the writings of their subjects in order to discursively locate them. This dearth of scholarly attention is in stark contrast to the plethora of nuanced analyses of the philosophical contours of the disenchanting modernist hermeneutics of Japan and China. Scholarship on intellectually nuanced religious reenchantment is largely confined to the field of Western occulture.[28]

My approach and focus differs from previous scholarly treatments in that I explore an influential and erudite East Asian monk's polemical response to his predecessors' and colleagues' demythologization and demonization of magic. To answer my core research question—while not overreaching—I have sought to explore issues concerning Wuguang's life and its context as well as his ideology, sources, motivations and influence.

The core questions I will explore concerning Wuguang's life, context, ideology and sources include: how did Wuguang, an individual from a working class family in an isolated mountaintop agrarian village, encounter the wide array of religious, philosophical and scientific traditions that demonstrably influenced him? Why were his studies so eclectic? Why did he study the particular traditions that comprise this eclecticism? Which manifestations of disenchanted Buddhist modernism was he responding to? In what ways did Wuguang's approach both differ from and resemble those of his predecessors and contemporaries? Answering these questions will give us insight into not only Wuguang, but also into the disenchanting modernists to whom

[27] Triplett, "Healing Rituals in Contemporary Japanese Buddhism," 112.

[28] Recent influential examples include, Egil Asprem, *The Problem of Disenchantment: Scientific Naturalism and Esoteric Discourse, 1900-1939* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014), "The Disenchantment of Problems: Musings on a Cognitive Turn in Intellectual History," *Journal of Religion in Europe* 8 (2015): 305-320; Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy: Rejected Knowledge in Western Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

he was responding and the contours of nineteenth-twentieth century East Asian Buddhist discourse more broadly.

In seeking to understand Wuguang's motivations, I have analyzed his life from both etic and emic perspectives. Etically, I have sought to understand the external factors that produced this particular figure. This has been done in order to lay the groundwork for an emic understanding of what motivated Wuguang to 'revive' Zhenyan traditions, why he rejected the disenchanted form of Buddhism being popularly propagated, and why he chose to sophisticate magic.

Answering questions related to Wuguang's influence offers greater insight into how his reenchantment efforts have shaped the face of contemporary living East Asian religiosity. These questions include: how has the sect that Wuguang founded fared since his passing in the year 2000? Is Wuguang's influence limited to this sect's members, or is it discernible elsewhere? How have the individuals who he influenced praxiologically translated Wuguang's reenchantment of Buddhism into their living religiosity? The answers to these questions deepen our knowledge of the current situation of Taiwanese Buddhism and religiosity in the Chinese-speaking world.

This study's significance lies not only in its deceased subject, but in that subject's living heirs and their position within their Taiwanese—and increasingly international—context. To this end, I have sought to both account for and quantify Wuguang's impact, uncover the reasons people were drawn to him during his life, and continue to flock to his movement since his death. In order to appreciate this significance, I approach the movement that he founded as a New Religious Movement (NRM), while employing the Religious Economy Model (REM) as utilized by Rodney Stark, William Sims Bainbridge and like-minded sociologists of religion. These

scholars reject the 'secularization thesis' that predicts the decline or death of religion in the face of science and secularity, and instead hypothesize that "secularization stimulates religious innovation."[29] REM frames both religion and magic as 'products,' while treating religious organizations as 'suppliers,' and religious individuals as 'consumers.' As a deductive model for the global religious market, it is used to understand why new religions are born, and predict whether a religion will flourish or flounder. Rather than seeing secularization as heralding the death of religion, they "argue that secularization is a self-limiting process that begets its own religious reactions….As major religions adopt an increasingly vague and inactive conception of the supernatural, they will be replaced by religions offering more vigorous conceptions."[30] My utilization of REM attempts to identify the "vague and inactive conception of the supernatural" that made room for Wuguang within the religious marketplace, as well as why certain religious consumers find his teachings to be a more "vigorous conception."

Section II: Data Collection

I have employed multiple data collection methods in order to answer the research questions detailed above. The primary data that I have collected can roughly be categorized as: historical, textual, material, doctrinal, ritualistic and anthropological. These have all been further enriched through secondary sources.

Much of my data has been collected by conducting long-term, onsite fieldwork at multiple locations throughout Taiwan from 2011-2015. I have conducted numerous semi-structured interviews, executed participant observation and collected examples of religious

[29] William S. Bainbridge and Rodney Stark, "Church and Cult in Canada," *The Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers canadiens de sociologie,* vol. 7, no. 4 (1982): 353.

[30] Ibid, 352.

material culture at relevant sites. At the headquarters of Wuguang's sect, I have additionally engaged in targeted data collection in the form of questionnaires that I handed out to specific members. Moreover, from August, 2011 to June 2013 I attended the priestly ordination class of an offshoot of Wuguang's sect that included not only instruction, but required ritual performance.[31] As my fieldwork involved live human subjects, I have paid special attention to the ethical issues of issues of informed consent, confidentiality and doing no harm.[32] I have gathered historical data through fieldwork at other relevant religious sites, and through news broadcasts and gazetteers.

Wuguang's contribution to modern Buddhist discourse is most clearly encapsulated in his writings. It is here that we find the ways in which he built upon or diverged entirely from his predecessors and contemporaries. Thus, I have undertaken an extensive reading of all his available works. I began at the very beginning of his writing career and proceeded to move forward chronologically. This was done in order to understand how his ideology evolved

[31] Instruction was centered on a soteriological epistemological transformation based on Zhenyan/Shingon phenomenology (see Chapter 5). The ritual requirements consisted of preliminary esoteric practices that had to be performed twenty eight times and the Quadrilateral Cultivation 四度加行 whose four rituals had to be practiced 108 times. All rituals were performed in full religious garb at the sect's headquarters (see Chapter 9).

[32] Informed consent as defined by standard anthropological fieldwork guidelines is a process that is "dynamic and continuous; the process should be initiated in the project design and continue through implementation by way of dialogue and negotiation with those studied," American Anthropological Association, *Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association* (NP: American Anthropological Association, 2009), Section A.4. Found on the American Anthropological Association website, "Professional Ethics," www.aaanet.org/cmtes/ethics/Ethics-Resources.cfm (accessed May 22, 2013). In order to uphold this standard, I made sure to continually receive both implicit and explicit informed consent from the leadership and members of the religious communities in which I conducted fieldwork. This was achieved by presenting myself, first and foremost, as a PhD candidate writing a dissertation focused on their religious movements' history, ideology, practices, demographics and sociological contexts. I was also quite careful in making sure my presence was actually welcomed to whatever event I attended by either waiting for an invitation or first informing those concerned of my intentions to participate rather than simply showing up unannounced. Additionally, I made it clear that any and all data I collect via posing questions, taking pictures or recordings and attending rituals were solely for the purpose of research and may very well in fact be included in my dissertation and future publications. Implicit consent was obtained by being invited to attend and participate in religious functions. Explicit consent was received verbally in front of witnesses. When conducting semi-structured interviews, I kept all media devices such as voice recorders in sight and only utilized them if given explicit permission by the interviewee. Unless given explicit permission, the anonymity of all individuals has been safeguarded through omission of their real names and possible identity markers.

throughout his lifetime. To my surprise, I discovered that—in terms of magic—there was no significant change at all.[33] From his earliest works to his last sermons, his doctrines revolved around harmonizing magic and modernity. In addition to uncovering this consistency, I have elucidated Wuguang's hermeneutical methodology by scrutinizing his writings through a discriminating lens focused on orthopraxic, doctrinal and thematic minutiae in order to untangle the multifarious threads he used to weave his doctrines.

Section III: Background and Terminology

The research questions posited above are interlinked with three concepts central to this study, Buddhist modernism, magic and disenchantment/reenchantment, as well as the more peripheral issue of Buddhist sectarianism. All of these issues are inseparable from the historical context that produced Wuguang. Thus, before outlining this dissertation's structure I have defined these four terms while explaining their relevant histories.

Buddhist Modernism: From Disenchantment to Reenchantment

David McMahan has defined 'Buddhist modernism' as "not all Buddhism that happens to exist in the modern era but, rather, forms of Buddhism that have emerged out of an engagement with the dominant cultural and intellectual forces of modernity."[34] Buddhist modernism is not a static and well-demarcated phenomenon but "a dynamic, complex, and plural set of historical

[33] There is a single exception. Wuguang's book on Chan/Zen, *Speaking of Chan*, interprets magical phenomena related to ghosts and other noncoporeal entities via a psychologizing hermeneutic. As this interpretation is inconsistent with Wuguang's writings that came both before and after it was published, I have concluded that it does not represent a change in Wuguang's views. Its peculiarity is easily explained by the fact that it is a book on Chan/Zen and the form of Chan/Zen that Wuguang was familiar with was a disenchanted form influenced by both Japanese and Chinese forms of Buddhist modernism that Wuguang studied whilst a monk at a modernist monastery. The development of this nascent form of Taiwanese Buddhist modernism is dealt with at great length in the next chapter. Wuguang's exposure thereto is discussed in Chapter 2.

[34] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 6.

processes with loose bonds and fuzzy boundaries."[35] Nevertheless, there is a common interpretive trope that the architects of Buddhist modernism used in order to harmonize their religion with modernity that McMahan identified as 'demythologization.'[36] McMahan defines demythologization as "the process of attempting to extract—or more accurately, to reconstruct—meanings that will be viable within the context of modern worldviews from teachings embedded in ancient worldviews. In order to transpose such themes into a modern key, elements that are incompatible with modernity are relegated to 'myth' and shorn of literal truth-value."[37] Things deemed "incompatible with modernity" of which McMahan speaks are what we would refer to as the 'fantastical' or 'magical' and include things such as wonder-working, divination and accounts of other realms.

Demythologization is not a strictly Buddhist phenomenon. This term is a translation of the German *Entmythologisierung*, a popular modernist Christian hermeneutic associated with Rudolf K. Bultmann (1884-1976). Bultmann distinguished the mythological aspects of the New Testament from the religion's essential teachings, which he referred to as *Kerygma*, and asserted that the former are incompatible with a modern and scientific worldview, and must therefore be reinterpreted as ahistorical and symbolic.[38] The similarities between Bultmann's demythologization and the hermeneutic of Buddhist modernism have already been noted by

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[35] Ibid.

[36] McMahan identifies two additional aspects that characterize Buddhist modernism, 'detraditionalization' and 'psychologization.' He defines detraditionalization as "the modernist tendency to evaluate reason, experience, and intuition over tradition and to assert the freedom to reject, adopt or reinterpret traditional beliefs and practices on the basis of individual evaluation." Concerning psychologization he states that it presents "Buddhism as an ethical psychology, deemphasizing ritual and religious elements." See ibid, 43 and 52. However, it is obvious that both of these are themselves secondary outcrops of the primal interpretive ploy of demythologization. Detraditionalization is predicated on a loss of religious authority, an authority built upon a religious mythos (see below, 'Methodology') and psychologization is nothing more than reinterpreting the magical and mythological through a psychologized—and disenchanted—worldview. These issues are discussed in greater detail in this dissertation's final chapter.

[37] Ibid, 6 and 46.

[38] See Rudolf K. Bultmann, "New Testament and Theology," in *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate*, ed. Hans W. Bartsch (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row Publishers, 1961), 1-44.

scholars.[39] Less well-known is the fact that the term demythologization is used as a translation for Max Weber's (1864-1920) term '*die Entzauberung der Welt*' which is usually translated as the 'disenchantment of the world'[40] from Weber's "Science as a Vocation."[41] Disenchantment is a philosophical rubric used to analyze the transformative quality of modernity. Weber's word which is translated as both 'demythologization' and 'disenchantment'—'*Entzauberung*'—is a composite formed from the word *Zauber*[42] meaning 'magical' (*magische*).[43] In front of *Zauber*, Weber attached the German prefix *ent*- which connotes a transformation that negates an immediately former condition and is similar to the English prefixes *de*- and *dis*-. Thus, to 'demythologize' or 'disenchant' something is to rob it of its previously possessed magic.[44] Weber referred to this 'magic' as 'mysterious incalculable forces' (*geheimnisvollen unberechenbaren Mächte*)[45] and proclaimed that to believe in them in the modern era required one to make an 'intellectual sacrifice' (*opfer des intellekts*).[46]

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[39] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 46-50; James M. Shields, "Awakening between Science, Art and Ethics: Variations of Japanese Buddhist Modernism, 1890–1945," in *Rethinking Japanese Modernism*, ed. Roy Starrs, (Leiden: Global Oriental (Brill), 2012), 111.

[40] For a summary of translations of *entzauberung* as 'demythologization,' see See Bo Elling Bo, *Rationality and the Environment Decision-making in Environmental Politics and Assessment* (London: Earthscan, 2008), 167 note 19.

[41] The English version of Weber's work that I am working from is, Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," *Daedalus* 87, no. 1, Science and the Modern World View (1958): 111-134.

[42] Philip Fisher, *Wonder, the Rainbow, and the Aesthetics of Rare Experiences* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 83.

[43] This is according to *zauber*'s use as a noun meaning "magical acts" (*magische Handlungi*), "magical means" (*magisches Mittel*) and "magical effects" (*magische Wirkung*). "*Zauber, der*," *Duden Online*, http://www.duden.de/rechtschreibung/Zauber (accessed Oct. 30, 2015).

[44] Although Weberian disenchantment is often used as a passive and sociological construct, Weber also used it as a prerogative. Jeffrey Green has explained that Weber saw disenchantment as an "ethical necessity" and "a call to recognize that the moral and spiritual direction previously understood to be available is no longer available—or, that such direction was never available." See Jeffrey E. Green, "Two Meanings of Disenchantment: Sociological Condition vs. Philosophical Act—Reassessing Max Weber's Thesis of the Disenchantment of the World," *Philosophy and Theology* 17, no. 1-2 (2005): 60.

[45] Weber, "Science as Vocation," 117. Also see Egil Asprem, "The Problem of Disenchantment: Scientific Naturalism and Esoteric Discourse, 1900-1939" (PhD diss, University of Amsterdam, 2013), 13 and 20-21. It should be noted that the German term '*unberechenbaren*' also translates as 'unpredictable.' '*unberechenbaren*,' *Duden Online*, http://www.duden.de/suchen/dudenonline/unberechenbaren

[46] Weber, "Science as Vocation," 133.

Within the nineteenth-twentieth century East Asian Buddhist modernist context of this dissertation, many magical phenomena were not only "shorn of literal truth-value" through the disenchanting hermeneutic of demythologization, but were in fact demonized, relegated to the category of 'superstition' and purged from Buddhism by both the pen and the sword. This occurred during the Meiji Buddhist Revival and Buddhist Revival in China.[47] These revivals were born out of crises. Japan and China were threatened by Euro-American powers who, with their advanced technology, expanded deep into Asia with colonial zeal. In order to curb Western expansionism, the Japanese and Chinese literati attempted to modernize their respective societies. To do so, they adopted Western pedagogical methodology[48] and intellectual categories. While applying these categories—namely the secular-religious-superstitious trinary—the Japanese and Chinese elite sought to expunge 'superstition' from their cultures. This purge entailed the illegalization of multiple magical practices commonplace in various forms of folk religion and Daoism related to divination, spirit communication and faith healing.[49]

This disenchantment threatened the survival of Buddhism in both Japan and China. Her temples were ransacked, idols smashed, treasuries plundered, clerics defrocked, practices mocked and ideologies scoffed at. In both places the same key criticisms were applied to

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[47] It must be noted that Japan and China were not the only locations to produce an early form of Buddhist modernism during a Buddhist revival. In fact, the very term 'Buddhist modernism' is a later incarnation of the term 'Protestant Buddhism' coined by Richard Gombrich to refer to similar developments that took place in Sri Lanka. See Richard F. Gombrich and Gananath Obeyesekere, *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990; reprint; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1990), 6-7 and the sources cited there.

[48] See Margaret Mehl, *Private Academies of Chinese Learning in Meiji Japan: The Decline and Transformation of the Kangaku Juku*, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Monograph, 92 (Copenhagen: Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Press; London: Taylor & Francis, 2003), 15-20; William T. Rowe, *China's Last Empire: The Great Qing* (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 260.

[49] See Paul R, Katz, "'Superstition' and its Discontents – On the Impact of Temple Destruction Campaigns in China, 1898-1948" (paper presented at the "International Conference on Sinology," Taipei, 2013). Online: https://www.academia.edu/6686676/_Superstition_and_its_Discontents_On_the_Impact_of_Temple_Destruction_Campaigns_in_China_1898-1948 (accessed Jan. 12, 2016). Also see Josephson, *The Invention of Religion*, 182-201.

Buddhism: it is otherworldly, parasitic, superstitious and backwards. Each one of these characteristics were seen as a threat to the Japanese and Chinese literati who believed that their respective society's survival rested upon the possibility of catching up with the West. These onslaughts catalyzed a number of Buddhist thinkers to reformulate their religion and restructure the *saṃgha*. To do so, they attempted to distance Buddhism from things deemed 'superstitious'—e.g. 'magic'—and present Buddhism as a scientifically compatible and philosophically rational religion. This posed a great challenge as within Buddhism there are depictions of miracles, multiple-universes, rebirth, ghosts and other similarly unverifiable phenomena. Due to their lack of verifiability, believing in them is contrary to an empirical, scientific worldview and demands one to make a Weberian intellectual sacrifice. Within these East Asian contexts, such a sacrifice was a price far beyond what the literati would pay. This meant that securing Buddhism's East Asian future demanded its reformulation. As the literati had embraced modern Western philosophy and modern science, it was this to which Buddhism had to be reconciled. Two of the most famous Japanese and Chinese Buddhist modernists to take on this task were Inoue Enryō 井上 円了 (b. Inoue Kishimaru 井上岸丸; 1858-1919) and Taixu 太虚 (secular name Lu Peilin 呂沛林; 1890-1947), whose contexts and approaches I will now briefly discuss.

Inoue Enryō and the Meiji Buddhist Revival

The Meiji Restoration 明治維新 (1868-1912) was a time of great upheaval for Japanese society characterized by zealous nationalism. In a time-span of less than half a century Japan was transformed from a feudal society based on a rigidly tiered caste system into a modern nation-state with a Western-based system of education ruled by a constitutional monarchy. This restoration was intended to be a new start for the country that would transform her into a modern

nation-state capable of competing with Euro-American powers. This was accomplished by mimicking the Western powers the Japanese elite felt threatened by. Before the Meiji, Westerners had been perceived as 'barbarians' *ban* 蠻 (Chn. *man*). This changed during the Meiji, when these barbarians were then considered the bearers of 'enlightened civilization,' to be emulated.[50] This mimicry entailed adopting Western dress, food, pedagogy and intellectual categories.

Buddhism, which had enjoyed governmental sponsorship during the preceding Edo Period (also called the Tokugawa Period; 1603-1868), came under attack. In addition to the above-mentioned criticisms that were leveled against Buddhism, her Indian origins—as well as Chinese provenance—became a source of nationalistic derision.[51] This derision can be understood within the context of Japan's 'Exiting Asia Ideology' 脱亜論 that sought to separate the Japanese 'race' from other 'Asian races' and claim superiority over them.[52] As Buddhism originated in India and traveled to Japan via China—two countries from which the Japanese literati were attempting to detach themselves—many of the literati believed that it should be discarded during Japan's exit from Asia. In 1868, the Japanese government issued the 'Separation of kami and buddhas Campaign' 神佛分離, which led to the 'Abolish Buddhism and destroy Śākyamuni Campaign' 廃佛毀釋, during which Buddhist clergy were forcibly defrocked and Buddhist temples, art and treasures expropriated, sometimes through violence.[53] This was

[50] Masako N. Racel, *Finding their Place in the World: Meiji Intellectuals and the Japanese Construction of an East-West Binary, 1868-1912* (PhD diss, Georgia State University, 2011), 1.

[51] Claudia Marra, "Haibutsu Kishaku," *Journal of Nagasaki University of Foreign* Studies 18 (2014): 175. Online: http://id.nii.ac.jp/1165/00000069/ (accessed Jan. 12, 2016).

[52] Alberto La Spada, "From Nation-states to Nation-regions: The Evolution of National Identities Facing the Dawn of the Global Era," (BA thesis, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, 2014), 67-68. Online: http://hdl.handle.net/10579/4484 (accessed Jan. 13, 2016).

[53] See Allan G. Grapard, "Japan's Ignored Cultural Revolution: The Separation of Shinto and Buddhist Divinities in Meiji ('*Shimbutsu Bunri'*) and a Case Study: Tōnomine," *History of Religions* 23, no. 3 (1984): 240-265.

done to create a clear demarcation between the 'foreign' religion of Buddhism and native Shintō 神道, the latter which was promoted as a tool of national progress.[54]

These attacks on Buddhism motivated Japanese Buddhists such as Inoue to reform their religion by harmonizing it with science, modern philosophy and framing it as 'Japanese.' Inoue was the first Buddhist priest to gain admittance to the Imperial Tōkyō University.[55] He rejected 'magical Buddhism'[56] 祈禱佛教 and sought to disenchant Japanese religion by embarking upon his 'Preternatural Studies' 妖怪學. This entailed Inoue investigating Japanese forms of folk religion in order "to rationally explain away supernatural beliefs so that Japan could become a modern nation-state competitive with the West."[57] This investigation included topics such as

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[54] In order to accomplish this, the Meiji government began a process of what John Breen and Mark Teuween have called the "Shintōization" of myths and practices centered on *kami* and their shrines. These preexisting shrines—as well as their deities and the practices that took place there—had hitherto been decentralized. Additionally, unlike Buddhism which boasts a particular canon with rules and regulations, there was no single unifying concept that united these different shrine-based traditions into a distinct religious tradition. Therefore, boundaries had to be drawn for the emerging 'Shintō' to become an individual phenomenon that could be contradistinguished from others. See John Breen and Mark Teeuwen, *A New History of Shinto* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 21-23. The demarcation between Shintō and Buddhism posed a number of challenges. First was the relationship that had existed between Buddhism and native shrine practices for over a thousand years. According to what has been called the 'synchronization of kami and buddhas' 神佛習合, Shintō and Buddhist deities were considered largely interchangeable. This engendered both local shrine and Buddhist deities with a dual-personality of sorts where each was simultaneously perceived to have a Shintō and Buddhist identity. Due to this paradigm, Buddhist temples and Shintō shrines alike contained statues of the other's deities and the liturgy of each contained supplications and praises to both. This interchangeability is based on the doctrine of 'original substance, manifest traces' 本地垂逆, where the 'original substance' is considered to be the same underlying material that both the *kami* and buddhas are composed of. For a full length volume comprised of articles on this paradigm see Mark Teewuen and Fabio Rambelli eds, *Buddhas and Kami in Japan: Honji Suijaku as a Combinatory Paradigm* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003). The construction of Shintō as a unified religion distinguishable from Buddhism was largely fueld by Japanese nationalism and the need to transform the country into a modern nation. To accomplish this holistic societal overhaul, central authority had to be strengthened. Power held by the feudal lords was handed over to the emperor in a process encapsulated by the slogan 'Restore the Monarchy' 王政復古. Shintō was seen as useful in promoting the new-found power of the emperor, partly because his right to rule was justified by his being a descendant of the sun goddess Amaterasu 天照. Thus, constructing a unified, state-controlled Shintō essentially meant strengthening the visibility of the Emperor and the birth of this 'religion' was a part of the Meiji propaganda machine.

[55] Jason Ā. Josephson, "When Buddhism Became a "Religion': Religion and Superstition in the Writings of Inoue Enryō," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 33, no. 1 (2006): 150.

[56] Shields, "Awakening between Science, Art and Ethics," 114.

[57] Michael D. Foster, *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 27.

ghosts, monsters and bouts of insanity. His methodology entailed a demythologization through psychologization of the preternatural. He concluded that the majority of magical accounts were nothing more than humans misinterpreting the world due to their own ignorance.[58] In order to present Buddhism as not only compatible with—but an invaluable tool for—Japan's modernization efforts, he sought to present Buddhism as superior to Western philosophy,[59] and make it more socially engaged by encouraging Buddhists to establish hospitals, charities and educational institutions.[60] His strategy to market Buddhism to the Meiji elite is encapsulated by the motto he created, 'Defend the Nation and Love the Truth' 護國愛理.[61] It was through 'loving the truth' that the nation could be defended. That truth, according to Inoue, was Buddhism itself. Inoue's Buddhism, however, was framed as a particularly 'Japanese' Buddhism—distinguishable from 'inferior' forms of Buddhism such as 'Chinese Buddhism'[62]—that reflected the 'Spirit of Japan' 本精神.[63] The efforts of reformers like Inoue proved successful. Not only was Buddhism once again accepted in Meiji Japan, but it was seen as a useful tool towards its modernization efforts. These efforts were not limited to Japan's borders, but—in emulation of Western

[58] Ibid, 83. For a discussion on Inoue's mystery studies and the typologies he employed see Miura Setsuo, "Inoue Enryo's Mystery Studies," *International Inoue Enryo Research* 2 (2014):127-128. Online: https://www.toyo.acjpluploaded/attachmenll236l.pdf (accessed Jan. 13, 2016).

[59] Inoue's engagements with Western Philosophy are discussed in Chapter 3.

[60] Thomas D. DuBois, *Religion and the Making of Modern East Asia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 181.

[61] See Kathleen M. Staggs, "'Defend the Nation and Love the Truth': Inoue Enryō and the Revival of Meiji Buddhism," *Monumenta Nipponica* 38, no. 3 (1983): 254.

[62] It should be noted that the term 'Chinese Buddhism' 中國佛教 was originally a Europen concept that framed Chinese forms of Buddhism as a polluted amalgamation of Indian Buddhist and native Chinese religious traditions. See Martino Dibeltulo, "The Revival of Tantrism: Tibetan Buddhism and Modern China" (PhD diss, University of Michigan, 2015), 4.

[63] Gereon Kopf, "The Modern Buddhism of Inoue Enryō," *International Inoue Enryo Research* 1 (2013): 26-27. Online: https://www.toyo.ac.jp/uploaded/attachment/12672.pdf (accessed Jan. 13, 2016).

imperialist nations—included colonial expansionism, a fact reflected in the overseas espionage conducted by Japanese Buddhist missionaries.[64]

Taixu and the Buddhist Revival in China

The years 1839-1942 have been referred to as 'China's Century of Humiliation' 百年國恥.[65] China's humiliation was a product of several conflicts with multiple Western powers as well as Japan. Just as in Japan, during the last decades of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), there was a sense of threat posed by Western expansion. However, unlike Japan which had yet to engage a Western nation-state in a military conflict, China's defeat at the hands of Western powers during the First (1839-1842) and Second (1856-1860) Opium Wars showcased to the world the Qing Empire's inability to thwart Western encroachment. This triggered widespread calls for modernization.

Modernization was centered on education and, at first, was very detrimental to Buddhism. In 1898, the Qing government implemented the 'Using Temple Property to Support Schools' 廟產興學 policy that appropriated monastic property to build its first budding modern school system. This called for the confiscation of *all* temples within China—save for those that performed imperial sacrifices.[66] However, these wide scale confiscations did not truly begin until 1904, two years after the Qing was able to establish China's first-ever public school system.[67]

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[64] See James Boyd, "Undercover Acolytes: Honganji, the Japanese Army, and Intelligence-Gathering Operations," *Journal of Religious History* 37, no. 2 (2013): 185-205.

[65] In both the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC), there have been special remembrance 'Days of Humiliation' practiced to commemorate specific events that occurred throughout this time. See David Scott, *China and the International System, 1840–1949: Power, Presence, and Perceptions in a Century of Humiliation* (New York: State University of New Yotk Press, 2008), 46, 154, 197, 207, 234 and 297.

[66] Vincent Goossaert, "1898: The Beginning of the End for Chinese Religion?" *Journal of Asian Studies* 65 (2006): 307.

[67] Glen Peterson and Ruth Hayhoe, Introduction to *Education, Culture, and Identity in Twentieth-century China*, eds. Glen Peterson et al. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001; reprint, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 1.

Then, led by Western-educated Chinese elite, Buddhist—and even Daoist—religious practices began to be targeted as forms of backwards superstition, and many of the properties belonging to these religious institutions were seized. This marked the beginning of a wave of temple destruction campaigns that would occasionally swell throughout the Qing Dynasty, the Republican period (1912-1949) and under the Communist PRC.[68] The anti-superstition campaigns involved the Chinese adopting the Western category of 'religion' from Japan, and applying it to their own traditions. The Chinese literati, who had been influenced by Jesuit missionaries, imposed Abrahamic concepts upon Asian religions and labeled Buddhism as a form of 'idolatry.'[69] This notion then spread amongst the Chinese populace.

As the attacks on Buddhism in China mirrored those in Japan, it is not surprising that the Chinese Buddhists first looked to Japanese Buddhist modernism for inspiration. This reliance can be seen in the efforts of Taixu, who began his reformist career as a Japanophile.[70] After traveling to Japan he believed that the Japanese Buddhists' approach to modernization as propagated by Inoue and others had proven itself to be successful and should be adopted in China. In an effort to distinguish Buddhism from superstition and thereby, save it from persecution, Taixu attempted to prove that Buddhism was entirely compatible with modernity. Taixu's form of Buddhist modernism was propagated in two educational institutions, the Wuchang Buddhist Academy 武昌佛學院 in Hubei Province's 湖北省 capital city, Wuhan 武漢 and the Nanputuo Buddhist Academy 南普陀佛學院 in Amoy (Xiamen) 廈門. These academies were revolutionary for their time as they took modern Western universities as their pedagogical

[68] See P. Katz, "'Superstition' and its Discontents.'"

[69] Vincent Goossaert and David A. Palmer, *The Religious Question in Modern China* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 53-55.

[70] Fumihiko Sueki, "Chinese Buddhism and the Anti-Japan War," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 37, no. 1 (2010): 12.

model.[71] Similarly to the Japanese reformers, Taixu encouraged Buddhists to involve themselves in charitable social engagement.[72]

Like many great men whose visions are not appreciated in their time, Taixu's plan for a new, worldly-oriented Buddhism would not be realized in his homeland nor during his lifespan. As discussed in Chapter 1, it was not until after those whom Taixu had influenced made their ways across the Taiwan Strait that the ideological seeds he had planted would sprout to fruition.

Reenchanted Buddhist Modernism

The scientifically compatible, rational, socially engaged forms of Buddhism devoid of magic as propagated by these and like-minded reformers represent but one side of Buddhist modernism—'disenchanted Buddhist modernism.' 'Reenchanted Buddhist modernism' represents forms of Buddhism whose architects have harmonized magic with modernity in counter-reaction to disenchanted Buddhist modernism. The modernizing efforts of the early Buddhist modernists that entailed demythologization spurred magically inclined Buddhist modernists to remythologize what had been "shorn of literal truth-value" and expelled to the realm of 'superstition.' These reenchanted responses to disenchanted Buddhist modernism do not represent conservative, regressive or fundamentalist developments aiming to restore Buddhism to a premodern state. Instead, they employ the same techniques the disenchanting Buddhist

[71] Yu Xue, *Buddhism, War, and Nationalism: Chinese Monks in the Struggle against Japanese Aggressions, 1931-1945*, East Asia: History, Politics, Sociology, Culture (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 38-39.

[72] Don A. Pittman, *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 95. Also see Holmes Welch, *The Buddhist Revival in China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 121-131.

modernists had used to demythologize the tradition in order to remythologize it. Thus, reenchanting Buddhist modernists reject neither modernity nor magic—they embrace both.[73]

Wuguang was one such Buddhist modernist who, in response to his predecessors' demythologizing the fantastical or deeming it superstitious, was inspired to sophisticate it. To do so, Wuguang crafted a unique 'theory of everything' (TOE). A TOE is "a theory that provides a unified description of all known types of elementary particles, all known forces in the universe, and the origin and evolution of the universe."[74] Despite the fact that the term TOE is associated with scientific—rather than religious—speculation, it is an appropriate characterization of Wuguang's doctrines. This is because he used his TOE to explain the nature and origins of all phenomena within the universe. Moreover, science—in addition to religious and philosophical concepts—was a vital component of Wuguang's TOE. Were it not for Wuguang's use of science to construct his TOE, it would be entirely unremarkable and could not be considered a form of Buddhist modernism. Wuguang fashioned his TOE in order to rescue 'magic' from the category of 'superstition' by placing it within the benign category of 'religion.'

As I will demonstrate, the exact practices and beliefs that the disenchanting Buddhist modernists deemed 'superstitious' were the exact ones that Wuguang's doctrines were aimed at redeeming, and later became the foundational elements of his disciples' religious practices. Moreover, Wuguang's popularity can be attributed to the fact that he offered religionists from

[73] It must be noted that my charactarization of reenchanted Buddhist modernism is similar to the resurgence of supernaturalism in Thai religiosities that Peter Jackson refers to as 'postmodern Buddhism.' See Peter A. Jackson, "The Enchanting Spirit of Thai Capitalism: The Cult of Luang Phor Khoon and the Post-modernization of Thai Buddhism," *South East Asia Research*, vol. 7, no. 1 (1999): 5-60.

[74] John Daintith, "Theory of everything," in *A Dictionary of Physics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009; 6th edition, 2014). Online: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199233991.001.0001/acref-9780199233991-e-3048 (accessed Feb. 20, 2016).

traditional Chinese backgrounds a way to harmonize the faiths of their ancestors with their modernized present.

'Magic'

Although reified in Western intellectual circles as "*sui generis*,"[75] even within Western contexts "there is no unanimously agreed academic definition of 'magic,' nor any shared theory or theoretical language — and apparently not even any agreement on the range or type of actions, events, thoughts or objects covered by the category."[76] Within the East Asian context of this study, 'magic' is an even more ambiguous creature. There is no Classical Chinese equivalent for the term 'magic,'[77] and the majority of Sino-Japanese terms that are currently directly translated into English as 'magic' include the character 'demon' 魔. Within Buddhist texts this character is often used to refer to Māra, the demon king who tempted Śākyamuni Buddha as he sat beneath the Bodhi Tree. Thus, it would seem within an East Asian, particularly Buddhist, context that 'magic' would be something entirely negative. This, however, is in fact not the case as 'magic' as a phenomenon separable from 'religion' is a Western import and an entirely Christian construct[78] and the Japanese appropriation thereof was highly influenced by Weber.[79] As noted, within the context of this study 'magic' did not did not represent a distinct typological category. It was magic's liminality that rendered her vulnerable to being exiled to the category of 'superstition' by disenchanting Buddhist modernists, as well as what made it possible for

[75] Hanegraaff, "Magic," 397 and 404.

[76] Bernd-Christian Otto and Michael Stausberg, "General Introduction," to *Defining Magic: A Reader*, eds. Bernd-Christian Otto and Michael Stausberg, Critical Categories in the Study of Religion (Sheffield, UK: Equinox Publishing, 2013), 1.

[77] Gil Raz, *The Emergence of Daoism: Creation of Tradition* (Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2012), 129.

[78] W. Davis, *Dojo*, 210. For an overview of the wider evolution of the definitions of 'magic' see Michael D. Bailey, "The Meanings of Magic," *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* 1, no. 1 (2006): 1-23; Hendrik S. Versnel, "Some Reflections on the Relationship Magic-Religion," *Numen* 38, fasc. 2 (1991): 177-197.

[79] Covell, *Japanese Temple Buddhism*, 12-13.

reenchanting Buddhist modernists to reclaim her therefrom. This typological ambiguity demands that we must establish what East Asian 'magic' is before we analyze how and why Wuguang sophisticated it.

This study's limited focus on Wuguang's reenchanting Buddhism precludes lengthily comparing Western and Eastern notions of 'magic,' and the fact that Wuguang solely navigated the Sino-Japanese appropriated secular-religious-superstitious trinary rather than its Western predecessor renders such a comparison unnecessary. Moreover, the most convincing attempts to define 'magic' are Western-centric, and therefore ill-suited for this study's purposes.[80] I have therefore analyzed the practices that Wuguang sophisticated as well as the terms he used to describe them by relying upon the definition articulated by Stephen Covell in his work on the 'rejection of magic' in modern Japan, and employed the distinction between 'religion' and 'magic' penned by Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge to examine the sociological significance of Wuguang's religious movement. Covell defines 'magic' as "the utilization of supernatural entities or powers to bring about an effect, or the belief systems associated with such acts."[81] The core terms that Wuguang used to denote 'magic'—'spirit-permeation' *shentong* 神通 and 'mediumship' *wushu* 巫術—are analyzed in Chapter 3. Other practices and beliefs that Wuguang spoke of I cite that are covered by Covell's definition relate to: apotropaic devices, incantations, curses, supernatural capabilities, Daoist immortality practices, spirit-communication, empowerment and astrology (see figure 1). Covell's definition serves our

[80] I have not utilized the seven definitions of 'magic' listed by Wouter Hanegraaff (see note 3) because the practices discussed in this study—as well as Wuguang's personal understanding and public explanation thereof—transverse the boundaries of a number of the definitions detailed by Hanegraaff. Hanegraaff himself states that his list is not exhaustive.

[81] Covell, *Japanese Temple Buddhism*, 12. Covell's definition is based on the one found in Shimazono Susmu, "Religious Influences on Japan's Modernization," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 8, nos. 3-4 (1981): 213.

purposes, for it encompasses the divinatory, spiritualist, accursed and healing practices labeled as 'superstitious' by disenchanting Buddhist modernists and later sophisticated by Wuguang.

Magical Terms Used by Wuguang	
Apotropaic Magic	
fu 符	Ornamental, edible and vestural objects
fu zhou fa 符咒法	Apotropaic methods
hong fu 紅符	Edible talisman
zhou shui 咒水	'Holy water,' (alternatively *jiachi shui* 加持水)
xiandan miaoyao 仙丹妙藥	Miraculous cure, also *xiandan ziliao* 仙丹治療
Incantations	
zhou 咒	'Incantation,' 'mantra,' and 'dhāraṇī'
Curses	
fuzixian 符仔仙	Taboo folk rites
gudu 蠱毒	Poisonous curse
Supernatural Capabilities	
hufeng huanyu 呼風喚雨	Controlling the weather
chengfeng 乘風	Riding the wind
qianli yan 千里眼	Clairvoyance
shunfeng er 順風耳	Clairaudience
lingyan 靈眼	Spirit-eyes, also *yinyan* 陰眼
Daoist Immortality Practices	
liandan 煉丹	Refining the elixir
xianjia miaojue 仙家妙訣	Miraculous alchemical immortality practices
tuna 吐納	Transcendent breath practices
yangshen 養神	Nourishing the spirit
Spirit-Communication	
wenshen 問神	Asking a god
fushen 附身	Possession and intentional spirit-invocation
ling shizhe 令死者	Commanding the dead
Empowerment	
jiachi 加持	Empowerment, or translation of *adhiṣṭhāna*
Astrological	
xingdu haohuai 星度好壞	Astrological auspiciousness and inauspiciousness

Figure 1: Terminology Wuguang used to describe magical practices.

Stark and Bainbridge distinguish magic from religion by stating that, "magic does not concern itself with the meaning of the universe, but only with the manipulation of the universe for specific goals…magic deals in relatively specific compensators, and religion always includes the most general compensators."[82] While this distinction is doctrinally problematic—for as we will see, Wuguang viewed magic and religion as one[83]—it is sociologically applicable because it enables us to comprehend both why and how Wuguang's sophistication became popular.

As I will demonstrate, Wuguang wished to do for 'magic' what the disenchanting Buddhist modernists did for Buddhism—reformulate "meanings that will be viable within the context of modern worldviews."[84] However, rather than shorning them of their "literal truth value" or relegating them to 'myth'[85] by disenchanting Buddhism, he reenchanted the tradition by explaining magic in terms of modern philosophy and science.

Buddhist 'Schools' and 'Lineages'

In addition to Buddhist modernism, reenchantment and magic, there is another issue that, although peripheral, runs throughout this dissertation: East Asian religious 'sectarian consciousness' 宗統意識. As mentioned above, Wuguang's claim to fame is that he resurrected a 'school' of esoteric Buddhism. Appreciating why this bestowed Wuguang with such fame, as well as what this endeavor entailed, requires an understanding of contemporary Taiwanese

[82] Rodney Stark and William S. Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival, and Cult Formation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 30. I have relied on this earlier distinction rather than the more detailed one found in Stark, "Reconceptualizing Religion, Magic, and Science," for I do not agree with his assertion that "Magic is limited to impersonal conceptions of the supernatural," and his claim that "Compulsion of spiritual entities remains within the realm of magic, but exchanges with the Gods (which imply rapport) shifts the activity into the realm of religion," 109-110.

[83] See Chapter 3.

[84] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 6.

[85] Ibid, 46.

Buddhist sectarian consciousness in general and esoteric Buddhist religious authority in particular.

Taiwanese Buddhist sectarian consciousness has been greatly influenced by relatively rigid Japanese Buddhist denominational boundaries that solidified during the Tokugawa Period.[86] Although the neatly organized boundaries that this framework offers have never reflected common perception and are in fact a product of East Asian appropriations of Western religious boundaries, they have shaped both religionist and scholarly understandings of Buddhist sectarianism.[87] These boundaries are articulated via the terms 'school' 宗 (Chn. *zong*, Jpn. *shū*)—the first character in the typological category of 'religion' 宗教—and 'lineage' 流 (Chn. *liu*, Jpn. *ryū*).[88] Most often 'school' represents an over-arching denominational identity that consists of multiple 'lineages.'[89] Within this framework, schools and lineages are clearly defined, independent religious sects whose sectarian identities are defined by the provenance and contents of their Dharma-'transmissions' 傳. These transmissions are depicted as having originated in the past with an important religious figure, claims that are corroborated by school/lineage-specific origination myths and lineage charts[90] 血脈 that respectively detail each sect's first master-

[86] For the development of these Japanese Buddhist boundaries see, Michel Mohr, "Zen Buddhism during the Tokugawa Period: The Challenge to Go beyond Sectarian Consciousness," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21, no. 4 (1994): 341-372.

[87] Jimmy Yu, "Revisiting the Notion of *Zong*: Contextualizing the Dharma Drum Lineage of Modern Chan Buddhism," *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 26 (2013): 116-120. Online: http://enlight.lib.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-BJ001/bj001390683.pdf (accessed Jan. 11, 2016).

[88] Both the characters for 'school' and 'lineage' are oftentimes paired with a character meaning 'stream' 派 (Chn. *pai*, Jpn. *ha*), whose usage is interchangeable with 'lineage.'

[89] It must be noted that in Japan, certain sectarian lineages are subdivided into yet another level. However, there is no single standardized term for this. Sometimes the character for 'temple' 寺 (Chn. *si*. Jpn. *ji*) or 'hall' 院 (Ch. *yuan*, Jpn. *in*) is used. The only times I have encountered these terms used this way in Taiwan are in reference to Japanese Buddhist communities.

[90] Lineage charts have been used by Buddhists since at least the Tang Dynasty as a means to validate religious authority. They were retroactively constructed by appropriating important historical and ahistorical figures from the past as patriarchs and placing them at the beginning of the chart. Buddhists did this in order to link their contemporary leadership to these figures through transmission. Lineage charts act in concert with origination myths

disciple transmission and systematically trace subsequent master-disciple transmissions throughout the ages. These transmissions are school/lineage-specific and differentiated by the particular soteriological technology they contain as well as the specific individuals who are believed to have propagated them. Thus, sectarian boundaries are justified by differences in orthopraxis—the contents of a sect's transmission—and the provenance of the transmission. Living devotees' religious authority and sectarian identity rest upon the belief that they are links within an unbroken chain of a particular transmission.

Transmission-procedures often entail reenacting the origination myth of the school in which the transmission is taking place,[91] and therefore differ between schools.[92] One archetypal format that bears great relevance to this study is the Zhenyan/Shingon method for performing *abhiṣeka* 灌頂. *Abhiṣeka* is a ritual based on medieval Indian royal coronation rites that were later influenced by Buddhist purification rituals. It involves anointing the head of the receiver with water, which is reflected in the meaning of the Sanskrit term and the Chinese translation *guanding* 灌頂 (Jpn. *kanjō*), which mean to 'sprinkle the crown of the head with water.' It is often rendered into English as 'empowerment,' as the officiating master transfers his power to the student, which enables the latter to effectively perform esoteric rituals. There are different levels and forms of *abhiṣeka*. In Zhenyan/Shingon, the most basic is karmic-binding *abhiṣeka* 結

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and enshrine the actors as the first patriarchs of their schools. See John R. McRae, *Seeing through Zen Encounter, Transformation, and Genealogy in Chinese Chan Buddhism* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2003), 3-4.

[91] In addition to the ways in which Zhenyan/Shingon transmission reenacts the school's origination myth (see below), the same framework is found in Chan/Zen where mind-to-mind transmission' 以心傳心 is seen as a reenactment of the 'Flower Sermon' 拈花微笑. See Albert Welter, "Mahākāśyapa's Smile: Silent Transmission and the Kung-an (Koan) Tradition," in *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*, eds. Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 71-109.

[92] Despite the fact that there are discernible similarities between the ways in which transmission is justified in different schools, there is not a single, universal understanding or process of transmission. See Wendi L. Adamek, *The Mystique of Transmission: On an Early Chan History and Its Contexts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 14.

緣灌頂 that establishes a link between the master and disciple. Above this there is Dharma-study *abhiṣeka* 學法灌頂 that enables a devotee to study rudimentary esoteric rituals. After this is Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* 傳法灌頂 that renders one an ordained Zhenyan/Shingon priest 阿闍梨 (Skt. *ācārya*) and forges a link within the transmission-chain.[93] This is the level of *abhiṣeka* that Wuguang received in Japan.

Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* as practiced in Zhenyan/Shingon represents a reenactment of the school's origination myth referred to as the legend of the 'Iron Stūpa of South India' 南天竺鐵塔.[94] The legend of the Iron Stūpa of South India states that Mahāvairocana[95] transmitted the esoteric Dharma to Vajrasattva Bodhisattva. Vajrasattva then transcribed the contents of this transmission and sealed them in an iron stūpa in southern India. These writings remain locked away and untouched within this stūpa for hundreds of years until the Buddhist philosopher Nāgārjuna (c. 150-c. 250) was given the whereabouts of the stūpa and knowledge of how to open it in a vision. Whilst inside the stūpa, he received transmission from Vajrasattva, which marks the moment that the first human became a link within the Zhenyan/Shingon transmission chain.[96] Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* reenacts the exchanges that took place between Mahāvairocana and Vajrasattva as well as Vajrasattva and Nāgārjuna, as it takes place over a maṇḍala that has been ritually constructed that is meant to simultaneously symbolize Mahāvairocana's palace and

[93] Abé Ryūichi *The Weaving of Mantra: Kūkai and the Construction of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 124.

[94] For this tale see, Charles D. Orzech, "The Legend of the Iron Stupa," in *Buddhism in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 314-317.

[95] Mahāvairocana is explained in greater detail in Chapter 3, Section III, "Soteriological Phenomenology."

[96] Adrian Snodgrass, *The Symbolism of the Stupa* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers; First Indian ed., 1992), 376.

the Iron Stūpa. During the ritual, the initiator and initiated respectively visualize themselves as Mahāvairocana and Vajrasattva.[97]

This origination myth references not only the provenance of Zhenyan/Shingon's Dharma-transmission but also the contents of the transmission itself as well as their soteriological aims. Zhenyan/Shingon's soteriological aim is to realize the unity that exists between the practitioner and Mahāvairocana and is encapsulated in the phrase 'becoming a Buddha in this body' 即身成佛. The realization of this unity, referred to as 'ritual identification' 入我我入 (literally '[the deity] entering me, me entering [the deity]'), is achieved through mimicking Mahāvairocana's activities. These activities—referred to as the 'three mysteries' 三密 (Skt. *tri-guhya*)—are identified as his body 身, speech 口 mind 意, which are respectively copied by performing mudrās, reciting mantras and visualizing maṇḍalas. The transmission that Mahāvairocana gave to Vajrasattva not only serves as the model for Zhenyan/Shingon Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka*, but also the contents of its orthopraxis due to the fact that this transmission was communicated via the three mysteries.[98]

The sectarian consciousness of Wuguang's disciples is built upon the concepts 'school' and 'lineage' as well as the contents, provenance and continuity of 'transmission.' This can be seen in the following passages written by Wuguang's dharma-heirs that declare and explain their denominational affiliation:

> Esoteric Buddhism originated in India. It was transmitted by Mahāvairocana to Vajrasattva, the latter who passed it on to its systematizer, Nāgārjuna. It was later introduced to China during the reign of the Tang Dynasty emperor Xuanzong by Śubhākarasiṃha and Vajrabodhi, who respectively traveled by land and sea. After that, the Japanese monk, Kūkai studied it with Huiguo

[97] Cynthea J. Bogel, *With a Single Glance: Buddhist Icon and Early Mikkyō Vision* (Seattle and Washington: University of Washington Press, 2009), 208.

[98] Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, 130.

> of Qinglong before bringing it to Japan, reorganizing it and passing it down to his disciples. This transmission has continued for over a thousand years.
>
> In 1971, our temple's founder, Guru Wuguang, traveled to Kōyasan, Japan where he studied esoteric Buddhism and received dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka*, thus becoming a fifty-fourth generation *ācārya* of the Chūin-ryu sect under the monk Kamei Senyū. Thus, the bloodline of Zhenyan returned to China. After returning to Taiwan the following year, our Guru planned to build a great monastery, so that the flag of esoteric Buddhism that had disappeared from China for over a thousand years would fly again.[99]
>
> 'Bright' 光明 is a 'lineage' 流 of the 'Mantra school' 真言宗 of Buddhism. It evolved from Japanese Shingon. The founder of our lineage, Guru Wuguang reclaimed the esoteric chain of transmission that Kūkai inherited from Huiguo of Qinglong temple during the Tang Dynasty.[100]

Here, we see that that Wuguang named his sect the 'Mantra (Zhenyan/Shingon) School Bright Lineage' 真言宗光明流. We also witness that the members of the Mantra School Bright Lineage (hereafter MSBL) self-identify as devotees of a specific Buddhist group that is distinguishable from others and that their 'Bright Lineage' 光明流 is a particular sect within the larger 'Mantra school' 真言宗. We are told that this self-differentiation is based upon the contents and provenance of the transmission that they received from Wuguang. The former is

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[99] Mantra School Bright Lineage Website, "Introduction of our sect History," http://www.tofub.org/history.html (accessed Oct. 23, 2012). On Nov. 30, 2015 I attempted to access the website only to discover it had been taken down. However, I was still able to access a saved copy from Dec. 7, 2013 by utilizing the Wayback Machine, Internet Archive: https://web.archive.org/web/*/http://www.tofub.org/history.html https://archive.org/web/. I have heavily edited the grammar, syntax and spelling of the text due to the fact that English was not the author's first language. Original text: "Esoteric Buddhism orientated from India, cultivated by Nagahvaya (龍猛) which was passed on by Universal Buddha Variocana (大日如來) and he derived it into pure Esoteric Buddhism (密教) doctrines. That was introduced it to China from India during the time of Tang Xuan Emperor (唐玄宗) by Subhakara Simba (善無畏三藏) and Vajra Bodhi (金剛智菩薩) via the land and sea routes. After that, Japanese student Monk Kukai (空海) learnt it from Wei Guo Acarya (慧果阿闍梨) of Qing Long Temple (青龍寺). He brought it back to Japan, re-organized it and passed it on from generation to generation for more than a thousand years. Our temple founder, Superior Master Wu Guang went to Kongobu-ji (金剛峰寺) Head Temple of Shingon (True Words) Buddhism at Mount Koya, Japan in 1971 and learnt this Esoteric Buddhism from Monk Xuan Xiong. He finally received from the Main Court Stream (中院流) the title of 54th Bhisoka [sic] Acarya (傳法阿闍梨) and the bloodline thus returned to China. Next year after his return to Taiwan, the Superior Master energetically planned and built the Temple of Universal Brightness (五智山光明王寺) so that the flags of Esoteric Buddhism which had disappeared from China for more than a thousand years now flies again."

[100] Mantra School Bright Lineage Website, http://www.mantrabright.org/ (accessed on Nov 29, 2015). I have heavily edited the grammar and spelling of the text due to the fact that English was not the author's first language. Original text: "'Bright 光明流' is a lineage of 'Mantra 真言宗' school Buddhism. It evolves from Japan's 'Shingon Buddhism,' The Founder 'Master Wu Guang 悟光上師' brought the linkage back to Taiwan in 1972, after inheritance from Xian's 'Wei Guo Acharya 惠果阿闍梨' of Qing Long Temple 青龍寺 by 'Master Kobo Diachi 弘法大師' during the Tang Dynasty 唐朝."

conveyed through the emphasis on mantra recitation, while the latter is expressed in the authors' retracing the provenance of the MSBL's chain of Dharma-transmission. Thus, the sectarian boundaries Wuguang placed around his fledgling lineage were drawn in accordance with well-established Buddhist denominational demarcations. This consistency is also embodied in the MSBL's lineage chart (see figure 2), which implies that the MSBL stems from Shingon's Ono Lineage 小野流.[101]

Figure 2: MSBL lineage chart. Image supplied by MSBL devotee.

[101] As seen when comparing the MSBL's lineage chart with those found in Zuishin'in Religious Research Institute 随心院聖教調査研究会, *Zuishin'in shōgyō tojiin nettowāku* 随心院聖教と寺院ネットワーク [Network of Zuishin'in Religious Temples] (Tokyo: Zuishin'in Shōgyō Chōsa Kenkyūkai, 2004), section 1, 30–31.

Given the importance of Dharma-transmission continuity, it becomes clear why Wuguang's resurrection of Zhenyan was considered such a remarkable accomplishment. Since Zhenyan's orthodox initiation chain disappeared from China after it had been transmitted to Japan by Kūkai, Chinese devotees had to venture outside of their homeland if they wanted to study esoteric Buddhism. As no esoteric Buddhist school or lineage can "spring into being *ex nihilo* but must be able to trace its origin back through several generations of master-to-student transmission,"[102] Wuguang had to travel to Japan in order to join himself with the initiation chain as propagated by Japanese Shingon. After returning, Taiwanese Buddhists saw him endowed with the religious authority to found the MSBL and give them Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka*.

Although Wuguang's attempt to resurrect Zhenyan by receiving Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* in Japan is currently the most successful of which I am aware, it was not the first. In fact, the Chinese Buddhist reformer Taixu also attempted to revive this extinct form of esoteric Buddhism. To do so, he urged his students to receive initiation, first in Japan and later in Tibet, where esoteric chains of initiation remained intact. Taixu's efforts initiated the 'Tantric Revival' 密教復興運動. This revival collectively refers to esoteric Buddhism's rises in popularity on the Chinese mainland during the late Qing Dynasty and early Republican Period (1912-1949).[103] The first rise in popularity was centered in Eastern China and was focused on Japanese esoteric Buddhism while the second was centered near Beijing and concentrated on Tibetan Vajrayāna. The first, Japanese-oriented of these developments—although still alive in present day Hong

[102] Erik J. Hammerstrom, "The Heart-of-Mind Method: Legitimating a New Buddhist Movement in 1930s China," *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 17, no. 2 (2013): 13.

[103] See Ester Bianchi, "The Tantric Rebirth Movement in modern China: Esoteric Buddhism Re-vivified by the Japanese and Tibetan traditions," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungarica*, vol. 57, no. 1 (2004): 31-54; Erik Schicketanz, "Wang hongyuan and the Import of Japanese Esoteric Buddhism to China during the Republican Period," in *Buddhism across Asia: Networks of Material, intellectual and Cultural Exchange*, ed. Tansen Sen (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2014), 1.323-347.

Kong[104] despite their being called "short-lived"[105]—was not as widespread as the Tibetan-oriented popularity. Additionally, unlike Wuguang, these figures are not known to have founded their own, independently self-propagating Zhenyan lineages. Wuguang, who resurrected Tang Dynasty Zhenyan by receiving *abhiṣeka* in Japan, was a direct heir of Taixu's Tantric Revival. However, he was not directly influenced by the Japanese-oriented revivalists but, rather, the Tibetan ones.

Despite the fact that Buddhist sectarianism is not the focus of this study, it did weigh heavily upon Wuguang's mind and partially steered the trajectory of his career. It was also of great concern to his predecessors and contemporaries to whom he was responding. Consequently, this is an issue that we will refer to throughout this dissertation.

Section IV: Dissertation Structure

Chapter 1 begins my analysis of Wuguang and his reenchantment by exploring the context from which they arose: Taiwan under Japanese rule. This analysis is based on data gathered from colonial-era Buddhist periodicals and secondary sources. I focus on the ways the secular-religion-superstition trinary was applied by Japanese missionaries and Taiwanese Buddhists in an effort to disenchant Taiwanese religion. I argue that the political and cultural contours of this discursive context gave birth to a nascent form of Taiwanese Buddhist modernism that constituted an intermingling of Japanese and Chinese forms, which represents an

[104] Although usually not mentioned, there was an interest in Japanese esoteric Buddhism happening in Hong Kong that coincided with developments taking place on the Chinese mainland. The Hong Kong Mantra School for Lay Buddhists 香港佛教眞言宗居士林 that is still in operation was founded during this time. See, "Hong Kong Mantra School for Lay Buddhists Website," http://www.buddhistmantra.hk/ (accessed Feb. 4, 2015). Also see Bill M. Mak, "The Career of Utsuki Nishū 宇津木二秀 in Hong Kong during the Japanese Occupation Period (1941-1945)," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch* 55 (2015): 57-82. Online: http://www.billmak.com/ wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Mak-2015-4.pdf (accessed Jan. 13, 2014).

[105] Bing, "The Tantric Revival and its Reception in Modern China," 394.

early Taiwanese Buddhist revival that has gone unnoticed by previous scholars. I also assert that these Taiwanese modernization efforts were undertaken in response to anti-superstition campaigns that were similar to those that occurred in Japan and China. I additionally argue that this form of Buddhist modernism—as well as the anti-superstition campaigns that triggered it—were what Wuguang was polemically responding to.

Having explored the world into which Wuguang was born, Chapter 2 presents an overview of his life that pays special attention to his studies and exploits. By scrutinizing the details of his life—which I gathered through a close reading of his autohagiography, accounts of people who knew him, fieldwork and secondary sources—I attempt to uncover the internal and external factors that motivated him. This is in order to answer four questions: how did Wuguang become so eclectic? What are the particular sources of the specific elements within his eclecticism? How did Taiwan's history and religious makeup shape his life? Why did Wuguang sophisticate 'superstition' rather than accepting—or entirely rejecting—the disenchanted hermeneutic of Buddhist modernism? I assert that Wuguang's Daoist upbringing, a traumatic childhood religious experience, and his personal religious life were what motivated him to reenchant Buddhism.

Chapter 3 represents our entry into Wuguang's reenchantment. I begin by uncovering how his definition of magic, and how he understood its relationship to science, religion and superstition. Wuguang's definition of magic is elucidated by analyzing his writings on the subjects of Daoist cultivation, mediumship and esoteric Buddhist practices. I argue that Wuguang's understanding of magic was intermingled with his epistemological mystical empiricism and that both were heavily based upon Buddhist sectarian boundaries, the secular-religious-superstitious trinary, Shingon phenomenology and his personal religious life. I

demonstrate that Wuguang believed that belief concerning the nature of magic is what differentiates religion from superstition.

Chapter 4 focuses on Wuguang's TOE that represents his attempt to harmonize science, religion and magic. While detailing the ontological and consequential metaphysical nuances of this theory, I highlight the ways in which Wuguang utilized concepts that his Buddhist modernist predecessors had wielded to disenchant Buddhism in order to reenchant it. In doing so, I identify the particular scientific and religious concepts that Wuguang adulterated magic with in order to sophisticate it.

While my fieldwork data have enriched all aspects of this study, in Chapter 5 they are central. In this chapter I detail the history, structure, headquarters, leadership, praxis and activities of the Buddhist lineage Wuguang founded, the MSBL. As the MSBL is small in comparison to the larger Buddhist groups that dominate Taiwan and is extremely secretive, my data are predominantly qualitative. Although the MSBL self-identifies as a particular lineage of Zhenyan/Shingon, in my analysis thereof I have approached it as a new and independent New Religious Movement whose practices, beliefs and material culture have yet to be documented. To this end I have identified the origin of these facets and paid special attention to how—and why—they have been appropriated and reinvented. Throughout my analysis I additionally draw attention to the ways in which the MSBL's religious life remains consistent with—and departs from—Wuguang's doctrines and personal religiosity. This chapter concludes with a sociological analysis of the MSBL in order to understand its rise, allure, and impact. I argue that Wuguang's reenchanted Buddhism appeals to a niche religious market comprised of modern-minded people from Buddho-Daoist-folk religious backgrounds.

In order to showcase this hitherto overlooked figure's widespread influence across the Chinese-speaking Buddhist world, Chapter 6 details five Buddhist communities in addition to the MSBL that owe their existence to Wuguang. As discussed, Wuguang's influence is alive and well, and has spread beyond the borders of Taiwan to the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong and Malaysia. Wuguang's relationship to and influence upon each community is individually explored.

In this dissertation's conclusion, I begin by returning to the research questions articulated in this introduction and highlight the issues I have left unresolved. From there, I discuss a number of provocative particularities and offer an integrative analysis thereof. I also return to my core argument regarding Wuguang's doctrines being a form of reenchanted Buddhist modernism, and explore the wider implications of this study, and recommend areas I believe to be the most fruitful for further investigation.

Chapter 1

Wuguang's Taiwan

Whatever secular rationalists say, magic and the occult, like their big-brother religion, refuse to go away. Histories of the occult, best defined as irregular/heterodox knowledge, a one-time bedfellow of religion and reason, fight shy of its transnational/transcultural dimensions. These were pronounced in post-classical antiquity, during the Crusades, in the Renaissance, Baroque and Romanticism, and, under European high empires—where the older, Muslim-Christian-Jewish esotericism began to cede to enthusiasm for India and the Far East. 'Syncretism', the pluralistic and accomodatory opposite of fundamentalism, is the name given to the products of religio-magical confluence between different cultures. Syncretism is most observable in those laboratories the 'religion-making imagination', borderlands, backwaters and 'contact zones'. In Mikhail Bakhtin's words, 'The most intensive and productive life of culture takes place on the boundaries'. Occultists and explorers like Richard Burton spent their life in such places.

~ John Bramble[106]

The births of Japanese and Chinese Buddhist modernism during the Meiji and Chinese Buddhist Revival were defensive reactions meant to safeguard the future of Buddhism amidst the physical, financial and ideological attacks that resulted from Western encroachment and modernity. Despite inherent differences, the Buddhist situations in Japan and China, as well as the responses to those situations, greatly mirrored one another. Both focused on making Buddhism less other-worldly and harmonizing its doctrines and practices with science and modern philosophy, and demanded that Buddhism be purged of 'superstition.' The following demonstrates the exact roles these Japanese and Chinese developments played in shaping twentieth century Buddhist discourse in Taiwan.

Buddhist modernism was created in Japan and China in order to shield Buddhism from suppression. This was also the case in Taiwan, a land juggled between these two powers during

[106] John Bramble, *Modernism and the Occult* (Oxford: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 1.

the period in question. The anti-superstition campaigns of Japan and China were replayed in Taiwan while she was in the hands of Japan. This spurred a number of Taiwanese monks to modernize their faith by initiating the 'First' Taiwanese Buddhist Revival 臺灣佛教復興.[107] Wuguang was directly influenced by this revival because he was a favored disciple of one of its most erudite and active figures. In later chapters, I argue that this revival and the attacks on 'superstition' that instigated it represent the form of disenchanted Buddhist modernism that provoked Wuguang's reenchanted response.

Understanding Wuguang's response requires a familiarity with what he was responding to. Therefore, I begin by briefly discussing the First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival, and then proceed to detail the historical and ideological context from which it arose. This chapter's third section focuses on the transmission to Taiwan of the Tibetan-oriented facet of the Tantric Revival, and briefly details the historical context of the Second Taiwanese Buddhist Revival. As the history of Buddhism in Taiwan has already been detailed by multiple scholars, I have limited my presentation thereof to the points that bear the greatest relevance to this study.

The history of Taiwanese Buddhism can roughly be broken up into three epochs: Early (1624-1895), Japanese colonial (1895-1955) and Republican (1955-present). Wuguang's life overlapped with the second and third of these as he entered this world as a subject of the Japanese empire and exited it as a citizen of the Republic of China (ROC). As noted, the form of

[107] I have adopted this exact terminology, "Taiwanese Buddhist Revival" 臺灣佛教復興, from a piece written by the Taiwanese monk Yongkun 永坤 (family name Zeng 曾), who was a married Buddhist in accordance with the Japanese custom. See Zeng Yongkun 曾永坤, "*Tichang kaicui taiwan fojiao dahui* 提唱開催臺灣佛教大會 [Plenary Address at the Taiwanese Buddhist Conference]," *South Seas Buddhist Journal* 12, no. 9 (1934): 27-28. The term *fuxing* 復興 is similarly used by other monks as a call to modernize Taiwanese Buddhism. See, Daoyou 道猷, "*Dui taiwan fojiao zhi xiwang* 對於台灣佛教之希望 [Regarding Hope for Taiwanese Buddhism],*" South Seas Buddhist Journal* 10, no .6 (1932): 35-37.

Buddhist modernism that Wuguang was responding to was born during the Japanese colonial period. Because of this, this is the period given the most attention.[108]

Section I: The *First* Taiwanese Buddhist Revival

When employing the terms 'Taiwanese Buddhist Revival,'[109] 'Buddhist Revival in Taiwan'[110] or 'Taiwanese Buddhist Renaissance,'[111] scholars are unknowingly referring to the *Second* Taiwanese Buddhist Revival, as they consistently overlook the first. Those who have paid close attention to the events of the First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival did not frame it as such. The ideological foundations of the well-known Second Taiwanese Buddhist Revival are an example of Chinese—rather than Taiwanese—Buddhist modernism, as this second revival represented the fulfillment of Taixu's dream to create a 'Buddhism of Human Life' 人生佛教. This dream was furthered by his student Yinshun[112] 印順 (1906-2005) and actualized by Cheng

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[108] Historical data has largely been collected from secondary sources while details regarding the First Taiwanese Buddhist revival and the application of the secular-religion-trinary have come from textual research, gazetteers and onsite fieldwork.

[109] Examples include André Laliberté, "Tzu Chi and the Buddhist Revival in Taiwan: Rise of a New Conservatism?" *China Perspectives* 19 (1998): 44-50; Johnathan H. X. Lee and Mario Poseski, "Buddhist Compassion Relief: Tzu Chi Foundation," in *Encyclopedia of Global Religion*, eds. Mark Juergensmeyer et al. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2012), 162.

[110] Yuchen Li, "Ordination, Legitimacy and Sisterhood: The International Full Ordination Ceremony in Bodhgaya," in *Innovative Buddhist Women: Swimming Against the Stream*, ed. Karma Lekshe Tsomo (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000), 186.

[111] Sallie B. King, "Buddhism in Dialogue with the West: What it Offers and What it Learns," in *Dialogue and Ethics in Buddhism and Hinduism: Public Presentations of The 14th Dalai Lama, Sallie B. King, Anantananad Rambachan and Samdhong Rinpoche*, eds. Carola Roloff et al. (Münster: Waxman, 2015), 38; Hubert Seiwert, "Religious Response to Modernization in Taiwan: The Case of I-Kuan Tao," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch* 21 (1981): 43-70.

[112] Yinshun was a notoriously influential and controversial Buddhist modernist who sought to create a wholly disenchanted form of 'Buddhism of the Human Realm devoid of spirits and gods' 非鬼化非神化的人間佛教. He went so far as to criticize his teacher Taixu for not attacking the worship of deities with sufficient vehemence. See Richard Madsen, *Democracy's Dharma: Religious Renaissance and Political Development in Taiwan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 22-23; Don A. Pittman, *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 204; Yang Yuwen 楊郁文, "Buddhadharma for People and Human-oriented Buddhism: A Discussion of the Original Concerns of Ven. Yinshun's 'Humanistic Buddhism' 人本的佛法與人本為中心的佛教──論印順導師「人間佛教」之本懷," *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 17 (2004): 3-4. Online: http://www.chibs.edu.tw/ch_html/chbj/17/chbj1701.htm#nf1 (accessed Jan. 16, 2016).

Yen 證嚴 (secular name Wang Jinyun 王錦雲; b. 1937), Hsing Yun 星雲 (secular name Li Guoshen 李國深; b. 1927) and Sheng Yen 聖嚴 (secular name Zhang Baokang 張保康; 1930-2009) who respectively founded the Humanistic Buddhist sects Tzu Chi 慈濟, Fo Guang Shan 佛光山 and Dharma Drum Mountain 法鼓山.[113] This revival was designed by Chinese Buddhist masters who came to Taiwan after the end of Japanese rule.

The First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival was born while Taiwan was ruled by Japan in the first half of the twentieth century, and was the product of native Taiwanese efforts. Although overlooked by the scholarly community, this revival occurred before the majority of the Chinese architects of the Second Taiwanese Buddhist Revival ever set foot on Taiwanese soil. As the native Taiwanese monks who initiated the First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival were directly and simultaneously influenced by both Chinese and Japanese forms of Buddhist modernism, their efforts represent an intermingling of both. Charles Jones has already shown how a number of Taiwanese monks made efforts to maintain contact with Buddhism on the Chinese mainland during the Japanese colonial period in order to "remain informed about currents of thought on the mainland."[114] However, the interplay between these developments and those that were imported from Japan warrants a closer look.

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[113] Although the founder of Tzu Chi, Cheng Yen was in fact born in Taiwan, unlike Hsing Yun and Sheng Yen who were born in China, she is the ideological heir of Yinshun and in fact, received tonsure from him. See Elise A. DeVido, *Taiwan's Buddhist Nuns* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2010), 100; C. Julia Huang, *Charisma and Compassion: Cheng Yen and the Buddhist Tzu Chi Movement* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2009), 215. It is said that it was Yinshun who inspired her life's work by charging her to "serve Buddhism and all living beings." See Mark O'Neill, *Tzu Chi: Serving with Compassion* (Singapore: John Wiley & Sons [Asia], 2010), 179. Although I have placed Tzu Chi in the camp of Buddhist modernism due to the fact that its founder deemphasizes magic while emphasizing charitable social engagement, the issue is more complex as there are pre-modernist aspects that are more present than within the others listed here. For more information refer to Charles B. Jones, "Modernization and Traditionalism in Buddhist Almsgiving: The Case of the Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu-chi Association in Taiwan," *Journal of Global Buddhism* 10 (2009): 291-319.

[114] Charles B. Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan: Religion and the State, 1660-1990* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 42.

The Sino-Japanese syncretic nature of the First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival is made readily apparent by the following passage written during the Japanese colonial era by the Taiwanese monk Weilong 微隆 (a.k.a. Xuanda 玄達, secular name Zhang Jinchu 張金出 Weilong 微隆; 1909-?):

> Speaking of Taiwanese Buddhism is truly a bittersweet matter. If we were to look at its form and color, we would see monasteries, halls, shrines and nunneries, all of which are magnificent and recently refurbished. It looks like a Buddhist kingdom—as Buddhism is so widespread. But, if one were to go a step further and view the reality of its internal matrix, he see would something entirely different. Terrible! You see hundreds of Taiwanese monasteries, halls, shrines and nunneries as well as thousands of monastics, but there is no central authority connecting them. We are fortunate that the [Japanese] authorities have established the South Seas Buddhist Association that hosts an annual seminar, leading a small number of the masses to receive the Buddha's doctrine and accepting the Buddha's influence. And recently, there have been a number of wise and virtuous monks and laymen [from Japan] who have come to disseminate Buddhism, and a few Buddhist propagating organizations that who have gone amongst the masses and introduced Buddhism to the average person. Such education organizations have now spread everywhere, however, there still is no Buddhist education organization to mention.
>
> With the situation as it is, we cannot hope to promote Buddhism amongst the masses in a way that they will believe and accept…The nineteenth-twentieth centuries represent a time of great upheaval. Scientific understanding is rapidly progressing, [ushering in] a tempest of new ideologies that reassess the value of traditional values and laws, destroying traditional taboos, smashing the limitations of old thought forms, causing people to sing the song of personal liberty, marching along the path to emancipation. Given these circumstances, many of us Buddhists have yet to wake up from the pipe-dream of "people who are indifferent to current events" who erroneously think that monastics should just close their doors, personally cultivate [and think] "Why on earth would I concern myself with such trivial worldly matters?" The masses are familiar with this sort of monk—the kind of monk that is used to only taking care of himself and not concerning himself with worldly matters. Thus, the masses loudly sing a song asking "How is Buddhism good? How is Buddhism good? Truly it should be called 'self-professed saintliness'"…We need talented monks who can improve Buddhism, reverse its decline…[115]

[115] Weilong, "*Du yanjing dashi taiwan fojiao zhenxingce houde ganxiang* 讀眼淨大師臺灣佛教振興策後的感想 [My Reflections after reading Master Yanjing's 'Plan to Invigorate Taiwanese Buddhism']," *South Seas Buddhist Journal* 13, no. 3 (1935): 25. All issues of the *South Seas Buddhist Journal* have been accessed via the "Digital Archives Project," hosted by Dharma Drum University 法鼓山大: http://buddhistinformatics.ddbc.edu.tw/taiwanbuddhism/tb/ny_new.html. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own. Original text: "說起臺灣佛教來真是要悲喜交集、我們若將形色上來看到處都可以看著這寺、院、堂、庵重興的重興、新建的新建、彷佛成一個佛教國—佛教多麼普遍啊—可是再進一步細詳來看他內容的組織究竟是怎樣的一回事。那孰糟糕！你看、臺灣寺、院、堂庵雖有數百、僧徒雖有數千、而對於佛教的總機關幾乎連一個都沒有。幸有當局創設一個南瀛佛教會、年中開一次講習會、才有小數的社會人略領其佛陀的教義！受佛陀的感化. 又近來有幾位明哲的僧伽居士們到處傳布佛教、才有點佛教宣傳的機關和去社會的一般士女們接觸。現今到處都有布教所之設立然而對於佛教々育創設之機關者、還是談不到呢。如此、那裏能夠希望佛教振興與一般人們信仰和接授呢…自將十九世紀末至二十世紀初、真是一個大動搖的時代、科學昌明達於極點、新思潮風

This article showcases numerous aspects of the influence Japanese and Chinese modernizing transformations had upon Taiwanese Buddhism. First, the complaints regarding the state of Taiwanese Buddhism closely mirror those voiced by both Japanese and Chinese critics of Buddhism that we saw in the previous chapter, namely its irrelevance to the modern world, distance from science, complete disconnect from society and backwards nature. In addition to its contents, the article's authorship also demonstrates the fact that the above grievance was born out of an intermingling of Japanese and Chinese forms of Buddhist modernism. Its author, Weilong, was one of Taiwan's elite Buddhist monks. He began studying in Taixu's Nanputou Academy in 1933. After graduating in 1936, he traveled to Japan the following year to study at Hanazono University 花園大學 in Kyōto, the main university of the Myōshinji 妙心寺 sect of Rinzai Zen. He subsequently graduated from its Department of Buddhism 佛教科 in 1940.[116] It is no coincidence that the negative characterization of Taiwanese Buddhism was penned by someone who had studied abroad in Buddhist institutions whose pedagogy was designed to propagate a form of Buddhism that would be impervious to these specific attacks. The instruction that Weilong received in China and Japan was what made the Taiwanese Buddhist situation appear "terrible" 糟糕, for this situation was a relative one that revealed itself to Weilong once he returned home after having finished his modernized studies.

起雲湧、重新估定舊日道德法律的價值、掃蕩了習慣的障礙、打破了因襲思想的束縛、使人民高唱自由之歌、大踏步向解放的道路上走去。在這種情形之下我們佛教徒還是很多在這迷夢不醒的當中做一個「不問時事的人」以為出家人只好閉門自修管這世界的閒事幹什麼？而社會人有一種也是同這樣的認識僧伽──於是僧伽變成一種不問世事只顧自己不顧他人習慣、曰以由中高唱佛教是怎樣好怎樣好、真所謂「自稱聖賢了」了…要之僧有人材、則佛教興起、反之則衰…"

[116] Ohno Ikuko 大野育子, "The Appearance of the Buddhism Elites in the Japanese Taiwan Rule Times by Overseas Taiwanese Students of Soto Zen Buddhism Komazawa University 日治時期佛教菁英的崛起—以曹洞宗駒澤大學台灣留學生為中心" (MA thesis, Tamkang University, 2009), 64. The title listed here is the work's official English title.

The relative 'terribleness' of Taiwanese Buddhism was directly rooted in Taiwan's pre-Japanese past. Before the Japanese colonial period, the most widespread form of Buddhism was a religion that scholars refer to as Zhaijiao 齋教 ('Vegetarian Religion') that Buddhist modernists saw as a form of 'superstition.' Zhaijiao is a non-monastic tradition that shares the same geographic point of origin as the majority of Han Taiwanese at this time, Fujian.[117] Its orthopraxis and doctrines represent a blend of Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism and Chinese folk religion.[118] The other form of Buddhism in Taiwan—that Weilong belonged to—was orthodox monastic Buddhism. Although orthodox monastic Buddhism in Taiwan was not perceived as a form of 'superstition,' Japanese and Chinese Buddhists considered it relatively backwards. Before Japanese colonization, a Taiwanese monk's communal role was largely limited to performing funerary rites and acting as a temple maintenance man. They were not educated enough to teach and did not practice meditation or engage in other expressions of Buddhist piety.[119] They also occupied a relatively low social position.[120] Many 'monks' were in fact imposters.[121] The majority of authentic monastics were only novice monks (Skt. *śrāmaṇera*)

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[117] Although there has been a small Chinese presence on the island for over half a millennium, substantial settlement did not begin until the period of Dutch colonization around 1624. From then until the twentieth century, Han Chinese immigration to Taiwan primarily consisted of two different Han identities from China's southern provinces. The larger of the two groups consisted of the Southern Hokkien (Mandarin pronunciation: *minnan*) 閩南 speaking peoples from the prefectures of Zhangzhou 漳州 and Quanzhou 泉州 in Fujian Province 福建省 with a smaller presence of Hakka 客家語 speakers who mostly came from Guangdong Province 廣東省. See Ann Heylan, "The Legacy of Literacy Practices in Colonial Taiwan. Japanese–Taiwanese– Chinese: Language Interaction and Identity Formation," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 26, no. 6 (2005): 498; Ronald G. Knapp, "The Shaping of Taiwan's Landscapes" in *Taiwan: A New History*, ed. Murray A. Rubinstein (New York: ME Sharpe, 1999), 9.

[118] A consensus on how exactly to define Zhaijiao has eluded scholars. For more information see Nikolas Broy, "Secret Societies, Buddhist Fundamentalists, or Popular Religious Movements? Aspects of Zhaijiao in Taiwan," in *Chinese and European Perspectives on the Study of Chinese Popular Religions*, ed. Philip Clart (Taipei: Boyang Publishing, 2012), 329-368.

[119] Charles B. Jones, "Taiwan," in *Encyclopedia of Monasticism*, eds. William M. Johnston et al. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 1229.

[120] Wei-Yu Lu, "The Performance Practice of Buddhist Baiqi in Contemporary Taiwan" (PhD diss, University of Maryland, 2012), 62.

[121] C. Jones, "Taiwan," 1229.

rather than full-fledged ones (*bhikṣu*).[122] The low quality of Buddhist monastics during the early period of Taiwanese Buddhist history can be attributed to an interplay between Chinese perception and law as well as Buddhist regulations. Taiwan's previous colonizer, China, had seen her as "backwater"[123] and a "land of typhoons, plagues and headhunting native peoples."[124] Taiwan was therefore not a choice destination for erudite monks. Additionally, although one could receive tonsure in Taiwan during this early period, it was impossible to receive full Buddhist monastic ordination there. This was due to a Chinese mandate requiring all Taiwanese monks to be ordained at Yongquan Temple 湧泉寺 in Gushan 鼓山, on the outskirts of Fuzhou 福州, the capital of Fujian Province.[125] Receiving monastic ordination at Yongquan Temple was an arduous task due to the dangers posed by cross-strait navigation and piracy.[126] Most monks who did travel to China did not return,[127] preferring China to their backwater home. Thus, Weilong's perception of Taiwanese Buddhism in light of the modernized forms he studied in China and Japan is understandable.

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[122] There are several rites of religious passage than a person must go through in order to transition from a non-Buddhist to lay Buddhist and then a full-fledged monastic. The first is the 'conversion' or 'refuge ceremony' 皈依 which renders one a lay Buddhist devotee. If the devotee then wishes to become a monastic he must go through a two-step process. The first is called tonsure 剃度 that entails having one's head shaved and renders one a novice monk. Becoming a full-fledged monk requires receiving full monastic ordination 具足戒. One can take refuge under the auspices of a tonsured novice monk but tonsure and full monastic ordination requires a number of witnesses and a fully ordained monastic officiator. For this process see Lori Meeks, "Vows for the Masses: Eison and the Popular Expansion of precept-Conferral Ceremonies in Premodern Japan," *Numen* 56, no. 1 (2009): 1-43.

[123] C. Jones, "Taiwan," 1229.

[124] Ibid.

[125] *Chici gushan yongquan chansi tongjie lu* 敕賜鼓山湧泉禪寺同戒錄 [*Record of Imperial Edicts Relating to Monasticism at Yongquan Temple*], as quoted in Huang Lang-Shiang 黃蘭翔, "Traditional Buddhist Monasteries in Taiwan during the Qing Dynasty and their Transformation under Japanese Colonialism 清代臺灣傳統佛教伽藍建築在日治時期的延續," *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 18 (2005): 150. Online: http://www.chibs.edu.tw/ch_html/chbj/18/chbj1805.htm (accessed Mar. 2, 2016).

[126] Knapp, "The Shaping of Taiwan's Landscapes," 9.

[127] As inferred from C. Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan*, 11.

Weilong was not the only Taiwanese Buddhist to return home after studying in modernized Buddhist institutions and thereafter to insist that Taiwanese Buddhists adopt modernization efforts similar to those already in place in Japan and China. His article was written in direct response to an article written by Wuguang's Chan teacher, Yanjing 眼淨 (secular name Linkan 林看, Dharma-name Zhengfa 證法; 1898–1971). Yanjing was an influential, island-wide famous monk whose status as a paragon can be seen in the authorship of two dedications in his *Festschrift*. The first was composed by Taixu's student, Yinshun. The other was written by Wu Den-yih 吳敦義 (b. 1948), the tenth Vice President of the ROC.[128] Despite this fame, scholars have yet to discuss Yanjing's importance.

Yanjing was born in the rural village of Shiaying 下營 near Tainan[129] 臺南 and became a monk when he was thirteen at Taiwan's very first Buddhist monastery, Zhuxi Temple 竹溪寺.[130] Shortly thereafter, he moved to Taipei and studied at the Chinnan Gakurin 鎮南學林, a school run by the Myōshinji sect of Japanese Rinzai Zen. His higher-education both predates and

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[128] Jing-ming 淨明 ed., *Yanjing heshang yuanji ershiwu zhounian jinianji* 眼淨和尚圓寂二十五週年紀念集 [(Biography) in honor of the 25th anniversary of Monk Yanjing's Passing] (Kaohsiung: Yuanheng simiao lin, 1985), 41-42.

[129] Tainan is one of Taiwan's major cities, located on the island's south western coast. It was the Dutch colonial center and Ming Dynasty 'circuit' 道 capital of Taiwan. As Tainan was Taiwan's early political, economic and cultural center, it became her religious heart. Qing imperial administration subdivided the Chinese mainland into eighteen different provinces. These provinces were then further subdivided into the descending categories of 'circuits' 道, 'prefectures' 州 and 'counties' 縣. It was not until fending off the French invasion of Taiwan during the Sino-French War 中法戰争 (1884-1885) that the Qing administration elevated Taiwan's status from a circuit of Fujian to independent province. The newly established provincial capital was set up in the northern city of Taipei 臺北, which was later the Japanese and ROC capital. Nevertheless, Tainan, even to this day, is the center of traditional Han-Taiwanese culture. See See Blaine Chiasson, "Late-Qing Adaptive Frontier Administrative Reform in Manchuria, 1900-1911," in *Entangled Histories: The Transcultural Past of Northeast China* (Switzerland: Springer, 2014), 163-169; Monica Cable, "Tainan" in *International Dictionary of Historic Places*, vol. 5, *Asia and Oceania*, eds. Paul E. Schellinger et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 793.

[130] For the history of Zhuxi Temple see, Lu Jiaxing 盧嘉興, "*Taiwande diyizuo siyuan-zhuxisi* 臺灣的第一座寺院─竹溪寺 [Taiwan's First Monastery— Zhuxi Temple]," *Taiwan fojiao shilunji (8)–taiwan fojiao pian* (1979): 233-254.

mirrors Weilong's, as Yanjing studied in the Nanputou Academy the very first year it opened in 1925.[131] Sometime around 1929, he, like Weilong, studied in Hanazono University. Out of personal interest, he additionally traveled to Gifu 岐阜, Japan, to study Shingon.[132]

Yanjing and Weilong were both members of an esteemed class of Taiwanese Buddhist monks referred to as the 'Buddhist elites' 佛教菁英.[133] This title referred to Buddhists from Taiwan who had traveled to Japan and received a modern education at a Japanese Buddhist university. This, as well as their studies at the Nanputou Academy, set them apart from the majority of Taiwanese Buddhists who, as detailed above, were not well educated at all. This dearth was due to Taiwan's lack of Buddhist-centered educational options. It was this lack that forced more ambitious monks to travel abroad. Despite these shortcomings, Weilong's article highlights a ray of light within this dark situation in the form of conferences, lecture series and missionary activities. These positive aspects, however, are shown to be solely the fruits of Japanese labor which are in and of themselves inadequate to make up for the Taiwanese *saṃgha's* weaknesses. The organization responsible for these efforts, the South Seas Buddhist Association (SSBA) 南瀛佛教會, has been characterized by Charles Jones as "the most successful and influential of the island-wide Buddhist groups" during the Japanese colonial period.[134] The SSBA was founded by Japanese Buddhist missionaries in Taiwan and run through close cooperation between Japanese and Taiwanese Buddhists. Both Yanjing's article and

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[131] Yu Lingbo 于淩波, *Minguo gaoseng chuan: xu bian* 民國高僧傳: 續編 [Transmission of Eminent Republican Monks: Continued], 2 vols. (Taipei: Zhaoming, 2000), 2.354-355.

[132] Wuguang, "*Yanjing heshang shiji* 眼淨和尚事跡 [Monk Yanjing's Achievements]," in *Yanjing heshang yuanji ershiwu zhounian jinianji* 眼淨和尚圓寂二十五週年紀 念集 [(Biography) in honor of the 25th anniversary of Monk Yanjing's Passing], ed. Jing-ming 淨明 (Kaohsiung: Yuanheng simiao lin, 1985), 68.

[133] The Taiwanese Buddhist Elites is the topic of Ohno, "Appearance of the Buddhism Elites."

[134] C. Jones, *Taiwanese Buddhism*, 74.

Weilong's response to it were published in the SSBA's periodical, the *South Seas Buddhist Journal* 南瀛佛教會報 (SSBJ), in 1935 while Taiwan was in the hands of Japan.

Yanjing's article, to which Weilong was writing in supportive response, describes the modern age as "the era of the profusion of common knowledge" 今日民智發達之時 and contains similar grievances to those detailed above:

> Throughout Buddhism's long eastward progression, it has inevitably transformed in the face of adversity. The present day is a time when emerging ideologies are steadily and ever-increasingly posing threats to Buddhism day by day. However, my Taiwanese monastic brethren have yet to realize this. Because of this, [Taiwanese] Buddhism is on the decline. As we have not properly educated our monks, they are degenerate and generally ignorant. No wonder we are not taken seriously by the masses. Unless we can hastily produce men of great talent, I fear that, in the end, we will be unable to avoid [Buddhism's] extinction…In order to produce young men to become exemplar monks, we must fulfill our monastic educational responsibilities. All across Taiwan there are monks who have not fulfilled this responsibility in their monasteries. The result is that today many of our monks are stupid sheep…The biggest reason for all of this is our deficient monastic education. [The result is that our monks] do not know how to relate Mahāyāna Buddhism to the waves of modernity…Reform requires multiple methods. If we can implement the above, we will actualize positive progress. By doing so, we will be able to revive our particular Taiwanese Buddhism.[135]

As in both Japan and China, Yanjing's closing statement calls for a 'revival' *huifu* 恢復 (Jpn. *kaifuku*) of Buddhism. Although this term for 'revival' differs slightly from its more common synonym *fuxing* 復興 (Jpn. *fukkō*), its meaning is the same and it is used in the same sense elsewhere in the SSBJ.[136] Like Weilong and his Japanese and Chinese Dharma-brethren, Yanjing

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[135] Yanjing, "*Bendao fojiao zhenxingce* 本島佛教振興策 [Plan to Reform Taiwanese Buddhism]," *South Seas Buddhist Journal* 13, no. 1 (1935): 26-27. Original text: "佛教東漸以來。其中盛衰幾變。所謂事久弊生。勢所必然。當此思潮澎湃之際。階級與階級之競爭日甚一日。而吾臺僧伽制度。至今尚未實現。故佛教隨之衰敗。僧伽因此墮落。此完全因無佛教々育所致。使一般僧伽智識缺少。無怪被社會輕視。若不早施教育培養人材。終恐難免遭人宰割…對於蓄養青年僧徒為人師者。須負責任教育僧徒。蓋臺灣各寺。收薙僧徒者向不負育之責。以致今日之僧伽多為啞羊…蓋其最大原因在僧伽缺教育。不知大乘教法。與時代潮 流之關係也…改善方法不一。如能照上幾條。實施積極進行。藉可恢復吾臺佛教之一法也。"

[136] Examples include Yinxi 隱西, "*Taiwan fojiao bing zai nali* 臺灣佛教病在那裏 [Where is Taiwanese Buddhism's Sickness]," *South Seas Buddhist Journal* 13, no. 6 (1935): 21-23; Katō Totsudō 加藤咄堂, "*Bukkyō to kyōka undō* 佛教と教化運動 [Buddhism and the Education Movement]," *South Seas Buddhist Journal* 15, no. 2 (1937): 32-33.

laments the state of Taiwanese Buddhism for its backwardness and irrelevance. He attributes both of these to the limited educational options in Taiwan, which he states have caused the *saṃgha* to be populated by 'stupid sheep' 啞羊. Similar to Weilong, Yanjing's emphasis on education was rooted in his experiences in Japan, China and the Japanese-run Chinnan Gakurin in Taipei. After witnessing the results of these modernization efforts—as well as the caliber of monks in China and Japan—he came to realize just *how* backwards the Taiwanese *saṃgha* was in comparison. This is apparent in his language in the above passage, which specifically identifies "*our* Taiwanese monks" as the targets of his criticism and calls to "revive *our* particular Taiwanese Buddhism." However, he does not lay the blame on the "stupid sheep" themselves, but on the Buddhist leadership who he believed had failed miserably in educating their monastic disciples.

In addition to the thematic parallels between Yanjing's call to action and those voiced by modernizers in Japan and China is his emphasis on 'young' 青年 and 'talented' 材 men. In Japan, these terms denoted the Western-educated literati who were Inoue Enryō's intended audience.[137] In a Chinese context, the notion of 'men of talent' traditionally referred to individuals capable of passing the Imperial Examination[138] 科舉 who were perceived to be able

[137] J. Snodgrass, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West*, 9, 125-126, 148-149 and 245.

[138] This examination, which originated over fourteen hundred years ago, was one of the keys to social mobility throughout Chinese history. In principle, regardless of one's familial social status, one would be able to secure a position of esteem through passing the Imperial Examination. The situation on the ground, however, differed as historical records indicate that upwards social mobility first—unofficially—required class intermarriage before even taking the examination. This examination required the examinee to memorize lengthy passages from and compose essays on the Confucian Classics referred to as refers to the Four Books and Five Classics 四書五經. The Four Books being: *Great Learning* 大學, *Doctrine of the Mean* 中庸, *Analects* 論語, *Mencius* 孟子. The Five Classics are: *Classic of Poetry* 詩經, *Book of Documents* 尚書, *Book of Rites* 禮記, *Classic of Change* 易經 and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋. Eligibility to even take the examination required one to attend a select number of government-sponsored schools. As one's entry and future within the literati was dependent upon one's success or failure of this exam, there was little incentive to study subjects such as science and mathematics. However, once these education reforms took place the system was immediately changed. See Toby E. Huff, *The Rise of Early Modern Science: Islam, China and the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993; reprint, New York:

to effectively fill governmental positions. In this framework, 'talent' was not something people were entirely capable of fostering, but was partially dependent upon the innate capabilities they were born with. Thus, the Imperial Examination was not seen as a way to produce talented people, but to locate them. The educational reforms that occurred in the final years of the Qing Dynasty represented a switch from this paradigm, in which 'talent' became something to be nurtured through national, public education.[139] We can discern parallels to both of these Japanese and Chinese emphases on 'young men of talent' in Weilong's and Yanjing's articles above. It is these educated masses who were brought up during what Weilong called "a time of great upheaval" in which "scientific understanding is rapidly progressing, [ushering in] a tempest of new ideologies that reassess the value of traditional values" and Yanjing called "the era of the profusion of common knowledge" that must be convinced of Buddhism's value. This could only be accomplished by modern, like-minded individuals. As Weilong stated, "we need talented monks who can improve Buddhism, reverse its decline," echoing Yanjing's warning to his Dharma-kin, "No wonder we are not taken seriously by the masses. Unless we can hastily produce men of great talent, I fear that, in the end, we will be unable to avoid [Buddhism's] extinction."

Yanjing's attempts at ushering in the First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival through educational means were embodied by his career. After returning to Taiwan, he eventually served as the abbot of three different Buddhist monasteries: Kaiyuan Temple 開元寺 in Tainan, Tzuyun

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Cambridge University Press, 2007), 278; Rowe, *China's Last Empire*, 260; Rui Wang, *The Chinese Imperial Examination System: An Annotated Bibliography* (London: Scarecrow Press, 2013), 7.

[139] See W. K. Cheng, "Enlightenment and Unity: Language Reformism in Late Qing China," *Modern Asian Studies* 35 no. 2 (2001): 474; Ya-pei Kuo, "Redeploying Confucius: The Imperial State Dreams of the Nation, 1902-1911," in *Chinese Religiosities: Afflictions of Modernity and State Formation*, ed. Mayfair Mei-hui Yang (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2008), 74.

Temple 楠梓慈雲寺 in Kaohsiung, Chao Tian Temple 朝天宮 in Yunlin 雲林, and finally the monastery where he originally became a monk, Zhuxi Temple. It was at this first and final monastery that he eventually officiated at Wuguang's Buddhist conversion. In 1959, Yanjing founded the Kaiyuan Buddhist Academy 開元佛學院 and later opened a Buddhist library to offer monks an education similar to that which he had received in Japan and China.[140] After his death, a monastic scholarship—which is still sometimes awarded—was set up in his name with funds that he had entrusted to his secretary for safekeeping.[141] That secretary was Wuguang. Despite Wuguang's iconoclastic approach, this relationship reveals that he lent his voice to the same modernist discourse that Yanjing had contributed to.

Yanjing's and Weilong's calls for reform were not only born out of their experiences in Japan and China. They also were motivated by historical factors related to Japanese colonization, the most poignant of which was the implementation of anti-superstition campaigns. Now that we have seen the ways in which Yanjing and like-minded Taiwanese Buddhist reformers envisioned the future of Taiwanese Buddhism, let us take a look at the historical factors that gave birth to their vision.

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[140] See Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, *The Year Book of Buddhist Colleges and Buddhist Institutes in Taiwan, The 1st Issue* 臺灣佛學院所教育年鑑創刊號, (Taipei: Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2002), 321-329. Online: http://www.chibs.edu.tw/ch_html/others/college/mainframe.htm (accessed Jan. 15, 2016). Also see Heng-Ching Shih, "Buddhist Spirituality in Modern Taiwan," in *Buddhist Spirituality*, vol. 2, *Later China, Korea, Japan, and the Modern World*, eds. Takeuchi Yoshinori et al. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass; First Indian Edition; 2003), 419-420.

[141] As told in Wuguang, "*Yanjing heshang shiji*," 68-71.

Section II: The Revival's Context, Japanese Colonialism (1895-1945)

Taiwan was transferred from Chinese to Japanese control at the end of the first Sino-Japanese war with the signing of the Shimonoseki Treaty 下関條約. The soldiers and administrative officials who were immediately stationed in Taiwan were accompanied by Buddhists clerics who had enlisted in the military. Their official mission was to tend to the spiritual needs of the Japanese who were stationed there. To ensure that their needs would be adequately met, the Japanese exported clergy from a wide range of Japanese denominations.[142] The representatives of these sects also came to expand the member base of their particular school and lineage.[143] These missionary activities were encouraged by the government, as it saw them as a means of strengthening Japanese influence.[144] At this time, the Japanese government viewed Buddhism as a possible agent in its expansionist ambitions not only in Taiwan, but also into the Chinese provinces of Fujian and Guangdong, from where the majority of Taiwan's ethnically Chinese inhabitants originally came.[145] This attitude was thanks to reformers such as Inoue Enryō, who had framed 'Japanese' Buddhism as a national asset that could be used as a tool for Japanese national progress.[146] Immediately after arriving in Taiwan, these sects began to compete with one another for new devotees. This sectarian competition was rooted in more

[142] C. Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan*, 34. These denominations included: Sōtō and Rinzai's Myōshinji sect of Zen, the Hongan-ji 本願寺 and Ōtani 大谷 branches of Jōdo Shinshū, Nichiren 日蓮宗, six sects of Shingon and Tendai. See Matsukane Kimimasa 松金公正, "The Propagation of Japanese Buddhism in Taiwan during the Japanese Occupation 日據時期日本佛教之台灣佈教: 以寺院數及信徒人數的演變為考察中心," *Yunkuang Journal of Buddhist Studies* 3, (1999): 191-221; Ohno, "Appearance of the Buddhism Elites," 12.

[143] Ohno, "Appearance of the Buddhism Elites," 12.

[144] Chengpang Lee, "Shadow of the Colonial Power: Kominka and the Failure of the Temple Reorganization Campaign," *Studies on Asia* 2, no. 1 (2012): 130.

[145] C. Jones, "Religion in Taiwan at the End of the Japanese Colonial Period," in *Religion in Modern Taiwan: Tradition and Innovation in a Changing Society*, Volume 1&2 A-Z, edited by Philip Clart & Charles B. Jones (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 20.

[146] See this dissertation's Introduction, Section III, "Buddhist Modernism: From Disenchantment to Reenchantment."

clearly demarcated denominational categories that existed in Japan than those in China or Taiwan that categorized temples according to sect.[147]

In terms of how these Japanese Buddhists interacted with the native Taiwanese Buddhists, scholars typically periodize their relationship according to three stages: Exploration and Alliance (1895-1915), Cooperation and Development (1915-1937), and the Kōminka Movement 皇民化運動 (1937-1945).[148] Briefly, the first is characterized by a hands-off, *laissez faire* approach taken by the Japanese government when they preferred not to interfere with Taiwanese religion. The second is typified by increasing collaboration between the Taiwanese and Japanese Buddhists, and was instigated by a religious uprising against Japanese rule. The third and final stage of this relationship, the Kōminka Movement, entailed the Japanese exerting extreme pressure upon all forms of religion in Taiwan in order to make them more 'Japanese,' and modernizing them as part of an empire-wide effort to strengthen the Japanese military. As Japan was considered 'modern' and Japanese Buddhism considered 'Japanese,' Japanifying Taiwanese religion entailed simultaneously modernizing it, and vice versa. To achieve this goal, the Japanese adopted two different tactics. The first was well-planned, non-violent, and coincided with the Cooperation and Development stage mentioned above. The second coincided with the Kōminka Movement and was exactly the opposite: haphazard, rushed and bloody. Thus, the difference between these two stages represent different disenchantment techniques the Japanese employed to transform Taiwanese Buddhism into modern, Japanese Buddhism. During the Cooperation and Development stage, the Japanese colonizers adopted techniques similar to

[147] Huang, "Traditional Buddhist Monasteries," 147.

[148] See Han Zheng-zong 闞正宗, "The Characteristics and Research on Buddhism in Japanese Colonial Taiwan 日治台灣佛教的特點與研究," *Yuan Kuang Journal of Buddhist Studies* 18 (2012): 97. Online: http://www.ykbi.edu.tw/modules/journal/data_18/journal_18_4.pdf (accessed Feb. 22, 2016).

those promoted by Meiji Buddhist reformers such as Inoue Enryō via education and charitable social interaction. During the Kōminka movement, they chose to raze institutions that they viewed as superstitious to the ground.

My presentation of the historical and ideological backdrop of the First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival is structured in accordance with this threefold periodization. As we will see, the Japanification/modernization efforts were beneficial to monastic Buddhism and detrimental to Zhaijiao, Daoism and Taiwanese folk religion. As noted, the Japanese Buddhists considered Taiwanese monastic Buddhism to be a form of 'religion,' rather than an example of 'superstition.' This was because Taiwan's full-fledged monks had received ordination at Yongquan Temple, which propagated both the Caodong 曹洞 and Linji 臨済 lineages[149] of Chinese Chan, from which Japanese Sōtō and Rinzai Zen respectively sprang.[150] Thus, their faith occupied the neutral category within the secular-religious-superstitious trinary and was therefore considered largely acceptable. Because of this, practitioners of Zhaijiao, Daoism and Taiwanese folk religion aligned themselves with these lineages in order to save themselves from the Japanese anti-superstitious campaigns. Nevertheless, differences between Japanese and Taiwanese sectarian consciousness and monastic practices produced tensions that audibly rumbled throughout all three periods.

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[149] Jian Canteng, "*Rijushidai taiwan beibu caodongzong dafapaide jueqi-juelichanshi yu dahu fayunsipai* 日據時代台灣北部曹洞宗大法派的崛起: 覺力禪師與大湖法雲寺派 [The Sudden Emergence of Sōtō in Taiwan during the Japanese Occupation: Chan Master Jueli and the Dahu Fayun Temple Lineage]," *Yuan Kuang Journal of Buddhist Studies* 3 (1996): 57. Online: http://ccbs.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-AN/an245.htm (accessed Feb. 23, 2016).

[150] Caodong/Sōtō and Linji/Rinzai are two of the most dominant Chan/Zen sects. Although there are scholarly disputes concerning the nature of these sectarian distinctions, they can be traced to a factional split that took place in the twelfth century. See Mario Poceski, *Ordinary Mind as the Way: The Hongzhou School and the Growth of Chan Buddhism* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 112-113; Morten Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen: The Dispute over Enlightenment and the Formation of Chan Buddhism in Song-dynasty China*, Kuroda Institute Studies in East Asian Buddhism, 22 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 57.

Exploration and Alliance (1895-1915)

During the early period, the Japanese government largely adopted a 'live and let live' arrangement with Taiwanese religion. However, due to the expansionary ambitions and denominational competition mentioned above, within monastic circles they did suasively promote collaboration by offering specific incentives. If a Taiwanese monk chose to officially identify himself as a member of a Japanese Buddhist denomination, he was awarded with governmental registration and issued a special identification card. This had three tangible benefits. During the first twenty years of Japanese rule, the colonial government suppressed numerous small uprisings, many of which were organized by religious communities. Affiliating with a Japanese denomination and obtaining a government-issued ID card—that one could produce on the spot—helped Taiwanese monks to avoid the suspicions of the Japanese authorities.[151] Japanese affiliation additionally opened up the possibility to receive university education in Japan. Many Buddhists recognized these benefits and took advantage of them, which led to an initial spread of Japanese-affiliated Taiwanese Buddhists when numerous temples became associated with, and partly managed by, Japanese Buddhist denominations.[152] The most successful Japanese denomination was Sōtō. Sōtō's immediate success was due to its shared ancestry with Chan's Caodong lineage and the tonsure familial relationship upon which Buddhist sectarian consciousness in Taiwan was constructed.

[151] A picture of such a card can be seen in Ohno, "Appearance of the Buddhism Elites," 14.

[152] Cheng Shu-Hui 鄭淑惠, "Study on the Inheritance and Development of Tainan's Zhuxi Temple 臺南府城竹溪寺傳承發展史之研究" (MA thesis, Hsuan Chuang University, 2012), 53.

Five Great Buddhist Lineages		
Lineage	**Sanctuary**	**Location**
Kaiyuan 開元	Kaiyuan Temple 開元寺	Tainan 台南
Mount Yuemei 月眉山	Lingquan Temple 靈泉寺	Keelung 基隆
Mount Guanyin 觀音山	Lingyun Temple 凌雲寺	Taipei County 台北縣
Fayun 法雲	Fayun Temple 法雲寺	Miaoli Country 苗栗縣
Mount Dagang 大崗山	Chaofeng Temple 超峰寺	Kaohsiung County 高雄縣

Figure 3: Taiwan's Five Great Buddhist Lineages, their sanctuaries and locations.

Monastic Taiwanese Buddhism was dominated by the 'Five Great Buddhist Lineages' 五大法派 based out of the 'Five Great Ancestral Sanctuaries' 五祖師道場 (see figure 3).[153] These lineages represent the proliferation of 'tonsure-families' 剃度宗派 established by monks who had received full-monastic ordination at Yongquan Temple and then immigrated or returned to Taiwan.[154] If a prominent abbot with many disciples decided to switch his temple's Chinese Chan affiliation to a Japanese Zen affiliation, other temples whose abbots were his tonsured disciples followed suit and their temples' affiliations—and all of their resident monastics—were

[153] Often, these are referred to as the "Four Great Lineages," omitting Kaiyuan. This is due to Kaiyuan's incorporation into the Dagang lineage after the colonial period. See Kan Zhengzong 闞正宗, *Taiwan fojiao yibainian* 臺灣佛教一百年 [*One Hundred Years of Taiwanese Buddhism*] (Taipei: Dongda, 1999), 88.

[154] Tonsure families have been a key feature of Chinese Buddhism since the Song Dynasty. When a devotee leaves his family through 'renunciation' 出家 (Skt. *pravrajyā*) to become a tonsured monk, he enters into a new familial structure based on the officiator of his tonsure ceremony. Upon having one's head shaved the devotee's tonsure officiator becomes his 'master-father' 師父 while other monks who were tonsured by the same officiator become his 'master-brothers' 師兄. Because of the loyalty these tonsure-kin held for their master-father and each other, loosely affiliated temple networks were born out of these lineages by the founding of new temples and the incorporation of preexisting ones into the abbot's particular tonsure-family. These ties of tonsure-kinship are the basis for the Five Great Lineages. See Marcus Bingenheimer, "Chinese Buddhism Unbound - Rebuilding and Redefining Chinese Buddhism on Taiwan," in *Buddhism in global perspective*, eds. Ichijo Ogawa et al. (Mumbai: Somaiya Publications, 2003), 129; Schlütter, *How Zen Became Zen*, 57; Holmes Welch, *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism: 1900-1950* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 247-302.

consequentially changed as well. This meant that persuading a number of temples to affiliate with a Japanese denomination was accomplished in one fell swoop simply by persuading a single abbot of a large temple to do so. The tonsure-kinship shared by the Five Great Ancestral Sanctuaries and smaller temples throughout Taiwan thus provided the perfect medium by which Japanese Buddhism could spread across the island.

Although there were benefits for Buddhists to actively cooperate with the Japanese, there were still efforts to maintain the Chinese character of their religion and limit the influence of Japanese Buddhist missionaries. This can be seen in the establishment of ordination platforms, which enabled the Taiwanese monks to give their disciples full monastic ordination on Taiwanese soil, rather than sending them to Yongquan Temple or to Japan. As mentioned above, it was impossible to receive full monastic ordination in Taiwan prior to the Japanese colonial period. Due to differences between the monastic regulations of Chinese and Japanese Buddhists—the former were not allowed to marry, consume alcohol or meat while the latter were—Japanese Buddhism was considered less than valid by much of the Taiwanese Buddhist establishment.[155] Thus, despite their official affiliation, the majority of Buddhist tonsure monks preferred not to receive any form of Japanese Buddhist monastic ordination.[156] As the Taiwanese Buddhists suddenly found themselves separated from Yongquan Temple not only by dangerous waters but also a newly drawn international border, they were at a loss how to propagate their form of monastic Buddhism. In response, during the 1920s and 1930s Taiwanese Buddhists

[155] These relatively lax regulations were products of the Meiji-era push to modernize Buddhism. See Richard M. Jaffe, "Meiji Religious Policy, Sōtō Zen, and the Clerical Marriage Problem," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 25, no. 1-2 (1998): 45-85.

[156] C. Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan*, xvi.

began giving full monastic ordination on Taiwanese soil in accordance with the Chinese regulations of Yongquan Temple.[157]

This effort to limit the influence of Japanese missionaries can also be seen in historical details closely related to Wuguang. Wuguang and his master-father, Yanjing, were members of the Kaiyuan Lineage based in Kaiyuan Temple in Tainan. During this first period of the Japanese colonial era, Kaiyuan Temple first became affiliated with Sōtō but then switched its affiliation to Rinzai Myōshinji. This switch occurred around the end of this first phase of the colonial period when Kaiyuan Temple's recently appointed abbot, Chuanfang 傳芳 (a.k.a. Qingyuan 清源, secular name Chen Chunmu 陳春木; 1855-1918),[158] traveled to Taipei to meet Nagatani Jien 長谷慈圓 (1880-1918), the then abbot of Taipei's Rinzai Temple 臺北臨濟護國禪寺.[159] The outcome of this meeting was that the Kaiyuan Temple would abandon its Sōtō affiliations for Rinzai Myōshinji. This initiated a cooperative relationship that would last throughout and even after the colonial period. The reason behind this switch is said to be opportunistic and practical. Although Sōtō affiliation awarded a certain amount of protection, it had offered Kaiyuan Temple little else as the Sōtō administration did not invest as much in Kaiyuan Temple as they did in the other Great Ancestral Sanctuaries.[160] After this, Kaiyuan Temple became a nexus of both Taiwanese-Japanese Buddhist cooperation as well as the Chinese efforts to distinguish

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[157] These early ordinations are the topic of Charles B. Jones, "The Establishment of Chinese Ordination Platforms in Taiwan during the Japanese Period 1895-1945," (paper presented at the conference "Bordering the Borderless: Faces of Modern Buddhism in East Asia" Durham, NC, Oct. 4-5, 2013).

[158] Zeng Jinglai 曾景來, "*Kaiyuanchansi jilu* 開元禪寺記略 [Records of Kaiyuan Chan/Zen Temple]," *South Seas Buddhist Journal* 15, no.12, (1937): 40-43.

[159] The following details can be found in Wang Jianchuan 王見川, "A Brief Investigation on Tai-nan Kai Yen Monastery during the Japanese Occupation (1896-1924) 略論日據時期的台南開元寺," *Yuan Kuang Journal of Buddhist Studies* 4 (1999): 279-291. Online: http://ccbs.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-BJ010/bj99910.htm (accessed Jan. 15, 2016).

[160] Ibid, 288.

themselves from the Japanese Buddhists. This can be seen in the revitalization efforts of Chuanfang.

Chuanfang was a native of Tainan. He had studied Buddhism at Kaiyuan Temple before going to China in 1881. He spent thirty years there, much of which at Yongquan Temple, before returning to Taiwan in 1911. Chuanfang was the master-father of a number of important Taiwanese monks, including his immediate Kaiyuan abbot predecessor, Xuanqing 玄精 (secular name Cai Chan 蔡漳, 1875-1921).[161] Chuanfang's student, Xuanqing, invited his master-father to return to Taiwan and assume his own post in order to revitalize Kaiyuan Temple. As Chuanfang had spent the prior thirty years in China, he had never experienced Japanese colonialism nor its effects on Taiwanese Buddhism. Thus, the Taiwan that Chuanfang returned to was completely different than the one that he had left. In displeasure with the growing influence of Japanese Buddhism, he drafted a document entitled 'Kaiyuan Temple Regulations'[162] 開元寺例規 that stated all official offices at Kaiyuan Temple could only be held by his 'Dharma-relatives' 法類, another term for tonsure-kin.[163] This definitively excluded Japanese Buddhists from holding official positions at Kaiyuan Temple and thereby limited their influence. This can be seen in the experience of Tōkai Gisei 東海宜誠 (often incorrectly rendered 'Higashiumi Gisei'; 1892-1989).[164] Tōkai was an extremely active Japanese Buddhist missionary who

[161] Although abbots usually succeed their teachers rather than their students, Chuanfang's immediate predecessor was one of his tonsured disciples. Chuanfang left Taiwan for China before ever becoming the abbot of Kaiyuan Temple and only returned when his student Xuanqing, who was the abbot of Kaiyuan Temple at the time, invited Chuanfang to return and assume his own post. See ibid, 285.

[162] Temple-specific regulations are quite common throughout East Asia. See Helen J. Baroni, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Zen Buddhism* (New York: Rosen Pub. Group, 2002), 338.

[163] The regulations and return of Chuanfang are recorded in He Mianshan 何绵山, "The Impact of Yongquan Temple upon the Sect of Taiwan Kaiyuan Temple 鼓山涌泉寺对台湾开元寺派的影响," *Journal of Minjiang University* 30, no. 3 (2009): 10-14.

[164] This incorrect Romanization has been noted by Yu-shuang, "Japanese Influence on Buddhism in Taiwan", *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies Website*, http://jocbs.org/index.php/jocbs/

encountered animosity from Kaiyuan monks after he moved to Tainan in 1923 and attempted to involve himself in the affairs of Kaiyuan Temple. As Kaiyuan Temple was officially part of Rinzai's Myōshinji sect, his involvement seemed entirely appropriate. However, he encountered fierce opposition from the monastery's leadership. The Taiwanese monks were able to conveniently justify this resistance by relying on Chuanfang's regulations that limited administrative positions to Chuanfang's tonsure-kin. This experience motivated Tōkai to leave Tainan and relocate to Kaohsiung.[165]

Cooperation and Development (1915-1931)

The friction between Taiwanese and Japanese Buddhist monks visible in the resistance that Tōkai encountered at Kaiyuan Temple was minor in comparison to tensions between the Japanese authorities and non-monastic religious devotees. These tensions had been festering beneath the surface, with minor periodic eruptions throughout the first twenty years of Japanese rule. It was the boiling over of these tensions that brought an end to the colonial authorities 'live and let live' approach to Taiwanese religion and forced the Japanese authorities to adopt a different, more involved approach. This new approach is what distinguishes the second period from the first.

The second period was triggered by the Tapani Incident 噍吧哖事 of 1915. This was a revolt against Japanese rule that lasted for over a month and took the lives of over 1,000 Japanese and Taiwanese.[166] Even though the rebels' military might paled in comparison to that

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article/view/77 (accessed Nov. 27, 2015). Many works in English and even Chinese with English titles use the incorrect Romanization.

[165] Jian Canteng 江燦騰, "Gisei Higashiumi and the Development of Buddhism in Gaoxiong during the Period of Japanese Rule 日治時期高雄佛教發展與東海宜誠," *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 16 (2003): 217-225. Online: http://www.chibs.edu.tw/ch_html/chbj/16/chbj1608.htm (accessed Feb. 22, 2016).

[166] Paul R. Katz, *When Valleys Turned Blood Red: the Ta-pa-ni Incident in Colonial Taiwan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), xi.

of the Japanese, "They were not a rabble but were organized into units possessing their own uniforms and commanders."[167] This rebellion was planned in a Zhaijiao temple and had distinctively religious elements. As Charles Jones states, the leaders of the revolt "took up religious practices and rhetoric in preparing for the uprising...they all adopted a vegetarian diet, performed rituals to rally the Daoist celestial Generals and their spirit armies to their cause, wore bullet-deflecting talismans, and so on."[168] The brutality and religious component of this uprising sent shockwaves through the Japanese administration. In order to ensure that this scenario did not repeat itself, they revamped their leadership and took a much more hands-on role in Taiwanese religion than they previously had. They established the Office of Shrines and Temples 社寺課 to investigate and thereby regulate Taiwanese religion.[169] Two investigations into Taiwan's religious traditions were conducted. The first was unsuccessful and was called off.[170] The second one, spearheaded by the Office of Shrines and Temples director, Marui Keijirō 丸井圭治郎 (1870–1934), produced much greater results that were published in his book *Report of the Investigation into Religion in Taiwan* 臺灣宗教調查報告書.[171]

The religious component of this rebellion put all forms of Taiwanese religion on the Japanese radar. The institutions and patrons of these religions were automatically viewed as potential threats. In order to escape suspicion, the Taiwanese devotees formed island-wide religious associations whose charters demanded that their members pledge not to engage in

[167] Paul R. Katz, "Governmentality and Its Consequences in Colonial Taiwan: A Case Study of the Ta-pa-ni Incident of 1915," *Journal of Asian Studies* 64, no. 2 (2005): 389.

[168] C. Jones, "Religion in Taiwan at the End of the Japanese Colonial Period," 21.

[169] C. Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan*, 75.

[170] C. Jones, "Religion in Taiwan at the End of the Japanese Colonial Period," 22.

[171] Marui Keijirō, *Taiwan shūkyō chōsa hōkokusho* 臺灣宗教調查報告書 [Report of the Investigation into Taiwanese Religion] (Taihoku [Taipei]: Taiwan Sōtokufu, 1919).

rebellious activities.[172] Joining these associations put the Five Ancestral Lineages "under the command of Japanese Buddhism."[173] Despite the island-wide nature of these organizations, they were aligned along Japanese religious sectarian lines. As already mentioned, the different Japanese religious denominations that came to Taiwan were in competition with one another. This competition similarly permeated these Taiwanese associations. Marui recognized this drawback and, together with Taiwanese leaders of monastic Buddhism and Zhaijiao, formed the South Seas Buddhist Association (SSBA), which was intended to be a non-sectarian organization.[174] It was the journal of the SSBA in which Yanjing's article declaring that Taiwanese monastics were "stupid sheep," as well as Weilong's response thereto were both published. It is also where we find monks calling for a "Taiwanese Buddhist Revival."

Although the relationship between Japanese and Taiwanese Buddhism during this middle section of the Japanese colonial period is popularly referred to as 'Cooperation and Development,' a more nuanced title would be 'Disenchantment through Reeducation.' To appreciate this, the reader must recall that according to Japanese ideological typology of this time, 'Japanese' and 'modern,' were synonymous and juxtaposed with a category comprised of 'non-Japanese Asian' and 'superstitious.' Since this second period was incited by a revolt against Japanese rule, as one would suspect the emphasis on education at this time was to train the Taiwanese to be more like the Japanese. In 1919, just four years after the Tapani incident, secondary and higher education opportunities with the aim to "create faithful Japanese followers" were opened up to the Taiwanese.[175] Another example of this emphasis on education

[172] C. Jones, "Religion in Taiwan at the End of the Japanese Colonial Period," 21.
[173] Hsuan-Li Wang, "Gushan: The Formation of a Chan Lineage during the Seventeenth Century and Its Spread to Taiwan" (PhD diss, Columbia University, 2014), 211-212.
[174] C. Jones, "Religion in Taiwan at the End of the Japanese Colonial Period," 21.
[175] W. G. Beasley, *Japanese Imperialism, 1894-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 147.

as a means of Japanization/modernization is attested to by the writings of Nagatani Jien, the abbot of the Rinzai Temple in Taipei, whom Chuanfang of Kaiyuan Temple met with in order to switch Kaiyuan's Japanese denominational affiliation from Sōtō to Rinzai Myōshinji. He was also the founder of the Chinnan Gakurin, the Rinzai academy in Taipei where Wuguang's master-father, Yanjing, would eventually study. Nagatani blamed Taiwanese resistance to Japanese rule on the superstitious nature of Taiwanese Buddhism and stated that one of his core goals was to "preach orthodox Buddhism in order to eliminate the superstitions [of the Taiwanese people]."[176] Here, Nagatani concretely articulates the typology I just outlined, in which 'superstition' is juxtaposed with 'orthodox Buddhism' and the former is depicted as an enemy of Japan, while the latter as its ally. This statement demonstrates how the suppression of 'superstition'—an element of modernization—was considered an essential aspect of keeping Taiwan under Japanese rule and essentially 'Japanifying' it. Thus, educating Taiwanese religious adherents—of all kinds—entailed making their religions more 'modern' and 'Japanese' through making them less 'Chinese' and 'superstitious.'

This trend is further attested to by the ways in which the Japanese authorities imposed their own sectarian categories upon the different forms of Taiwanese religion. These clearly defined borders were imposed not only upon orthodox Buddhism, but on Zhaijiao as well. Due to a colonial crackdown in the wake of the Tapani incident, Zhaijiao was forced to redefine its identity from an independent faith to a form of lay Buddhism.[177] As Zhaijiao laid outside of any

[176] Nagatani Jien 長谷慈圓, "*Zhennanxue liao sheli chenqing shu* 鎮南學寮設立陳情書 [Petition for Establishing the Chinnan School]," *Shōbōrin* 正法輪 378 (1917): 9-11, as quoted and translated from the Japanese to Chinese in Shi Huey-yen 釋慧嚴, "A Further Look at Buddhist Education in Taiwan during the Period of Japanese Rule 再檢視日治時代台灣佛教界從事的教育事業," *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 16 (2003): 192.

[177] Philip Clart, "Phoenix and the Mother: The Interaction of Spirit Writing Cults and Popular Sects in Taiwan," *Journal of Chinese Religions* 25 (1997): 11.

established Japanese sectarian means of definition, this identification essentially retrofitted it into the Japanese worldview.

This sectarian imposition can also be seen in the career of Nukariya Kaiten 忽滑谷快天 (1867-1934). Nukariya, a Sōtō Zen monk and friend of D. T. Suzuki (1870-1966), was the president of Komazawa University from 1921-1934.[178] He was the author of the second book on Zen ever to be published in English, *Zen: The Religion of the Samurai: A Study of Zen Philosophy and Discipline in China and Japan*, which he wrote while in residence at Harvard University.[179] He was very active in the dissemination of Meiji-era modernism among the Taiwanese Buddhist elites and traveled to Taiwan multiple times. In his writings and lectures, Nukariya presented an idealized vision of a 'Pure Zen' 純禪 that was devoid of not only superstitious elements, but even elements of non-Zen schools of Buddhism. One school in particular, Pure Land 淨土, was seen as a possible contaminate that needed to be eliminated. This can be seen in the following words written by Nukariya:

> The blooming prosperity of Zen was over towards the end of the Southern Sung dynasty (1127-1279), when it began to fade, not being bitten by the frost of oppression from without, but being weakened by rottenness within. As early as the Sung dynasty (960-1126) the worship of Buddha Amitabha stealthily found its way among Zen believers, who could not fully realize the Spirit of Shakya Muni, and to satisfy these people the amalgamation of the two faiths was attempted by some Zen masters.[180]

According to Nukariya, the Tang Dynasty was China's 'Golden Age of Zen'[181] that was brought to a close by Chan monks incorporating the practice of 'Reciting the name of Amitābha' 念佛. This practice was popularized by the Chinese Buddhist monk Tanluan 曇鸞 (Jpn. Donran; 476-

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[178] Wang, "Gushan," 234.

[179] Robert H. Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," in *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 114.

[180] Nukariya Kaiten, *Zen: The Religion of the Samurai: A Study of Zen Philosophy and Discipline in China and Japan*, Luzac's Oriental Religious Series, 4 (London: Luzac & Co., 1913), 23-24.

[181] Ibid, 21.

542) and involves reciting the mantra 'Homage to Amitābha Buddha' 南無阿彌陀佛 with the intent of being reborn into Amitābha's paradisiacal Pure Land.[182] Although presented as historical fact, the devolution of Chinese Chan that Nukariya retells has little to do with history and everything to do with imposing Japanese Buddhist sectarian boundaries onto Chinese forms of Buddhism. Due to autocratic state control, Buddhism in Japan has been organized into different schools based on lineage and orthopraxis[183] since its inception.[184] This, however, has not ever been the Chinese situation, where there never existed an institutionally independent Chan[185] or Pure Land[186] sect before the modern era. Since the Tang Dynasty, the dominant form of Chinese Buddhist orthopraxy has consisted of a combination of practices that in Japan would be associated somewhat exclusively with Zen, Pure Land or esoteric Buddhism.[187] In fact, this very difference between Japanese and Chinese Buddhism led to a certain level of apprehension from the Japanese Buddhist establishment directed towards Chinese Chan masters who traveled to Japan during the Togukawa after the collapse of the Ming Dynasty, whom they viewed as representatives of a contaminated form of Chan Buddhism.[188] In an effort to eradicate this practice from Taiwanese Chan, during one of his many trips to Taiwan Nukariya went so far as

[182] This practice is neither monolithic nor unidirectional. For historical, doctrinal and ritual intricacies related to this practice that lay outside the scope of this dissertation see Charles B. Jones, "Toward a Typology of *Nien-fo*: a Study in Methods of Buddha-Invocation in Chinese Pure Land Buddhism," *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies* 3 (2001): 219-239. Online: http://www.shin-ibs.edu/documents/pwj3-3/10JS3.pdf (accessed Jan. 15, 2016).

[183] See this dissertation's Introduction, Section III, "Buddhist 'Schools' and 'Lineages.'

[184] Sharf, *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 8-9.

[185] McRae, *Seeing Through Zen*, 122.

[186] Robert H. Sharf, "On Pure Land Buddhism and Ch'an/Pure Land Syncretism in Medieval China," *T'oung Pao* 88, nos. 4-5 (2002): 282-331.

[187] It must be ancestrd that, as with all rigid sectarian boundaries, lived Buddhism is often more fluid than these ideal categories. Although commonly classified as a 'Pure Land practice' in Japan, the chanting of Amitābha's name has been practiced by adherents of Japanese Shingon and Tendai for centuries. See Hendrik Hendrik van der Veere, *A Study into the Thought of Kōgyō Daishi Kakuban: With a Translation of His Gorin Kuji Myō Himitsushaku* (PhD diss, Leiden University, 1998), 156-158.

[188] See Sharf, "On Pure Land Buddhism and Ch'an/Pure Land Syncretism in Medieval China."

to chastise the monks of Kaiyuan Temple—the head temple of Wuguang's Chan lineage—for their engaging in this practice.[189]

Interestingly, Wuguang notes both the rigid sectarian demarcations as well as the negative attitude of Japanese Zen thinkers towards the presence of Amitābha chanting in Chinese Chan in the following passage:

> Regular Buddhists, such as Japanese Zen devotees are not allowed to recite Amitābha's name. Reciting Amitābha's name is prohibited in Zen halls. Why? They say that it will defile the Buddha hall and people who practice this recitation must wash their bodies thrice. Is Amitābha a defilement? Amitābha is a pure teaching lord, how can you say he is a defilement? It is not the Buddha that defiles, it is the heart of man that defiles. Every religion has its head mountain, Shingon, Zen, Amitābha chanters, Pure Land, etc. Why do they have their head mountains? Because they fear that another sect will take their followers. This is why the idea of practicing to go to the Western Paradise exists. Without which, would one go to hell? This is not the meaning of practices aimed at going to the Western Paradise. Japanese Shingon also has its 'mountainism' because they fear that other denominations will take their followers from them. This is wrong.[190]

According to Wuguang here, what lies at the heart of the Japanese Zen castigation of Pure Land practices is what is referred to as 'mountainism' 山頭主義. This term evokes the image of a mountain to refer to a sect's 'head temple' 本山 (literally 'root mountain'). Head temples function as the seats of Buddhist sectarian affiliation. Mountainism is not a purely Japanese phenomenon, but one that describes how the average Buddhist sect in East Asia cares "about only its own benefits, shows concern only for its own development, and values only its own

[189] See Wang, "Gushan," 237.

[190] Wuguang, *Amituo mi shi* 阿彌陀祕釋 [(Commentary to Kakuban's) Esoteric Explanation of Amitābha], 1998. Online: http://www.china2551.org/Article/tmwh/tmzl/200912/10395.html (accessed Jan. 16, 2016), Original text: "普通信佛的人，如日本禪宗的信徒是不可念佛，禪宗的佛堂是不可念阿彌陀佛，為什麼呢？ 他們認為念佛會令佛堂污穢，念佛的人需用大水洗身三遍。阿彌陀佛是不是這般污穢呢？阿彌陀佛是清淨教主，為何說是污穢呢？並不是佛污穢，是人的心污穢。山頭主義宗教有個別的山頭，有真言宗、禪宗、念佛宗、淨土宗等山頭。為什麼有山頭呢？因為怕別派搶走自派的信徒，故此有教修去西方淨土的觀念，是否信這便可不用去地獄呢？修西方淨土並不是這個意思。日本的真言宗也有山頭主義，也是怕別派搶走自家的信徒，這是不對的。"

leadership."[191] It is this sectarian competition that Wuguang blames for the Japanese attempts to eradicate the recitation of Amitābha's name from Taiwanese Chan practice.

Through an interesting doctrinal twist, the Japanese efforts to decontaminate Zen from Amitābha chanting were also rooted in disenchantment. The sectarian distinction demarcated by chanting Amitābha's name is justified along the 'self-power/other-power' 自力他力 dichotomy. These two categories have been well established since the fifth century in China, and came to be used in Japan as means to justify sectarian borders.[192] Briefly, the 'power' 力 taxonomized is soteriological and relates to whether a practitioner can achieve salvation through his own meritorious efforts or must rely on a form of grace of a buddha. Denominations that place a greater emphasis on other-power perform practices intended to initiate a graceful response from a deity. Those that emphasize self-power concentrate their efforts on accumulating merit and internal cultivation. The practice of chanting Amitābha's name is often categorized as the former while Chan/Zen meditation is categorized as the latter. Although seemingly unrelated, Meiji-era Zen admonishments of the inclusion of Pure Land practices were connected to the eradication of superstition. This can be seen in an article written by Marui that was published in the SSBJ in 1926:

> Daoism holds a particular power that controls the religion of the Taiwanese people, but this Daoism can be categorized into two sects: southern and northern. The northern head temple is in Beijing and is called Quanzhen Daoism which relies on self-power…In contrast is the southern sect which focuses on fortune telling and relies on apotropaic technology based on other-power aimed at achieving longevity. Because of this, they are extremely superstitious.[193]

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[191] Lu, "The Performance Practice of Buddhist *Baiqi*," 245-246.

[192] James L. Ford, "Jokei and the Rhetoric of 'Other-Power' and 'Easy Practice' in Medieval Japanese Buddhism," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 29, no. 1-2 (2002): 68.

[193] Marui Keijirō, "*Shūkyō-teki yori mitaru Taiwan no minzoku-sei ni tsuite* 宗教的より見たる臺灣の民族性に就て [Concerning a Religious Perspective on the Nature of the Taiwanese]," *South Seas Buddhist Journal* 4, no. 6 (1926): 2-4. Original text: "斯の如く道教は臺灣人の信仰を支配する大勢力を持ってゐるが、此の道教には南北の二派がある。北派の本山は北京にあって全真教と呼び、謂はゞ自力主義の方で…之に對する

The bifurcation Marui presents here—although not explicitly stated—is between the Quanzhen sect of Daoism 全真道 and an amalgamation of Zhaijiao, Daoism and Chinese folk religious groups. These latter, southern groups would have in fact been closer to the faith of the majority of Taiwanese practitioners as their ancestry stemmed from southern, rather than northern, China. The Quanzhen sect is one of the most successful Daoist sects in China whose head temple in Beijing that Marui references is the White Cloud Monastery 白雲觀 that was founded in the Tang Dynasty. Although the tenets of Quanzhen do not greatly differ from other forms of Daoism,[194] it is popularly perceived as a more modern form of Daoism due to intentional modernization efforts aimed at saving it from the category of 'superstition.'[195] Marui's perception of Quanzhen Daoism as a modern form of Daoism in contrast to "extremely superstitious" Fujian and Taiwanese religion was undoubtedly rooted in these Quanzhen modernization efforts.

More importantly, this passage shows us that Marui wielded the self/other-power binary to determine whether a religious tradition should be placed into the category of 'religion' or 'superstition' within the secular-religious-superstitious trinary. Furthermore, this exact distinction is also found in Marui's earlier work that he wrote after conducting his investigation into Taiwanese religion. There, he draws exactly the same distinction between northern

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南派の方は, 命を主とする他力主義の方で、符呪科教によって壽福を求める事を目的とし、隨って非常に迷信的である。"

[194] Vincent Goossaert, "Quanzhen" in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008).

[195] David A. Palmer and Xun Liu, "Introduction: The Daoist Encounter with Modernity", in *Daoism in the Twentieth Century: Between Eternity and Modernity*, eds. David A. Palmer et al., foreword by Kristofer Schipper, New perspectives on Chinese culture and society, 2 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2012), 10. This perception, which has also been shared by Western scholars, has been questioned in Louis Komjathy, *Cultivating Perfection: Mysticism and Self-transformation in Early Quanzhen Daoism* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), 19.

Quanzhen Daoism and southern miscellaneous Daoism.[196] He additionally groups another major school of Daoism, the way of the Celestial Masters 天師道,[197] alongside southern miscellaneous and Taiwanese Daoism as 'superstitious' due to their reliance on 'other-power.'[198] This shows that this sectarian distinction was central to Marui's understanding of 'superstition.' As Marui was a graduate of Komazawa University—the same university where the Pure Land critic Nukariya taught—we see that this distinction was one present within Zen intellectual circles during the twentieth century. Thus, from a Meiji-era, Zen modernist vantage point, Pure Land was considered a superstitious form of Buddhism as it relied on other-power. This is a facet of the anti-superstition campaigns that, as far as I am aware, has escaped scholarly notice until now. This thus adds another level to our understanding of the Meiji Buddhist application of 'superstition,' the desire to create a 'pure' Zen Buddhism and the attacks on Taiwanese religion.

Although this awareness of the Japanese applying this dichotomy of self/other-power to Taiwanese religion may be news, Michael Pye has pointed out that this dichotomy was used to articulate a disenchanting hermeneutic in Meiji-era Japan. Pye demonstrated that self/other-power rhetoric was employed by Japanese Zen Buddhists during the Meiji period to demonstrate their sect's being in harmony with modernity due to its reliance on self, rather than other-power.[199] In Weberian terms, this can be understood as an example of the rejection of 'mysterious incalculable forces' (*geheimnisvollen unberechenbaren Mächte*), those force being powers that have an ontological existence outside of one's self. As I will demonstrate in the remaining sections of this dissertation, the use of the self/other-power dichotomy to distinguish

[196] Marui, *Taiwan shūkyō chōsa hōkokusho*, 13.
[197] We will return to this form of Daoism in the next chapter.
[198] Marui, *Taiwan shūkyō chōsa hōkokusho*, 200.
[199] Pye, "Rationality, Ritual and Life-Shaping Decisions in Modern Japan," 6.

‘religion’ from ‘superstition’ found in Meiji-era Zen discourse came to be a central facet of Wuguang’s sophistication of magic.

The efforts of the SSBA embody the Japanese efforts to disenchant Taiwanese religion through pedagogy. The modernization through reeducation that typified the Cooperation and Development stage of Japanese colonial attitudes towards Taiwanese religion was not limited to the religious sphere. The number of Taiwanese—both Buddhist and non-Buddhist—that traveled to Japan greatly increased during this time. In 1915 there were around 300 Taiwanese studying in Japan, a number that grew to 2,400 by 1922.[200] The increased accessibility of Western-modeled education not only created the ‘Taiwanese Buddhist Elites,’ but a whole new class of modernized, Taiwanese literati. This new class of literati was active in attempting to secularize the *saṃgha* and stamp out folk religion. The monk Jinglai 景來 (Secular name Zeng Puxin 曾普信; 1902-1977)—who was a Kaiyuan lineage monk like Yanjing and Wuguang—was asked by the Taiwan Governor-General’s Office to conduct an investigation into Taiwanese religion similar to that of Marui. His results were published in a volume entitled *Taiwanese Religions and Undesirable Superstitious Customs* 臺灣宗教と迷信陋習 in 1938.[201] Another Taiwanese monk from the Kaiyuan lineage to join these efforts was Zhengfeng 證峰 (secular name Lin Qiuwu 林秋梧, 1903-1934). From 1929-1931, Zhengfeng launched a campaign to abolish the *Ullambana* ceremony held during Ghost Month 鬼月.[202] His reasoning was that, despite its Buddhist origins, the *Ullambana* had been contaminated by folk religion and was therefore superstitious. Both

[200] Xiaokun Song, “Between Civic and Ethnic: The Transformation of Taiwanese Nationalist Ideologies 1895-2000” (PhD diss,University of Burssles, 2009), 90.

[201] Zeng Jinglai, *Taiwan shūkyō to meishin rōshū* 臺灣宗教と迷信陋習 [Taiwanese Religions and Undesirable Superstitious] (Taihoku [Taipei]: Taiwan shūkyō kenkyūkai, 1938).

[202] The *Ullambana* is discussed at greater length in chapter 5.

Zhengfang and Jinglai were greatly influenced by Nukariya.[203] As their efforts crossed over into the final and most brutal stage of Japan's anti-superstition campaign in Taiwan, let us now look at the Kōminka period.

Kōminka (1937-1945)

1931 marked the beginning of what is referred to by some Japanese specialists as the 'Fifteen Years' War' 十五年戦争.[204] This war includes the Manchurian Incident (1931), the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) and Japan's involvement in World War II. In light of renewed armed conflict on multiple fronts, Japan began to implement a number of widespread Japanization campaigns throughout its territories that had administrative offices. In its colonial enterprise, Japan had overextended herself.[205] With the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, Japan was in dire need of manpower for its war effort and its colonies offered an untapped and plentiful source. However, in order to enlist its colonial citizens in the military, their loyalty needed to be believable. Because of this, the Japanese authorities felt a pressing need to ensure the 'Japaneseness' of their colonial subjects. These circumstances bore the Kōminka Movement 皇民化運動. Kōminka, which literally means 'transformation into imperial citizens,' consisted of four elements: the adoption of Japanese surnames, military conscription, the National Language Movement[206] (NLM) 國語運動 and the Temple Reorganization Campaign (TRC) 寺

[203] Wang, "Gushan," 238-239.

[204] This term was coined in 1956 by the Japanese historian, philosopher and peace activist, Tsurumi Shunsuke 鶴見俊輔 (1922-2015). See Philip A. Seaton, *Japan's Contested War Memories: The 'Memory Rifts' in Historical Consciousness of World War II* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 40. For a lengthier discussion of this term and its implications see Kisaka Jun'ichirō, "Recent Japanese Research on the Second World War," in *Historical Studies in Japan (VII): 1983-1987*, ed. National Committee of Japanese Historians (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 246-251.

[205] Wanyau Chou, "The Kōminka Movement in Taiwan and Korea: Comparisons and Interpretations," in *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945*, eds. Peter Duus et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 40.

[206] The NLM represents an attempt by the Japanese colonial authorities to ensure that their Taiwanese subjects—the majority of whom whose native language was Taiwanese—became fluent in Japanese. Although a number of schools aimed at instructing the Taiwanese in Japanese had been functioning on the island for some time,

廟整理運動. The National Language Movement was an attempt to stamp out the use of languages other than Japanese. It started one year before the TRC, which was an effort to eradicate Zhaijiao and Taiwanese folk religion. Thus, this period was a time when the Japanese authorities were performing collective elinguation on the Taiwanese mother tongue while simultaneously committing mass deicide upon the seemingly deaf gods formerly prayed to by the recently silenced. Of these three aspects of the Kōminka movement, it is the TRC that bears the greatest relevance to this study.

As noted, the Kōminka movement was when the Japanese re-education of Taiwanese religious devotees took on a much more sinister character. Those who had not gotten on board the path to Japanimation/modernization of their own accord by shedding their 'superstitious' religious affiliations by this point were rounded up and thrown on. It is no coincidence that the calls for a 'Taiwanese Buddhist Revival' were vented during the height of the Kōminka in 1935 and 1936, respectively the last year prior to and the first year of the TRC. The fact that the elimination of superstition was at the heart of the Kōminka is explicitly stated in the following passage, written by an anonymous Japanese author, which was published in the SSBJ:

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very few Taiwanese chose to enroll their children at first. This was due to linguistic attachment related to their ethnic identity and the fact that there was already a school system based on that of imperial China in place. This changed between 1897-1898 when the colonial authorities instituted their own elementary school system and passed a law requiring all Taiwanese run schools to include Japanese language instruction. In an attempt to wipe out this bilingualism and this bi-cultural identity the Japanese authorities began actively suppressing the use of Taiwanese. The first steps were taken in 1937 when the government removed all Chinese lessons from the classroom and asked all bilingual newspapers to discontinue using Chinese. If students were caught speaking Taiwanese in school they faced the possibility of being flogged. The Japanese also instituted a 'National Language Family' 國語家庭 program whereby families who could prove only Japanese was spoken in their homes were awarded a plaque to hang outside their house. These families were also allowed to send their children to schools whose student bodies were predominantly Japanese children, which had more funding and therefore better facilities. Although this did little to wipe out the use of Taiwanese, by 1941 fifty-seven percent of Taiwanese understood Japanese. See Miyawaki Hiroyuki, "Colonial Language Policies and Their Effects" (paper presented at the "World Congress on language Policies," Barcelona, Apr. 17, 2002); Fuji Shōzō, "The Formation of Taiwanese Identity and the Cultural Policy of Various Outside Regimes," in *Taiwan under Japanese Colonial Rule, 1895-1945: History, Culture, Memory*, ed. Liao Ping-Hui et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 67.

> From Japan's acquisition of Taiwan…it can still be observed that the daily lives of the populace are filled with strange superstitions and evil customs that did not arise overnight. Thus, the goal of the Kōminka to thoroughly transform the lives and eradicate the superstitions and evil customs [of the Taiwanese people] should begin by criticizing the hotbed of folk beliefs.[207]

This article, which was the foreword to one of the SSBJ's issues, tells us in definitive terms that the eradication of 'superstition' was at the heart of the Kōminka. As Japanization was synonymous with modernization, this is unsurprising.

The TRC, like the Kōminka movement of which it was a facet, was aimed at cleansing the Taiwanese population of folk religion and non-orthodox Buddhism which it saw as superstitious, backwards and inherently Chinese, or more correctly, *not* Japanese. In an effort to wean the Han Taiwanese from their Chinese folk customs, temples were demolished and their religious images burned: a process called 'sending all of the gods to Heaven' 諸神昇天.[208] Although initiated by the Japanese themselves, Taiwanese were encouraged to burn their own religious icons in order to "send them to a better place," and in their stead worship Shintō *kami*.[209] As a result, the number of native Taiwanese temples was reduced by a third during the mere three years that the TRC lasted (1936-1939),[210] which was in direct contradistinction to the doubling of Shintō shrines in Taiwan during this time.[211]

Although the TRC was the most drastic and brutal aspect of the Kōminka movement and Japan's attempt to modernize Taiwan, its negative effects were not shared equally among the

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[207] NA, [Untitled Foreword], *South Seas Buddhist Journal* 16, no. 12 (1838), 1. Original text: "本島改隸以來…現に民衆生活の色彩には猶ほ多分に迷信陋習の含まれてゐるのを見ることが出來ゐ。而も之に對する處置は一朝一夕に爲し得るものでない。されば皇民化の徹底を目標とする生活改善、迷信、陋習の打破には先づ其の温床たる民間信仰の再檢討から始まるべきである。"

[208] C. Jones, "Religion in Taiwan at the End of the Japanese Colonial Period," 25; Lee "Shadow of the Colonial Power," 137.

[209] Cheng-Tian Kuo *Religion and Democracy in Taiwan* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2008), 64.

[210] Chou, "The Kōminka Movement in Taiwan and Korea," 46.

[211] Ibid, 45.

different religious traditions in Taiwan. In fact, monastic Buddhism was strengthened to the detriment of Zhaijiao and folk religion. This was because of the bonds formed and denominational affiliations shared between the Taiwanese Buddhists and the Sōtō and Rinzai missionaries that helped to assure it was not deemed a form of superstition. This shielded monastic Buddhism from the reorganization, a form of protection that could be extended to other religious groups were they to align themselves with one of the Five Great Taiwanese Buddhist Lineages. Many non-affiliated Zhaijiao and folk temples sought such affiliation, which was often enough to prevent being ransacked. As a result, Zhaijiao temples were eventually subsumed by orthodox Buddhism. Those that were not primarily went the way of Daoism or folk religion.[212] However, Daoism also came under fire. This suppression led to many Daoist temples being either renamed in order to appear Buddhist or being taken over by Buddhists. Daoist priests often registered themselves as Buddhist monastics in order to avoid the suppression.[213] Japanese Buddhist denominations that did not share the strong commonalities with Chinese Buddhist denominations that Zen did were unable to take advantage of preexisting orthodox Buddhist temples. This led them to become more active in their recruitment and reeducation efforts. One such example is a Shingon-sponsored missionary effort during the 1940s that brought a number of Taiwanese devotees from throughout the island to Japan where they toured important religious, political and historical sites. They were also educated on the importance of Japanese language, *sūtra* chanting and fundamental features of Shingon orthopraxy. The fact that this trip was in direct relationship to the Kōminka movement is attested to by the contents of the publication documenting this event entitled 'Draft Plan for Propagating Religion in Taiwan' 臺

[212] C. Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan*, 91.
[213] Kuo, *Religion and Democracy in Taiwan*, 64.

灣開教計劃案 where the term 'Kōminka' is featured prominently throughout as the goal of activities held during the trip.[214]

Section III: Republican Period (1945-present)

The Republican period—which continues today—is broken up into two eras. These are respectively characterized by tyranny and democracy. During the first era that lasted from 1945-1987, Taiwanese religion was tightly regulated. Even though the ROC's constitution ensures freedom of religion, in the words of André Laliberté, "this may not mean much."[215] Despite the fact that the leader of the Kuomintang (KMT) 國民黨 headed ROC, Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石 (1887-1975), had put an end to the early anti-superstition campaign following his initial consolidation of power,[216] the KMT was generally opposed to folk religion in both Taiwan and on the mainland because they felt that the energy and funds spent in its rituals were desperately needed for nation building.[217] As Philip Clart writes, "While remaining disdainful of the 'irrationalism' of Taiwanese folk religion, the government never suppressed it violently."[218] This stranglehold was loosened when the Taiwanese experience of enduring martial law longer than

[214] Kogi Shingon-shū 古義眞言宗, *Taiwan Kaikyō Keikaku-an* 古義眞言宗台湾開教計画案 [*Draft Plan for Propagating Religion in Taiwan*] ([Kōyasan]: Kogi Shingon-shū Kyōgakubu, 1940?).

[215] André Laliberté, *The Politics of Buddhist Organizations in Taiwan: 1989-2003 Safeguarding the Faith, Building a Pure Land, Helping the Poor* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 56.

[216] This consolidation occurred on the Chinese mainland, before the KMT's retreat to Taiwan, at the end of multiple military engagements collectively referred to as the Northern Expedition 國民革命軍北伐 (1926-1928). See Tiina H. Airaksinen, Imperialism and Nationalism as May Fourth Movement Discourses, *Studia Orientalia Electronica* 2 (2014): 1. Online: http://ojs.tsv.fi/index.php/StOrE/article/view/8809 (accessed Jan. 13, 2016) and Laliberté, *The Politics of Buddhist Organizations in Taiwan*, 31-32.

[217] Sue-Mei Wu, "Hand Puppet Theater Performance: Emergent Structures and the Resurgence of Taiwanese Identity," in *Religion and the Formation of Taiwanese Identities*, eds. Paul R. Katz et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 103.

[218] Philip Clart, "Popular and Minority Religions," in *The Encyclopedia of Politics and Religion*, vol. 1, ed. Robert Wuthnow (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2007), 126.

any other populace finally came to an end.[219] It was during the first that modernist disenchanting Buddhist figures from the mainland came to Taiwan and when Wuguang encountered the Tibetan side of the Tantric Revival. The Second Taiwanese Buddhist Revival occurred during the second period and bears little relevance to this project. For this reason, our focus is on the first period.

Mainland Modernism and the Tantric Revival Come to Taiwan

Beginning one week before New Year's Day 1946, roughly 459,928 Japanese were unceremoniously expelled from Taiwan over a four month period. They were only allowed to take 1000 Japanese Yen in cash and one backpack of daily necessities as they bid Taiwan farewell, thus leaving behind their fortunes, homes, Shintō shrines and Buddhist temples.[220] As the ROC was the internationally recognized government of China, she was given Taiwan with Japan's defeat by the Allied forces at the end of WWII. This proved beneficial for Chiang Kai-shek's forces in 1949 when they were defeated by the communists led by Mao Zedong 毛澤東 (1893-1976), for it offered them a safe haven. Between 1948 and 1949, roughly two million Chinese from the mainland came to Taiwan where they met roughly six million Han Taiwanese already living there.[221] Among the mainlanders who followed Chiang and his forces, there were a number of extremely influential Buddhist monks. As explained by Jones, "Chiang Kai-shek's retreat to Taiwan in 1949 brought a wave of mainland monks from the eastern seaboard, men who had been leaders of national stature and sought to do for Chinese Buddhism what the

[219] Tsung-Fu Chen, "The Rule of Law in Taiwan: Culture, Ideology, and Social Change," in *Understanding China's Legal System: Essays in Honor of Jerome A. Cohen*, ed. C. Stephen Hsu (Albany, NY: New York University Press, 2003), 384.

[220] C. Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan*, 98-99.

[221] Wei-Bin Zhang, *Taiwan's Modernization: Americanization and Modernizing Confucian Manifestations* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2003), 20.

Nationalist government was trying to do for Chinese politics: make credible claims to positions of national leadership while in exile on Taiwan."[222]

Tensions between the newcomers, 'provincially foreign people' 外省人 and the 'provincially native people' 本省人 boiled over in 1947 during an uprising called the '228 Incident'[223] 二二八事件 that resulted in a crackdown referred to as the White Terror 白色恐怖, where those suspected of supporting the uprising were executed, jailed or sent into exile.[224] This marked the beginning of Taiwan's long night of martial law. Similar to how Taiwanese religionists had sought Japanese sectarian affiliation and formed island-wide Buddhist associations in order to prove their loyalty during the post-Tapani political climate, Taiwanese Buddhist temples during the early Republican Period became affiliated with the Buddhist Association of the Republic of China (BAROC) 中國佛教協會—which had recently relocated to Taipei[225]—to avoid governmental scrutiny.[226] Reminiscent of Japanese attempts to transform Taiwanese religiosity, the BAROC tried to purify Taiwanese Buddhism of its Japanese influence, Fujian character, 'superstitious' nature and 'non-Buddhist' elements. This entailed altering the

[222] C. Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan*, 94.

[223] The 228 incident was sparked when a Taiwanese lady was hit by police while being arrested for illegally selling cigarettes. As a crowd gathered to protect the woman, police opened fire and killed one bystander. In response, provincially native people attacked police stations, government agencies and random mainlanders. The more educated Taiwanese joined these efforts by criticizing the KMT and making various demands. For more information see Craig A. Smith, "Taiwan's 228 Incident and the Politics of Placing Blame," *Past Imperfect* 14 (2008): 143-163.

[224] Mau-Kuei Chang, "On the Origins and Transformation of Taiwanese National Identity," in *Religion and the Formation of Taiwanese Identities*, eds. Paul R. Katz et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 42-43.

[225] The BAROC was founded in 1929 and was originally meant to be an agent in Taixu's modernization efforts. See Laliberté, *Politics of Buddhist Organizations in Taiwan*, 32.

[226] André Laliberté, "Mainstream Buddhist Organizations and the Kuomintang 1947-1996," in *Religion in Modern Taiwan: Tradition and Innovation in a Changing Society*, eds. Philip Clart and Charles B. Jones (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 161.

liturgical style of Taiwanese Buddhist worship,[227] vehemently attacking Zhaijiao,[228] and condemning 'superstitious' magical beliefs and practices.[229]

In the years following the KMT's retreat to Taiwan, masters of Chinese Buddhism were not the only ones to arrive, as there were also multiple propagators of Tibetan Buddhism. The Tibetan master most relevant to our discussion was Elder Gongga 貢噶老人 (secular name Shen Shuwen 申書文; 1903-1997).[230] Elder Gongga was a female disciple of the Karma Kagyu master Gangkar Rinpoche (Gongga Hutuketu 貢噶呼圖克圖; 1893-1957).[231] Gangkar Rinpoche was one of many Tibetan teachers who helped spread Tibetan Buddhism in China during the Tantric Revival by giving initiation to "famous officers, warlords, wealthy traders, and intellectuals."[232] Gongga studied with Gankar Rinpoche during the Tantric Revival. Gongga—who is most famous for her posthumous mummification into a golden Flesh Body Bodhisattva Relic 肉身菩薩—left China in 1958 and made her way to Taiwan, where she was instrumental in spreading Tibetan Buddhism. Originally from Beijing, she spent years in various retreats throughout Tibet and China before coming to Taiwan. Despite her influence, she did not receive full monastic

[227] Before the KMT's retreat, Buddhist services in Taiwan had mostly been conducted in Taiwanese and chanted according to what is referred to as 'Gushan tune' 鼓山音 based on the tune of Yongquan temple from where the native monastic transmission originated. The BAROC put forth efforts to change the pronunciation of the Chinese scriptural characters to Mandarin and the melody to 'Ocean tide tune' 海潮音 to which the majority of its leaders were accustomed. See Lu, "The Performance Practice of Buddhist *Baiqi*," 4. For a technical explanation of the differences between these two see Lu, 89-106.

[228] See Ibid, 79.

[229] See Jones, *Buddhism in Taiwan*, 111-115.

[230] About Elder Gongga see Fabienne Jagou, "Today's Taiwanese hagiographies of Sino-Tibetan Buddhist Masters: A Search for legitimacy," in *Chinese and Tibetan Esoteric Buddhism*, eds. Yaël Bentor et al. (Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, forthcoming) and *Gongga laoren* (1903-1997): *Une nonne laïque à l'origine du développement du bouddhisme tibétain à Taiwan*, forthcoming.

[231] See Monica Esposito, "rDzogs chen in China: From Chan to "Tibetan Tantrism in Fahai Lama's (1920-1991) Footsteps," in *Images of Tibet in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, vol. 2, ed. Monica Esposito, (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2008), 476. About Gangkar Rinpoche, see Carmen Meinert, "Gangkar Rinpoché between Tibet and China: A Tibetan Lama among Ethnic Chinese in the 1930s to 1950s," in *Buddhism between China and Tibet,* ed. Matthew T. Kapstein (New York: Wisdom publications, 2009), 215-240.

[232] Bing, "The Tantric Revival and its Reception in Modern China," 409.

ordination until the age of 77 in 1980.[233] She initially set up a center in Taipei and then later opened another in Tainan, the Gongga Temple 貢嘎寺. Both are still extremely active today.

The Buddhism that Gongga propagated was unlike the disenchanted forms propagated by Japanese and Chinese Buddhist modernists. She is credited with being one of the first Buddhist masters to openly propagate Tibetan Buddhism in Tainan. This occurred in 1960 during a ten-day event that hundreds attended. All of the attendees received an introductory form of *abhiṣeka*. The contents of the transmission were considered a 'transfer of consciousness' *phowa*, which Jagou describes as "one of the most elitist among the various esoteric Buddhist teachings."[234] *Phowa* teachings are directly transmitted by one's personal teacher (*lama, guru*) and are meant to enable one to choose where he will be reborn at the moment of death.[235] *Phowa* practices are also aimed at enabling the practitioner to break the constraints of the physical body. As explained by the 14th Dalai Lama (b. 1935), "Consciousness can be trained to leave the body. In po-wa (*phowa*) meditation, it is trained to leave the body and return at will. It is this possibility of separating consciousness and body we call transformation. There are also techniques to transfer consciousness to another body during this lifetime."[236] This transfer is executed by sending the consciousness through the fontanel by performing mantra-centered rituals believed to create a small hole in the top of the skull.[237] The consciousness's targeted destination can be a beneficial

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[233] See Douglas Gildow and Marcus Bingenheimer, "Buddhist Mummification in Taiwan: Two Case Studies," *Asia Major 3rd Series* 15, no. 2 (2002): 95; Fabienne Jagou, "Tibetan mummies and relics in Taiwan: Tibetan heritage or hybrid innovation?" (paper presented at "Today's Interactions between Tibetan, Taiwanese and Chinese Buddhisms Conference," Taipei Apr. 2, 2014).

[234] Fabienne Jagou, "Tibetan Buddhism in the Tainan Area: A Case Study of Two Karma bKa'rgyud School Monasteries," in *Religion in Transformation in the Tainan Area*, ed. Ye Chunrong 葉春榮 (Tainan: Tainanshi zhengfu wenhua ju, 2014), 415.

[235] Dan S. Yü, *The Spread of Tibetan Buddhism in China: Charisma, Money, Enlightenment*, Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 30.

[236] "Dalai Lama," Video of an interview with the Dalai Lama posted to YouTube by Persephoneia on Aug. 22, 2006. Online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VA0n2bEnaN8 (accessed Dec. 2, 2015).

[237] Margaret Gouin, *Tibetan Rituals of Death: Buddhist Funerary Practices* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), 16-17.

rebirth.[238] It can even also be performed to possess another human's body.[239] The journey that the consciousness makes in the rebirthing forms of *phowa* has been popularized in the West by various texts referred to as "The Tibetan Book of the Dead."[240] As *phowa* practices can be used as a means of spiritual possession and astral travel, it is clear that the teachings imparted by Gongga during this retreat represent a form of magic.

This event, which had over one hundred attendees, was one of the first times that Tibetan Buddhism had been publicly taught in southern Taiwan and was a key event in its early propagation.[241] The retreat took place at Zhuxi Temple and was organized by its secretary, Wuguang.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have demonstrated the ways in which Japanese and Chinese modernist discourse penetrated and shaped the Taiwanese Buddhist Revival. I have also identified the sources of this penetration, Japanese Buddhist missionaries and Taixu's Nanputou Academy, as well as the anti-superstitious/anti-Chinese sentiment from which it arose. This was done in order to identify the particular modernist trope that Wuguang raised his voice against. Additionally, I have given the reader a short preview regarding Wuguang's initial encounter with esoteric Buddhism that occurred during the ten-day retreat led by Elder Gongga. Lastly, this chapter has

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[238] Anna Balikci, *Lamas, Shamans and Ancestors: Village Religion in Sikkim* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), 273.

[239] Tanya Zivkovic, *Death and Reincarnation in Tibetan Buddhism: In-Between Bodies*, Routledge Critical Studies in Buddhism (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 74.

[240] Mei Ching Hsuan, "Pho ba Liturgy in 14th Century Tibet," *Tibet Journal* 29, no. 2 (2004): 47.

[241] Lo Wei-shu 羅娓淑, "A Study of the Development of Chongqing Temple in Tainan and its Relationship to the Development of Tibetan Buddhism in Southern Taiwan 台南重 慶寺的發展歷程與南台灣藏傳佛教發展關係研究," *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 20 (2007): 316-317.

provided us with the historico-cultural factors that produced the particular spatiotemporal context that Wuguang was born into, grew up in and became an influential Buddhist figure.

In the next chapter, which is an analytical biography of Wuguang, I demonstrate exactly how this context shaped Wuguang's life and career. Now that we thoroughly understand the contours of the Taiwanese Buddhist landscape and the modernist, disenchanting discursive context into which she was plunged, let us take a look at the life of a Buddhist figure who sought to reverse this trend. Let us now look at Wuguang.

Chapter 2

Wuguang's Quest

Spirit, far from being opposed to the biological (as in the Cartesian dualism of body and mind), is the potentiality of human life—through conscious positing of future foals—for purposeful creation and growth. It is the possibility of structural self-transcendence made incipiently conscious in man...Its close connection with consciousness precludes exclusive linking of spirit with the irrational. French esprit, like German Geist and analogous terms in other languages, embraces "spirit" and "mind" in a single concept; hence the spiritual quest can include both the intellectual and scientific search for truth and the religious pursuit of salvation, which are fundamentally akin...Yet the ultimate indeterminacy of scientific truth need not entail a directionless relativism. On the contrary, an indeterminate goal engendered through purposive trial and error is a prime criterion for the spiritual quest (as for its biological and psychological antecedents), which thus attains in scientific inquiry one of its fullest expressions.

~ Robert Mitchell Torrance[242]

Wuguang was a complex individual who led a multi-faceted life that consisted of several somewhat self-contained phases. In each phase he attempted to master a specific thought tradition and harmonize it with those already in his eclectic repertoire. These traditions include: Daoism, Chinese folk religion, Chan, Zhenyan/Shingon and Tibetan Buddhism as well as modern philosophy and science. In this chapter I will answer four questions: how did Wuguang become so eclectic? What are the particular sources of the specific elements within his eclecticism? How did Taiwan's history and religious makeup shape his life? Why did Wuguang sophisticate 'superstition' rather than accepting—or entirely rejecting—the disenchanted hermeneutic of Buddhist modernism? To answer these four questions we will now turn our attention to Wuguang's life.

Wuguang's encounter with and incorporation of the aforementioned thought traditions occurred amidst a spiritual quest. This quest consisted of an exploration into multiple aspects of

[242] Robert Mitchell Torrance, *The Spiritual Quest: Transcendence in Myth, Religion, and Science* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 54-55.

religion not entirely unlike the investigations of Inoue Enryō, Marui Keijirō and even the Taiwanese monk Jinglai before him.[243] Permeating this investigation was a single, evolving goal.[244] This goal related to the acquisition and comprehension of wielding power gained through harnessing invisible forces. This sort of magical power is commonly described as 'supernatural' or 'paranormal' and is easily identified as an example of Weber's "*geheimnisvollen unberechenbaren Mächte*."[245]

The structure of this chapter mirrors the compartmentalization of Wuguang's life. It begins with his childhood then moves onto his adulthood where we explore Wuguang's relationship with Yanjing, conversion to Buddhism and the spiritual crisis his entering the *saṃgha* initiated. Then we look at his time in personal retreat in the mountains, interactions with Elder Gongga, subsequent study in Kōyasan and his founding of the MSBL. Throughout, I will draw attention to which developments I detailed in the introduction and previous chapter which coincided with the events retold here in order to analyze how they steered the trajectory of Wuguang's spiritual quest.

The biography that I present is based upon data gleaned from multiple sources. The primary data source is Wuguang's autohagiography entitled *A Memoir of Trials and Tribulations* 滄桑回憶錄 that he read at the opening ceremony of the head temple of the MSBL in 2000—the year of his death.[246] This has been enriched by data collected from Taiwanese newspapers, temple publications, the writings of Wuguang's students, contemporaries and scholars as well as

[243] See pages 20, 64 and 73.
[244] This fact was first revealed to me by a leading monk of the MSBL, Dec. 2014.
[245] See page 16.
[246] Wuguang, *Cangsang huiyilu* 滄桑回憶錄 [Memoir of Trials and Tribulations] (Handwritten manuscript, 1999). Online: http://www.mantrabright.org/index.php?option=com_lyftenbloggie&vie w=entry&id=5&Itemid=29 (accessed Jan. 19, 2016).

interviews I conducted between 2011-2015 with Wuguang's students, family, friends and acquaintances. Additionally, as this is the first thorough treatment of this recently departed figure, I have made use of a variety of internet resources. My reliance upon his personal retelling of his story is justified by two factors. First, a number of aspects of Wuguang's life have been confirmed by individuals I interviewed throughout the course of my fieldwork who were neither his family members, disciples nor even fans. The same is true for data I gathered from tangentially related primary and secondary sources and even correspondence with the paragon of the Buddhist mindfulness movement, Shinzen Young 真善 (Steve Young). Young is an American-born, ethnically Jewish, Japanese-ordained Shingon *ācārya* and *vipassana* teacher who collaborated with UCLA and Harvard Medical School to research the neurological effects of meditation.[247] Young met Wuguang in 1971 after receiving Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* while Wuguang was still in the training stage. After Wuguang returned to Taiwan, Young stayed with Wuguang for several months at Zhuxi Temple. The corroborations from Young and others recount the events detailed in this chapter just as, extremely close to, or—in an obviously polemically motivated fashion—differently than Wuguang did. Thus, except for a few notable exceptions, there is little room to doubt the events as Wuguang stated, or at least *his* belief that this was the case. Those elements that do immediately trigger skepticism, despite being doubtable, still offer an invaluable opportunity to see into the mind of both the tale's teller and its intended audience. I thus pay special attention to the more dubious aspects of his tale that I have neither been able to confirm nor contradict in order to understand their 'street value,' Wuguang's

[247] See Shinzen Young, "Buddhist Brain: 'The Science of Enlightenment, the Enlightenment of Science,'" (public talk, Tuscon, AZ, Oct. 19, 2006). Online: http://www.shinzen.org/The%20Buddhist%20Brain.pdf (accessed Jan. 18, 2016). Also see Ann Gleig, "#Hashtag Meditation, Cyborg Buddhas, and Enlightenment as an Epic Win: Buddhism, Technology and the New Social Media," in *Asian Religions, Technology and Science*, ed. István Keul (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), 191.

intentions for possibly engaging in tall-tale telling and the reasons behind his belief that they would in fact be believable. Thus, both the fact and possible fiction of what follows are equally invaluable resources.

The tale presented in Wuguang's autohagiography is not chronological and there are in fact numerous historical inconsistencies concerning the dates he claims events occurred. As he composed this work at the age of eighty-one—one year before he passed away—and the soul-searching such a work demands, these peculiarities are understandable. I have chosen to compose my own biographical sketch of Wuguang rather than simply presenting a translation of his depiction due to these oddities and in order to incorporate data gained from other sources. Additionally, some of the details recounted have little relevance to this dissertation.

As we are about to see, the disenchantment efforts that we have hitherto explored had little impact on the world that Wuguang grew up in. Rather than a disenchanted—or Japanified—household, Wuguang was born into an ethnically, culturally and religiously traditional Minnan-speaking Taiwanese home whose culture was rooted in the 'superstitious southern Daoists' of Fujian whom Marui had criticized. Wuguang's reenchanted Buddhist modernism was born out of this upbringing and the modernist Buddhist education he would later receive under the 'stupid sheep'-condemning monk, Yanjing.

Section I: Childhood

We need to recognize the importance of the "disenchantment" of certain strategic elements of society and the economy; but we must be very suspicious of, and finally reject, a priori theories that postulate the Entzauberung of the whole damn Welt.

~Winston B. Davis[248]

Wuguang came into the world during the 'Cooperation and Development' phase of the Japanese Colonial Period, three years after the Tapani Incident.[249] He was born on December 5th, 1918 in Wushankeng 烏山坑, a rural mountain village in Kaohsiung's Neimen District 高雄市內門區 in southern Taiwan. This was just under one month after the end of World War I. He states that his father was a bit of a vagrant whose parents had died at a very young age. This had allowed him the freedom to wander about and study Chinese martial arts. The year that his father settled down in Neimen was the year Wuguang was born.

Wuguang's autohagiography states that he was born with the umbilical cord wrapped around his neck and that this was seen as a bad omen that foretold of a young, tragically accidental—or suicidal—death. This prompted his parents consulted a local fortune teller 算命 who predicted that Wuguang would die by the age of thirty. This greatly troubled his parents, who sought a second and then third opinion. However, his fortune remained the same and their concern for him was deepened by Wuguang's frequent bouts of childhood illness.

Wuguang's childhood home was an extremely religious one. He states that the house he grew up in housed a shrine that was utilized by the local community for the three deities enshrined therein: Mazu 媽祖 (a.k.a. 'Empress of Heaven' 天后), the 'Lord of Laws,' Fazhu

[248] W. Davis, *Japanese Religion and Society*, 151.
[249] See pages 63-64.

Gong 法主公 (a.k.a. Zhang Gong Shengjun 張公聖君) and Shennong 神農, the 'Divine Husbandman.' Mazu is a sea goddess who originated in Fujian. She is the most popular deity in both Taiwan and the coastal provinces of China.[250] The second god, the Lord of Laws, is a popular folk and Daoist deity who—according to Wuguang's family—is associated with Daoist techniques aimed at controlling and harnessing the power of the weather referred to as 'Thunder Magic'五雷.[251] They also told him that this second icon was brought over from China by Wuguang's first ancestor to immigrate to the island and that this ancestor was an accomplished Daoist priest 道士頭. The third deity, the Divine Husbandman 神農, is the deified form of a mythical Chinese sage-emperor. He is believed to have lived circa 2700 BCE and traditionally attributed with authoring the classical medical text, the *Canonical Pharmacopoeia of the Divine Husbandman* 神農本草經.[252]

Of these three gods, Wuguang tells us that only the Divine Husbandman was perceived to display what is referred to as 'miraculous response' 靈感 (or 靈應). Also translated as 'efficient response,' this is the perception that a particular deity housed within an icon responds to requests for divine intervention. This belief is absolutely central to Chinese folk religion, Daoism and even Chinese Buddhism. As Adam Yuet puts it, "At the core of Chinese popular religion is the concept of magical efficacy (*ling*) which is conceived as a particular deity's miraculous response (*lingying*) to the worshiper's request for divine assistance (granting a son, granting magical

[250] Randall L. Nadeau, "Divinity," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Chinese Religions*, ed. Randall L. Nadeau (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2012), 374.

[251] See Edward L. Davis, *Society and the Supernatural in Song China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 24-30; Florian C. Reiter, "The Management of Nature: Convictions and Means in Daoist Thunder Magic (Daojiao leifa)," in *Purposes, Means and Convictions in Daoism: A Berlin Symposium*, ed. Florian C. Reiter (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007), 183-200.

[252] Elisabeth Hsu, "*Zhubing yuanhou lun*," in *The Encyclopedia of Daoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008).

medicine, bringing rain, resolving a dilemma through divination, granting prosperity, etc.).”[253] It should be understood that when Wuguang states that Mazu and the Fazhu Gong lacked a miraculous response he is not making a theological claim, as he is not referring to the actual deities represented by these icons but to the physical icons themselves. Thus, although the Mazu and the Lord of Laws statues did not exhibit a miraculous response, this does not mean that petitioners believed the gods themselves to be lacking. Rather, it means that people—based on experience—believed that praying to the Divine Husbandman statue in this particular shrine produced practical results, which was not the case for the statues of the other two deities.

As is typical of local shrines, townsfolk would come to Wuguang’s house and offer incense, spirit-cash and pray to the statues.[254] Wuguang relates that sometimes slips from the burning paper would be blown onto the beard of the Divine Husband statue. Wuguang felt that it was unseemly to the eye, and once when his parents were not home he tried to clean it. Evidently, the paper had singed the hair and it could not be removed with a wet cloth, so Wuguang grabbed one of his mother’s combs. When he began to comb the statue’s beard he was suddenly stricken with an unbearable pain in his stomach and doubled over on the floor. When his parents returned, they found him in this state and called the doctor who was unable to do anything. They then brought a ritual master 法官 and several neighbors to come and ‘ask the god’ 問神 what to do. This term, ‘asking the god,’ refers to rituals where a deity is asked specific questions. The answers are given through the aid of a medium who functions as the god’s

[253] Adam Y. Chau, *Miraculous Response: Doing Popular Religion in Contemporary China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 2.

[254] For information on these practices see Chapter 4, Section III, “Spirit Communication.”

mouthpiece. After receiving divinely bestowed instructions, a miracle cure was created that immediately ended Wuguang's suffering.

Despite his overall poor childhood health, Wuguang entered the Japanese run public school system at nine years old and claims to have been an exceptionally gifted student. He states that from an early age he was fascinated with the wonders of modern technology and predicted the invention of the portable transistor radio[255] and the proliferation of television.[256] Due to Japanese education policy at that time, students were not allowed to speak Taiwanese and they were not instructed in Chinese orthography. In their efforts to modernize/Japanify Taiwan, the Japanese had instituted a Taiwan-wide elementary educational system that ran from grades 1-6 in which instruction was conducted in Japanese.[257] This meant that acquisition of Chinese literacy required the financial means to pay for tuition at privately owned traditional Chinese-styled schools 書房 or hire private tutors.[258] Wuguang's parents, who made a meager living making and selling bamboo furniture, had to find other means. At first they sought elementary Chinese books at local Daoist and Zhaijiao temples, but there were none there. One of Wuguang's uncles, however, had learned to read and write in order to defend himself in court. After Wuguang graduated from the Japanese school system, his uncle took on the task of

[255] The first successfully produced transistor radio was the Regency TR-1 first made in 1954 by the Regency Division of Industrial Development Engineering Associates based in Indianapolis, Indiana. See John W. Klooster, *Icons of Invention: The Makers of the Modern World from Gutenberg to Gates* (Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood Press, 2009), 520.

[256] The black and white television did not become widely available until the 1950s. See ibid, 434.

[257] Wei-Bin Zhang, *Taiwan's Modernization: Americanization and Modernizing Confucian Manifestations* (Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, 2003), 86.

[258] See Jenine Heaton, "Early Japanese Education in Taiwan: The Impact of Isawa Shūji's American Experience," *Sino-Japanese Studies* 21 (2014): 42-79. Online: http://chinajapan.org/articles/index.php/sjs/article/viewFile/39/43 (accessed Nov. 15, 2015).

teaching him how to read Chinese through the Confucian Four Books and Daoist stories about immortals 仙.[259]

Analysis

This short section concerning Wuguang's childhood reveals a number of important elements regarding his family, context and person. His family was very religious and saw themselves as descendants of a Chinese Daoist priest. As this time lies between the Tapani incident and the Kōminka movement, in this opening section offers multiple examples of what forms of Taiwanese religion the Japanese authorities were attempting to stamp out. While the Taiwanese *saṃgha* whom Wuguang would eventually join was engaged in a Japanese initiated, mainland Chinese influenced modernization effort, Wuguang was living in a house with deities who were frequented by lay patrons who believed in the miraculous response of the Divine Husbandman icon as well as mediums who drew upon that miraculous response to call upon the gods. This upbringing undoubtedly played a major role in forming Wuguang's reenchanted Buddhist modernism.

Whether or not Wuguang's predictions concerning the proliferation of audio-visual technology are true, total fabrications or even false memories, his belief in them demonstrates that he had a very positive attitude towards scientific advancement. If true, this was a sentiment he held all his life. If fabricated, it was an aspect of his outlook that he wanted others to believe in order for them to see him as a progressivist.

[259] Such stories have been collected and translated into English in Eva Wong, *Tales of the Taoist Immortals* (Boston: Shambhala, 2001). It must be noted that some scholars, such as Robert Campany, assert that the term 'immortal' is an inappropriate rendering of the Chinese term *xian* 仙. For a discussion and survey of this issue see Thomas Michael, *In the Shadows of the Dao: Laozi, the Sage, and the Daodejing* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2015), 119-124.

Although Wuguang's upbringing equipped him with the *lingua franca* of East Asian modernization at that time, Japanese, it did not render him proficient in Mandarin—a proficiency he lacked till the day of his death. He was only comfortable speaking Japanese and Taiwanese. This limited his interactions with—and influence by—mainland Chinese Buddhists during the later republican period. Thus, Wuguang's upbringing shielded him from not only Japanese, but even later Chinese, influence, a fact that demonstrates the relative irrelevance of Humanistic Buddhism—despite its cultural capital—to this study on a Taiwanese Buddhist figure.

Section II: Early Adulthood

Wuguang states that, due to the horrid state of the Taiwanese economy brought about by the Shōwa Financial Crisis 昭和金融恐慌 of 1927 and the Great Depression (1929-1939), he became an economic refugee and moved to Japan in 1935 when he was seventeen years old.[260] At first he lived with one of his primary school teachers who had expatriated and took on odd jobs. This allowed him to meet a scholar who helped him apply to Waseda University 早稲田大學 where he earned a degree in a form of Japanese stenography called *sokki* 速記. *Sokki* was invented during the Meiji period and quickly became very popular, birthing a new genre of literature referred to as *sokkibon* 速記本.[261] According to J. Scott Miller, *sokki* played a large role in the modernization of Japan as it "ushered in a new age of literacy and textual immediacy."[262] However, Wuguang states that the conclusion of his studies coincided with the proliferation of recording technology that essentially rendered this skill obsolete. With a largely

[260] Norio Tamaki states that the Taiwanese banking system was "at the core" of the Shōwa Financial Crisis, Norio Tamaki, *Japanese Banking: A History, 1859-1959* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 152-153. This crisis was a complete loss of trust in the Japanese banking system that saw the closure of multiple banks.

[261] J. Scott Miller, "Take as Text: *Sokkibon* in the Diet Library Collection," in *New Directions in the Study of Meiji Japan*, eds. Helen Hardacre et al. (Leiden, New York and Cologne: Brill, 1997), 582.

[262] J. Scott Miller, "Japanese Shorthand and *Sokkibon*," *Monumenta Nipponica* 49, no. 4 (1994): 487.

useless degree and no chance of finding employment, Wuguang returned to Taiwan and worked in agriculture.

Wuguang tells us that his mother suddenly fell ill and passed away at the age of forty-two, shortly before the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. As he had six siblings—the youngest who was six years old—and a father whose grief prevented him from properly functioning, he became the default family breadwinner. This forced him to return to Japan. He studied at a mercantile marine school in Ōsaka and later landed a job as a merchant sailor with Ōsaka Shōsen Kaisha (OSK; Ōsaka Mercantile Steamship Co.) 大阪商船株式會社.[263] In addition to providing for his family, Wuguang states that there was another reason for his choosing this specific job. As he would be able to travel to Thailand, Japan, China and other East Asian and even South East Asian destinations, he would have the opportunity to pursue religious specialists in a variety of places and from them learn what he referred to as 'miraculous Daoist immortality alchemical practices' 仙家妙訣.[264] Wuguang's studies of religious practices, which he said he continued during his time at sea, were not limited to Daoist or even Chinese religious technology. This can be seen by his recounting in great detail his experiences with Samoan religious practices in a speech he gave during the founding of the MSBL's Hong Kong branch

[263] The OSK was a Japanese shipping company founded in 1884. It was merged with the Mitsui Lines in 1964 to form the Mitsui OSK Lines. It had trade routes throughout Asia as well as the United States of America. For more information see Masato Shinohara, "Maritime Cluster of Japan: Implications for the Cluster Formation Policies," *Maritime Policy & Management: The Flagship Journal of International Shipping and Port Research* 37, no. 4 (2010): 377-399.

[264] For this term see Leslie de Vries, "The Gate of Life: Before Heaven and Curative Medicine in Zhao Xianke's Yiguan" (PhD diss, Ghent University, 2012), 3. The exact kinds of practices which Wuguang practiced are detailed below.

temple in 1995.[265] It must have been during these naval excursions that he was exposed to Samoan religion.

After the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937, Wuguang's maritime profession became even more dangerous and he decided that it was time for him to return to Taiwan. Once in Taiwan, he began working at a branch of the Taiwanese Bureau of Transportation 台灣交通局 in Wuqi 梧棲. Wuqi is a coastal suburban district of Taichung 台中, Taiwan's third most populous city which lies in the central region of the island. He writes that he resigned his post after working there for eight months in order to fully dedicate himself to the pursuit of his spiritual goals. To do so, he began living at Quanhua Temple 勸化堂 on Lion Head Mountain 獅頭山 in Miaoli County in central Taiwan. Lion Head Mountain is one of the most important religious locations in Taiwan and a popular tourist attraction.[266] Quanhua Temple is one of twelve temples dotting Lion Head Mountain. It was built by the Japanese in 1940 to commemorate the 2,600th anniversary of the royal court and currently serves as a guesthouse.[267] During his stay there, Wuguang states that he immersed himself in Chan/Zen meditation and started fasting as a form of religious austerity. He also states that devotees who came to worship at the temple would always offer him food, which he politely refused, and this constant refusal made him feel uncomfortable and desire to find somewhere else to stay. One day the temple was visited by an eminent monk named Miaoguang 妙廣 (style Tengkong 騰空, secular name Luo

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[265] Wuguang, *Wuguang shangshi 1995 nian yu xianggang daochang de kaishi* 悟光上師 1995 年於香港道場的開示 [Guru Wuguang 1995 [Speech] at the Opening of the Hong Kong Sanctuary]. This text, which is hosted online in the archive of Northwestern University's Department of Buddhist Studies 西北大學佛教研究所, is a partial transcript made from a recording of this speech. Online: http://www.china2551.org/Article/tmwh/tmzl/201002/10658.html (accessed Sept. 15, 2015).

[266] Yves Raguin, "Lion Head Mountain and Buddhism in Taiwan," tr. J. Maynard Murphy, *Journal of the China Society* 8 (1971): 21-30.

[267] Robert Kelly and Joshua Samuel Brown, *Lonely Planet: Taiwan* (Footscray, Victoria: Lonely Planet Publications, 2007), 176.

Shuilin 羅水鄰, 1902-1988).[268] Wuguang tells us that Miaoguang heard of his fasting as well as the awkwardness it was causing at the temple. To alleviate the situation, he sought Wuguang out and invited him to stay at one of Taiwan's Five Ancestral Sanctuaries,[269] Fayun Temple which had been founded by Miaoguang's teacher, Jueli 覺力 (1881-1933), and his close friend Miaoguo 妙果 (1884-1964).[270] Wuguang was well accepted there and he befriended a young man named Lee Shi-chieh 李世傑 (1917-unknown) who later became an extremely influential Buddhist scholar who wrote on esoteric Buddhism, Indian philosophy and translated scholarly works on Buddhism from Japanese to Chinese.[271] When their paths crossed, Wuguang relates that Lee was living in a small house next to the monastery.

One night Wuguang accompanied Lee and a number of Lee's friends to a restaurant. Despite the social discomfort caused by Wuguang's refusing to partake in the meal, they ended up staying quite late, after Fayun Temple had already locked its doors. Wuguang reports that being unable to get into the monastery put him in a foul mood and that he suddenly decided to return to his family. He hitchhiked to Miaoli city and then took several buses back to his familial home in Kaohsiung's Neimen District the next day. When he got there, he encountered a group of family friends eating and drinking alcohol with his father. Everyone was surprised and happy

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[268] Miaoguang's family was originally from Chaozhou 潮州 in Guangdong Province, China. He was born in Taichung's Fengyuan District 豐原. At twenty eight years old he converted to Buddhism after having attended Japanese public school and private Chinese school. At thirty one years old he became a novice monk at Miaoli's Fayuan Temple under the monk Jueli 覺力 (1881-1993) from China and then became a full monk at Taipei's Shipu Temple 十普寺. In 1972 he was elected as the fourth chairperson of the Buddhist Association of Taipei's Taipei Branch. See The Buddhist Association of Taipei website, "Development", http://www.bataipei.org/pg000.html (accessed on Oct. 22, 2015).

[269] Refer to Figure 2.

[270] For Jueli, Miaoguo and the establishment of Fayun Temple see C. Jones, "Buddhism in Taiwan," 48-54.

[271] Ou Suying 歐素瑛 et al., "*Hou Kunhong Xiansheng fangwen jilu* 侯坤宏先生訪問紀錄 [Notes from an Interview with Hou Kunhong]," *Annual of Taiwan Oral History Society* 6 (2015): 32 note 11. Online: http://www.oh. org.tw/annual/tohs-annual_n06_28-40.pdf (accessed Jan. 19, 2016).

to see him and invited him to join them for dinner. At first, he wanted to decline the invitation and continue his fast, but when he tried to speak no words escaped his mouth. He thus ended his fast, but only ate a small amount and did not drink any alcohol. As he had been fasting for such a long time, it was difficult for his body to tolerate eating regularly. He thus reports that it took him around twenty-one days to be able to eat like a normal person again.

Wuguang tells an interesting story concerning his first weeks back at home. He states that he remained in correspondence with Lee Shijie and that the next week he wrote him a letter, to which Lee immediately responded. In it Wuguang relates that Lee wrote, "The day after you left, two criminal investigators came to detain you. I do not know what the matter was about. It would be best if you did not return in the near future. Upon reading this letter, I request that you burn it." Shortly thereafter another letter followed, this one from a friend still working in the mercantile marine industry. It stated that a couple of weeks prior, a criminal investigator boarded the last ship that Wuguang had been stationed on and went through Wuguang's records and correspondences but did not find any incriminating messages. The criminal investigator then told his friend that he had searched for Wuguang at Lion's Head Mountain but that he had already left, and that his current whereabouts were unknown. In explaining this story, Wuguang states "They were wasting their time, I have no clue as to why they would have suspected me of being a Chinese spy. Good Heavens!"

Analysis

This sections details Wuguang's transition from a boy into a young man. This coming of age saw the end of the Cooperation and Development Era, the Kōminka Period and the Second Sino-Japanese War. Whether or not we believe Wuguang's conveniently serendipitously evading

Japanese counter-intelligence officers, we can appreciate the story's literary value and Wuguang's belief in its believability due to its wartime context.

From the very beginning, Wuguang portrays his entire life as one that constituted a continual religious quest. Mirroring Śākyamuni's time as a wandering ascetic, Wuguang states he went without food for "more than ten days" 經過十幾天. Although not an unbelievably lengthy amount of time—and a practice corroborated by Shinzen Young—this would explain his sudden decision to leave the temple and feelings of frustration at finding it locked at night. After going without food for such a period of time he would have undeniably been easily agitated.

This section also gives us further insight into his large family. He was one of seven children in a family that was not very well off. From his travels we can also see that Wuguang was something of a free-spirit and drifter, something he most likely inherited from his father. Wuguang, who was known as a "heavenly vagabond" 太空流浪人, refers to his father as "lone drifter" 孤身的流浪漢. The similarities between these nicknames attest to the fact that in some ways Wuguang saw himself as 'his father's son' or 'a chip off of the old block.' Noting this drifter quality of Wuguang's character helps us understand not only his maritime travels—which he states lasted "no less than six years"—but also his eclecticism, as its different elements were collected during these journeys. In Wuguang's mind, however, this drifting was not as aimless as that of his father's due to its spiritual goal, a goal he consistently returns to even when speaking of his time at sea and frames as one of his reasons for going overseas as well as quitting his job in Wuqi. In the next section we will begin to see the particular features of the 'miraculous Daoist immortality alchemical practices' that Wuguang was performing.

Section III: Adulthood

After returning to Neimen, Wuguang began working in construction. He reports that due to Japan's involvement in Word War II, there was a great demand in the construction business at the time. Although not stated in his autohagiography, his disciples have said that during this time Wuguang also offered his services as a ghost hunter. There is a story that he was initially hired to remodel a house. During the renovations the owners of the house became very ill out of the blue. The family also began hearing voices whose source they were unable to locate. When they explained the situation to Wuguang—who was nothing but their remodeler at the time—he concluded that the house was infested with spirits of the dead. Having received permission from the owners, he performed an exorcism on their home that reportedly rendered the house spirit-free.[272]

Although this story is absent from Wuguang's writings, in the autohagiographical sections dealing with this time of his life we find the first accounts of Wuguang's personal experimentation with various religious rituals. The first mentioned is the rite entitled the 'Celestial Book of the Six Heavenly Stems'[273] 六甲天書 which is found in the Daoist text *The Myriad Methods of Returning to the Origin* 萬法歸宗.[274] Wuguang states that he attempted to

[272] Semi-structured interview with longtime disciple of Wuguang, Aug. 2014.

[273] See Mugitani Kunio, "*liujia* and *lauding*," in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008).

[274] This work also goes by a longer title, *Esoteric Transmission of the Myriad Methods of Returning to the Origin* 祕傳萬法歸宗. I make this assertion based on a comparison of both texts. This is in contradiction to Adeline Herrou's claim that they are in fact different works. Due to the decentralized nature of Daoism, it is plausible that there are multiple texts in circulation with such titles, some of whose contents are different and some whose contents are the same, which would mean there is truth to both ways of looking at it. In the case of Wuguang, however, the ritual he describes and the talismans he used are found in both texts. See Adeline Herrou, "A Day in the Life of Daoist Monk," *Journal of Daoist Studies* 3 (2010): 121-122. Also see Philip S. Cho, "Healing and Ritual Imagination in Chinese Medicine: The Multiple Interpretations of *Zhuyou*," *East Asian Science, Technology and Medicine* 38 (2013): 71-113. Online: http://www.eastm.org/index.php/journal/article/view/666/578 (accessed Mar. 9, 2016).

use this rite in order to summon the deity through reciting incantations and ingesting enchanted elixirs for forty-nine days in a specially chosen location. He said it didn't work though and nothing happened. Not giving up, Wuguang visited a master who taught a form of taboo folk talismanic rites 符仔仙 that a friend told him about. The taboo nature of these rites are due to their being associated with necromancy and curses.[275] After studying with him and creating his own talismans, Wuguang says he went home and tried them out. Again, nothing happened. Finally, from a source he found more trustworthy, he heard of a master who was able to summon spirits, his mastery and success of which was reportedly testified to by his being able to manipulate a strip of bamboo which would break into two, yet in fact not be broken. Wuguang states that this particular master wished to perform the spirit-summoning ritual atop a deserted mountain. Due to Wuguang's detailed account, we will rely on his words to tell the story. Those involved are Wuguang, his friend Mr. Hong 江先生, the master Mr. Fan 范先生 and two of his students who are left unnamed:

> Mr. Hong, Mr. Fan and I rode in my car, passing over a large river on our way up the mountain. On the first leg of the journey, there were many boulders justting out of the road. Despite my flooring the accelerator, we got stuck. So we left the car at the bottom of the mountain and walked to our goal atop the mountain. When we got there it was already dusk. We ate dinner, and then began the ritual. In preparation of the ritual two extremely cordial disciples of [Mr. Fan] tested the bamboo, which was approximately three inches in diameter and broken into two stips. After dinner a table was brought, upon which were placed two candles, an incense censor, three cups of alcohol, four pieces of fruit, etc. Mr. Fan lit a large amount of incense sticks whose smoke rippled through the sky as it was caught by a breeze. [Mr. Fan's] two students raised the bamboo strip. Mr. Fan then began reciting incantations while holding a bowl filled with water in his left hand and carving symbols in the air with a sword he held in his right. Upon concluding the chant he spat holy water and alcohol onto the bamboo and clasped his hands. But it had no effect. He tried again, and again, up to twelve times. Since it was sprinkling, Mr. Hong and I were watching from beneath an overhaning. Mr. Fan then shouted, "How strange! Why is there no miraculous response?" Mr. Hong then said to me, "Brother, the spirits probably don't dare come here because of our presence." I was not convinced of that explanation. Well, that was how the ritual ended.

[275] See Chi Kao 高旗, "A Study on Fishermens' Folklore in Keelung: Taboos and Religious Beliefs in Waimushan Fishing Village 基隆漁民民俗研究: 以外木山漁村之信仰與禁忌為例" (MA thesis, National Taiwan Ocean University, 2011), 117.

> It then suddenly began to pour, a torrent that continued through the next day that prevented us from going down the mountain. How strange, if we had been able to drive the car up the mountain, we would have been unable to go down [in this weather]. In the end, we made our way down the mountain with umbrellas, then drove the car from the bottom of the mountain back to Mr. Fan's home. Mr. Fan accepted my payment of 10,000 Taiwanese dollars, but it probably did not feel good. [To make up for the mountaintop failure] he transmitted to me the entire ritual technology regarding the ritual that he had tried to perform. I never tried it though, so I do not know if it is actually efficacious.[276]

Despite each of this miserably failed attempts, Wuguang continued to dedicate himself to studying religion. He attempted to procure as many Daoist scriptures as he could, but very few were available and those that he did find he found incomprehensible.

He states that when he was thirty-three his father suddenly became ill and passed away in three days. The grief left him torn between throwing himself further into religious practice and taking on further responsibilities of being the family breadwinner. In search of an answer, he lit incense in the altar outside his house and prayed for guidance. He then went to sleep, hoping for a dream that would show him the way. No such dream occurred. Three days later, however, he was visited by a friend who reported that he had numerous Daoist religious books. Unable to read them, he offered to give them to Wuguang. Wuguang states that he read them all, many times over, but did not understand much of anything they said. He continued to inquire about where to locate religious texts and later heard that the local temples belonging to the Xiantian sect 先天派 and Jintong sect 金童派 of Zhaijiao had a number of valuable religious works that

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[276] Wuguang, *Cangsang huiyilu*. Original text: "我與江老 先生及范先生坐我的車開往, 過了大溪爬上山，但到爬山的第一段崎坡時，中 間有一寸多的石頭自路底凸出路面，我加油衝了幾次都衝不過去. 然後車就放於山下,徒步上山到目的地。時已經黃昏，準備吃晚飯後再開始作法，該二位兄弟亦非常親切, 要試驗用的竹亦準備好，該竹約有三寸徑破成二片。晚飯吃後就搬來一隻桌， 放於庭中燃起二支蠟燭，一個香爐，還有三杯清酒，四果等供物，范先生燻起一大把的線香，香煙被了微風吃拂，遙遙飄飄透上天空，二位兄弟抬起竹片，范先生就 念起咒語左手托一碗水, 右手作劍印於中虛寫符字，然後將咒水噴洒於竹片上，用雙手將竹片拿合，但都無效，再做幾次至十二點，我與江老先生因為下了少雨故坐 於房屋的簷下觀摩，范先生大呼奇怪！為什麼不靈。江老先生 對我說，師兄，大概是我們在此鬼神不敢來，我不以為然。這場作法就此結束. 隨即下了大雨至翌日，不能下山，說也奇怪，若果昨天車能開上山，今天怎能下山 呢，後來打傘下山，在山下開車回到雙冬范先生處，范先生受我給他的代價一萬元，大概是過不去，他就將合竹的符咒秘訣全部傳給我，後來我尚未試驗過，是否確 實有靈驗卻不知 道."

were related to Daoist internal alchemy. However, he was told that before seriously engaging in Daoist alchemical practices one must study the art of making Daoist apotropaic devices 符咒法, which represent a clear example of 'magic.'[277] This would enable him to control the forces of nature 呼風喚雨 (literally 'breathe wind and summon rain') and evoke supernatural beings for protection. This led him to seek out a master of talisman making in Tainan County. In order to receive the talismans needed to wield power over the natural world, disciples—of whom there were many—had to go through a number of preliminary practices and then enter into a retreat. The preliminary practices consisted of chanting various incantations, self-immolation, painting the body in red Chinese characters and ingesting edible talismans 紅符. These practices eventually culminated in a forty-nine day mountaintop retreat that was spent sitting alone in a dark room performing meditation and esoterically transmitted religious technologies. As the retreaters could not leave the room, all food was brought to them. At the end of the retreat, everyone went down from the mountain and crossed a bridge. At the other end of the bridge, the talisman master was waiting for them. Each disciple in turn pulled a lot corresponding to a specific deity that determined which set of talismans he would be given. Wuguang reports that he attempted to use them in his practices, but he got nothing at all from them.

Analysis

Despite this recurring theme of total disappointment, Wuguang continued to practice on his own, even without a master. In Wuguang's autohagiography, he states that while living in Kaohsiung's Zuoying District 左營區 he began searching for what in English is often referred to as the 'Golden Elixir,' 'Cinnabar' or 'Elixir of Life' which are all translations of the character

[277] See this dissertation's Introduction, "Magic."

dan 丹 meaning 'pellet.' The process of creating this elixir is referred to as 'refining the elixir' 煉丹 (also 鍊丹 or 練丹), whose connotations encapsulate the soteriological aims of multiple Daoist practices. This elixir has many different meanings, both physical and transcendental. Its distillation can represent achieving immortality, a godlike existence, supreme understanding of the nature of reality or all of the above. The belief in this elixir is prehistoric and thus remains in obscurity. Due to this ancientness, there are countless traditions of both past and present concerning its attainment. Typically, these different modes are categorized as either 'external' *wai* 外 or 'internal' *nei* 内 as explained by Fabrizio Pregadio:

> In its various formulations, the Way of the Golden Elixir is characterized by a foundation in doctrinal principles, first set out in the founding texts of Taoism, concerning the relation between the Dao and the world of multiplicity. *Waidan* and *neidan* are two paradigmatic forms of practice, with several varieties for each of them, devised on the basis of those principles. Both forms of practice are centered on the notion of refining (*lian* 鍊, 煉) the ingredients of the outer or the inner elixir—inanimate matter in *waidan*, and the primary constituents of the cosmos and the human being, namely essence, pneuma, and spirit (*jing*, *qi*, *shen*), in *neidan*. The Chinese alchemical tradition has therefore three aspects, namely a doctrinal level and two main forms of practice, respectively based on the refining of an "outer" or an "inner" elixir.[278]

The refining of the elixir thus refers to both external (*waidan*) and internal (*neidan*) means. External means constitute what the word 'alchemy' connotes in a Western sense, as in creating various potions and concoctions. Although benevolent, *waidan* potions often contain ingredients most people would find quite unappetizing. These Daoist potions are used in order to initiate a miraculous transformation of the body of those who ingest them. These elixirs have caused the deaths of numerous people, including Chinese royalty, for thousands of years.[279]

[278] Fabrizio Pregadio, "*Jindan*," in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008).

[279] Ho Peng Yoke, *Explorations in Daoism: Medicine and Alchemy in Literature* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 79.

Internal practices are very different. They are often built around breath regulation and achieving a form of union with specific deities and celestial beings who correspond to the human organs. Via breath practices devotees 'refine' their breath—which is also referred to as the life force and substratum of the Daoist universe, *qi* 氣—while the deity practices are intended to render one's body a manifestation of pure divinity by housing the corresponding deities within the human organs.[280] The aim of these deity practices is to essentially 'transform the body' 變身 and 'mutate into a god' 變神.[281] Deity practices are extremely *reserché* and examples of such are largely limited to the Daoist textual tradition. Breath practices, on the other hand are extremely popular and form the foundations of Taiji Quan 太極拳 and Qigong 氣功. The three "primary constituents of the cosmos and the human being" Pregadio referred to above, essence 精, pneuma 氣 (translated by me as 'breath' above), and spirit 神 (also 'god'), form a trinity of sacrality known as the 'Three Treasures' 三寶 of Daoism. These treasures are aspects of a human being that act as agents by which one smelts the elixir, by 'refining one's essence into pneuma' 鍊精化氣, 'refining ones pneuma into spirit' 鍊氣化神 and finally 'refining spirit to return to the void' 鍊神還虛.[282] When this void is reached, one has become an 'immortal' or 'transcendent' 仙.

Although I have presented these practices as independent from one another, the doctrines and rituals of which they are constructed overlap. These fuzzy boundaries are evident in Wuguang's practice as he performed them in relationship with one another. Regarding his personal quest for the elixir, Wuguang wrote that he would gather herbs and other materials in

[280] James Miller, *Daoism: A Beginner's Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2008), 79.

[281] See Shin-Yi Chao, *Daoist Rituals, State Religion, and Popular Practices: Zhenwu Worship from Song to Ming (960-1644)*, Routledge Studies in Taoism (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2011), 53-76.

[282] Pregadio, "*Jindan*."

order to create alchemical concoctions. These he ingested in correlation to the performance of various Daoist bodily practices such as Daoyin 導引, often referred to colloquially in English as 'Daoist Yoga,'[283] which bear resemblance to both Qigong and Yoga. This has been confirmed by three external sources. According to a contemporary Zhaijiao practitioner, Wuguang's alchemical concoctions were well known and, in fact, highly sought after during this time by people who wished to purchase them. In a non-structured interview he stated that Wuguang operated a laboratory in Kaohsiung's Zuoying District, listed in his autohagiography as his residence during this exact time. This individual described Wuguang's alchemical laboratory, stating that Wuguang had an extremely large cauldron-like pot that was around one meter tall in which he would simmer his mixtures for several days.[284]

Similarly, Shinzen Young recalled that during his time with Wuguang he saw him perform strange yoga-like practices and fast. During the fasts Shinzen said that Wuguang would take "some secret herbal concoction that he found in some old book."[285] In this account from Young, we find the exact religious practices that Wuguang claims to have performed. Notable is the fact that Young's account are of observations he made in 1972, some twenty years after Wuguang lived in Kaohsiung's Zuoying District. This tells us that Wuguang not only truthfully engaged in the practices he claims to have, but that he continued to do so for decades to come.

The other source who confirms this aspect of Wuguang's religious life during this time speaks to the bodily practices he claims to have performed. The cover of an early copy of Wuguang's first published book, *The Art of Yogic Nourishment and the Esoteric Path* 瑜珈養生

[283] A full-length book dedicated to Daoyin is Livia Kohn, *Chinese Healing Exercises: The Tradition of Daoyin* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008).

[284] Personal conversation with a Zhaijiao devotee, Dehua Hall 德化堂, Tainan, Mar. 2015.

[285] Shinzen Young, personal communication, Oct. 24, 2014.

術與祕密道 boasts the signet 印章 and printed name of Yanjing (see figure 4). In the previous chapter we saw that Yanjing was one of the key figures in the First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival. He was educated in the Japanese run Rinzai school in Taipei, Taixu's Nanputuo Academy in China and Hanazono University in Kyoto. As a modern reformer, he emphasized education as the way to improve the Taiwanese s*aṃgha*. Signets, colloquially referred to as 'chops,' bear the same weight and have the same function as a handwritten signature in the West.[286] Similar to an official 'signing off' on a document, this signifies a 'stamp of approval' or ownership. Throughout the book, Wuguang speaks of not only Yoga, but also Daoyin, Qigong and similar subjects related to internal refinement. The fact that Yanjing—an extremely famous and influential monk bent on modernizing Buddhism—believed in this work enough to grant it his signet and have his name printed on its cover attests to Wuguang's proficiency and knowledge of the subject material.

Yanjing's familiarity with Wuguang's non-Buddhist practices was one of the foundations of their relationship. Wuguang's performance of these practices in Kaohsiung overlapped his time working in construction. From the early 1960s up until 1973 Zhuxi Temple—of which Yanjing was the abbot at that time—was undergoing renovations and Wuguang had been hired to work on this project.[287] These renovations resulted in Zhuxi Temple's architectural transformation from an older to newer style (see figures 5-7). Wuguang took up residence in

[286] In contemporary Taiwan, signets are still preferred over handwritten signatures for signing rental agreements, vehicle titles and all forms of legal transitions. As I have always preferred to use my own signature, believing it to be much harder to duplicate that a signet bearing my Chinese name, Bai Kangdi 白康地, as a foreigner I have been allowed to sign my name and accompany it with a red-stamped finger print. Red is the color used for the signet stamp.

[287] This period of reconstruction is memorialized in a stele that currently stands at Zhuxi Temple that I saw on Aug. 2, 2013.

Zhuxi Temple in a cell facing Yanjing's. Yanjing urged Wuguang to become a monk and, although he was initially reluctant, he eventually did.

It is at this point when a number of worlds collided. The ideologies and exploits discussed in the previous chapters constituted attempts to eradicate every religious practice performed by Wuguang detailed in this chapter. Yanjing—at least to a certain extant—embraced these efforts. Thus, Wuguang and Yanjing's meeting was one between premodern and modern religion—a relationship that helped give birth to Wuguang's reenchanted Buddhist modernism. It was also when our "heavenly vagabond," Wuguang, was put in a very structured environment for the first time in his adult life. As to be expected, the friction caused out of these tensions eventually led to some remarkable developments. As we are about to see, even though Wuguang became a monk, he was not entirely suited for monastic life.

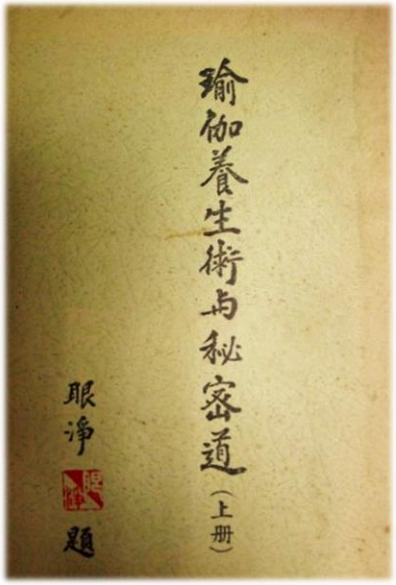

Figure 4: Cover of 1972 copy of Wuguang's *The Art of Yogic Nourishment and the Esoteric Path.* Image supplied by MSBL member and reproduced with full permission.

Figure 5: Modern façade of Zhuxi Temple.

Figure 6: Modern façade of Zhuxi Temple.

Figure 7: Older gate of Zhuxi Temple.

Section IV: Middle Age

The reader may have already noticed one facet of Wuguang's practices that I have yet to highlight: their solitary nature. Each and every 'master' we have yet to see Wuguang speak of was one who he, in the end, saw as a charlatan. Given the fact that the traditional scriptures in

which the techniques that Wuguang was attempting to implement are written in a very esoteric nature, it would have been extremely challenging for Wuguang to follow their directions properly. We saw him admit this fact above when, after obtaining Daoist texts he confesses that he found them largely incomprehensible. The unsupervised nature of his quest came to end—at least temporarily—at Zhuxi Temple with his meeting Yanjing. Yanjing redirected Wuguang's spiritual quest by reorienting his spiritual compass. From Wuguang's perspective, his whole search for preternatural capabilities had, thus far, been one oriented externally as he had been seeking spiritual power through sources other than himself. This changed during a conversation with Yanjing where Wuguang asked him to clarify a passage within a Daoist text that he found incomprehensible. Yanjing's answer:

> To refine the elixir, is to refine your mind. A mind that does not move is called 'the elixir.' Awakening the mind is distilling the elixir. Refining the elixir or sitting in Chan/Zen meditation are both methods. If you are unable to awaken your mind, no matter how much you refine, you are still just an unenlightened person.[288]

This encounter happened around the same time that Wuguang heard of someone in Kaohsiung who owned a laundromat. This person was a very advanced practitioner of Daoist alchemy and had a hard spot within his stomach that he claimed was in fact, a physical manifestation of having distilled the elixir within his body. However, he faced medical complications and it turned out it was an advanced malignant tumor and he died shortly thereafter. This adds a whole new dimension to our understanding of why Wuguang chose to turn to Buddhism. Wuguang was immediately very impressed with Yanjing, most notably his humble manner and how he paid no attention to normal hierarchical protocol but treated everyone as his equal. Yanjing evidently

[288] Wuguang, *Cangsang huiyilu*. Original text: "練丹就是練心，心不動 曰丹，悟 了心即服了丹，練丹或坐禪都是手段，若不能了悟心，任你練幾世都是凡夫."

liked Wuguang very much as well and invited Wuguang to live in Zhuxi Temple in the room opposite his own cell.

As noted, Zhuxi temple was undergoing a renovation project and Wuguang's initial reason for living there was to become a temple secretary and supervise the project and its funds. Not too long after, Yanjing encouraged Wuguang to formally leave behind his secular life and become a monk. Wuguang agreed, and returned to his wife to tell her the news. Wuguang recounted this heartbreaking scene for us:

> Not long thereafter, the monk [Yanjing] motivated me to become a monk. I returned home to collect my things, just two outfits tucked under my arm. I said "See you later," to my wife and she asked "Where are you going?" "I am going to renounce [and become a Buddhist monk]," I replied. I had thought this would not be an issue, since we were both used to my being a transnational vagabond. This time, however, she was heartbroken and started weeping. She wept and wept and could not speak. When our little daughter saw her mommy crying she grabbed tightly on my leg and would not let go. "Daddy, where are you going?" she asked. Like my wife, I could not muster the will to speak. I picked her up and hugged her then handed her over to her mother and said, "You be a good girl and play with mommy." Her crying mother said, "Because of your wandering to the far corners of the earth your younger brother always bullied me. Now that all of your brothers have moved out into their own houses, I had wanted you to stay here with me and we could have a wonderful life together, but now you want to renounce. How am I supposed to go on?" I felt absolutely horrible, but I did not want to stay there with my wife. I only got married in the first place because my parents had pressured me to do so in order to keep tabs on me. With a heavy heart I tried to say that I was going to stay, but the sentence was cut short by acid rising from the pit of my stomach. So, I left.[289]

Thus, Wuguang became a tonsured monk in 1957, two years after becoming a Buddhist. Despite the heartbreaking nature of the above story, he kept in touch with his wife and children, the latter who still come to celebrate Wuguang's birthday and commemorate his death at the MSBL's head temple. One of his sons also expressed the desire to follow in his father's footsteps and become a

[289] Wuguang ibid. Original text: "經過不久 和尚鼓勵我出家，我就回去帶行裡，簡單衣服二著包成一策夾在腋下，向妻子說再見，她問：你要到那裡。我答：要去出家。本來我是常在國外流浪已經成了習慣是不會怎樣的，但這時她都悲傷流淚，掩面哭不成聲，小女孩看她母親哭泣就抱住我的腳緊緊不放，問：爸爸你要到那裡？我亦不能回答，將她抱給她的媽媽，你乖乖 跟媽媽玩啊，她的媽媽哭著說，以前你流浪天涯，使我被你的弟弟欺負，現在他們都各自成家去了，本想你能留下來，過著幸福的生活，至今又是要出家，叫我怎麼 過日呢！我大感怨嘆，當時不想帶家後娶妻子，卻被父母強迫成家，連累我的行止，想了大傷心亦將流出的酸淚吞到腹子裡，半句話都說不出，我就出了家門了."

monk, but Wuguang told him to return home and take care of his mother.[290] Nevertheless, that son eventually grew up and received *abhiṣeka* from Wuguang, becoming an MSBL priest.

As a tonsured monk, Wuguang practiced Chan/Zen meditation, scriptural chanting and taught classes on Buddhism around Tainan. He is also reported to have engaged in anti-missionary activities, targeting Christian lecturers. In an account by a Christian missionary, Wuguang is said to have passed out anti-missionary pamphlets whose text is quoted and annotated in the following passage:

> In 1962, the monk Quanmiao [Wuguang] rebuked a missionary in front of hundreds of people at Tainan's Kangle [market]...he vehemently attacked Christianity shamelessly in front of everyone and gave the following criticism: "You see! Jesus is worse than the [legendary thief] Daozhi,[291] his doctrines are diametrically opposed to the words of the sages! Therefore it is unfitting to refer to the New and Old Testaments as a Bible. Secondly, the New and Old Testaments teach people to kill, not only to kill but to massacre entire cities with the utmost rage. You see this kind of god, '*it*' is the most violent, cruel and selfish ever spoken of. Is this a god or THE God? He is a master bandit, the primordial evil, he is nothing but a *yakṣa* or *rākṣasa*." He then gave an even greater criticism, "Jesus promoted discord, if everyone believed in Jesus no one would get married and have children, which would mean that the elderly would have no one to take care of them and be filial...I believe the New and Old Testaments are the most evil writings ever produced...Jesus is just a myth, his name should be changed to [reflect] his true nature."[292]

In addition to displaying Wuguang's anti-Christian sentiment, this passage contains specific—rather than general—condemnations of Judeo-Christian scripture. The violent massacres Wuguang refers too are undoubtedly those found in the Old Testament (Joshua: 6:17) while his hypothetical, "if everyone believed in Jesus no one would get married and have children, which would mean that the elderly would have no one to take care of them and be filial" was clearly

[290] Semi-structred interview with a number of Wuguang's offspring, Jan. 2014.

[291] Daozhi 盜跖, is a legendary robber and marauder believed to have lived during the Spring and Autumn period 春秋时代 (c. 771- c. 481) found throughout Chinese literature and folklore.

[292] Timothy Kung 龔天民, *A Study in Buddhist Ksitigarbha and Yama-Raja* 地藏菩薩與羅王真相 (Taipei: Daosheng, 1990). Online: http://www.jonahome.net/files/dizhangwang/3/2.htm (accessed Jan. 18, 2015).

aimed at Jesus telling his disciples they must abandon their families to become his followers (Luke 14: 25-7). The upshot is that Wuguang had at least a rudimentary knowledge of the Bible.

Despite articulating his anti-Christian standpoint through evoking Buddhist beliefs in demonic beings, he believed himself to be unfit for monkhood and came to feel as though he was leading a double life. Externally, he was a devoted Chan monk while internally he was wracked with doubts and even regretted entering the monkhood at all. When giving lectures, he was able to speak eloquently and answer parishioners' questions. However, he felt like a total phony who did not believe in what he was saying. He felt that the answers he gave in response to parishioners' questions were shallow and only functioned to give people peace of mind. He also found his Chan meditation practice unfulfilling.

This inner turmoil motivated him to seek counsel from Yanjing, whom he asked, "What is the main point of meditation?" Yanjing answered, "Chan is not in sitting, it is in awakening." Wuguang then asked, "What is awakening?" "Awakening the mind," replied Yanjing. Wuguang was not much impressed with this answer.

Wuguang tells us that these conflicting emotions caused him to fantasize about leaving the monkhood. The only reason he remained a monk at this point was because he dreaded the loss of face that he would inevitably suffer by disappointing everyone whom he had forced to make personal sacrifices in pursuit of his religious quest. Being privy to the tear-stained scene in which he left his wife and family, we can understand his concern. Having nowhere to turn,

Wuguang remained at Zhuxi Temple and in the late 1960s became a fully ordained monk at the Japanese-built Rinzai temple in Taipei.[293]

Seeking solace, Wuguang relates that he decided to on a religious retreat 閉關 out in the wilderness. In preparation, he began delegating his responsibilities to other Zhuxi Temple monks and with the increased free time, started building a small, concrete hut near a mountaintop waterfall in Kaohsiung's rural Liugui District 高雄六龜區. Once the hut was constructed and his responsibilities covered, he approached Yanjing to ask for leave. Yanjing said no, stating "One who has yet to enlighten the ground of the mind, cannot go into the mountains." However, Yanjing did allow him to enter into retreat within the monastery walls where Wuguang could remain alone in his own room.

Before entering the retreat, Wuguang visited Zhuxi Temple's library to search the Chinese *Tripiṭaka* for all instances of Chan/Zen recorded sayings literature 禪宗語錄 as the study thereof was to be a crucial element of his solitary practice. Once his retreat began, Wuguang claims to have spent the entire day on his bed oscillating between studying the Chan/Zen texts and performing Chan/Zen meditation in half hour intervals. This regiment put a strain on his body to the point that he could hardly walk. When Yanjing would visit him—something Wuguang says he did quite often—he would knock on the door to Wuguang's cell with his walking stick. The pain in Wuguang's legs was so severe that it would sometimes make it impossible for him to stand, forcing him to roll off of the bed and onto the floor from where he

[293] According to his disciples the year was 1967. However, 1966 is listed as the year in Kuo Yongkun 郭永坤, *Guangmingwang si* 光明王寺 [Temple of Universal Brightness], found on the website of the Buddhist Association of Kaohsiung 大高雄佛教會, http://nknush.kh.edu.tw/~volunteer/data/te001.pdf (accessed Dec. 6, 2015).

would crawl to the door. He imagined this insane display prompted Yanjing to suspect that was suffering from demonic possession.

Wuguang reports that a lay devotee visited him during the fourth month of this retreat and informed him that a master of Tibetan Buddhism from China had recently been coming to Tainan. She was in search of an established Buddhist community that would allow her to teach the Dharma, but had been turned down by every temple in Tainan that she had approached—including Kaiyuan Temple, Zhuxi Temple's head temple. Wuguang became interested in the possibility of learning from this master as he was unfamiliar with Tibetan Buddhism: an interest intertwined with the hope for the potential to reinvigorate his religious practice. This Tibetan master was the female Elder Gongga of the Tantric Revival spoken of in the previous chapter. In 1960, Wuguang used his position at Zhuxi Temple to organize the ten-day Dharma event featuring Elder Gongga where she transmitted *phowa* practices. During this event Wuguang became a disciple of Elder Gongga and then began studying Karma Kagyu esoteric rituals.[294] He also helped secure a place for Gongga and her followers to live and practice at Zhuxi Temple. He set them up in the dormitory used for the Buddhist Academy Yanjing had established at Zhuxi Temple, Miaoming Vihara 妙明精舍, which Wuguang himself had helped construct. He also designated a place for Gongga to stay near the monastery's ossuary stūpa 靈骨塔.[295] This was to ensure her privacy since people would not come there due to the association with death.

[294] Lo Wei-shu, "A Study of the Development of Chongqing Temple in Tainan and its Relationship to the Development of Tibetan Buddhism in Southern Taiwan," 316-317.

[295] Huang Hui Li 黃慧琍, "The First Research of Tibetan Traditional Buddhism Development---Base on the Tibetan Tradition Buddhism Group in Tainan Area, 藏傳佛教在台發展初探－－以台南地區的藏傳佛教團體為研究對象" (MA thesis, National University of Tainan, 2000), 54.

Wuguang's tutelage under Elder Gongga was short-lived. Wuguang states that he became disillusioned with Elder Gongga after she appointed a new disciple to lead the community. He reports that this was done behind his back and that a number of Elder Gongga's followers in Tainan perceived it as a slight to Wuguang, as he had contributed so much to the community and had been Elder Gongga's assistant during lectures. Wuguang wrote that he decided not to defend his position in order to avoid creating ripples within the community and make the newly appointed leader lose face, and therefore Wuguang severed his ties to the fledgling community. Another version of the reason for Wuguang's estrangement from Elder Gongga is told by her followers. They state that it was rooted in differences in Buddhist practice. As some Tibetan Buddhist rituals involve the ingestion of meat—which is forbidden in orthodox Chan Buddhism—Wuguang eventually banned the practice of Tibetan Buddhism at Zhuxi Temple.[296] Even if this latter account is closer to the truth, it does not seem to mark the end of Wuguang's involvement within the community as he claims to have continued to practice with them even after they vacated Zhuxi Temple.[297] There is also evidence that Wuguang personally continued to perform Tibetan Buddhist practices privately while living at Zhuxi Temple.[298] Although Wuguang portrays his time with Gongga and her community as signifying the entirety of his formal study of Tibetan Buddhism under a master, he contradicts this in his autohagiography by

[296] Fabienne Jagou, "Tibetan Buddhism in the Tainan Area: A Case Study of Two Karma bKa'rgyud School Monasteries" (paper presented at the Third International Conference on Tainan studies with the theme Religion in Transformation in the Tainan Area, National Museum of Taiwan Literature, Oct 21, 2012).

[297] Between the time Gongga's community left Zhuxi Temple and found a permanent ritual space, they practiced at a small sanctuary in Tainan called Dehua Hall 德化堂 as noted in Lo Wei-shu, "A Study of the Development of Chongqing Temple in Tainan," 316-317. In Wuguang's autohagiography he states that he was teaching at Dehua Hall at that time per the invitation of the sanctuary's leadership. Wuguang's having taught at Dehua Hall was confirmed to me by the sanctuary's elders on Mar. 29, 2015. However, they did not recall Gongga's presence.

[298] Shinzen Young, personal correspondence, Oct. 21, 2014.

stating that he received the Tibetan version of the Adamantine Armor Mantra from the Buddhist reformer Nan Huai-Chin (Nan Huajin 南懷瑾, 1918-2012).[299]

After breaking away from Gongga and her community, he figured that he should return to Japan and study at Hanazono University like Yanjing and a number of his other Dharma-kin had done. As Wuguang could not afford to make this happen on his own, he needed financial assistance from the monastery. After inquiring into this possibility, he was informed that it was impossible. This impossibility, we are told, is due to another Zhuxi Temple monk's failure to pay his tuition when at Hanozono University only a short time before. This debt caused a lien to be put against the monastery.

With the squashing of yet another dream, Wuguang once again entered into retreat, for real this time. He decided to finally make good on his earlier plans and seek answers in the small hut he had constructed near the mountaintop waterfall. Wuguang says that he took along two lay members of Zhuxi Temple who wanted to come with him and one other companion. All three of these companions are left unnamed, but we do know that the first two were human and the last one was spiritual. Wuguang believed that while on retreat he was shadowed by a Dharma-protector 護法 (Skt. *dharmapāla*). Dharma-protectors are relatively minor deities in the Buddhist pantheon who are often of non-Buddhist origins.[300] Dharma-protectors are often given wrathful visual depictions, expressing their abilities to protect people from both internal and external threats.

[299] Currently, there is nothing more known about Wuguang's encounter with Nan Huai-chin as neither Wuguang's writings nor any of his disciples have been forthcoming with such information.

[300] Robert E. Buswell and Donald S. Lopez Jr., *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 249-250.

Wuguang commenced his retreat by reciting the Adamantine Armor Mantra 200,000 times over the span of 48 hours. Perhaps due to this, two major developments reportedly occurred during this retreat. The first is not found in any of his writings and represents a modern oral myth among his students. The second is in his autohagiography. Both are fantastical. To appreciate the details of the first story one must first have a basic knowledge of Taiwan's geography, climatology, topography and zoology.

Taiwan sits in the northern subtropics and rests upon the eastern edge of the Pacific Rim also known as the 'Ring of Fire' for its high level of geothermic activity. Because of this activity and global position, over half of Taiwan is covered in mountains and frequently rocked by earthquakes as well as typhoons. Additionally, there is a rainy season popularly known as the 'Plum Rains' 梅雨 during late spring and early summer. For a number of reasons, the most dangerous place to be caught during such a storm is in the mountains. First, rain falls heavier and lasts longer in the mountains due to the lower temperatures at higher elevations that cause the moisture in the clouds to condensate at a higher rate. The dangers posed by heavy precipitation are additionally exacerbated by the sloping hills, which are largely untouched by the hand of man. The mixture between frequent earthquakes and regular downpours coupled with the slope of the land are the perfect recipe for flashfloods, avalanches and mudslides—each being potentially deadly. Additionally, infrastructure and even home dwellings in the mountainous regions are generally much shabbier than those in the flatlands. The former is due to governmental neglect of rural areas and the latter due to the generally lower socioeconomic status of those who live in the mountainous regions as well as relatively lackadaisical enforcement of zoning and building codes. Also, the rural nature of the mountains as well as the lower socio-economic status of its residents leads to cheaper, less stable habitation structures.

This can be seen by the dual home-ownership of more well-to-do Taiwanese aboriginals of the Paiwan Tribe 排灣族, who are concentrated in southern and eastern Taiwan. Over successive waves of colonization, Taiwanese aboriginals have been forced out of their agricultural holdings in the lowlands by ethnic Chinese settlers and pushed into the less-hospitable mountainous regions. This is the source for the racial terms 'mountain land people' 山地人 and 'flat land people' 平地人 to refer to Taiwanese of aboriginal and Chinese descent respectively. The former term is considered offensive, but the latter is not. Well-to-do aboriginals often maintain dual home-ownership, having a house in their tribal mountain village and one in the lowlands. During both typhoons and the Plum Rains, these wealthier aboriginals prefer to live in their home in the lowlands due to the danger posed by the lethal combination of climate, topography and geology just detailed.[301] The lethality of this combination has caused entire village populations to relocate to charitably constructed towns in the lowlands after whole villages have been wiped from the face of the earth.[302] The other major threat one faces when in rural Taiwan is the prevalence of venomous snakes.

The fantastical tale we are about to hear is based upon these mundane geographic, topographic, climatological, geological and zoological features. I have gone into such detail concerning these features and their consequential dangers for this was the assumed knowledge of this story's intended audience, without which the tale's 'street value' is inevitably diminished. As I recount this tale—which was told to me by a MSBL member who holds a faculty position related to a scientific discipline at a Taiwanese university—we must keep in mind that

[301] This information was gathered while periodically living in one such lowland aboriginal house in southern Taiwan between 2014 and 2016.

[302] Three such towns in southern Taiwan include: Rinari 禮那里, New Laiyi 新來義 and Wulaluzi 吾拉魯滋.

Wuguang's retreat took place in the mountains of rural Kaohsiung country in southern Taiwan where the rains are their most furious and dangerous.

The first, oral tale is an account of sudden enlightenment. Within Chan/Zen discourse a distinction is made between sudden enlightenment 頓悟 and gradual enlightenment 漸悟. The former asserts that enlightenment happens in a lightning flash moment of realization and the latter perceives it as the accumulation of steady spiritual progress. Most forms of Chan/Zen have embraced the former while denouncing the latter as inferior. This dichotomy, however, is extremely polemical and used in sectarian debates and should thus not be taken as a definitive construct.[303] Wuguang's tale of sudden enlightenment is set in his small hut near the mountaintop waterfall during his retreat and begins with him sitting in meditation while a storm rages outside. As the rain fell unabatedly, the lake at the bottom of the waterfall flooded the entire area around Wuguang's hut—yet not a drop of rain penetrated it nor did the rising flashflood-waters seep beneath the door. Not realizing that he was in fact being preternaturally protected, Wuguang sought to flee the mountains and seek shelter in the lowlands lest he risk being buried alive or hurled down the mountain in a mudslide. When he opened the door to leave, he was confronted by an abnormally large snake wrapped around one of the pillars that framed the doorway to his hut. Its head was poised at the center of the entrance presenting a gaping, fang-armed mouth. This sight is reported to have initiated a sudden enlightenment experience for Wuguang. He then closed the door and composed a *gāthā* 偈 entitled *One True Sentence of Dharma* 一真法句 to encapsulate the insight gained from this cognitive transformation. The next day, after the rain had stopped, Wuguang carved this *gāthā* onto a rock

[303] John R. McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch'an Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986), 247.

that to commemorate this experience. However, believers who have sought out the hut and *gāthā*-engraved stone say that they are nowhere to be found. They attribute these disappearances to the earthquakes, typhoons, Plum Rains and mudslides that frequent this area.[304]

The other fantastical development is found within Wuguang's autohagiography. It details when Wuguang began to believe that he had acquired supernatural healing powers. He says he realized this after healing a veteran from advance-staged syphilis, restoring mobility to a young paralyzed man and restoring sanity to another—a chain of events that Wuguang claims garnered him the reputation as a faith healer. As this reputation spread, more and more people began seeking him out—even to heal their livestock. Wuguang says each of these healings was accomplished through practicing *adhiṣṭhāna* and reciting mantras.[305] He states that although he was thankful for this newfound ability, he did not understand it. He recalled Elder Gongga often stating that through the practice of Tibetan Buddhism, one would eventually "see living Buddhist deities and hear mantras from the sky," but he had never believed such claims as they contradicted the disenchanted form of Buddhism that he had studied at Zhuxi Temple. He pondered whether the source of this ability was located either within or without of himself. He articulated this inner/outer dichotomy in terms of the 'self power/other power' 自力/他力 distinction that was crucial to the Japanese disenchanting typology in relation to the secular-religious-superstitious trinary as discussed in the previous chapter. The reader should recall that this dichotomy is central to Pure Land Buddhism and came to be used as a way to distinguish

[304] Interview with one of Wuguang's oldest disciples, Aug. 2014.
[305] The next chapter contains a lengthy discussion on *adhiṣṭhāna*.

between superstitious and non-superstitious forms of religion in Japan and then later Taiwan during the Japanese Colonial period.[306]

As Wuguang had lost faith in Chan/Zen and had a negative experience with Tibetan Buddhism, he turned to the only other Buddhist alternative he had: Shingon. It is reported that Wuguang discovered Shingon's Tang Dynasty forerunner, Zhenyan, while studying the Chinese *Tripiṭaka* during this retreat. Seeking to determine whether his healing capabilities were derived from self or other power, he decided to go to Kōyasan, Japan.

Analysis

This section detailed the events of Wuguang's life that occurred between the early 1950s and late 1960s. During this time he became a Chan monk, received a modernized Buddhist education under Yanjing's tutelage, studied Tibetan Karma Kagyu Buddhism, went on retreat, became a well-known folk healer and went into two solitary retreats. Thus, we have located the sources of his Chan/Zen, scientific, philosophical and Tibetan knowledge. Before even acquiring erudition and familiarity in these fields, he was already an advanced alchemist and practitioner of multiple forms of Daoist cultivation. Although he does not speak of his studies of Kundalini Yoga, this was another religious practice he is known to have engaged in.[307]

The tension born out of the integration of these disparate elements—as well as the friction between disenchanted and enchanted worldviews—plunged Wuguang into a period of doubt. This doubt is poignantly expressed in his desire to leave the monkhood and return home,

[306] See pages 70-73.

[307] This is a well-known and popularly discussed fact among the members of the MSBL. It is also evidenced by his book on Yoga discussed above, as well as the first article he ever published, "*Wo dui misheng de kanfa* 我對密乘的看法 [My View of Esoteric Buddhism]," *Bodhedrum* 菩提樹 154 (1965): 8-11. This article details the connection between Yoga and esoteric Buddhism.

his retreats and his constant investigations of other religious traditions. These studies were not born out of mere curiosity, but were instigated by a lack of spiritual fulfillment. This void did not become filled until experiencing a moment of sudden enlightenment and subsequently gaining preternatural healing powers. However, the acquisition of these powers presented him with more questions—questions he articulated in Meiji-originating religious vs. superstitious typology.

The role the self/other-power dichotomy played in Wuguang's understanding of religion and magic cannot be overstated. Before his clear articulation of this dichotomy, he alluded to it in his initial conversation with Yanjing concerning 'refining the elixir.' Wuguang states that he realized that the entirety of the pre-Buddhist phase of his spiritual quest was one that was externally oriented—in other words, a pursuit of other-power. Only after encountering Yanjing did he decide he should be looking inwards to discover the self-power buried inside. Then, when he believed that he had in fact acquired the ability to perform actual magic, he wondered whether the existence of these powers contradicted or confirmed the modern typologies that he had learned. This shows us that the answer to this question determined whether or not Wuguang would become a modernist who built upon Buddhist engagements with modernity or a fundamentalist who rejected them. As we already know it was the former, it is unsurprising that he concluded that these powers originated within. In the next chapter, we will explore the repercussions of this conclusion. Now, we will continue to see how Wuguang's life unfolded after coming down from the mountain.

Section V: Maturity

In 1970, Yanjing passed away. Wuguang states that while he was preparing to study in Japan—something that Yanjing had always encouraged him to do—Yanjing fell ill and was hospitalized. Seeing that Yanjing was not getting better, Wuguang convinced him to return to the

monastery and pass away in peace within its walls. Wuguang tells us that he took care of Yanjing for three days until his death and then made funeral arrangements. After Yanjing's affairs were posthumously put in order, Wuguang moved to Taipei and was given donations by devotees to travel to Japan. However, the money he was able to raise did not cover his tuition, so he did odd custodial jobs in order to supplement it.

In the hopes of going to Kōyasan, Wuguang wrote a letter to his grade school teacher—with whom he had lived in Japan while studying stenography—to try and make connections for him. He states that his teacher, who was living in Tōkyō at the time, drove all the way to Kōyasan to see what he could do. He then put Wuguang in touch with Meguro Ryūko 目黒隆幸, who was the head priest of Kōyasan's Henshōsonin 遍照尊院. Wuguang states that Meguro warned him that it would be difficult for him to study at Kōyasan since he was not Japanese, but still advised him to apply for a student visa and figure out the rest after arriving in Japan. Wuguang writes that this proved difficult as he had to additionally apply for permission to leave the country because of restrictions born out of Republican martial law. However, he eventually navigated the procedural difficulties and traveled to Kōyasan in 1971.

There are conflicting accounts of how Wuguang came to become a Shingon priest while in Japan. His only extant writings from this time do not speak of his experiences in Japan.[308] As the known Japanese individuals who played a role have all since passed away, we are limited to accounts from Wuguang, his students and those who knew him. Meguro Ryūko's involvement is attested to by the contact he kept not only with Wuguang, but even his posthumous followers

[308] Wuguang's article, "*Guanyu* 卐卍 *biaozheng zhi lunji* 關於卐卍表徵之論據 [Regarding the Controversy over the Direction of the Swastika]," *Bodhedrum* 菩提樹 227 (1971): 27, was written while he was in Kōyasan. However, it does not contain any details about Wuguang's time there.

who met with Meguro multiple times before the latter passed away. Amidst the different accounts concerning the details of what happened between Wuguang's arrival in Japan and initial return to Taiwan, they consistently imply that he encountered resistance. The tales told by himself and members of the MSBL all attribute this difficulty to Wuguang's non-Japanese ethnicity. However, I have also been informed that there was a Korean Buddhist studying with Wuguang at Kōyasan at that time.[309] Additionally, Shinzen Young who is from America became a Shingon priest before Wuguang did. The presence of these non-Japanese devotees questions the validity of the accounts that attribute Wuguang's initial difficulty at receiving training to his ethnicity. Nevertheless, we will view these first.

According to Wuguang, after he arrived at Kōyasan Meguro introduced him to Hotta Shinkai 堀田真快 (1890-1984), abbot of Kongōbuji 金剛峰寺. Wuguang says that he requested to become his disciple and study at his training hall 專修學院 but that Hotta refused both requests; the first because he did not take on personal disciples and the second because the training hall was not open to foreigners at that time. According to Dr. Huang Ying-Chieh (a.k.a. Tulku Palme Khyentse Rinpoche) of Huafan University in Taiwan, when he met Wuguang many years later, Wuguang related this story and added a detail not found in his autohagiography. Huang states that Wuguang told him that he responded to the Shingon priests who barred his entrance by likening his own situation to that of Kūkai's, stating that if Kūkai's Tang Dynasty Chinese teachers had been similarly exclusive then today there would be no such thing as Shingon.[310] In Wuguang's autohagiography it simply states that despite Hotta's refusal, he stayed

[309] Interview with high-ranking MSBL member, May 2014.

[310] As reported in the personal blog of Dr. Huang Ying-Chieh (aka Tulku Palme Khyentse Rinpoche), associate professor of Huafan University. Online: http://tw.myblog.yahoo.com/gadegadepalagade/article?mid=486&prev=515&next=412&l=f&fid=14 (accessed July 10, 2013).

in Japan and began auditing classes and that this dedication helped Meguro persuade the abbot of Hōju-in 寶壽院, Kamei Senyū 亀位宣雄 to allow Wuguang to officially enroll as a student and eventually obtain *abhiṣeka*. Wuguang's students, based on either Wuguang's later embellishments or their own, have said that Wuguang waited outside of Hōju-in for three days in the snow without food or water to prove his loyalty.[311] A number of students have also said that he lied, claiming to be the newly appointed abbot of Zhuxi Temple in the hopes that this status would convince them to train and ordain him.[312] The fact that Zhuxi Temple's abbot, Yanjing, had just passed away makes it possible that such a lie had been told. Interestingly, during fieldwork at Zhuxi Temple one young nun—who had never met Wuguang—told me Wuguang was a previous abbot of Zhuxi Temple.[313]

Out of all these stories, there is possible corroboration in a photograph of Wuguang taken during this time. In this photo Wuguang is wearing an Avalokiteśvara hat 観音帽 (a.k.a. swallowtail hat 燕尾; see figure 8). In Japan, this hat is worn by high-ranking monks—such as abbots—of very important temples at special occasions such as the funeral of a leading Buddhist figure or installation of a deity. It is not worn regularly, nor by common monks.[314] So the fact that Wuguang is wearing an abbot's hat while in Japan lends credibility to the claim that

[311] Conversation with MSBL member, May 2014.
[312] Ibid.
[313] Conversation with Zhuxi Temple nun, Aug. 2, 2013.
[314] Victor G. Hori, personal correspondence, Aug. 6, 2013 and personal correspondence with the proprietor of Houi-Butsugu Shop 後藤新助法衣仏具店, Sept. 13, 2013. In searching for information regarding this particular religious piece of headgear—about which little to nothing is written—I wrote Dr. Hori due to his academic credentials and experience as a Japanese Zen monk. He detailed his personal knowledge regarding the hat and suggested I contact a merchant dealing in Japanese Buddhist ritual wear. Both Dr. Hori and the proprietor of the Houi-Butsugu Shop's having confirmed that the donning of this hat is limited to extremely high-ranking abbots of important temples.

he lied about his credentials. If this is true, he must have had a reason to lie. Being refused training would be the most logical reason for him to put on such a charade and masquerade as Zhuxi Temple's abbot. In regards to how Wuguang was perceived by the priests at Kōyasan, Shinzen Young stated, "I got the impression that at least some of the monks there recognized that he was already a master. I think they may have also been impressed with his proficiency in Tibetan practices."[315] Regarding these practices, and why others may have been impressed thereby, Shinzen related a story concerning Wuguang:

Figure 8: Wuguang, circa 1971. Image supplied by MSBL member.

> I was initially drawn to him because of the depth of his practice and his attainments in Tibetan Vajrayāna. I don't know if he mastered all six of the "dharmas of Naropa" or not, but I can attest to one thing: when I met him in Japan, he invited me to press my finger into his fontanel suture area. My finger went down in between the skullbones! He said that that was part of the *phowa* practice. It was pretty freaky.[316]

These short testimonies are revealing on a number of levels. First, they show that Wuguang did in fact attempt to project an air of authority as a Buddhist master while in Japan. It also shows that he very much flaunted the Tibetan aspect of his credentials. Lastly, the fact that Young states that Wuguang referenced *phowa*—the exact practices that we know Elder Gongga transmitted during the event Wuguang organized at Zhuxi Temple—adds further credibility to these accounts. Regarding exactly how Young met Wuguang while in Japan he relates:

> I met Wuguang when he was still in training at the Shinbessho on Mt. Kōya. Shinbessho was a place for doing groupwide *kegyō* [Quadrilateral Cultivation]. It was something of an

[315] Shinzen Young, personal communication, Oct. 24, 2014.
[316] Ibid.

> innovation. The more traditional way was to do individual *kegyō* in an individual temple under a personal master. That's what I did under Nakagawa Zenkyo at Shinno-in.[317]

From this it appears that Wuguang was never the disciple of a single Shingon priest, despite the fact that all known accounts depict him as having sought out a personal master. Young relates that Wuguang was part of a "group wide" training course, meaning that it was in fact a large class of devotees being trained in the Quadrilateral Cultivation ("*kegyō*"). Young contrasts this with his own experience which entailed training under a private master. This more traditional kind of training involves one becoming a disciple 弟子 of a priestly teacher 師僧 and this relationship is registered when one begins training.[318] Thus, it was perhaps due to this transition between a master-disciple focused form of training to more "group wide" classes that caused Wuguang to initially seek out a personal priestly teacher and to be denied. This passage also gives greater detail about where Wuguang ended up studying and shows that he studied at a number of temples on Mt. Kōya. The one that Young mentions here, Shinbessho 真別處, is a popular name for Entsūritsu-ji 圓通律寺, which is a commonly used training hall.[319] Wuguang's disciples say that he studied at Sanbō-in 三寶院, which is another training hall.[320] We cannot know for certain whether or not his having been trained in multiple locations was by choice, but from Wuguang's own testimony as well as these other accounts thereof, it would appear that it was in fact out of necessity.

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[317] Ibid.

[318] Philip L. Nicoloff, *Sacred Kōyasan: a Pilgrimage to the Mountain Temple of Saint Kōbō Daishi and the Great Sun Buddha* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2008), 192.

[319] Ibid, 194 and 350.

[320] Chewei 徹威, "*Zhenyanzong conglaimeiyou 'jingang asheli'* 真言宗從來沒有「金剛阿闍梨」[Zhenyan/Shingon has never had an 'Adamantine *Ācārya*']," *Fengshui Magazine* 129 (2008). Online: http://fengshui-magazine.com.hk/No.129-Mar08/A54a.htm (accessed Jan. 19, 2016). Chewei was a disciple of Wuguang and is currently the head of the MSBL's Hong Kong branch.

Having received *abhiṣeka*, Wuguang returned to Tainan in 1972. Regarding this time, we can once again to draw upon Shinzen Young's account as he lived with Wuguang at Zhuxi Temple:

> I lived with Wuguang for about 8 months, just he and I together in a little corner of Zhuxisi. He had his bedroom and I had mine across from his. There was a Shingon alter [sic] in the main area. He also had an office. We were located right next to where the dead bodies were put before cremation. I seem to remember him saying something like he chose that place because people would tend not to come around due to the funereal associations. FYI, we always spoke Japanese. He was one of those Taiwanese who grew up under the Japanese and really liked the Japanese. I seem to remember that I used Mandarin with just about everyone else. I can tell you I don't think he had much of an organization built up around him at the time. One more tidbit. One night as I was sitting in my room, I heard a bunch of yelling and cursing in Taiwanese. When I went out, Wuguang was exorcising someone who had been training to become a medium, but it had gone badly and it turned into the Chinese equivalent of demonic possession. That was pretty interesting to watch.
>
> I can also tell you something about his daily routine. It was amazing. He was the most clock-like, regular human I ever encountered. Every night from about 8-12, he would do a 4-hour sit in full lotus in his room. Then he would lie down for 4 hours attempting not to fall asleep, but deeply resting the body. Then he'd get up, go to his office, and begin his day—which, as I remember largely consisted of a stream of people seeking help in various ways. He was particularly known for his ability to psychically locate runaways.
>
> He was one of my great role models for what it means to be a "functioning Bodhisattva."
>
> At that time he was interested in establishing credibility for *vajrayāna* by linking it to texts that already existed in the Chinese canon, the Tang dynasty Zhenyan works you alluded to. But I got the impression he felt Tibetan *vajrayana* was superior to the Japanese form.[321]

In the very first paragraph we see that when Wuguang returned to Taiwan he returned to Zhuxi Temple. We can also appreciate what a weird situation this must have been. In order to ensure his privacy, Wuguang set himself up near the ossuary stūpa, which, as he told Young, was to ensure his privacy. The reader should recall this is the same place Wuguang had designated for Elder Gongga to stay at Zhuxi Temple in the early 1960s. Within this relatively secluded section of the monastery grounds, Wuguang set up a Shingon altar. It was also where he established his office where he would spend his entire day attempting to help a great number of people—the majority of whom, implied by Young, sought Wuguang out for his reputation as a wonder-

[321] Shinzen Young, personal correspondence, Oct. 24, 2014.

worker. This adds credence to Wuguang's claiming that while on retreat near the mountaintop waterfall, he acquired a reputation as a folk healer.

The fact that so many believers came to see him each day shows that this relatively secluded section of Zhuxi Temple was indeed a very publicly accessible place. Thus, we can readily identify exactly who Wuguang wanted to put distance between himself—other Zhuxi Temple monastics. We saw that Wuguang performed strenuous meditation during his private retreat at Zhuxi Temple that caused Yanjing to entertain the possibility that Wuguang had become possessed (or perhaps had lost his mind). During that time though, Wuguang's room was across from Yanjing's. Now that Yanjing was gone, and Wuguang was additionally performing exorcisms—on monastic grounds in a modernized, demythologized temple—as well as Shingon rituals (and who knows what else), it makes sense that he would want to keep prying eyes at bay.

Despite Wuguang's iconoclasm, he *was* favored by Yanjing. This is attested to by multiple details already listed such as Yanjing installing Wuguang in the room across from his own, entrusting Wuguang with the funds to create a monastic scholarship fund, his entertaining Wuguang's absurdity and spending his last three remaining days on earth in Wuguang's care. Additionally, Yanjing gave many of his personal belongings to Wuguang before he passed away.[322] This relationship is undoubtedly what had enabled Wuguang to use his secretarial position at Zhuxi Temple to organize the *phowa* retreat officiated by Elder Gongga, allocate space for her followers to stay on the monastic grounds and later designate a secluded living space for himself away from prying eyes. However, now that his master was no longer able to

[322] See the pictures of Yanjing's items in Wuguang's possession after his master's death in Jing-ming ed., *Yanjing heshang*, 31.

speak for Wuguang, his peculiarities that Yanjing seemed to have found endearing would soon make Zhuxi Temple inhospitable.

Although Young says Wuguang did not have "an organization built around him" when he first came back to Taiwan, it is obvious that before going to Japan he was already a charismatic leader who had developed a following, albeit a loose and unorganized one. According to his disciples, as soon as he came back to Taiwan, he immediately founded the MSBL and began teaching his own form of esoteric Buddhism at Miaoming Vihara on the grounds of Zhuxi Temple. We are also told it was just a year later, in 1973, Wuguang relocated the Shingon altar that Young mentions—as well as his esoteric lecturing—to a small folk religious temple named Longshan Hall 龍山内院. After the relocation, Wuguang's following steadily grew while he continued to periodically visit Kōyasan.[323] He publically propagated his Dharma, as testified to a 1978 television broadcast entitled *Grand Master Quanmiao of Tainan Receiving the Transmission of Zhenyan/Shingon Buddhism* 台南全妙大師獲佛教真言宗真傳.[324] This broadcast was aired on Apr. 20, 1978 in Tainan and shows Wuguang receiving a certificate from a Japanese monk in a Shingon temple in Japan. Thus, in addition to spreading his Dharma through word of mouth, he also took advantage of modern media outlets.

Although Wuguang began only giving elementary forms of *abhiṣeka* and training his students in short, introductory esoteric practices, he eventually began to give Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* on Taiwanese soil. He adapted the practices contained in the ritual manuals he had received in Kōyasan by Sinicizing them. I have been told that these activities did

[323] Personal interview with Chesheng, July 2013.

[324] Aired on, *Taiwan Television* (TTV) 臺灣電視公司 on Apr. 20, 1978. Online: http://dava.ncl.edu.tw/metadatainfo.aspx?funtype=0&PlayType=2&id=135218&BLID=135218 (accessed Dec. 22, 2015).

not go unnoticed by his Japanese Dharma-kin. In fact, another Taiwanese Chan monk who was traveling to Kōyasan at that time, who also eventually received *abhiṣeka* and formed his own monastery based on a mixture of Chinese Chan and Japanese Shingon, reportedly told Meguro what Wuguang was up to.[325] Wuguang then received a letter written by Meguro around 1980. This letter rebuked Wuguang and told him that he should neither be altering the traditions nor giving his students Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka*. Wuguang ignored these orders and continued pursuing his goal, which Young above relates was to legitimize esoteric practices by rooting them in the Buddhist canon. One vital component of his strategy to achieve this validation was to link himself to Tang Dynasty Zhenyan via Shingon *abhiṣeka*. Towards this aim, Wuguang assumed three distinct titles that I have never seen proof of him ever being awarded. Two are Japanese and one, although rooted in Tang Dynasty esoteric Buddhism, is primarily used by Tibetan Buddhists. The two Japanese ranks that he took on are greater arch bishop 大僧正,[326] which is the highest rank within the Japanese ecclesiastical hierarchy 僧階, and *maha-ācārya* 大阿闍梨 ('high priest').[327] Of these, the second is the most important and is fully written as 'Grand Master of Lamp Transmission' 傳燈大阿闍梨 representing the priest's authority to give Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka*. Wuguang gave himself the shortened version of this title in order to show that he was the patriarch of a new Buddhist lineage. The greater archbishop title is less important and is largely symbolic. Although his disciples often refer to Wuguang by these titles in writing, the more preferred term is guru 上師. This was used in Tang China, but since then has

[325] See Cody Bahir, *Buddhist Master Wuguang's Taiwanese Web*, 87.

[326] As signed in *Mijiao sixiang yu shenghuo* 密教思想與生活 [Esoteric Buddhism and Life], (Kaohsiung: Guangmingwangsi, 1981), 3.

[327] See Wuguang, *Xinbian zhengfa yanzang* 新編正法眼藏 [New Perspective on the Treasury of the True Dharma Eye] (Hong Kong: Forms Publications (JK), 2014), 7. In the foreword written by Wuguang's students it says that he received *maha-ācārya abhiṣeka* 大阿闍梨灌頂.

primarily been used by Tibetan Buddhist masters as a Chinese translation of the term *Lama* (which itself is a Tibetan rendering of 'guru'). This is a shortened version of the term 'Lofty Esoteric Guru' 金剛上師, which denotes an influential teacher of esoteric Buddhism. However, during the Tantric Revival it was used by Chinese devotees who had received Japanese Shingon ordination. Wuguang undoubtedly first encountered this term during his studies with Elder Gongga as it was the title she used. Since Wuguang's personal adoption of this term, it has become a general title for esoteric Buddhist teachers—regardless of denomination—in the Chinese-speaking world.[328]

Despite his break from Kōyasan and presenting false credentials, Wuguang was in fact promoted to a high-rank within the Japanese ecclesiastical hierarchy—just not to this particular rank. In 1983 he was given the title of lesser archbishop 少僧正 and was allowed to wear purple robes (see figure 9), the color associated with the Japanese imperial household, as a sign of his spiritual maturity.[329]

Figure 9: Wuguang wearing the purple robes in accordance with his status as a lesser archbishop. Image provided by MSBL member.

[328] See Cody Bahir, *Buddhist Master Wuguang's Taiwanese Web*, 89-90.

[329] For a thorough treatment of purple robes see, Duncan Williams, "The Purple Robe Incident and the Formation of the Early Modern Sōtō Zen Institution," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 36, no. 1 (2009): 27-43.

Conclusion

The remainder of Wuguang's story is inextricable from the history of the MSBL and has thus been interwoven into our discussion in Chapter 6. In conclusion, I would like to return to the four questions I posed at the beginning of this chapter: how did Wuguang become so eclectic? What are the particular sources of the specific elements within his eclecticism? How did Taiwan's history and religious makeup shape his life? Why did Wuguang sophisticate 'superstition' rather than accepting—or entirely rejecting—the disenchanted hermeneutic of Buddhist modernism?

The answers to the first three questions are given in the details of Wuguang's Daoist upbringing, the different folk, Daoist and yogic practices he studied, his education at Zhuxi Temple, experiences with Elder Gongga and time at Kōyasan. The answer to the fourth question is more multifaceted.

Were Wuguang to consider religious practices related to magic as superstitious then he would be forced to question the faith in which he had been brought up—Daoism. For him to apply the secular-religion-superstition trinary as his predecessors had would have forced him to declare that the religion of his childhood and early adulthood—as well as the beliefs of his family and the throngs of people who sought out his spiritual assistance—as irrational, backwards and superstitious. Thus, he could not whole-heartedly accept Buddhist modernism. His refusing to reject Buddhist modernism in preference for fundamentalism was rooted not in his upbringing, but his personal interests. He tells us that, even as a child, he was fascinated with scientific advancement and technology—particularly inventions related to radio and television broadcasting. The upshot is that a rejection of modern science would constitute intellectual disingenuousness.

There is yet a deeper personal reason that Wuguang chose to rescue magic from the category of 'superstition'—he had an unshakably firm belief in its veracity. This belief was rooted in his childhood experience with the Divine Husbandman detailed above. In order to demonstrate this fact, we must take a close look at how Wuguang related this event:

> Perplexedly, a great pain arose in my stomach. When my parents returned home and found me in this state, they sought a physician to treat me, but the pain did not subside. After nightfall my father invited his friends and a Daoist ritual master who lived nearby to ask the gods. Shortly thereafter, the god's throne began to tremble and a divine voice roared: "This child of yours is impolite, he defiled my sanctity by using a brush on my beard, therefore [this pain] is a castigation." My father then knelt down and entreated the god be merciful and protect my body. He then offered a spoon of incense ash which he referred to as a 'miraculous medicine' for me to ingest. It truly was a miraculous medicine for I completely recovered within a half of an hour. From that point on, I dared not act foolhardy towards godly icons. [Since then], this mystical event has always been carved into my soul, to the point that recollection thereof makes it feel new. That was the moment my fascination with mystical forces—invisible to the physical eye—as well as my quest to understand them were born.[330]

This tale marks the beginning of Wuguang's spiritual inquiry as expressed in the final sentence, "That was the moment my fascination with mystical forces—invisible to the physical eye—as well as my quest to understand them were born." The forces of which Wuguang speaks obviously represent an example of Weber's *geheimnisvollen unberechenbaren Mächte*. As we are already privy to the fact that the trajectory of Wuguang's life was dominated by a quest for magical forces, this declaration is a concrete confirmation that Wuguang's reenchanted Buddhist modernism can be traced back to this experience.

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[330] Wuguang, *Cangsang huiyilu*. Original text: "不知怎樣，我的 肚子大痛起來，父母親回來看到這情境，找大夫來診療，但都沒有止痛，是夜父親就請了法官及鄰近朋友來問神了。 駕去神轎不久就開始跳動，大發神威說，你這個孩子不禮貌， 用梳子梳吾的嘴鬚污穢了神聖，所以是一種教訓，父親就跪下來請求神明開恩，保佑我的身體，後來賜了一匙的香灰，稱它是仙丹給我服下去，真是仙丹妙藥，不經 半小時全部都痊癒了，自此我都怕得不敢對神像輕舉妄動。這些神秘事項永遠刻在心靈，至今回憶猶新。那個時候起對於肉眼看不到的神秘力量，求了解的心亦興起 了很大的興趣。"

This provenance is additionally confirmed by the passage that immediately follows the above where Wuguang shows us that later, similar experiences directly built upon this one further guided his religious inquiry:

> Sometimes I would see the masters of mediumship using talismans and holy water to cure people, or spirit-mediums using swords to hack their bodies, causing blood to flow like water, or fire-walking without injury. Later, one time in the Zhengziliao district of Tainan while celebrating a god's birthday there was a spirit-medium who had viciously slashed his own forehead. Not only did his whole body hemorrhage but the skin on his forehead was shred to pieces. He became comatose. Later [his fellow practitioners] carried him into a dark room, sat him in a chair and besought the god for a miraculous cure. The medicine was an ointment consisting of ash from the incense burner and alcohol mixed together that was applied to his head. They then bandaged his head and made him rest until the morning of the next day. When he awoke, he took off the ash and discovered that his forehead did not have the slightest scar—it was as it had been before [the incident]. Everyone then praised the might of the god with deep inexpressible feelings. This experience further impassioned my quest for knowledge.[331]

Again, Wuguang is revealing the fact that what motivated his life-long study of religion was in fact, this experience. The exact *type* of experience detailed above is an example of a 'spiritual experience.' The spiritual experience Wuguang relates here is neither revelatory nor blissful. It was additionally not resultant of spiritual practices nor even intentionally induced. In contrast, it was entirely negative and even nonconsensual. Thus, what Wuguang experienced is what Rudolf Otto (1869-1937) referred to as 'daemonic dread.' Otto saw daemonic dread as the "religion of primitive man" that constitutes a "crudely naïve and primordial emotional disturbance,"[332]—a fitting description for a painful childhood encounter with a wrathful deity. Otto explained that

[331] Ibid. Original text: "有時看了巫師的行符咒水治病，神祇的誕辰乩童施展特技操劍砍其全身血流如注，過火時赤足屐如平地絲毫不傷，後來有一次在台南鄭仔寮，在祝賀神明生辰的時候，一位乩童操劍砍自己的頭額等處，不但全身流血，頭部傷得皮膚全碎，終於休克不知人事，然後被抬入暗室坐於椅子上，同神求仙丹治療，就在香爐內掬了香灰攪酒敷其頭上，用繃帶包好令他休息到了隔日上午，乩童醒來，掀去頭上的香灰，發現他的頭上沒有一點傷痕，一向如故，大家都大讚神明威力，深感不可思議，由此使我更加求知的心理旺盛起來。"

[332] Rudolf Otto, T*he Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational*, tr. John W. Harvey (London: Oxford University Press, 7th edition; 1936), 16.

daemonic dread is prone to produce physical sensations that lay out of the range of normal experience:

> It is a remarkable fact that the physical reaction to which this unique 'dread; of the uncanny gives rise is also unique, and is not found in the case of any 'natural' fear of terror… And any one who is capable of more precise introspection must recognize that the distinction between such a 'dread' and natural fear is not simply one of degree and intensity. The awe or 'dread' may indeed be so overwhelmingly great that it seems to penetrate to the very marrow, making the man's hair bristle and his limbs quake.[333]

Here we find Otto explicitly stating that negative physical sensations can be symptoms of daemonic dread. The crippling pain Wuguang experienced—albeit much more intense than anything described by Otto—was, in the god's own medium-projected voice a 'castigation,' a punishment, an outpouring the god's 'wrathful' potential—the exact characteristic Otto assigns to daemonic dread. The spontaneous, unsolicited and painful quality of this experience—all exacerbated by Wuguang's young and impressionable age at the time—are what rendered it so radically formative.

In addition to the nuances of the experience and Wuguang's developmental stage at the time is the story's context. The shrine in which this occurred was housed in Wuguang's childhood home. This home was occupied by a family who was descended from Daoist priests whose ancestors had brought Daoist idols when they came over from China. The hero of the story, whose efforts led to Wuguang's recovery, was a ritual specialist 法官 who was either a Daoist or a prominent local folk religious figure.[334] In a Daoist home, housing a Daoist shrine, Wuguang was struck down by a Daoist god and subsequently cured by a Daoist priest through

[333] Ibid.

[334] This term, *faguan* 法官 is the same words for a 'judge'. It is used both in Daoism as well as Chinese folk religion for people especially adept at working with non-corporeal entities. For more information see E. Davis, *Society and the Supernatural*, 14; Jan Jakob Maria de Groot, *The Religious System of China: Its Ancient Forms, Evolution, History and Present Aspect, Manners, Customs and Social Institutions Connected Therewith* (Taipei: Southern Materials Center; Reprint; 1989), 1264, 1278, 1252 and 1289.

Daoist spiritual technology. At Wuguang's age and location, it would have been logistically impossible for him to experience this experience in any other way than he did. The same can be said of his personal interpretation of this episode. Wuguang tells us, "[Since then], this mystical event has always been carved into my soul, to the point that recollection thereof makes it feel new," revealing that he reflected on this divine intervention throughout his life to such a point that the memory thereof remained fresh until he wrote it down in his dying days. In the years immediately following this event, Wuguang's interpretation—and recollection—of what happened would have been deeply colored by those around him, particularly his father, mother, siblings and the ritual master who healed him. Thus, Wuguang's understanding of what happened was entirely reasonable—even if not entirely believable—given the circumstances.

Epistemologically speaking, Wuguang's belief in 'invisible forces' placed an *onus probandi* (burden of proof) upon every religious doctrine, scientific principle, philosophical concept and spiritual technology that he encountered, the standard of proof being demonstrable consistency with his belief in the awesome powers of magic. Thus, in addition to motivating Wuguang to seek magical power, his childhood daemonic dread also shaped his investigative methodology. This is evidenced by his accounts of seeking various Daoist, folk, Buddhist and Samoan masters in order to learn magical technologies. This sort of religious polygamy shows that his quest was neither directed by religious affiliation nor doctrine. In order to evaluate the validity of *a priori* truth claims he tested the magical potency of the various spiritual technologies he learned and held their potency to the *a posteriori* standard of his original, childhood religious experience. This potency was something that he could only ascertain via experimentation. Rather than believing in their efficacy at face value or relying on others to perform the rituals for him he demanded that he witness their potency for himself. This is why

his autohagiography is dominated by the repetition of a single, quadrangular narrative structure: 1. He hears of a master renowned for having preternatural powers, 2. He learns spiritual technologies from the master, 3. He tests those spiritual technologies, 4. He concludes that they are either effective or ineffective.

As ‘magic’ is this study’s most central feature, now that we know *why* Wuguang attempted to rescue it from the typological pit of ‘superstition,’ let us look at *how* he did.

Chapter 3

Wuguang's Magical *Prajñā*

Related to the emphasis on doctrinal studies as the best way to approach Buddhism is the repudiation of "magic," a concept that was introduced to Japan with Western scholarship, especially that of Weber, in the modern period and that played a role in constructing a picture of Temple Buddhism as moribund or degenerate.

~Stephen Covell[335]

In the first two chapters of this dissertation, we saw that early East Asian architects of Buddhist modernism preferred to reconcile their religion with modernity by intentionally and actively disenchanting it. In the previous chapter, we saw that despite these disenchanting efforts that entailed temple destruction, doctrinal criticism, sectarian recategorization and orthopraxic reinvention, Wuguang grew up and lived in a world that remained enchanted. In this chapter, we will look at how Wuguang sophisticated magic in order to save it from the category of 'superstition.'

In order to understand Wuguang's sophistication of magic, we must understand how he perceived it. Although Wuguang did write a book that solely deals with magic, *Zhenyan/Shingon and the Art of Mediumship* 真言密教與巫術, it was never published, and its handwritten manuscript is either carefully guarded, or has in fact been stolen and is therefore unavailable to us.[336] In the absence of this focused treatise, we must peruse Wuguang's works in search of examples that exemplify Covell's definition of magic, "the utilization of supernatural entities or

[335] Stephen G. Covell, *Japanese Temple Buddhism*, 12.

[336] This book is listed as one of Wuguang's compositions on the MSBL's website, http://www.kmkt.org.tw/kmktchinese/CP.aspx?TabID=245 (accessed Apr. 8, 2017). In a private correspondence on Feb. 8, 2015 one of my informants related to me: "The following story could be a scandal. Last Sunday (2/1) during the meeting of our Study Group, I heard…that the material (maybe the manuscript) about the witchcraft locked in [name deleted]'s room…was gone while the locker was still in one piece. It is believed that the theif [sic] is an insider knowing everything in the temple." This story is believable because theft does in fact seem to be a problem at the monastery. Every time I have spent the night there I have been cautioned—multiple times—to not bring any valuables with me.

powers to bring about an effect, or the belief systems associated with such acts"[337] and extrapolate their taxonomical ramifications.

By applying our definition of 'magic,' we can see that the Western-influenced Meiji-era intelligentsia separated it from 'religion' in the following passage written by Inoue Enryō:

> In this world there are two aspects the material [*busshitsu* 物質] and the spiritual [*seishin* 精神]. The transformations of the material world are controlled by physical laws [*butsuri no kisoku* 物理の規則]. Natural calamities and diseases originate in this area [the material world]. Therefore, if one wants to avoid natural calamities and diseases, there is no way other than through the control obtained from scientific research…. Therefore, neither the Buddhas nor kamis nor religion have control over the material world. Instead it must be observed that [religion] commands the foundations of the spiritual world.[338]

Here Inoue posits a dualism between matter 物質 and spirit 精神 (also 'consciousness') and asserts that these two substances are governed by separate laws. By doing so, he excludes any possibility of wonder working or magic since the material world cannot be affected by anything except for other material phenomena. Thus, the material/secular world and the spiritual/religious world are entirely separate and do not overlap. The former is the realm of science while the latter is the realm of religion. As 'magic' entails "the utilization of supernatural entities or powers to bring about an effect," there is no room for magic in the 'secular' or 'religious' realms. Consequently, 'magic' is exiled to 'superstition.'

In opposition to this we find Wuguang's stance on the relationship between science and religion:

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[337] See this dissertation's Introduction, "Magic."

[338] Inoue Enryō, "*Meishin to shūkyō* 迷信と宗教 [Superstition and Religion]," in *Yōkaigaku zenshū* 妖怪学全集 [Complete works of Mystery Studies], by Inoue Enryō (Tokyo: Kashiwa Shoten, 1916), 267, as quoted and translated in Josephson, "How Buddhism Became a 'Religion,'" 156.

> Religion entails consciousness ('spirit') controlling matter, science entails matter controlling consciousness. In fact the power of consciousness is great…[339]

Here, both Wuguang's terminology and subject matter directly mirror those of Inoue above, the subject being the roles and realms of secular science and religion. Inoue placed the physical world wholly within the realm of science, thereby excluding religion as a means of affecting or even understanding the natural world. Wuguang, on the other hand, shows that religion is a source of techniques for the human mind to 'control' the material world. This term, control 支配 (Chn. *zhipei*, Jpn. *shihai*) also has the sense of 'dominate' and 'to arrange.' It is a term favored by Wuguang to articulate how metaphysical forces shape phenomena. This passage thus contains a radical definition of religion. According to Wuguang, religion *is* magic. Ergo, magic is not 'superstition.'

Now that we understand that Wuguang believed magic was inseparable from—and actually synonymous with—religion, let us discover how he defined and categorized magic in order to save it from the typological deathtrap of 'superstition.'

[339] Wuguang, *Shengsi zhi dao* 生死之道 [The Path of Life and Death]. Online: http://www.mantrabright.org/ index.php?option=com_lyftenbloggie&view=entry&id=3&Itemid=30 (accessed Jan. 25, 2016). Original text: "宗教家是精神去支配物質的，科學家是物質去支配精神的，其實精神力量才是大…"

Section I: Wuguang's Magical Taxonomy

Mundane and pragmatic magical outcomes like locating lost or stolen objects, inflicting harm on a neighbor, or seeking short-term financial gain, personal power, or sexual prowess are very much examples of the "low" magic tradition associated with folk-magic spells, acts of bewitchment, and medieval Goetic rituals. Hermetic "high" magic, on the other hand, is essentially transformative rather than results-driven and ultimately reflects a spiritual quest for gnosis.

~Lynne Hume and Nevill Drury[340]

Wuguang's magical taxonomy represents a harmonization of Chinese folk religion, Daoist, Mahāyāna, Zhenyan/Shingon and Karma Kagyu Buddhist beliefs and practices with modern scientific and philosophical concepts as well as Japanese ideological categories and sectarian boundaries. This taxonomy was constructed as a dual-layered set of binaries. The first distinguished between soteriologically transformative and worldly-oriented practices which were respectively placed into 'high' and 'low' categories reminiscent of Western occult taxonomies. The second differentiated between 'orthodox' and 'heterodox' forms of magic based upon where the practitioner believed his powers originated. As this schema is based on the intent and belief of the magical practitioner, it was all-inclusive and applicable to all forms of magic regardless of their cultural or denominational context. In order to understand Wuguang's taxonomy, we must first have a working comprehension of the different practices he categorized as well as the preexisting typologies that he used.

The majority of practices that Wuguang was concerned with were those that he had encountered throughout his spiritual quest. Within a Chinese religious context, phenomena that can be placed within the bounds of 'magic' are often denoted by the terms *wushu* 巫術, *shentong* 神通 and *lingtong* 靈通 (alternatively *tongling* 通靈). The first term's meaning is contextually

[340] Lynne Hume and Nevill Drury, *The Varieties of Magical Experience: Indigenous, Medieval, and Modern Magic* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2013), 128.

independent as it consistently refers to spirit-mediumship and is usually translated as 'sorcery.' The latter two terms are often translated as 'preternatural powers' or 'numinous abilities' and have different connotations within Daoist, Buddhist and folk religious contexts. Within Chinese folk religion, *shentong* and *lingtong* are similarly used in reference to practices involving wielding power from noncoporeal entities such as ghosts or gods. This fact is reflected in the characters of which they are composed, respectively *shen* 神 for 'god' and *ling* 靈 meaning 'spirit' which are both coupled with the character *tong* 通 meaning 'pervasion.' This linguistic construct alludes to the belief that the person wielding magical powers is doing so through the aid of a spirit. The difference between these two terms is one of focus. *Shentong* refers to the magical powers granted via *lingtong* whereas *lingtong* is the human-spirit coupling. The presence of a non-corporeal entity within one's body that occurs during *lingtong* is referred to in Chinese as *fushen* 附身. This term is usually translated as 'spiritual possession' and can refer to unintentional and intentional forms of spirit possession. Unintentional—sometimes nonconsensual—spirit hosting is closer to the meaning of the English word 'possession,' while intentionally inviting such a spirit is referred to as 'invocation.' In English, 'invocation' is contrasted with 'evocation': the former involving internally hosting an entity and the latter meaning to exercise one's influence over an externally existing entity.[341] According to this usage, all forms of intentional *fushen* are invocation, while unintentional ones are possession.[342]

[341] The distinction between invocation and evocation is an emic one used in English-speaking occult circles. This usage was first established by Eliphas Levi, (born Alphonse Louis Constant; 1810-1875), the influential French occultist. It was later adapted by Peter J. Carroll (b. 1953) the modern architect of the occult discipline referred to as 'Chaos Magic.' See Jason Mankey, "An Interview with Peter J. Carroll," Online: http://www.patheos.com/blogs/ panmankey/2014/03/an-interview-with-peter-j-carroll/ (accessed Oct 7, 2015). Despite his self-acknowledged role in canonizing this phrase—due to its widespread popular usage—Carroll refers to it as an "old axiom" in his later work, *The Octavo: A Sorcerer-Scientist's Grimoire* (Oxford: Mandrake of Oxford, 2011), 115.

[342] Spirits within the popular Chinese pantheon inhabit three primary typological categories: ancestors 祖先, ghosts 鬼 and gods 神, which are in addition to two secondary categories that transverse the ghost-ancestor and

As there is no Chinese lexical distinction between these two I will consistently leave the term *fushen* untranslated. Practices found in East Asia that can be classified as evocation include 'raising a baby ghost' 養鬼仔 in which where through rituals and apotropaic technology an individual keeps a ghost around to increase his luck.[343]

This same usages of *shentong* and *lingtong* are found in folk forms of Daoism and Buddhism. This is in stark contrast to their canonical traditions, in which these terms refer to specific magical abilities that are natural outcrops of religious cultivation not to be sought after in their own right.[344]

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ghost-god categories. This typology is based on Chinese beliefs about the afterlife and frames each of these types of beings (with only a few exceptions) as having once lived as human beings. After death, they immediately become ghosts. However, ghostliness is a liminal—and negative—position from which one hopes to escape and become an ancestor or god. Becoming an ancestor requires one to be the focus of devotional activities performed by their survivors while being a god requires substantial positive merit accumulated through meritorious deeds which result in popular esteem. This merit and esteem combine to elevate one from the ghost → ancestor and possibly → god status. In Chinese Buddhism, entities who fall into both the ancestor and ghost categories are usually seen as hungry ghosts (Skt. *pretas*). See Robert P. Weller, "Bandits, Beggars, and Ghosts: The Failure of State Control over Religious Interpretation in Taiwan," *American Ethnologist* 12, no. 1 (1985): 47; Yu Kuang-hong, "Making a Malefactor a Benefactor: Ghost Worship in Taiwan," *Bulletin of the Institute of Academia Sinica* 7 (1990): 40. The liminality of ghosts reflects their marginality and dual potentiality to act as malefactors or benefactors for the living. In Taiwan, ghosts are both respected and feared—the latter more so than gods. So much so that rather than saying the word 'ghost' 鬼, people utter the euphemism 'good brother' 好兄弟 in case a maleficent, rather than beneficent, ghost is in earshot. For more information see Richard von Glahn, *The Sinister Way: The Divine and the Demonic in Chinese Religious Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 6.

[343] See Chan Hui Ting, "The Magic of Modernity: Fengshui in Hong Kong" (MA thesis, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2011), 60.

[344] These powers come in lists of five or six and include: the ability to perform miracles 神足通 (Skt. *ṛddhividhi-jñāna),* clairaudience 天耳 (*divya-śrotra*), clairvoyance 天眼 (*divya-cakṣus*), mentalism 他心通 (*paracitta-jñāna*), past-life recollection 宿命通 (*pūrvanivāsânusmṛti-jñāna*) and the power to eliminate the causes of rebirth 漏盡通 (*āsrava-kṣaya-vijñāna*). See Stephen R. Bokenkamp, *Ancestors and Anxiety: Daoism and the Birth of Rebirth in China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 161; Louis Komjathy, *The Daoist Tradition: An Introduction* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 97-98; Richard R. McBride II, "Dhāraṇī and Spells in Medieval Sinitic Buddhism," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 28, no. 1 (2005): 90; Zhiru Ng, *The Making of a Savior Bodhisattva: Dizang in Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 41. For a corrective analysis on how Indian magical terminology was received in China that is outside the scope of this work, see Ryan R. Overbey, "On the Appearance of Siddhis in Chinese Texts," in *Yoga Powers: Extraordinary Capacities Attained through Meditation and Concentration*, ed. Knut A. Jacobsen, Brill's Indological Library, 37 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 127-144.

Within Shingon Buddhism, magical categories are often evoked as sectarian boundary markers. In addition to the categories of exoteric and esoteric Buddhism, the latter is additionally bifurcated between miscellaneous esotericism 雜密 (literally 'mixed esotericism') and pure esotericism 純密.[345] Rituals aimed at achieving worldly goals are considered part of the former, lower category while rituals with soteriological aims are assigned to the latter—i.e. pure Shingon.[346] Thus, this distinction is a sectarian one as non-Shingon forms of magic are considered 'miscellaneous' and Shingon practices are labeled as 'pure.'[347]

Within each of the above contexts, the actual performance of all kinds of magic are often referred to as *adhiṣṭhāna* 加持 (Chn. *jiachi*, Jpn. *kaji*). The Sanskrit term *adhiṣṭhāna* along with its Sino-Japanese translation is usually rendered into English as 'empowerment' or poignantly by Robert Sharf as 'sympathetic magic.'[348] Within Shingon, *adhiṣṭhāna* has a particularly transformative connotation that can be described as "the soteriological transformation of the

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[345] Miscellaneous esotericism can also be rendered 雜部密教 while pure esotericism can also be rendered as 正純密教. Japanese Shingon exegetes applied the heterodox category of 'miscellaneous esotericism' to these religious technologies found in Chinese religion that closely resembled their own in order to show that, despite their similarities—which posed a threat to Shingon monopolizing claims of orthodoxy due to the Chinese provenance of their transmission—they are inferior as their transmission's provenance lies outside the bounds of the orthodox transmission chain. For the development of these terms and see Fabio Rambelli, "True Words, Silence, and the Adamantine Dance: On Japanese Mikkyō and the Formation of the Shingon Discourse," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 21 (1994): 373-405. I am intentionally not categorizing these terms within the larger framework of the *kenmitsui taisei* 顕密顕密体制 system due to issues raised by Rambelli in the aforementioned article. Also see Mikael Bauer, "Monastic Lineages and Ritual Participation: A Proposed Revision of Kuroda Toshio's Kenmitsu Taisei," *Pacific World Journal* 13 (2011): 45-65; Sueki Fumihiko, "A Reexamination of the Kenmitsu Taisei Theory," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, nos. 3-4 (1996): 449-466; Taira Masayuki, "Kuroda Toshio and the Kenmitsu Taisei Theory," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23 (1996): 427-448.

[346] Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, 153.

[347] In Charles D. Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom: The Scripture for Humane Kings in the Creation of Chinese Buddhism*, Hermeneutics, studies in the history of religions (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), passim, demonstrates that worldly and soteriological aims were largely considered synonymous in Tang Dynasty esoteric Buddhist circles.

[348] Robert H. Sharf, "Visualization and Maṇḍala in Shingon Buddhism," in *Living images: Japanese Buddhist Icons in Context*, eds. Robert Sharf and Elizabeth H. Sharf, Asian Religions and Cultures (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 196.

practitioner's body into a Buddha body."[349] In Chinese Buddhism, folk religion and Daoism *adhiṣṭhāna* is a commonplace term for the performance of ritual blessings, empowerments and healing—i.e. what Shingon labels as miscellaneous esotericism.

Wuguang applied the Shingon distinction between 'pure' and 'miscellaneous' forms of esotericism to categorize *all* forms of magic. He placed the majority of magic into an inferior, mundane category and *adhiṣṭhāna*—as defined as the transformation of oneself into a Buddha—into a superior, soteriological category. He articulated this distinction in a speech he gave in 1995 at the opening of the MSBL's Hong Kong branch temple:

> Some people think after they have converted to Zhenyan/Shingon they can recite mantras and perform mediumship, but this is entirely incorrect! Once you come to Zhenyan/Shingon, you must cultivate *prajñā*…this is how you become a Buddha! If you want to ride the wind like Liezi, who I doubt could even ride the wind, as if he could I think it would be inconvenient, [for] if you wanted to travel from here [Hong Kong] to Taiwan, you would have to wait until the Northerly Wind blew! So we do not need to believe in these sorts of myths…As practitioners of Zhenyan/Shingon, we do not perform mediumship, so what do we practice? If you want to practice mediumship, you should go study with the Samoans for their mediumship is truly amazing, they can all cast curses. If you go to South East Asia, go amongst the Samoans and see, you will then know…[but] is that the way to become a Buddha? No![350]

From this, we see that Wuguang validated the existence of various forms of magic and categorized them according to their soteriological/mundane aims. This confirmation and distinction are articulated by referencing classical Chinese literature concerning Liezi 列子 (c. fifth century BCE) who is mythically remembered for his ability to ride the wind.[351] Despite his

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[349] Fabio Rambelli, *A Buddhist Theory of Semiotics: Signs, Ontology, and Salvation in Japanese Esoteric Buddhism* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 146.

[350] Wuguang, *Wuguang shangshi 1995 nian yu xianggang daocheng de kaishi*. Original text: "有人認為皈依真言宗，念咒可以作巫術，根本不是！來真言宗，是要修智慧…這樣便可成佛啦！乘風而行便似列子，列子根本沒有乘風而行，假使他是會，我看那也很不方便。如果從這裡去台灣，要等吹北風才可以來的！故此我們不用相信這些傳說…我們修真言宗不是為了做巫術，那麼修來做什麼事？如果要做巫術，那麼要跟薩摩族學。薩摩族的巫術是很厲害的，他們都會放蠱毒。如你去南洋，到薩摩族中看看，你便知道…這樣會不會成佛呢？不會成佛！"

[351] Liezi, (a.k.a. Lie Yukou 列禦寇) is traditionally attributed with authoring the important philosophical work entitled *The Authentic Scripture on the Ultimate Virtue of Unfathomable Emptiness* 沖虛至德真經 commonly

expressing a certain amount of skepticism, Wuguang refuses to refute the possibility of Liezi's wind-riding and then makes a remarkable claim that Samoan magical practices are more potent than the Chinese ones available to his Han Chinese followers.[352] Regardless of the mundane magical potency of wind-riding and Samoan religion, Wuguang asserts that they are not appropriate for his followers to engage in due to their lacking soteriological efficacy. This is thus an articulation of Wuguang's application of the high/low magic distinction based on a practice's soteriological or mundane aims.

Wuguang went a step further by utilizing this soteriological/mundane binary to categorize specific magical practices by additionally employing Meiji-era ideological typologies. This articulation is found in a speech he delivered in 1999—one year before his death—at a Buddha-bathing 浴佛 ceremony:

> We are currently in the third dimension. After death people live in the fourth dimension. All examples of spirit-permeation that people are capable of in this world come from *fushen* of spirits in the fourth dimension…these forms of spirit communication predate Śākyamuni Buddha—in India there were many such sects. "Prajñā" is the reasioning of Śākyamuni, outside of this everything is mixed—we call them 'heterodoxy.' Heterodox religion looks outside of the mind—every religion whose orientation is external to the mind is heterodox…Daoism comes from Zhang Daoling's studying Laozi's non-action ideology. He transcribed the reasoning of this ideology and created mantras. Examples include the Mantra of Oral Purification, Speaking of the Cinnabar, Transcendent Breath Practices, Spirit Mediumship, Nourishing the Spirit etc.—[i.e.] practices involving internal alchemy and mantra recitation…[353]

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referred to as *The Liezi* 列子. For the significance and partial translation of this work see A. C. Graham, *The Book of Lieh-tzŭ: A Classic of the Tao* (New York: Columbia University Press, Morningside Edition; 1990).

[352] The reader should recall that in Chapter 2, Section II, hypothesized that Wuguang encountered Samoan religion while working as a merchant sailor. For more information on the term I am translating as 'curse' in the above passage, gudu 蠱毒, see Christine Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face: Scripture, Ritual, and Iconographic Exchange in Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 95.

[353] Wuguang, *Wuguang shangshi 1999 nian benshan yufo jie kaishi jiexuan*. Original text (converted from Simplified to Traditional Chinese): "我們現在是第三次元，人死了所處的世界是第四次元，現在的人所謂能通靈，全是第四次元的附身和通靈…釋迦佛以前都已經有，有這種通靈，印度有很多宗派，"智慧"是釋迦佛所講的道理，以外拉拉雜雜的信仰，我們稱為外道，外道是指心以外的信仰，心以外的信仰全是外道…道教是張道陵去學老子，學他的無為思想，籍這無為思想的道理做咒，譬如做什麼的淨口咒，講丹子、吐納、通靈，養神等，把練功當做咒來念…"

This short passage exemplifies the hybrid nature of the Wuguang's magical typology. First, he states that the magical powers resultant of spirit-permeation come from *fushen* with beings residing outside of our three-dimensional universe. He then proceeds to set up two magical categories—'prajñāic'[354] *zhihui* 智慧 (Jpn. *chie*) and 'heterodox' *waidao* 外道 (literally 'external path'; Jpn. *gedō*). 'Heterodox' is contrasted with 'orthodox' *neidao* 内道 (literally 'internal path'), a dichotomy based upon the same inner *nei* 内 and outer *wai* 外 dichotomy we already encountered in regards to Daoist cultivation.[355] Buddhist and Daoist authors employ these terms to differentiate between the doctrines, practices and texts of their co-religionists from those of other faiths. In these contexts orthodoxy and heterodoxy are based upon the provenance of one's religion. To walk a heretical, 'external path' entails performing practices that originated outside of the 'internal' orthodoxy.[356]

Wuguang reinterprets the directional orientation of the *neidao*/*waidao* dichotomy through a play on words. Rather than 'internal' referring to a practice's provenance, it refers to the practitioner's belief regarding the origin of the power harnessed through the practices he is performing. Orthodoxy entails being endowed with *prajñā*—an endowment that manifests itself as the realization that magical powers originate within one's self. To be heterodox—which

[354] Anglicization of the Sanskrit word *prajñā* into a neutered adjective is taken from Shi Cheng Kuan, *The Dharmic Treasure Altar-Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* (Taipei: Neo-Carefree Garden Buddhist Canon Translation Institute, 2011), 8.

[355] See Chapter 2.

[356] The *neidao*/*waidao* dichotomy has a long lexical history and multiple usages. Since the Han Dynasty, the inner/outer-path dichotomy has been used by writers to distinguish their own ideology from others through 'othering' them. See Shi Zhiru, "Contextualizing Buddhist Approaches to Religious Diversity: When and How Buddhist Intellectuals Address Confucianism and Daoism (3rd-9th c)," in *Religious Diversity in Chinese Thought*, eds. Perry Schmidt-Leukel and Joachim Gentz (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 83. In early Buddhist scriptures *waidao* functioned as a translation of the Sanskrit *tīrthika* referring to Jain and Brahmannical practitioners, but later was used by both Buddhists and Daoists as either an inclusive term for all 'not-Buddhist' or 'not-Daoist' faiths or more pejoratively as an equivalent to the English words 'heterodox.' See Eugène Burnouf, *Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism*, trans. Katia Buffetrille and Donald S. Lopez Jr. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 184.

Wuguang also refers to as 'mixed'—the pejorative term used in Shingon literature to refer to esoteric Buddhist practices that circulate outside of the Zhenyan/Shingon chain of Dharma-transmission—is to lack this *prajñā*ic realization and mistakenly attribute the source of magic to an external being such as a spirit living outside of our three-dimensional universe. Thus, whether a practice is considered heterodox or not depends on the practitioner's perception of that power's origins, not the power itself nor the rituals associated with its acquisition. Simply stated, Wuguang reoriented the directional orientation of these two 'paths' of *neidao*/*waidao* as he states that they do not refer to where the practices come *from*, but where one looks *to* when performing them in pursuit of magical power.

This reinterpretation of the *neidao*/*waidao* dichotomy—although not explicitly stated—is undeniably built upon another sectarian binary with which we are already familiar—self/other-power 自力/他力. This dichotomy is a sectarian distinction related to Pure Land Buddhism that was used in Meiji-era Japan and Taiwan to distinguish 'religion' from 'superstition' and later by Wuguang to articulate his attempt to understand the nature of the magical healing powers that he had acquired.[357] Here, we see Wuguang using this exact distinction to categorize magic. What renders magic prajñāic—i.e. wise and consequently orthodox—is cognizance of the fact that the power flows from within and is an example of self-power. This demonstrates his reliance on the typological categories and sectarian distinctions propagated in Taiwan by Japanese Buddhist missionaries.

Wuguang's magical taxonomy is a radical reinterpretation of the *neidao/waidao* dichotomy that cuts across sectarian lines and religious boundaries. These boundaries came into play in the chronology of Daoist practices Wuguang offers above. He states that Daoist practices

[357] See Chapter 2.

originated in Zhang Daoling's 張道陵 (second century) ritualizing the *reasoning* of Laozi. Zhang is seen as the founder and first patriarch of the Daoist lineage known as the Celestial Masters 天師. Celestial Masters Daoism (a.k.a. Orthodox Unity Daoism 正一道) is one of two main schools of Daoism.[358] The origination myth of Celestial Masters Daoism states that Zhang received prophetic revelation from the deified form of Laozi, Laojun 老君.[359] Wuguang's assertion that "Daoism comes from Zhang Daoling's studying Laozi's non-action ideology. He transcribed the logic of this ideology and created mantras" is directly referencing this story while interpreting it through his own magical taxonomy. This taxonomic interpretation manifests itself in Wuguang's use of the word 'reasoning' *daoli* 道理, which can also be translated as 'rationality.' In the context of Zhang's ritualizing Laozi's non-action ideology, 'rationality's' function is akin to that of 'prajñā' in Wuguang's heterodox/orthodox distinction. Consequently, Buddhists, Daoists—and all religionists—are practitioners of either a universal orthodoxy or heterodoxy that transverses religious and denominational distinctions. The exact practices he mentions here, Mantra of Oral Purification 淨口咒,[360] Speaking of the Elixir 講丹子,

[358] The other major school, Quanzhen Daoism was discussed in Marui's article concerning Taiwanese religion in Chapter 2.

[359] The deification of Laozi is the topic of Livia Kohn, *God of the Dao: Lord Lao in History and Myth* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998).

[360] The mantra to which Wuguang is referring, also written 'Divine Oral Purifying Mantra' 淨口神咒, is a Daoist liturgical formula related to the practice of 'transformation' detailed in the previous chapter. My translation of the text: "The Cinnabar of the divine mouth expels filth and clears the atmosphere. The divine tongue speaks truth, permeating fate and nourishing the spirit. The net of the divine teeth expels evil and safeguards truth. The throat of the god is strong and true, the divine breath draws my saliva. The divine heart is the elixiric center, rendering me truly permeated. The divine mind induces my saliva, the breath of the Dao is ever present. So let it be." Original text: "丹朱口神, 吐穢除氛. 舌神正倫, 通命養神. 羅千齒神, 卻邪衛真. 喉神虎賁, 氣神引津. 心神丹元, 令我通真. 思神鍊液, 道氣常存. 急急如律令." It can be found alongside four other purification mantras, the Purifying Mind Mantra 淨心神咒, Purifying Body Mantra 淨身神咒, Harmonizing Earth Mantra 安土地神咒 and Purifying Heaven Mantra 淨天地神咒. See Paul A. Jackson, "These Are Not Just Words: Religious Language of Daoist Temples in Taiwan" (PhD diss, Arizona State University, 2015), 200, 516 and 530.

Transcendent Breath Practices 吐納[361] and Nourishing the Spirit 養神 are all Daoist bodily practices aimed at achieving longevity, immortality and transcendence.[362] As we know Wuguang practiced these throughout his life, he clearly did not consider them heterodox. Rather, their heterodox or orthodox character was determined by whether or not the practitioner was endowed with *prajñā*/logic as manifest in the realization that these practices harness self, rather than other-power.

In addition to utilizing the Shingon and Meiji-era Zen classifiers of miscellaneous/pure esotericism and self/other power, Wuguang is also deploying the secular-religion-superstition trinary. As pointed out by Jacob Josephson, during the Meiji period, the typological category of 'superstition' mirrored the pre-modern category of 'heresy' 邪教 (Chn. *xiejiao*, Jpn. *jakyō*).[363] The same substitution of 'superstition' for the topological role traditionally occupied by 'heresy' similarly took place in Qing China.[364] The inescapable shared semiotic value of 'heterodox' and 'heresy' speak to the fact that for Wuguang, 'superstitious,' 'heterodox,' and 'heretical' referred to the same category, oppositional to 'prajñāic,' 'logical,' and 'orthodox.' Thus, while classifying magic, Wuguang is also redeeming it from the category of 'superstition' by placing it within the realm of orthodox religion. This is made abundantly clear when this typology is applied to Wuguang words quoted in this chapter's introduction, "Religion entails consciousness controlling matter" which could be rephrased in light of his taxonomy as "orthodoxy entails

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[361] The term *tuna* 吐納 (literally 'spitting and absorbing') is an abbreviation for *tugu naxin* 吐故納新 ('expelling the old and absorbing the new') which is an umbrella term for Daoist breathing practices aimed at achieving immortality and longevity. These practices involve expelling impure *qi* and inhaling purer *qi* in order to transform one's body into a transcendent being. See Catherine Despeux "*tuna*," in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008); Thomas Michael, *In the Shadows of the Dao: Laozi, the Sage, and the Daodejing* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2015), 118.

[362] For more information see Michael, *In the Shadows of the Dao*, 109.

[363] Josephson, *The Invention of Religion*, 30.

[364] Timothy Brook, "The Politics of Religion: Late-Imperial Origins of the Regulatory State," in *Making Religion, Making the State: The Politics of Religion in Modern China*, eds. Yoshiko Ashiwa et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 38.

knowing that it is *one's own* consciousness that controls matter through the performance religious techniques."

Magical Conclusion

In this section, we extrapolated Wuguang's magical taxonomy and demonstrated its hybrid nature. I argued that he categorized magic along a high/low binary based on a practitioner's soteriological/mundane ends as well as orthodox/heterodox based on the practitioner's perception that magic was self/other-power. As these taxonomical boundaries are based on the aim and belief of the practitioner rather than provenance, I asserted that a religion's orthodox or heterodox nature is irrelevant to a practice's religious or cultural context. This last assertion is attested to in Wuguang's other writings. Based on his understanding of the self/other-power distinction, Wuguang was a staunch anti-theist. He referred to theism 神教 as "a great superstition" 大迷信[365] and said that praying to Buddhist deities was heresy 邪教.[366]

From these nuances, it is clear that Wuguang defined 'superstition' and its semiotic brethren based solely on the belief of a religious practitioner. In Chinese, the word 'belief' 信 is the second character in the word 'superstition' 迷信 that literally translates as 'deluded' or 'mistaken belief.' This shows that—just as with the case of the directional orientation of the *neidao*/*waidao* dichotomy—Wuguang's taxonomy was linguistically based. For one's magic to not be 'superstitious' requires one to correctly 'believe' that the power originates in his own mind.

[365] Wuguang, *Chande jianghua* 禪的講話 [Speaking of Chan/Zen] (Jiayi: Wuzhishan guangmingwang si jiayi daochang, 1991), 27.

[366] Wuguang, *Amituo*.

Belief's role in Wuguang's religious classification system demonstrates the polemical nature of his teachings. If one believes magic to be 'superstitious' based on the misconception that those who wield magic do so by drawing upon forces originating in an external source, then one is attacking a strawman argument. As magic originates within and entails "consciousness controlling matter," labeling magic as 'superstitious' is to inappropriately apply the category of 'superstition.' Thus, the Japanese and Chinese Buddhist modernists who attacked Daoism and folk religion were chasing phantasms produced by their own imaginations. What they *imagined* they were attacking—even according to Wuguang—deserved to be labeled as 'superstitious.' However, if one practices magic with the realization that the powers come from within—a prajñāic realization open to followers of every faith—then the modernist critique is entirely unwarranted. This reveals Wuguang's reenchanted reaction to the disenchanting hermeneutic of early Buddhist modernism. He did not reject the notion that magic could be superstitious. Rather, he rejected a 'broadsword-like' application of the concept of 'superstition.' In order to save magic from the category of 'superstition,' Wuguang nuanced the typological category itself so that it could be wielded in a more 'scalpel-like' fashion.

This polemical quality rings even clearer when scrutinizing Wuguang's definition of '*prajñā*.' The logical/prajñāic realization that magic is self-power was not a simple intellectual awareness, but the product of advanced spiritual maturity. In order to understand what, exactly, this prajñāic cognizance entailed we must analyze Wuguang's epistemology, for this is the field of inquiry where his notion of *prajñā* naturally falls. To this end, our discussion in the next section analyzes Wuguang's epistemology while uncovering what Wuguang believed attaining this logical/prajñāic realization entailed.

Section II: Mystical Empiricism

Wuguang's epistemological position can be described as an example of 'mystical empiricism.' Mystical empiricism is a term that was coined by F.W.J. Schelling (1775-1854),[367] a German philosopher whose works influenced Inoue Enryō.[368] According to both Schelling and Wuguang, there are two levels of epistemological empiricism. The lower form is limited to data gained through the five senses while the higher, mystical form is able to transcend sensorial limitations and access data suprasensorially.[369]

The classical—'lower'—empiricist epistemological position is encapsulated in the Latin phrase *"Nihil in intellectu quod non sit prius in sensu.*"[370] Known as the Peripatetic axiom, it means "There is nothing in the intellect that was not previously in the senses." This dictum encapsulates the classical empiricist's stance on what constitutes knowledge and where it comes from. According to this empirical position, all knowledge comes from sensory data—without which the mind would be devoid of mentation as the human mind comes into this world as a

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[367] Schelling described his mystical empiricism thusly: "The lowest level of empiricism is one in which all knowledge is limited to experience through the senses, in which everything supersensible is either denied as such or as a possible object of knowledge. If one accepts philosophical empiricism in this sense, then it does not even share positive philosophy's opposition to rationalism. For positive philosophy merely denies that the supersensible is knowable only in a rational manner, whereas empiricism maintains that it is not knowable in this or any other way, and that ultimately it does not even exist. A higher level of philosophical empiricism, however, is one that maintains that the supersensible can become an actual object of experience, whereby it goes without saying that this experience cannot be of the merely sensuous type but must have something about it that is inherently mysterious, mystical, and for which reason we can call the doctrines of this type doctrines of a mystical empiricism." See Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy: The Berlin Lectures*, tr. Bruce Matthews (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2007), 171.

[368] Takemura Makio, "On the Philosophy of Inoue Enryo," *International Inoue Enryo Research* 1 (2013): 3-24. Online: https://www.toyo.ac.jp/uploaded/attachment/12697.pdf (accessed Feb. 7, 2016).

[369] In Buddhist literature there is an additional, sixth sense referred to as 'mentation' 意 (Skt. *manas*), which is the cognitive faculty that perceives phenomena. See Dan Lusthaus, *Buddhist Phenomenology: A Philosophical Investigation of Yogācāra Buddhism and the Ch'eng Wei-shih lun* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 55. Wuguang did speak of this mental faculty, but he did not discuss it as frequently as he did the other five senses or the suprasense.

[370] This is the wording used by St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274). See P. F. Cranefield, "On the Origin of the Phrase '*nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu*,'" *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 25, no. 1 (1970): 77-80.

tabula rasa (blank slate). Similar to a slate, experiences and external input make impressions upon the mind. These impressions then form what we refer to as 'knowledge' and enable 'thinking.'

Wuguang was a self-proclaimed empiricist. He believed that without external sensory input our minds would be devoid of mentation. This can be seen in the following passage:

> Generally speaking, our capacity for comprehension is delimited by what we have received from society, read in books or what we [have observed] on the earth. We are limited to thinking within this small range. Were it not for the existence of these [epistemic sources] we would be empty of thought, if these [epistemic sources] do exist, we have sensory perception data. Sensory perception data includes everything within this limited range [as outlined here].[371]

Here Wuguang echoes the Peripatetic axiom by stating that a lack of external epistemic sources would render humans "empty of thought." This thus places Wuguang squarely within the empiricist camp, as he believed sensory input was the only source of knowledge and even mental activity. However, Wuguang did not trust sensory input. This can be seen when comparing the above passage with others that deal with sensory perception and the five *skandhas*. Wuguang equated the five senses with the five *skandhas* yet declared them entirely unreliable:

> The five *skandhas* are form, sound, scent, taste and sight, referring to hearing a sound, seeing forms, eating fragrances and flavors and sensations in the physical body.[372]
>
> All of the five *skandhas* are fake. Solidified, the five *skandhas* form this 'soul,' possession of which causes us to be reborn into the six paths, having the five *skandhas* enables mentation…[373]

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[371] Wuguang, *Zhaolun: Wuguang shangshi shiyi* 肇論 - 悟光金剛上師釋義 [Guru Wuguang's Commentary to the Zhaolun], 4 vols. (2015), 2.4. Online: http://www.kmkt.org.tw/kmktchinese/images/kmkt2.pdf (accessed Jan. 23, 2016). Original text: "一般所能理解到的，只是我們在社會上或書上所看範圍，或是地球上的知識而已，我們僅在這極小的範圍內去思想。若沒有那些事就是空想，若有那些事物，就是見聞覺知，見聞覺知包括了所有的範圍是有限的."

[372] Wuguang, *Amituo*. Original text: "五蘊是色、聲、香、味觸，聽到的是聲音，看到的是色彩，食到的是香味，接觸身體的是感覺."

[373] Wuguang, *Yizhen faju qianshuo* 一真法句淺說 [Elementary Explanation of 'One True Dharma Sentence'] in *Xinbian zheng fayan zang* 新編正法眼藏 [New Perspective on the Treasure of the True Dharma Eye], by Wuguang (Forms Publications: Hong Kong, 2014), 190. Original text: "所有的五蘊是假的，這五蘊堅固就是世間所云之靈魂，有這靈魂就要輪迴六趣了，有五蘊就有能思…"

Wuguang thus sets up an epistemological problem. Since our only epistemically accessible source is untrustworthy it is impossible to believe that anything is true! This, however, is only the case when speaking "generally" 一般, rather then definitively or universally. In fact, Wuguang believed that there is a higher form of knowledge that is not reliant upon sensory perception that can only be gained via suprasensorial channels.

Wuguang referred to these suprasensorial channels as different kinds of 'eyes' 眼. The 'physical eye' 肉眼 is a term he used to encapsulate the five senses with which we are all born and grant us access to "fake" data. Juxtaposed to this is the suprasense that Wuguang referred to as the 'Buddha-eye' 佛眼 or 'Void-eye' 虛空眼 and was the source for trustworthy data. Between these two levels Wuguang posited others that are listed and explained in the following:

> The unenlightened only have 'physical eyes.' Through cultivation that they can obtain 'void-eyes' to see the true reality of things. Step by step one sees the things in the *dharmadhātu* as his inner mind's perception, reception and outlook are uniquely transformed [by obtaining] 'Heaven-eyes,' 'Dharma-eyes,' 'Wisdom-eyes' and 'Buddha-eyes.' Having practiced to [the point where] all dharmas are pure, one has then attained 'Heaven-eyes.' When you see the equanimity of all things, you have attained 'Dharma-eyes.' When you thoroughly comprehend the principle within everything, and see the equanimity of all things, then you have attained 'Wisdom-eyes.'[374]

The taxonomy articulated here is taken from canonical Buddhist sources that list different forms of sight. The vast majority of texts list these different 'eyes' (Skt. *cakṣus*) individually, but over time they started to be listed together as Wuguang does here.[375] In addition to the terms 'Buddha-

[374] Wuguang. *Zhaolun*, 1.17. Online: http://www.kmkt.org.tw/kmktchinese/images/kmkt.pdf (accessed Jan. 23, 2015). Original text: "凡夫只是肉眼，修行後就有個虛空眼能看到實相，甚至有個天眼、法眼、慧眼和佛眼，一步一步的看到法界的事物、你內心的感想、感受及看法就會有不同的轉變。修到諸法清淨，就得到天眼。你看到諸法平等，就得到法眼。你對一切諸法洞徹其中的理，一切諸法平等，你就得到慧眼。"

[375] These levels of sight include: 'physical eyes' (*mâṃsa-cakṣus*), 'Celestial eyes' (*divya-cakṣus*), 'Dharma-eyes' (*dharma-cakṣus*), '*Prajñā*-eyes' (*prajñā-cakṣus*) and 'Buddha-eyes' (*buddha-cakṣus*). See Étienne Lamotte, *The Treatise on the Great Virtue of Wisdom of Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpārami-tāśāstra)*, Vol. V, Chapters XLIX-LII and Chapter XX, tr. Gelongma Karma Migme Chödrön (Unpublished manuscript, 2007), 1869. Online: https://archive.org/stream/MahaPrajnaparamitaSastraFullByNagarjuna/Maha%20prajnaparamita%20sastra%20-%20Vol.5%20by%20Nagarjuna#page/n5/mode/2up (accessed Mar. 11, 2016).

eye' and 'Void-eye,' elsewhere Wuguang refers to suprasensorial faculties as the 'mind-eye' 心眼. This term is found throughout the Buddhist canon. Liturgically, it refers to the cognitive capability to visualize imagery. In Shingon literature it can additionally refer to the attainment of Buddha-hood.[376] Wuguang combined its ritualistic and soteriological connotations and added an epistemological nuance to this term by likening the mind-eye to an omniscient X-Ray that can rend the veil and peer into the true nature of things.[377]

In addition to articulating his mystical empiricism in established Buddhist terminology, Wuguang also rooted it in classical Buddhist phenomenology that drew a distinction between mundane and higher forms of knowledge. This distinction has been eloquently explained by Fabio Rambelli:

> Buddhism recognizes the existence of two radically different cognitive modalities corresponding to two different kinds of semiotics…Ordinary knowledge (in Sanskrit *jñāna*) is considered fallacious because it mistakes a presumed ontological reality of the universe with ordinary psycho-mental phenomena and processes (modalities and functions of mind) creating such a reality. In contrast, true, absolute knowledge, called *prajñā* or Bodhi, is the product of the performance of religious practices (meditative, devotional, and ritual practices in general), resulting in non-ordinary states of bodhi-mind-language.[378]

Wuguang's mystical empiricism closely resembles the semiotic taxonomy and cognitive transformation as detailed by Rambelli. Wuguang's epistemology included a distinction between *jñāna*—which he qualified as 'general'—and *prajñā*.[379] For Wuguang, *jñāna* represented a 'general' cognitive function where one's epistemic range is limited to secondhand data collected

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[376] Adrian Snodgrass, *The Matrix and Diamond World Mandalas in Shingon Buddhism*, 2 vols., Sata-Pitaka Series, 354 (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1988), 34.

[377] Wuguang, *Banruo liqujing jiangji* 般若理趣經講記 [Notes from Talks on the *Prajñāpāramitā-naya-śatapañcaśatikā*], 2 vols. (Kaohsiung: Yimin Chubanshe, 2011), 1.34.

[378] Fabio Rambelli, *A Buddhist Theory of Semiotics*, 17.

[379] The terms *jñāna* and *prajñā* are built around the Sanskrit root *jña* signifying cognitive potentiality. It is a cognate with the Greek word *gnosis*, the Latin (co)*gnito* as well as the English word 'know.' To this is attached the prefix *pra-* of *prajñā* which has the sense of 'heightening' or 'intensification.' See Oliver Leaman, *Eastern Philosophy: Key Readings* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 243-244; William Waldron, *The Buddhist Unconscious: The Alaya-vijñana in the Context of Indian Buddhist Thought*, RoutledgeCurzon Critical Studies in Buddhism (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 20.

through the five senses. *Prajñā*, on the other hand, refers to a higher cognitive modality where one's epistemic range included data inaccessible via the five senses.

In addition to detailing the different epistemological sources upon which these two cognitive modalities are based, Wuguang also detailed the differences between the modalities themselves:

> The reasoning of all things known by unenlightened people is relative and in no way [penetrates] the equality of things, [this level] of human knowledge cannot transcend these limitations. Buddhas, because of *prajñā*, can surpass the world, therefore they are remarkable. This aspect is translated as 'great *prajñā*,' therefore it is called *mahāprajña*, 'great *prajñā*' is [just a translation], not its actual name. '*Prajñā*' transforms everything into wisdom, hence its name. It can enable all the masses to understand, this is translated as 'remarkable, expansive, unlimited wisdom,' this is Buddha wisdom. Unenlightened wisdom is accumulated after one is born via interpersonal relationships with parents and siblings, teachers, community and friends—it is entirely imprecise.[380]

Here, the exact differences between *jñāna* and *prajñā* are detailed in terms of higher and lower forms of epistemology. Normal, unenlightened cognition is limited, relative and imprecise. In contrast, enlightened cognition is transcendent, universal and precise. Again, we see Wuguang directly referencing the secondhand nature of knowledge according to the classical empiricist position. The prevalence of this concept in his writings shows that he was familiar with classical empiricism—a knowledge likely gained while studying at Zhuxi Temple under Yanjing. It should be noted that Wuguang never once refutes this claim but instead continuously affirms it. This affirmation, however, is stated in order to present his mystical empiricism as superior as it

[380] Wuguang, *Xinjing sixiang jice* 心經思想蠡測 [Summary of the Ideology of the Heart Sutra]. Online: http://www.china2551.org/Article/tmwh/tmzl/201007/11646.html (accessed Jan. 23, 2016). Original text: "凡夫所知的道理有深淺廣狹多少並不是絕對平等，人智都不能超越界限，佛因為其智慧超越世間，所以是殊勝。此方名大般若是意譯，故稱摩訶般若，不名大般若。"般若"一般都翻做智慧，是以定慧來樹名的，為使大眾普遍容易了解，就譯成殊勝廣大無限的智慧，這就是佛智。凡夫的智慧是出生以後，受父母兄弟、學校老師、社會朋友的人際關係中得來的收藏品，都不盡正確。"

breaks the bounds erected by classical empiricism by positing the belief in suprasensorial capabilities.

Unlocking the prajñāic ability to access suprasensorial data does not come naturally, but requires performing religious rituals. As we can see in the following passage, Wuguang believed that the goal of ritual performance was to initiate mystical visionary experiences and that these experiences are what allow us to tap into our suprasensorial capabilities:

> Zhenyan/Shingon calls this direct, mystical visionary method the 'Yogic method' or '*Samādhi* method.' Via the experiences induced by this method one can directly grasp the disposition of the life of the true self and its movement through birth after birth, as well as all the mysteries of the universe. Ordinary beings can attain Buddhahood in their present bodies. As Amoghavajra said, "Only with this Zhenyan method can one become a Buddha in this body, therefore it is said that this *samādhi* method is missing from the writings of the other teachings." This Yogic or *Samādhi* method is called 'the method of direct mystical vision…'[381]

In this passage, Wuguang roots his mystical empiricism in the Buddhist canon in an effort to portray it as being consistent with orthodox Buddhism. Particularly significant is the fact that he referenced Amoghavajra, one of the key patriarchs of Zhenyan/Shingon. Here Wuguang proclaims that achieving direct mystical visionary experiences is the goal of Zhenyan/Shingon practice. This reveals just how important Wuguang believed these visions to be. They were not a secondary outcrop of religious practice, but the singular point of engaging in religious practice.

As visionless religionists are limited to sensory data, which is untrustworthy, in order to gain a true understanding of the universe one must engage in practices that initiate mystical visionary experiences to access suprasensorial data. This claim's subtext asserts that anyone who

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[381] Wuguang, *Sanmodi zhi Miguan* 三摩地之秘觀 [The Mystical Vision of *Samādhi*], ND. Posted to the blog of a Hong Kong devotee's blog entitled the '*Guangming bianzhao* blog' 光明遍照的博客 on Dec. 31, 2010. I have included this source due to its consistency with Wuguang's other works (see next note). Online: http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_63a661210100npyr.html (accessed Jan. 21, 2016). Original text: "其直觀神秘方法，真言密教曰瑜珈法或三摩地法。依此故能直接把握真我之活生生的動的姿態，亦能體會到全一的宇宙之神秘。通此個體的肉身能實現真我之活動，凡夫當體可以成佛了。而不空三藏云：「只於真言法中即身成佛故說此三摩地之法，餘教之中闕書之。」說之。 瑜珈法或三摩地法所稱之神秘直觀方法是…"

has not had mystical visions is essentially ignorant of the truth. The fact that this is what Wuguang is implying can be seen in the following passage where he disparages 'general' epistemologists:

> General epistemologists all integrate the true self into the relativity of emptiness and suchness through abstraction or particularity, comparing or contrasting things. This is nothing but relative, localized analytical observations of forms and qualities of the very outer layer of phenomena...this sort of epistemoligst will never be able to harmonize with the original essense of true Buddhahood...so what sort of method should one use to be able to firmly experience the the true character of the true self of the true Buddha?...Outside of this mystical, direct visionary method, there is no way to even gain a glimpse of the true self's character. [382]

Here, Wuguang concretely articulates the fact that he is joining the discursive context of modern philosophy by openly challenging 'general epistemologists' 認識者, who he asserts are incapable of making justifiable truth-claims as "outside of this mystical, direct visionary method, there is no way to even gain a glimpse of the true self's character." Those caught in the crosshairs of this attack include Buddhist modernists who downplay the importance of mystical visions. This shows us that when Wuguang articulated his epistemology he was doing so polemically. Were this not the case he would not have contrasted his position with 'general epistemologists' nor claimed that his method—and those that resemble it—are the *only* way.

In addition to illuminating Wuguang's epistemological position as well as its orthopraxic and polemical implications, in this section we have come closer to understanding Wuguang's interpretation of the secular-religious-superstitious trinary. We now know that when Wuguang defined orthodoxy as prajñāic, he was referring to a cognitive modality based upon data gathered

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[382] Wuguang, *Mijiao sixiang yu shenghuo*, 271-272. Original text: "一般之認識論者, 都是將真我當體嵌入事空之對立中, 將其拍象化或各別化, 把他和他物比較或對照. 這不外是相對性地, 局部性地, 分析性地明瞭其形體或形質, 僅於其事物的表皮面上…這種認識者,永遠無法同契真佛之本體….那麼用甚麼方法,才能把握體驗此真佛的真正自我之真相呢?...除此神秘的直觀方法外, 其他方法均無法窺知真我之姿." There is a paralell passage in text quoted in the previous note that states: "所謂普通一般之認識者，即以事物在時間、或集於空間去比對他物而已…且機械的以死物來觀察而已。 然用什麼方法才能把握體認此真佛的真我的真相…直觀之方法外都沒有辦法。"

from suprasensorial perception that is only accessible via mystical visionary experiences. We also know that Wuguang believed that the only way to access this level of cognition and gather trustworthy data was through religious rituals. As this prajñāic realization bestowed one with cognizance of the fact that magical power lies within, we can determine that this cognizance is not a simple intellectual affirmation, but a realization regarding self-power. Were this not the case, mystical visions would not be a prajñāic requirement. This point alludes to the fact that the epistemological position articulated in Wuguang's mystical empiricism was part of a soteriological process. Wuguang's understanding of this process was based upon Shingon phenomenology, which itself was built upon earlier Yogācāra cognitive-mapping. In order to understand *what* this prajñāic realization regarding self-power entailed, let us now analyze how Wuguang described this soteriological process.

Section III: Soteriological Phenomenology

Classical Yogācāra phenomenology posited a cognitive map featuring eight aspects of human cognition[383] (Skt. *vijñāna*, also translated as 'consciousness'). The five outer cognitive capabilities correspond to the five senses. Underlying these are two intermediary facets that interact with the deeper recesses of the mind while receiving input from the five sensorial cognitions. The most primordial cavern of the mind, the 'storehouse-cognition' (Skt. *ālaya-vijñāna*) is a mental substratum that contains karmic impressions referred to as 'seeds' (*bīja*) from past incarnations. These 'seeds' are the karmic potentialities born out of our activities. Wholesome activities plant positive seeds while unwholesome activities plant negative seeds.

[383] I have consistently translated the Sanskrit term *vijñāna* and its Chinese equivilent *shi* as 'cognition' rather than the more common rendering 'consciousness' to make a clear distinction between the phenomenological issues discussed in this section and the ontological issues surrounding 'consciousness' *jingshen* 精神 brielfy mentioned above, and discussed at great length in Chapter 4.

The character of the storehouse-cognition is not static, but is mutable and affected by the wholesome or unwholesome nature of the seeds that we deposit into it. The nature of these seeds in turn 'perfume' (*vāsanā*) the storehouse-cognition, flavoring what mental phenomena it produces. The function to store and later give rise to karmic potentialities rendered the storehouse-cognition the agent of rebirth, liberation and karma.[384]

East Asian Yogācāra later added an additional ninth cognitive level that was said to be purely undefiled—the 'undefiled-cognition' (Skt. *amala-vijñāna*).[385] Unlike the storehouse-cognition whose purity is determined by the nature of the seeds contained therein, the undefiled-cognition is statically wholesome. Later, Shingon phenomenology went even further and posited the existence of a tenth cognitive level more sublime than the undefiled-cognition. Kūkai referred to this level as the 'individuation-cognition' 一一識心.[386] Unlocking this cognitive modality is the mental manifestation of becoming a buddha.[387]

Wuguang openly references these cognitive maps while mentioning Kūkai's individuated-cognition by name:

> Exoteric Chan/Zen only states that *tathātā* is the source of the myriad phenomena, [meaning that] the myriad *dharmas* are transformations of *tathātā*. Chan/Zen's utility can only teach to this point. [However], we can analyze deeper. Yogācāra speaks of the six cognitions and further adds a seventh and eighth—without which there would be no

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[384] Johannes Bronkhorst, *Buddhist Teaching in India* (Somerville MA: Wisdom Publications, 2009), 142.

[385] This term has yet to be found in extant Sanskrit sources. Its coinage is often attributed to Paramārtha (499-569), one of the four great translators in Chinese Buddhist history. See Diana Y. Paul, *Philosophy of Mind in Sixth-century China: Paramārtha's "Evolution of Consciousness"* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), 121.

[386] T. 2427, 77.0378b04.

[387] Kūkai also speculated that there were in fact infinite levels. These levels should not be confused with Kūkai's 'Ten Stages of the Mind' 十住心 which is a doctrinal classification, rather than a cognitive-map. See Taikō Yamasaki, *Shingon: Japanese Esoteric Buddhism*, trs. Richard and Cynthia Peterson (Boston and London: Shambhala, 1988), 90-95. Wuguang was aware of both of these ten-tiered schemes and conscious of their differences as evidenced by his explanation of Kūkai's Ten Stages of the Mind in Wuguang, *Mijiao sixiang yu shenghuo*, 158-160.

> *saṃsāra*. Mahāyāna sūtras speak of the ninth cognition. Zhenyan/Shingon is able to touch upon the tenth cognition whose name is 'individuation-cognition.'[388]

In this passage Wuguang presents the Zhenyan/Shingon cognitive map as a more complete—and therefore superior—version than those used by other forms of Buddhism. It is thus a polemical statement aimed at demonstrating the superiority of Zhenyan/Shingon over other forms of Buddhism. He refers to the ninth, undefiled-cognition as *tathātā* ('suchness'), a confluence commonplace in Mahāyāna literature.[389] From this we see that Wuguang employed the Shingon cognitive map to articulate his epistemological position.

These phenomenological dynamics of Buddhist cognitive-mapping contain soteriological implications. According to the Shingon map, unenlightened sentient beings are directed through the nine channels of *saṃsāra* based upon the seeds deposited into the storehouse-cognition. While in *saṃsāra*, their cognitive capabilities are limited to the first nine levels of cognition. Most beings are only able to access the first eight while a bodhisattva—who chooses to remain in *saṃsāra*—can access the ninth. In order to escape *saṃsāra* one must unlock the tenth level of cognition: individuation-cognition. Doing so requires a supra-mundane cognitive modality whose mechanics are beyond the function of the lower nine. Because of this, unlocking the tenth cognition requires an additional apparatus. This apparatus is composed of five pure cognitive functions referred to as the 'five wisdoms' (Skt. *pañca-jñāna*) 五智. The five wisdoms represent an esoteric Buddhist doctrine built upon earlier Yogācāra ideas regarding cognitive modalities.[390]

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[388] Wuguang, *Zhaolun*, 1.4. Original text: "顯教禪宗只說到萬物的源頭是真如，真如生萬物萬法；萬法是真如變的，禪宗的功能只說到此。我們還可以再分析到裡面，唯識學說到六識，應再加上七識、八識，否則不能輪迴。大乘經典談到九識，真言宗則可論及到十識，稱之「一一心識」。"

[389] *Tathātā*—along with *dharmakāya* ('Buddha-body') and *dharmadhātu* ('phenomenal realm')—are ontological constructs that present the original state of the universe as pure and undefiled. In Mahāyāna these were later conflated with the soteriological notion of the *tathāgatagarbha* ('womb of the Buddha'). All of these concepts were late conflated with the undefiled-cognition. See Lusthaus, *Buddhist Phenomenology*, 8.

[390] Buswell et al., *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 245.

Rather than being distinct from the lower nine levels of cognition, they are higher functions thereof. The relationships between the five wisdoms, the cognitive map and realms of rebirth are detailed in the following chart (see figure 10).

Cognitive Map		**Epistemic Source**	**Five Wisdoms**	**Realm**
1	visual-cognition *cakṣur-vijñāna*	Five Senses	unrestricted activity *kṛtyānuṣṭhāna-jñāna*	Hell
2	auditory-cognition *śrota-vijñāna*			Hungry Ghost
3	olfactory-cognition *ghrāṇa-vijñāna*			Animal
4	gustatory-cognition *jihvā-vijñāna*			Asura
5	tactile-cognition *kāya-vijñāna*			Human
6	mentation-cognition *mano-vijñāna*	Three Early Yogācāra Mental Cognitions	marvelous observing *pratyavekṣaṇā-jñāna*	Deva
7	defiled mental-cognition *kliṣṭa-mano-vijñāna*		equality of all things *samatā-jñāna*	Śrāvaka
8	storehouse cognition *ālaya-vijñāna*		great mirror *ādarśa-jñāna*	Pratyekabuddha
9	undefiled cognition *amala-vijñāna*	Additional Soteriological Cognition	nature of the *dharmadhātu* *dharmadhātu-prakṛti-jñāna*	Bodhisattva
10	individuation-cognition 一一心識	Additional Shingon Cognition	All Five	Buddha

Figure 10: Wuguang's Understanding of the Shingon Cognitive Map

The soteriological process of cognitive transformation detailed here is encapsulated in the phrase 'transforming cognition into wisdom' 轉識成智 that embodies the soteriological goal of Buddhism according Yogācāra thought.[391] It was this exact process that Wuguang is referring to when drawing a distinction between *jñāna* and *prajñā*. Through the practice of rituals one attains

[391] See J. C. Cleary, *A Tune Beyond the Clouds: Zen Teachings from Old China* (Fremont, CA: Jain Publishing, 1990), 33.

mystical visions. These mystical visions then unlock the higher functions of the lower nine cognitive functions granting us suprasensorial capabilities. Having this capability—which enables a practitioner to see the true nature of reality—is what having *prajñā* means. It is thus an epistemo-soteriological condition.

The fact that this is exactly what Wuguang is saying is openly articulated in his writings. True to his inclusive and anti-sectarian stance, Wuguang taught that Zhenyan/Shingon rituals were not the only way to achieve this transformation. In the following passage, Wuguang asserts that Chan/Zen meditation equally has this potential:

> If one sits in Chan/Zen meditation unto the point of emptiness this is the realm of Mahāvairocana. Pure Land people or people who sit in Chan/Zen meditation, when they sit in Chan/Zen and see buddhas or other phenomena, all of this is the activity of the mind—the activity of the five wisdoms, the activity of the internal body of Mahāvairocana.[392]

Wuguang asserts that the visions of "Buddhas or other phenomena" one may experience during these practices are the activity of the mind, five wisdoms and internal body of Mahāvairocana. As this is a mystical vision, the "mind" of which Wuguang speaks is undoubtedly the aspect which has access to the supra-sense. This supra-sense is symptomatic of "the activity of the five wisdoms" which Wuguang further equates with the "internal body of Mahāvairocana." Mahāvairocana is the core deity of Shingon Buddhism. He is believed to be the totality of the entire universe itself and the true identity of all its inhabitants. Thus, the Shingon universe is a cosmotheistic one composed *of* Mahāvairocana and inhabited *by* his countless manifestations. As Wuguang already told us that mystical visions enable us to see the true nature of reality in an

[392] Wuguang, *Amituo mishi*. Original text: "坐禪至本性空，這境界即是遍照如來。淨土的人或坐禪的人，於坐禪期間見到佛或其他現象，皆是心的活動——五智的活動，即是大日如來的內體的活動。"

entirely unobscured fashion, from this passage we can deduce that this entails seeing the "internal body of Mahāvairocana."

The fact that the five wisdoms are higher functions of the nine cognitions means that even though unenlightened beings are limited to sensorial data, they are innately endowed with suprasensorial capabilities. Wuguang confirms this and explains that we lose this capability through negative 'genes' 基因. Throughout Wuguang's writings he uses the term 'genes' to explain the mechanics of karmic retribution. Similar to how our DNA is based upon the genetic makeup of our parents, our present capabilities are determined by our karma's 'genetic makeup' as determined by previous actions. Wuguang explains how this happens in a passage from his commentary to the Heart Sūtra:

> Becoming a buddha means transforming cognition into wisdom, [which is done by] transforming the five cognitions into the five wisdoms. 'Cognition' is the mentality of the world of delusion, 'wisdom' is the the true, certain path of original wisdom. Unenlightened people originally have the five wisdoms, but as they have been led astray by negative genetic qualities, and thus have become lost within phenomena—[meaning] that their wisdom has been transformed into cognition. If one [first] relies on the '*prajñā* of words and letters,' then on the '*prajñā* of contemplation,' then the '*prajñā* of the characteristics of reality,' one has thus become a buddha.[393]

Wuguang references the process of 'transforming cognition into wisdom' cited above and reverses into 'wisdom transferring into cognition' in order to explain the negative karmic consequences rooted in past life activity. These "negative genes" phenomenologically function the same as the 'seeds' that 'perfume' the storehouse-cognition in earlier Yogācāra thought. This results in one's epistemological range being limited to sensorial data. Wuguang defines

[393] Wuguang, *Xinjing*. Original text: "成佛是轉識成智，將五識轉成五智。識是迷界之心理，智是達道正確的本有智德。凡夫本來就具足五智，因為被惡的基因德性所支使，以致迷於現象，智變成了識，若依"文字般若"去做"觀照般若"，以"觀照般若"去證"實相 般若"，即成佛。"

becoming a Buddha as the attainment of *prajñā* that happens by retransforming one's cognitive function from the five senses *back* to the five wisdoms.[394]

From all of these references we have a clear understanding of Wuguang's epistemology as well as its soteriological implications. Becoming a buddha—the stated goal of Zhenyan/Shingon—is nothing other than the acquisition of *prajñā* brought about by transforming one's cognitive mode *back* to its original suprasensorially capable state. This is achieved through the performance of religious rituals that initiate mystical visionary experiences. Without these visions, this goal is unattainable. Although these visions are the entire point of performing Zhenyan/Shingon rituals, more common Buddhist practices such as Chan/Zen meditation and chanting Amitābha's name can also produce the same results. This transformation, however, does not entail producing a new cognitive modality but reviving an original one that has been lost. Again, mirroring Wuguang's anti-sectarian stance and reinterpretation of the divide between orthodoxy and heterodoxy, this transformation is open to all human beings regardless of their religious affiliation. If one's religious practices produce mystical visions that awaken the suprasensorial five wisdoms, then one's faith is orthodox. If one's religious practice does not—even if those practices are entirely Buddhist—his faith is heterodox.

Epistemological Conclusion

Wuguang's magical taxonomy and soteriological epistemology are highly polemical. In light of the fact that *prajñā*—orthodoxy—requires mystical visionary experiences, non-

[394] The prajñāic trinary detailed by Wuguang here was not his own invention. These three kinds of *prajñā (tri-prajñā)* are one prajñāic taxonomy found in classical Buddhist literature. The lowest form, '*prajñā* of words and letters' entails studying Buddhist literature. The second, '*prajñā* of contemplation' requires meditative practices. The latter, and highest form of these, '*prajñā* of the characteristics of reality,' is the essential *prajñā* inherent in all sentient beings that one attains through transforming their cognition to *prajñā*. See James M. Shields, *Critical Buddhism: Engaging with Modern Japanese Buddhist Thought* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 89-90.

experiential forms of religion are by default heterodox and practitioners of this universal heterodoxy are automatically ignorant.

The implications of this are directly related to Wuguang's views of magic. According to Wuguang, if one believes magic to be 'superstitious' based on the misconception that those who wield magic do so by drawing upon forces originating in an external source that is because one's views are heterodox and based on limited information. As magic originates within and entails "consciousness controlling matter," labeling magic as 'superstitious' is a logically fallacious strawman. Thus, the Japanese and Chinese Buddhist modernists who attacked Daoism and folk religion were chasing phantasms produced by their own imaginations. What they *imagined* they were attacking—even according to Wuguang—deserved to be labeled as 'superstitious.' However, if one practices magic with the realization that the powers come from within—a prajñāic realization open to followers of every faith—then the modernist critique is entirely unwarranted. From this we see that Wuguang did not reject the notion that magic could be superstitious. Rather, he rejected applying the concept of 'superstition' too broadly. In order to save magic from the category of 'superstition,' Wuguang nuanced the typological category itself.

Conclusion

In addition to fashioning his own typology and adding nuance to the category of 'superstition,' Wuguang redeemed magic by painting a picture of the world as he saw it. As to be expected, this world was an enchanted one that is permeated with magical energy.

Despite the fact that we now understand that when Wuguang considered a magical practice to be prajñāic, it meant that one's understanding thereof was built upon suprasensorial input collected through mystical visions, we have yet to see what, *exactly*, one saw during those

visions. In his commentary to the *Heart Sūtra* Wuguang said, "Viewing the world through the mind's eye transforms [it] into Śākyamuni's Pure Land."[395] However, Wuguang's description of this Pure Land bears little resemblance to its Buddhist precedents and was much more akin to something out of science fiction. This is because Wuguang constructed his magical world by drawing upon Daoist and Buddhist ontology, modern philosophy and thermodynamics.

In the next chapter, we will explore Wuguang's world while discussing both how and why he constructed it in the way he did.

[395] Wuguang, *Xinjing*. Original text: "安心眼前就變成了釋迦淨土."

Chapter 4

Wuguang's Electric Universe

Suddenly, I stood involuntarily motionless. The intellectual effort to which I had been stimulated had subconsciously gone further than I realized, and I had suddenly been led to a new point, as yet untrodden. The difficulty – indeed, the impossibility – of the dualism and parallelism of matter and energy had intensified in my head…to such an extent that I gasped for air intellectually, so to speak, and grasped at another solution. How would it be if energy alone had primary existence and matter were only a secondary product of energy, a complex of different energies held together by definite causes…[that thought] had the effect on me of a lightning-like illumination. I experienced a physical sensation in my brain comparable to an umbrella's turning inside out in a heavy wind. My total consciousness suddenly snapped over into a different, more stable position of equilibrium, out of the earlier position of relative equilibrium of my thinking, which had been satisfied with the parallelism of matter and energy. Here energy was definitely accorded the leading and decisive position: mass and weight, the chief properties of ''matter,'' were viewed as factors, or partial quantities, of certain kinds of energy.

~ Friedrich Wilhelm Ostwald[396]

After confirming the existence of magic, redeeming it from the category of 'superstition' and equating it with 'religion,' Wuguang went a step further and explained it in terms of 'secular science.' He accomplished this by fashioning a metaphysical ontology that reconciled Buddhist and Daoist ontologies, Chinese folk religious practices, esoteric Buddhist soteriology and scientific theories that had been popular during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Following in the footsteps of his Buddhist modernist predecessors, he articulated his new ontology and related metaphysics in the language of modern philosophy.

Just like his magical taxonomy and epistemology, Wuguang's onto-metaphysical doctrines represent a polemical response to disenchanted Buddhist modernism. This fact is

[396] Friedrich Wilhelm Ostwald, *Lebenslinien: Eine Selbstbiographie*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Klassing & Co., 1926-1927), 2.155-157 as translated and quoted in R. J. Deltete, "Wilhelm Ostwald's Energetics 1: Origins and Motivations," *Foundations of Chemistry* 9, no. 3 (2007): 31-32.

attested to by the particular religious practices that his ontology redeemed from the category of 'superstition' and the exact philosophical and scientific concepts that he utilized to do so. The practices that Wuguang explained were related to funerary practices, spirit-mediumship, demonic possession, and astrology. The philosophical and scientific rubrics that Wuguang employed revolved around the duality of mind and matter. These ritual and philosophical subjects were central foci of disenchanted Buddhist modernism.

This chapter is organized into three sections. The first discusses Wuguang's ontology while highlighting his reliance on the philosophical and scientific issues utilized by his Buddhist predecessors and the ways in which this ontology harmonized Buddhism, Daoism, philosophy and science. The second section is focused on the metaphysical ramifications of Wuguang's ontology and showcases his attempt to scientifically explain religious practices that had been deemed 'superstitious' due to their inexplicability. The third and final section presents Wuguang's radical prediction regarding the future of Asian—and global—religiosity.

Section I: Energetic Ontology

Nineteenth-early twentieth century East Asian Buddhist engagements with modern philosophy were dominated by overly simplistic interpretations of epistemological and ontological arguments. These oversimplifications focused on the divide between material and mental phenomena.[397] This division has both ontological and phenomenological applications. Despite the fact that ontological applications have phenomenological ramifications and vice versa, due to the fact that they are different philosophical fields of inquiry they produce different philosophical positions that I will now explain.

[397] Erik J. Hammerstrom, "The Expression 'The Myriad Dharmas are Only Consciousness' in Early 20th Century Chinese Buddhism," *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 23 (2010): 83.

Ontologically, the material/mental binary functions as the foundation of materialism and idealism. In Japanese and Chinese these were respectively translated as 'matter-only ideology' 唯物論 (also 唯物主義) and 'mind-only ideology' 唯心論 (also 唯心主義). The distinction between these positions is an issue of primacy. Materialism asserts that mental phenomena—commonly referred to as 'consciousness' or 'mind'—are secondary outcrops of matter while idealism maintains the exact opposite. According to both, if one were to deconstruct any 'thing' to its most primitive ingredient—whatever that 'thing' may be—a single, universal substance would be revealed. Their point of contention is whether that underlying substance would be material or mental. As both materialist and idealist ontologies posit that the entire universe is composed of the same underlying 'stuff,' they are both examples of 'monism'—a term that was rendered into Japanese and Chinese as 'single-basis ideology' 一元論 (also 一元主義).

The phenomenological application of the matter/consciousness divide is oftentimes very different. While the ontological applications just discussed were cases of 'either or,' phenomenologically it can be 'both and.' This difference is easily explained by using the ontological and phenomenological positions articulated by René Descartes (1596-1650) as an example. Rather than arguing that all worldly phenomena are composed of a single substance, he maintained that material phenomena are composed entirely of matter while mental phenomena are composed entirely of consciousness. Thus, rather than articulating a monistic ontology akin to either materialism or idealism, he formulated a form of 'dualism'—a term that was translated into Japanese and Chinese as 'double-basis ideology' 二元論 (also 二元主義). This dualistic ontology had phenomenological ramifications. Based on a strict division between matter and consciousness, Descartes argued for a strict division between mind and body. This strict division

is commonly referred to as 'Cartesian dualism'—which is a phenomenological, rather than ontological position as it concerns human experience.

East Asian Buddhist modernists tended to portray all Western philosophical positions as either strictly materialist or idealist.[398] This enabled them to proclaim that Buddhism contained philosophical positions that transcended this debate.

The material/mental binary served as Inoue Enryō's discursive point of entry in his engagements with modern philosophy.[399] This can be seen in the passage quoted in the previous chapter where he segregated religion from science based on the division between matter and consciousness.[400] His use of this distinction to proclaim that Western thought was limited to these two positions can be seen in the following:

> Since antiquity, verification has been sought for the idealist and materialist poles. It was assumed that either materialism or idealism provided the correct worldview. However, an outside observer

[398] Hammerstrom—who has contributed much to our understanding of early Chinese Buddhist engagements with modern philosophy—unknowingly conflates these ontological and philosophical issues throughout his work. In his "Myriad Dharmas" he states that the Chinese Buddhists were fashioning a Buddhist ontology that would transcend the materialist/idealist binary. However, the article primarily deals with phenomenology—not ontology—and the few ontological opinions he does detail are entirely idealist despite his claim that they transcend the materialist/idealist dichotomy. This is problematic, since the article's key argument is that the Buddhists transformed a classical Yogācāra phenomenological doctrine into an ontological one that transcended this binary. This misunderstanding is again found in his chapter, "Yogācāra and Modern Science in the 1920s: The Wuchang School's Approach to Modern Mind Science," in *Transforming Consciousness: Yogācāra Thought in Modern China*, ed. John Makeham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 175 where his confounding these issues is manifested in his characterizing these philosophical musings as "onto-epistemological." This same misunderstanding is again echoed in his book, *The Science of Chinese Buddhism: Early Twentieth-Century Engagements*, Sheng Yen Series in Chinese Buddhist Studies (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 105, where he states, "By the second half of the nineteenth century, the opposition between materialism and idealism in European philosophy had resulted in serious philosophical battles and even in the brief popularity of monism as a way to reconcile the two." This is simply not correct as ontological materialism and idealism are forms of monism and thus are in no way 'reconciled' through monism. Hammerstrom did an absolutely amazing job of giving a very detailed account of how Chinese Buddhists adapted Yogācāra phenomenology to construct a modern Buddhist epistemology and refute ontological materialism. However, he did not explain how they applied these phenomenological doctrines ontologically to transcend the materialist/idealist dichotomy.

[399] Kopf, "'Modern Buddhism,'" 32.

[400] See page 141.

> understands that each position highlights one aspect of reality and that both constitute different perspectives of the same reality.[401]

The philosophical positions that Inoue details and rejects in this passage are the materialist and idealist ontologies. In place of these he posits a dual-aspect monism. This position differs from materialism and idealism—as well as ontological dualism—in the fact that it asserts that the material and mental characteristics that phenomena exude are secondary qualities of a more primordial substratum. As 'material' and 'mental' are secondary attributes, the substratum is made of an underlying substance that is neither material nor mental.

Wuguang's use of the materialist/idealist binary mirrored that of Inoue's in multiple ways. Like Inoue, he reduced Western philosophy to a monolithic struggle between these two positions and rejected them both in favor of a dual-aspect monism:

> The essential path to the gate of Chan is one simple road… the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa* refers to this as the 'non-dual *dharma* gate,' philosophy calls it 'monism'… The body and mind are not two means that the body and consciousness are two aspects of a single material…Anthropologists have concluded that humans have been on the earth for 250,000 years. Throughout this entire time they have been mislead by the notion that the mind and body are separate, delighting in strange, unexamined accounts of absurd monsters. This has given birth to suffering and the plight of humanity's woes. Standard Buddhism says "form and mind are not two"… meaning that matter and consciousness are the same substance.[402]

Here, Wuguang states that the entire history of human intellectual inquiry has been polarized between the materialist and idealist positions and asserts that the correct paradigm entails a dual-

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[401] Inoue Enryō, "*Yo no uchū-kan* 余の宇宙觀 [A View of the Cosmos]," in *Funtō tetsugaku* 奮闘哲學 [Philosophical Struggle], by Inoue Enryō (Tōkyō: Tōadō Shobō, 1917), 237-238. Translation adapted from that presented in Kopf, "'Modern Buddhism,'" 35, citing the translation by Gerard C. Godart in, *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, eds. James W. Heisig et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2011), 625. Original text: "すなわち両極の合して一となることが、古来の唯物論、唯心論によりて明らかに証明せられている。あるいは唯物論が真理である、あるいは唯心論が真理であるなどというのは、いずれも偏見にして、局外より観察すれば、この二者全く一物の両端、一体の両面に過ぎぬことが分かる." Online: http://www.ircp.jp/enryo_senshu/text/INOUE02/02-04_funtoutetsugaku.txt (accessed Jan. 26, 2016).

[402] Wuguang, *Chande jianghua*, 12. Original text: "禪門的要道是單純的一條路…維摩經曰「不二法門」，哲學家曰「一元論…身心不二，即是我們的身體與精神是同一物之兩方面…據人類學者研究的結果，人類在地球上出現大約有二十五萬年之久，至今還迷惑於身心別體的觀念，喜歡著奇妖怪談荒唐不稽的幻覺，由此生出苦惱，乃是人類悲哀的事情，普佛教說色心不二…故色心不二是物質與精神是同一體."

aspect monism. Thus, his diagnosis of and prescribed remedy for widespread human misunderstanding are the same as Inoue's. To bolster his ontological claim, Wuguang cites Buddhist scripture and applies it phenomenologically to reject Cartesian Dualism, conflating the phenomenological and ontological issues described above. Wuguang also blames people's 'superstitious' belief in tales of fantastical creatures—beliefs targeted by Inoue in his Preternatural Studies—on dualism.

In addition to the similarities between Inoue and Wuguang's rejection of materialism and idealism in favor of dual-aspect monism, both concluded that the 'neither material nor mental' substratum underlying all phenomena consists of energy. This energetic monism, referred to as 'energeticism' 唯力一論/唯力論 ('energy-only monism'), is an ontology that was popular in European and East Asian intellectual circles during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Energeticism is most often associated with the German chemist, Freidrich Wilhelm Ostwald (1853-1932; 1919 Nobel Prize for Chemistry). Energeticism is an energy-based monism that presents energy as a "veritable ontological being."[403] According to energeticism, phenomenal diversity—including material and mental characteristics—is nothing more than the manifestation of energetic fluctuations and exchanges.[404] Although now largely forgotten, energeticism was an influential idea in its heyday. It influenced the automobile pioneer Henry Ford (1863-1947), the Scientific Management of Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856-1915) and even the work of Albert Einstein (1879-1955).[405] It was also popular within Russian—and later

[403] Émile Meyerson, *Explanation in the Sciences* (Dordrecht and Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991), 401.

[404] Frederick Copleston, *Philosophy in Russia: From Herzen to Lenin and Berdyaev* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), 285.

[405] Ostwald's influence on Ford and Taylor is noted in Edgar Herbst, *Der Taylorismus Als Hilfe in Unserer Wirtschaftsnot* (Leipzig: Anzengruber, 1920) as cited in Gerd Spittler, "Beginnings of the Anthropology of Work: Nineteenth-Century Social Scientists and their Influence on Ethnography" in *Work in a Modern Society: The*

Soviet—circles, so much so that Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) dedicated large sections of his writings in order to denounce it.[406]

Energeticism was also popular in Meiji intellectual circles. The Japanese chemist famous for discovering the flavor umami うま味, Ikeda Kikunae 池田菊苗 (1846-1936) reinterpreted the line from the *Heart Sūtra* that states "Form is emptiness, emptiness is form" in energetic terms by rendering it, "'Universe is energy, Energy is universe,' and that means energetic monism."[407] Ikeda studied with Ostwald in Germany after hearing of his energetic theories in Japan. His energetic reinterpretation of Buddhism was based on what he saw as a consistency between the energetic substratum and Mahāyāna Buddhist ontology that I will now explain.[408]

Identifying a particular substratum of the universe as a basis for a dual-aspect monism is particularly challenging from a Mahāyāna Buddhist perspective. This difficulty is born out of Mahāyāna understandings of impermanence (Skt. *anitya*) and emptiness (*śūnyatā*) that present all phenomena as being devoid of a permanent self-existence. Simply stated, there is no essential 'thing' that constitutes a phenomena's fundamental core as its present existence is nothing but a composite of interdependent, ephemeral causes and conditions (*nidāna*). This makes substance-based ontologies—such as materialism and idealism or even dualism—problematic from a

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German Historical Experience in Comparative Perspective, ed. Jürgen Kocka (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books 2010), 44.

[406] Kenneth M. Stokes, *Paradigm Lost: A Cultural and Systems Theoretical Critique of Political Economy* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1995), 171-172.

[407] Ikeda Kikunae, "*Enerrugii to kū*," *Gendai no Kagaku* 3, no. 6 (1915): 368. As quoted and translated in Yoshiyuki Kikuchi, "Wilhelm Ostwald and the Japanese Chemists," in *Wilhelm Ostwald at the Crossroads between Chemistry, Media and Culture*, eds. Britta Görs et al., Leipziger Schriften zur Philosophie, 12 ([Leipzig]: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2005), 111.

[408] Kikuchi, "Wilhelm Ostwald," 101-113.

Mahāyāna standpoint.[409] Energy, which is devoid of any permanent form and is always in a state of flux, was believed by Ikeda to sidestep the issues of impermanence and emptiness.

Inoue agreed. Underlying the different forms of phenomena he asserted that behind their material and mental characteristics is a substratum that was composed of energy:

> Matter and mind are phenomena. Suchness is the essence. Energy [力] develops out of the Suchness of matter and mind. […] With the energy possessed by its essence, Suchness evolves freely, independently, and naturally, and through natural selection discloses the two realms of matter and mind, giving birth to the myriad of phenomena and their transformations.[410]

In order to claim that Buddhism was not only harmonious with, but superior to, science, Inoue additionally equated energy with the *tathātā* to demonstrate that science was only now discovering something that Buddhists had known for millennia.[411]

The use of energeticism to fashion an ontology that transcended the materialist/idealist binary while harmonizing science and Buddhism was also popular in China and Tibet. However, multiple scholars have misinterpreted the Chinese and Tibetan textual examples and mistakenly

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[409] See Siddheswar Rameshwar Bhatt and Anu Mehrotra, *Buddhist Epistemology* (Westport, CT: Greenwood: 2000), 1.

[410] Inoue Enryō, *Bukkyō katsuron joron* 佛教活論序論 [Prolegomena to a Living Discourse on Buddhism] (Tōkyō: Tetsugaku Shoin, 1888), 368. As quoted and translated in Kōda Retsu, "The Structure of the 'True Mystery' in the Philosophy of Inoue Enryo," *International Inoue Enryo Research* 2 (2014): 107. Online: https://www.toyo.ac.jp/ uploaded/attachment/12860.pdf (accessed Jan. 26, 2016). Original text: "物心は象なり、真如は体なり、物心の真如より開発するは力なり…けだし真如はその自体に有するところの力をもって、自存、自立、自然にして進化し、自然にして淘汰して物心両境を開き、万象万化を生ずるものなり。" Online: http://www.ircp.jp/enryo_senshu/text/INOUE03/03-04_bukkyoukatsuronjoron.txt (accessed Jan. 26, 2016).

[411] See Kōda, "Structure of the 'True Mystery,'" 107. For more examples of scholarly discussions regarding Inoue's embracing energeticism see Christopher Goto-Jones, *Political Philosophy in Japan: Nishida, the Kyoto School and Co-prosperity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 47 and "The Way of Revering the Emperor: Imperial Philosophy and Bushidō in Modern Japan," in *The Emperors of Modern Japan*, ed. Ben-Ami Shillony (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), 32, n.29. Also see Gino K. Piovesana, *Recent Japanese Philosophical Thought, 1862-1994: A Survey* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 34; Gerard C. Godart, "'Philosophy' or "'Religion'"?: The Confrontation with Foreign Categories in Late Nineteenth Century Japan," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 69, no. 1 (2008): 86; Yamazaki Masakazu and Sumie Saito, "Modern Japan and its Philosophical Development," *Revue Internationale De Philosophie* 28, no. 107-108 (1974): 46 and the sources cited there.

postulated that their authors' were referring to Einstein's Theory of Special Relativity as expressed in the equation $E=mc^2$.[412]

Wuguang also embraced energeticism and taught that the underlying substratum consists of energy. His terminology differed somewhat in the fact that he never mentioned 'energeticism' by name and referred to 'energy' as 'luminosity'光 (Chn. *guang*, Jpn. *hikari*)—the second character of his name, Wuguang—rather than the term 'force'力 (Chn. *li*, Jpn. *chikara*) as his predecessors had done, and employed the term 'force' to explain the metaphysical ramifications

[412] Taixu mentions energeticism by name and even expresses fondness for it in "*Fofa yu kexue* 佛法與科學 [The Buddha-dharma and Science]," *Haichaoyin* 海潮音 4, no.8 (1923), (MFQ 157.15). Taixu's usage of the term 'energy only' 唯力 in this instance is noted by Erik Hammerstrom who states that the fondness Taixu expressed for this theory—which Hammerstrom misidentified as Einstein's Special Relativity—was revoked two years later in an article Taixu wrote (under the pseudonym Meian 昧盦) entitled "*Ai'ensitan xianguilun yu weishilun* 愛恩斯坦相對論與唯識論 [Einstein's Theory of Relativity and Consciousness-only Ideology]," *Haichaoyin* 8, no. 9 (1927): 247-249, (MFQ 168.365-367). This reading is problematic for a number of reasons. First, Taixu's earlier article—that mentions energeticism by name—does not mention Einstein or relativity. Second, the later article—on Einstein—does not mention energeticism. I conclude that this is because Taixu was in fact referring to two entirely different theories, one propagated by Ostwald and the other by Einstein. My conclusion finds strength in an earlier article written by Taixu—not quoted by Hammerstrom—entitled "*Ping zhuqian zhi junde xuwu zhuyi* 評朱謙之君的虛無主義 [Assessment of Zhu Qian the King of Nihilism]," *Haichaoyin* 1, no. 2 (1920?): 7-11, (MFQ 147.271-275), that references energeticism by name alongside other ontological positions without referencing Einstein's relativity. In light of all of this, it is impossible not to conclude that when Taixu referenced 'energy only' he was in fact not referring to Einstein's Special Relativity, but to energeticism. Additionally, Special Relativity shows that matter and energy are *interchangeable* rather than asserting that matter is *reducible to* energy—as implied in the name 'energy only' that was first used in Japan. Hammerstrom's confusing these two is understandable with the voluminous nature of the Chinese sources he was working with which prevented him from sufficiently tracing the Western ideas they were utilizing through their Japanese provenance. See Hammerstrom, *The Science of Chinese Buddhism*, 96-97. Hammerstrom may not be the only scholar to mistake energeticism for Special Relativity. In Thupten Jinpa's work on the Tibetan intellectual and modernist Gendün Chöphel (1903-1951), he speculates that Gendün Chöphel was utilizing Special Relativity to harmonize Mahāyāna conceptions of *śūnyatā* with science. As this was exactly how energeticism functioned in earlier Japanese Buddhist circles, it is probable that this was the theory Gendün Chöphel was using. See Thupten Jinpa, "Science as an Ally or a Rival Philosophy? Tibetan Buddhist Thinkers' Engagement with Modern Science," in *Buddhism & Science: Breaking New Ground*, ed. B. Allan Wallace (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003; First Indian Edition, Delhi, 2004), 73. Another possible case of mistaken Tibetan usage of energeticism can be found in Donald S. Lopez Jr., *Buddhism and Science: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Buddhism and Modernity (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 119-120. I speculate that the reason Buddhist Studies scholars so often overlook energeticism is due to the fame of Special Relativity and a number of widespread misunderstandings regarding the history of science. Energeticism is popularly believed to be antithetical to the existence of atoms and was therefore left dead in the water after the existence of atoms was proven. However, despite the fact that Ostwald passionately denied the existence of atoms for much of his career, after they were successfully proven to exist, Ostwald himself asserted that an energetic universe could still be an atomic one. It is perhaps these forgotten facets of scientific history that led Buddhist Studies scholars to consistently confuse energeticism for Special Relativity. See Gerald Holton, *The Scientific Imagination: Case Studies* (Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1993), 82.

of his energetic ontology. Despite these minor terminological difference, *guang* functioned in the same way for Wuguang as 'force' had for earlier Buddhist modernists and 'energy' did for the energeticists. We can see this when comparing two passages, one written by Ostwald and the other by Wuguang, in light of that from Inoue above:

> When, for instance, we say that we feel a material thing, as we put our hand upon a book or a desk, it is really the experience of some changed form of our organism which we feel, and which is due to the manifestation of the energy induced by the grasp of the hand.[413]
>
> The original nature of Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is *guang*. This was said in antiquity when religion began to advance. Later, sciences concerning change have developed and [obtained] this knowledge—but [science] has lost the original principle. Every tiny atom shines upon inspection, each particle has energy—it has electricity. If your hand physically comes into contact with something electricity is emitted—any sort of physical contact produces electricity. There is no copulation that does not emit *guang*.[414]

Here Wuguang tells us in no uncertain terms that he believed that substratum of the universe is composed of *guang*. This is articulated in terms of Zhenyan/Shingon cosmotheism that sees Mahāvairocana as the universe itself.[415] As Inoue had already asserted that *tathātā* is composed of energy and Mahāvairocana is considered *tathātā*, their ontologies are consistent with one another. The fact that Wuguang's *guang* 光 referred to the term 'force' 力 Inoue and others had used to denote the 'energy' of energeticism is further demonstrated by the similarity between Ostwald's statement and the latter half of the above passage written by Wuguang. The parallel ways Ostwald and Wuguang respectively used 'energy' and '*guang*' to explain that the physical sensation of a hand coming into contact with another body makes it all but undeniable that Wuguang had read Ostwald's words in some form or another.

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[413] This text is taken from a series of lectures entitled *Naturphilosophie* that Ostwald delivered in Leipzig during the summer of 1901 as translated and quoted in John G. Hibben, "The Theory of Energetics and its Philosophical Bearings," *The Monist* 13 (1903): 322.

[414]Wuguang, *Wuguang shangshi 1999 nian yufo*. Original text: "大日如來本性實是光, 初期的進步精華宗教學說, 以后的變化科學發達也知道, 但迷失原則. 微 細的原子, 每個檢照起來每粒都有光有電, 手碰便發出電, 有接觸才有電, 沒有交配便不發出光."

[415] See Rambelli, *A Buddhist Theory of Semiotics*, xvii.

Like Ikeda and Inoue, Wuguang concluded that energeticism was compatible with Buddhist ontology due to the fact that it is reconcilable with Mahāyāna notions of emptiness. This is revealed in his commentary to the *Zhaolun* 肇論 written by Sengzhao 僧肇 (384-414?). Sengzhao was a student of the renowned translator and exegete Kumārajīva (344–413), and a student of Daoism before turning to Buddhism. He applied Daoist ontological concepts related to 'being' 有 and 'non-being' 無 to explain Buddhist perceptions of 'form' and 'emptiness' in Chinese terms. This can readily be seen in the opening line of his *Treasure Store Treatise* 寶藏論 that states "Emptiness that can be deemed empty is not true emptiness. Being that can be deemed being is not true being,""[416] which is a Buddhist rearticulation of the opening of the *Daode jing*. In interpreting this same axiom in the *Zhaolun*, Wuguang explains that:

> "Being is not true being." 'Not true being' assumes form once it has been mysteriously arranged and organized, this is why it can be called 'mysterious being.' Take for example a television and electromagnetic waves. When the television has yet to be turned on it does not receive a signal. Once turned on, it receives a signal, as [the electromagnetic waves] have been arranged. This is therefore it is called 'mysterious.' Electric waves are formed by the vibrations of electrons, if a television's signal is not correctly calibrated then it will display a blurry, snowy picture since the electric particles within it are scattered. If the [televisions's] frequency is tuned to that of the particles, the picture projected will be very clear. Originally non-being [coalesces] into the image of being, but being will also become non-being because it is just the transmission of mysterious being.[417]
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> "It is not true emptiness"…because within true emptiness there is raw material, it is tiny and cannot be seen, like electrons, atoms, molocules...it is impossible to see. Its 'being' is nothing more than a light-wave...'being' rises out of 'emptiness,' 'emptiness' becomes 'mysterious being,' 'being' will once again revert to 'emptiness.' It comes and goes within the three realms like an unending circle.[418]

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[416] Translation adapted from Sharf, C*oming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 2.

[417] Wuguang, *Zhaolun*, 1.2. Original text: "有是假有，假有是經過微妙的設計與組織才形成的，故又可稱為妙有。例如電視和電磁波，電視未開就收視不到，一但打開就能收到，這就是組織的，所以叫做妙，電波是電子振動而成的，電視的頻率不合收視就會像雪花糢糊，因為電磁波中的粒子散開了.倘若使粒子的頻率相符，放映出來的相就會很清晰，原本沒有影像會有，但有也會變成沒有，因為那只是傳真來的妙有。"

[418] Ibid, 1.3. Original text: "「不真空」...由於真空裡面是有原料的，它微細得無法看見，像電子、原子、分子……是沒辦法看到的，有的還只是光波而已...「有」從「空」生，「空」變成「妙有」，「有」再回歸到「空」，如環無端，在三界虛中出沒。"

Here, Wuguang demonstrates his energetic explanation of emptiness by invoking the Mahāyāna doctrine 'true emptiness is mysterious being' 真空妙有 that asserts "true emptiness is mysteriously existing: truly empty, or immaterial, yet transcendentally existing."[419] Wuguang identified the mysterious existence/being as energy.

In addition to articulating his energetic ontology in such overt terms, Wuguang communicated this belief covertly. He hid this reference in plain sight by embedding it within his monk's style and Dharma-name. When the second character of the former, *guang* 光 and the first character of the latter, *quan* 全 are put side by side they read *quanguang* 全光 meaning 'everything is luminosity' or in energetic terms 'everything is energy.' The relationship between Wuguang's name and his ideology was also noted by Shinzen Young who stated, "Wuguang was really big on the whole light thing (as his name indicates). I remember him saying something like 'I've transformed it all into light.'"[420] Thus, energeticism was so central to Wuguang's religiosity that he seems to have named himself after it.[421]

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[419] Bongkil Chung, *The Dharma Master Chongsan of Wŏn Buddhism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), 298.

[420] Shinzen Young, personal correspondence, Feb. 6, 2015.

[421] In the introduction I discussed how Dharma-transmission provenance is supported by lineage charts in order to validate the master-disciple transmission chain of religious figures and thereby strengthen their legitimacy. These claims are further strengthened by what are referred to as 'lineage poems' 派詩. Lineage poems are used by both Buddhist and Daoist sects in East Asia as a way to designate members' sectarian affiliation and generation within their sect. Each Chinese character within these poems corresponds to a generation within a particular lineage. New lineage members are given a Dharma-name 法號 composed of two characters; one chosen by the officiating master and one drawn from the lineage poem corresponding to the individual's generation within that lineage referred to as a generation-character 輩字. The generation-character within the Dharma-name of the lineage's founder will be the poem's first character while those of his students will be the poem's second character and so on. If the devotee eventually becomes a monk, he is awarded yet another two-character Dharma-name referred to as a monk's style 字 which also has a poetically generated generation-character, but one drawn from a different poem than the one used to create the Dharma-name. When then Dharma-name and style are put side by side, they form the monk's full, four character Buddhist name. The character not drawn from the poem is often chosen by the devotee, which leads me to conclude that Wuguang's name was an intentional articulation of his belief in energeticism. The entire lineage poem from which the generational character of Wuguang's style—*wu* 悟—was taken from is recorded in CBETA X86 1603. The poem that was the source for the generational character in Wuguang's Dharma-name—*miao* 妙—can be found in in Shi Hui-yen 釋慧嚴, "The Interaction of Fukien's and Taiwanese Buddhism in Late

My assertion that Wuguang's ontology was an energetic one finds additional textual support from his other writings—which we will see shortly—and even the writings of his former disciple, Guru Chesheng 徹聖上師 (secular name Chen Shenghua 陳聖華; b. 1938). Chesheng obtained *abhiṣeka* from Wuguang before breaking away from the MSBL and founding his own lineage, the Samantabhadra Lineage 真言宗普賢流.[422] He states that he broke away from the MSBL because Wuguang taught that 'everything is *guang*' and wielded this concept in order explain the mechanics of magic.[423]

Given Wuguang's reliance on his Buddhist predecessors, his energetic ontology and energeticism's popularity amongst Buddhist modernists in Japan and China, it is logical to conclude that his energetic Mahāvairocana was based on the worldview propagated by Ostwald. There is yet another worldview that he drew upon to understand the magical world he lived in. This was the worldview which he had been brought up and educated in—Daoism.

The Dao of Electric Mahāvairocana

Wuguang's energeticism had a final essential ingredient—Daoist cosmology. His assertion that the substratum of the universe is composed of energy was predicated upon a marriage that he performed between Shingon cosmotheistic notions of Mahāvairocana and Daoist conceptions of the Dao 道. Notwithstanding the Dao's ineffable nature, in Daoist cosmology it has a palpable ontological function similar to that of Mahāvairocana.[424] In the

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Ming and Early Ch'ing Dynasty 明末清初閩台佛教的互動," *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 9 (1996): 230. For more information on lineage poems in general see Stephen Jones, *In Search of the Folk Daoists of North China* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 11 and 69.

[422] Chesheng and his Samantabhadra Lineage are discussed at great length in Chapter 6.

[423] Chesheng, *Shengyi xinyao azi yi* 勝義心要阿字義 [Explanation of the A-seed Syllable] (Taichung: Zhenyanzong Puxianliu Foxuehui, ND), 12.

[424] To define the Dao—which is not the same as discerning how it functions as an ontological construct—would be a fool's errand. The first words of the archetypal text of Daoism, the *Daode jing* 道德經 state, "The Dao

words of Thomas Michael, "Ultimately, of course, everything is the Dao…The imposition of borders on phenomenal reality is essentially the imposition of borders on the Dao itself, insofar as phenomenal reality is one primary field of the being of the Dao."[425] The fact that both the Dao and Mahāvairocana are portrayed as the embodiments of the universe undoubtedly inspired Wuguang to pen the following:

> Mahāvairocana is the Dao, the Dao is the principle behind the production of all phenomena, [thus] certainly all phenomena are the Dao's body.[426]

These words unequivocally equate Mahāvairocana and the Dao. They also reveal that Wuguang equated them based on the similar ontological role each played as the totality of the universe I explained above.

There are more profound qualities Mahāvairocana and the Dao share that Wuguang based this equation on.

The ontological character of the Dao is monistic. It is singularly composed of a substance referred to as *qi* 氣 (Jpn. *ki*). *Qi* is widely understood as a tangible energy.[427] As the Dao is the totality of the universe and is composed entirely of a single energetic substance, Wuguang interpreted Daoist *qi*-based ontology in light of modern notions of energy. This conflation directly relates to Wuguang's interpretation of Mahāvairocana's energetic composition. Based on the name 'Mahāvairocana'—which is formed from the Sanskrit words *mahā* meaning 'great' and

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that can be expressed is not the Dao, the name that can be named, is not the name," which testifies to the unfathomable and inexpressible quality of the Dao as well as the futility of attempting to explain it.

[425] Thomas Michael, *The Pristine Dao: Metaphysics in Early Daoist Discourse*, SUNY series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), 71.

[426] Wuguang, *Yizhen faju qianshuo*, 176. Original text: "這毘盧即是道, 道即是創造萬物的原理, 當然萬物即是道體."

[427] See Helen Farley, "Falun Gong and Science: Origins, Pseudoscience, and China's Scientific Establishment," in *Handbook of Religion and the Authority of Science*, eds. James R. Lewis and Olav Hammer, Brill Handbooks on Contemporary Religion 3 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010), 141-163.

vairocana meaning 'illuminator'—Wuguang believed that both Daoist and Zhenyan/Shingon cosmologies were energy-based. We can see this by comparing the line from the lengthier passage quoted above that reads, "The original nature of Mahāvairocana Tathāgata is *guang*," with another he wrote elsewhere about the Dao:

> The fundamental origin of the universe's entire body is *guang*, *guang* is the Dao."[428]

Here Wuguang says that the Dao is the origin of the universe and synonymous with *guang*—claims we already saw him make about Mahāvairocana. This tells us that, from Wuguang's ontological vantage point, the Dao and Mahāvairocana are not only thematically similar, but their elemental compositions are fundamentally identical. That composition, of course, was singularly composed of energy.

Wuguang's equating the Dao and Mahāvairocana—in his eyes—simultaneously rescued Daoist and esoteric Buddhist practices from the category of 'superstition' as they were explained within a scientific worldview that had been championed by the Nobel Prize-winning chemist, Ostwald. As Wuguang was a practitioner of both Daoism and Zhenyan/Shingon, his motivations for doing so are obvious.

Interlude

Wuguang is not the only—or even first or last—intellectual figure to interpret *qi* in scientific terms.[429] Thus, just as energeticism had been used by Inoue Enryō to harmonize

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[428]Wuguang, *Mijiao zhi guang yu dao* 密教之光與道 [The Luminosity and Path of Esoteric Buddhism]. Unpublished speech, 1988. Online: http://www.kmkt.org.tw/kmktchinese/Modules/Articles/ArticleView.aspx?TabID=199&guid=9df04062-3ecd-4fea-abe6-6d4344aa9106 (accessed Jan. 28, 2016). Original text: "宇宙全體乃光為根源, 光即道也."

[429] This is in fact a very popular interpretation among scientifically oriented scholars and practitioners. For scientific examples see Farley, "Falun Gong and Science," 141-163. Livia Kohn has also equated energy and *qi* by stating, "There are many conceptual and practical overlaps between Daoism and modern science. The world of Dao and its material energy *qi* closely matches that of quantum physics." See Livia Kohn, "Introduction: Mental Health in Daoism and Modern Science," in *Living Authentically: Daoist Contributions to Modern Psychology*, ed. Livia

Buddhist ontology and science, Chinese Buddhist modernists had already used *qi* to do the same thing.[430] Although I am not aware of any other Buddhist figures using Ostwald's paradigm to explain magic as Wuguang did, energeticism was extremely popular among Western occultists who used it to for the very same purpose,[431] and even deployed by Ostwald himself to explain telepathy.[432] Nevertheless, Wuguang's teachings standout for their being based on Zhenyan/Shingon and wielded to explain the mechanics of practices other Buddhist modernists had deemed 'superstitious.'

Let us now turn our attentions to the exact practices that Wuguang sophisticated by explaining them in terms of energy.

Section II: The Metaphysics of Magic

As already noted, the practices that Wuguang used his energetic ontology to explain in scientific terms were related to funerary practices, spirit-mediumship, demonic possession, and

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Kohn (Dunedin, FL: Three Pines Press, 2011), 1. To the best of my knowledge, the most complete treatment of this phenomenon remains Xun Liu, "In Search of Immortality: Daoist Inner Alchemy in Early Twentieth Century China" (PhD diss, University of Southern California, 2001).

[430] In the waning years of the Qing Dynasty, equating *qi* with electricity was used to fashion a scientifically sound Buddhist worldview. One example is the Buddhist reformer Tan Sitong 譚嗣同 (1865-1898) who asserted that the universe was permeated by an electric 'ether' 以太 composed entirely of *qi*. See Erik J. Hammerstrom, "Yogācāra and Modern Science," 186; Scott Pacey, "Tan Sitong's 'Great Unity': Mental Processes and Yogācāra in An Exposition of Benevolence," in *Transforming Consciousness: Yogācāra Thought in Modern China*, ed. John Makeham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 110; David Wright, "Tan Sitong and the Ether Reconsidered," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 57, no. 3 (1994): 551-575 and *Translating Science: The Transmission of Western Chemistry into Late Imperial China, 1840-1900* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 2000), 271-389.

[431] Energeticism was particularly influential on an occult-inclined part of the Russian intelligentsia. Such figures included Maxim Gorky (1868-1936), the founder of Socialist Realism, Anatoly Vasilyevich Lunacharsky (1875-1933) the first Soviet Commissar of Enlightenment—as well as member of the Theosophical Society—and the neurologist Vladimir Mikhailovich Bekhterev (1857-1927) after whom Bekhterev Disease is named. These and similar thinkers embraced many of the implications of Ostwald's energeticism for its consistency with both science and the occult. See Mikhail Agursky, "An Occult Source of Socialist Realism: Gorky and Theories of Thought Transference," in *The Occult in Russian and Soviet Culture*, ed. Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 249; John Gray, *The Immortalization Commission: Science and the Strange Quest to Cheat Death* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2011).

[432] Mark S. Morrison, *Modern Alchemy, Occultism and the Emergence of the Atomic Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 109.

astrology. Influential Buddhist modernists in Japan, China and Taiwan had consistently criticized these practices. It cannot be a coincidence that these are the same practices that Wuguang attempted to explain.

Wuguang's metaphysical redemption of magic is based on his energetic ontology, Buddhist notions of karma, Chinese metaphysics, and his understanding of thermodynamics (the scientific "study of the relationship between properties of matter, changes in these properties, and transfers of energy between matter and its surroundings that bring about these changes").[433] Since he believed that everything is composed of energy, he likened karma and magical power—which he referred to by the term 'force' 力 that earlier Buddhist modernists had used for 'energy'—to energetic 'waves' 波. Consistent with his statement that magical forces originate in the mind,[434] he taught that magical practices—and even mundane cognition—produce 'thought-waves'念波 and 'karma-waves' 業波. Wholesome thoughts produce wholesome waves while unwholesome thoughts produce unwholesome waves. These wholesome or unwholesome qualities manifest as each wave's 'wavelength' 波長.

Wuguang applied this thermodynamic interpretation of karma to explain the Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination 緣起論 (Skt. *pratītyasamutpāda*). He taught that these waves are the 'primary causes'主因 (*hetu*) that give rise to 'conditions' 緣 (*pratyaya*) that cyclically produce and shape phenomenal reality:

[433] Carl Schaschke, "Thermodynamics," *A Dictionary of Chemical Engineering* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). Online: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199651450.001.0001/acref-9780199651450-e-2907 (accessed Mar. 30, 2016).

[434] See the opening section to Chapter 3.

> The karmic force of primary causes is like a wavelength from a broadcasting station. It causes the realm of the living and realm of the dead[435] to intermingle without disorder, becoming the impetus for rebirth, and one can see the positive and negative elements that it absorbs.[436]
>
> Buddhism advocates the Dharma-gate of non duality, not dualism. Pay attention! Buddhism is not theistic, it is the ideology of karmic-force and dependent origination.[437]

In addition to thermodynamically explaining dependent origination, we see Wuguang asserting that these waves are the agents of karmic repercussions, rebirth and 'intermingling' between the realm of the living and of the dead. The exact kinds of intermingling that he is talking about relate to funerary practices and spirit possession—the practices that came under fire by disenchanting Buddhist modernists—which I will now explain.

Spirit Communication

Before the birth of Buddhist modernism, the primary communal role of an East Asian Buddhist monk was to perform rituals on behalf of the deceased. This was accomplished by transferring the karmic merit gained by ritual performance and scriptural recitation to the laity as well as conducting funerary rites. These rites are intertwined with native practices related to ancestor veneration due to the fact that both aim to ensure that the dead have a positive afterlife. Disenchanting Buddhist modernists attacked these practices due to the superstitious quality of 'transference' and inclusion of non-Buddhist elements. As we saw in Chapter 1, this trend manifested itself in Taiwan during the campaigns to abolish the *Ullambana*.[438] Rites related to

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[435] Throughout this text, Wuguang refers to the realm of the living and dead as the 'two realms of shadow and light' 冥陽兩界.

[436] Wuguang, *Shengsi zhi dao*. Original text: "主因業力如電台之波長一樣, 在冥陽兩界雖交織而不紊，成為輪迴之主要動力，視其吸收因素之勝劣".

[437] Wuguang, *Zhaolun*, 1.45. Original text: "佛教主張不二法門的，不是二元論。要注意！佛教不是靈魂論，是業力緣起論。"

[438] See Chapter 1, Section II, "Cooperation and Development." The *Ullambana* is explained in greater detail in Chapter 5.

spirit-mediumship, demonic possession and astrology were not only decentralized, but subject to governmental illegalization and Buddhist clerical condemnation.

Wuguang did not accept the distinction disenchanting Buddhist modernists had made between Buddhist funerary rites and Chinese ancestor veneration. He also rejected the decentralization of these practices and explained that they can cause the dead to visibly materialize. This materialization is accomplished through ritual performance and thought-regulation. By 'tuning' one's thoughts to the same 'frequency' of the deceased's one is able communicate and even physically summon them:

> To evoke the presence of a dead person and interact with it, one just needs to recall and visualize his [former] body and situation, this is the best method to make the world of the living and dead meet. Thus recalling his living form will lure the dead to tend to the living. Similar to how pricking one's body in a certain place with a needle causes his attention to focus on that spot, the living person, by focusing the force of his visualization, can stimulate the force of the deceased's consciousness and thus solicit a miraculous response, and interact with the spirit…this thought-wave will then match the wavelength of the deceased's *skandha* of consciousness…it is thus easy for the imagined image of the deceased to materialize. The length of time depends on the [living practitioner's] forces of concentration…Therefore, helping ghosts to pass over to the next incarnation, casting curses, performing incantations, necromancy and exorcism all work according to this principle.…Some people do not believe in the existence of the minds of spirits or deny the existence of the intermingling between the dead and the living, but they are mistaken.[439]
>
> If you miss your relative, you must whole heartedly think of him when he was alive and the times you had together, when you were filial to him, ceaselessly superposing your consciousness with him like water mixing with milk. If you can grasp the essence of this, you and the deceased can begin to enter a small world where your consciousnesses are living together and interacting, (this is the deep wisdom behind Buddhist practice). If you are a Chinese Buddhist, then you are able to use a beautiful memorial tablet and give him offerings, prepare nice foods and belongings from his life as offerings just like when he was alive and the two of you were together on earth.[440]

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[439] Wuguang, *Shengsi zhi dao*. Original text: "令死者喚起存在與覺受, 生人 僅以意識觀想其亡者處身於何境, 這是冥陽相會之最好辦法, 亦即是憶念死者生前之容貌相狀, 誘令死者的意志趨向於生者, 例如將針刺激身體某部位, 令其注意集中該處一樣, 生者用集中觀想力, 可使亡者喚起神識集中力, 其當處即可感應靈交…由此念波反應亡者的蘊識波長…即容易幻起亡者的色相幻影, 其幻影之殘留時間長短, 即視乎其專注力如何而定….所以超度亡靈, 或加持消災, 咒咀降伏, 均由此理則來發生效力…. 有人不信靈識的存在或否認冥陽的交涉關係存在乃是謬誤的."

[440] Ibid. Original text: "你要是想念親人的話, 你必需一心憧景着它生前與你一起時, 你對它的孝順情景, 不斷地與喜歡的心情相融如同水乳, 果能把握到這要義, 你就能與亡者開始進入天涯咫尺之心靈交感生活.

Here, Wuguang equates the Chinese and Buddhist practices by framing them as an aspect of 'Chinese Buddhism.'[441] He explains the mechanics of both by intermingling thermodynamic principles regarding waves with native Chinese metaphysics and the Buddhist doctrine of the five *skandha*s.

The principles related to waves are referred to as 'interference.' There are different forms of interference that fall into the categories of either 'constructive interference' or 'destructive interference.' Constructive interference occurs when one or more waves combine to create a wave whose strength—referred to as 'amplitude'[442]—is stronger than those of the original waves. This form of constructive interference is called 'superposition.' This form of superposition occurs when waves are 'coherent'[443] or 'in phase'[444] with one another, which means that they have the same

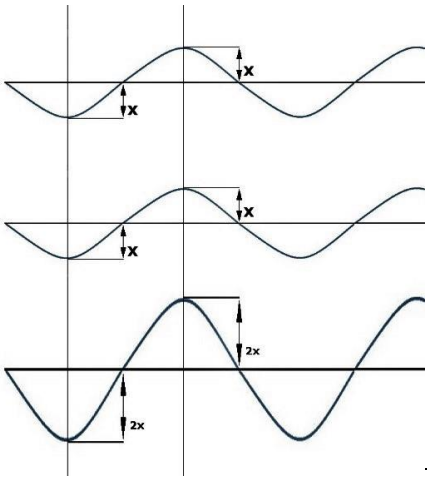

Figure 11: Superpositioning, where two waves with similar frequencies, whose amplitudes are equal to "x" superpose to form a single, doubly amplified wave with an amplification of "2x."

(此具有甚深的佛學妙理, 特別在此一提), 假如你是中國的佛教徒, 能用美麗的牌位來祭祀它, 妥備美味適合它生前善愛的供品來供養, 宛如生前一樣地在一起."

[441] The exact practice Wuguang describes here is in fact not 'Buddhist,' at all, in the strictest sense of the word. It is also not necessarily even 'religious,' but a central Chinese custom rooted in the notion of filial piety 孝. The ritual he details most usually takes place in the home in front of a familial altar adorned with elongated plaques 牌 bearing the name of one's ancestors. On the altar one can place offerings of food, incense and various gifts to the spirit of one's ancestors. Outside of the home one can also burn joss-paper, which is a sort of 'spirit currency' to financially support the spirit in the afterlife. These rites are performed by Daoists, practitioners of Chinese folk religion and Buddhists. For a full length work on these practices see William Lakos, *Chinese Ancestor Worship: A Practice and Ritual Oriented Approach to Understanding Chinese Culture* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010). For an informative overview of the Japanese version of these practices that explores their current status, see Hendrik van der Veere, "Dealing with Death and Disaster," *The Netherlands-Japan Review* vol. 2, no. 4 (2011): 11-19.

[442] See *Britannica Academic*, s. v. "amplitude," (2014). Online: http://academic.eb.com/EBchecked/topic/21711/amplitude (accessed May 31, 2016).

[443] "Coherence," in *A Dictionary of Geology and Earth Sciences*, ed. Michael Allaby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). Online: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199653065.001.0001/acref-9780199653065-e-1669 (accessed May 31, 2016).

[444] *Britannica Academic*, s. v. "amplitude."

amplitude—with their crests and troughs being nearly equal—and have similar frequencies.[445] If two coherent waves cross paths, they can combine to form a wave whose amplitude is double each wave's original one (see figure 11).[446] In the above passages Wuguang explains that through concentration, one can tune the frequency of one's thoughts to that of his deceased loved one's. This in turn causes their thought-waves to superimpose. The double strength of this combined wave then enables the spirit to manipulate the ever present energy of which the universe is composed and visibly materialize.

This energetic explanation constitutes Wuguang's scientific elucidation of the Chinese metaphysical principle known as 'sympathetic resonance' 感應 that postulates 'categorically alike' 同類 phenomena—regardless of spatial distance—can interact with one another. This principle is widely used to illuminate the mechanics behind the phenomenon of 'miraculous response' 靈感,[447] explaining that through the performance of ritual, one "reestablishes the original bond between humans and gods."[448] This belief flavored Chinese understandings of Buddhism, intermingling with the notion of karmic retribution and superseding Indian beliefs in "the power or 'grace' of the buddha" to explain human-deity interactions.[449] According to this line of reasoning, illicit acts render one categorically unlike a deity while one's categorical

[445] In addition to amplitude, 'frequency' and 'wavelength' are two measurements used to quantify the nature of energy-waves. 'Frequency' refers to the "number of crests that pass a given point within one second," whereas 'wavelength' measures the "distance between crests." See, "Anatomy of an Electromagnetic Wave," *NASA, Mission: Science*. Online: http://missionscience.nasa.gov/ems/02_anatomy.html (accessed Oct. 1, 2016). Wuguang seems to have used the terms 'frequency' 頻率 and 'wavelength' 波長 interchangeably, without utilizing a term to specifically refer to 'amplitude.' This is despite the fact that his energetic theories involved phenomena that concern wave-amplitude.

[446] Daintith, "Interference," In *A Dictionary of Physics*. Online: http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199233991.001.0001/acref-9780199233991-e-1517 (accessed May. 26, 2016).

[447] This term is explained on pages 90-91.

[448] See Fabrizio Pregadio, "Macrocosm and microcosm," in *The Encyclopedia of Daoism*, ed. Fabrizio Pregadio (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008).

[449] Buswell and Lopez, "ganying," in *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*; Sharf, *Coming to terms with Chinese Buddhism*, 119, and passim.

affinity can be regained or strengthened through wholesome deeds or ritual performance. Once the categorical likeness has been established, a practitioner is then able to receive a miraculous response. In the above passages, Wuguang applies this to ancestral spirits and explains miraculous response in terms of energetic waves and superpositioning, as attested to by his stating that the rituals and meditations are how one is able to "solicit a miraculous response." He further explains this in Buddhist terms, asserting that what the necromancer is in fact interacting with is the wavelength of deceased's '*skandha* of connsciousness' 蘊識—which throughout the text he asserts is what a deceased spirit actually is.

Wuguang asserts that all forms of human-spirit communication are explicable through interference/resonance when he stated that "helping ghosts to pass over to the next incarnation, casting curses, performing incantations, necromancy and exorcism all work according to this principle." Thus, it is not surprising that Wuguang applied superpositioning and resonance response in the following passage to explain magical powers that come from *fushen*:

> It is not inevitable that one will be able to perceive the world of the fourth dimension through cultivation as [that ability] is a kind of 'other-power' since perceiving the world of the fourth dimension requires *fushen*. The 'fourth dimension' refers to what will happen in the future and is not something within the mind of buddhas and bodhisattvas. For example, if a person goes to a temple to perform rituals and hears people saying that the deity enshrined within an icon has clairvoyance and clairaudience, [he may then] envily think, "How wonderful it would be if I could hear things from far off distances!" [If he then] proceeds to supplicate, "Bodhisattva! You can perceive things from far off distances, you can also see the future. If you could enable this sight within me I would be everlastingly grateful." [Only] if it so happens that the frequency of the spirit's [mind] inhabiting the icon and yours are congruent or linked through karma that the spirit will then *fushen* with you. This would then cause you to have a dual personality. You will then have someone else's eyes as your eyes will be exchanged, they are not your eyes as they have become '*yin* eyes,' which people commonly refer to as 'spirit-eyes.'[450]

[450] Wuguang, *Zhaolun*, 4.77. Original text: "然而四次元的世界不一定是修行人才能看到的, 這是一種他力, 要鬼神附在我們的身才能看到四次元的世界, 四次元的事情是未來世間要發生的 事情, 並不是佛菩薩心裡面的事情. 譬如某個人去廟裡面拜拜, 聽人講廟裡 的神如千里眼能看到千里以外, 順風耳能聽到千里以外, 他就很欣羨,想: 我能看到千里外有多好！便求, '菩薩！你能看到千里外的事, 未來過去也 能看到, 若能使我看到, 那真是感恩不盡.' 恰巧鬼神附在神像的身上與你的頻率符合, 跟你有緣, 他就附到了你的身上, 附在你

Wuguang explains the mechanics of *fushen* in terms of superpositioning/resonance. According to this passage, mediums are able to communicate with spirits due to the fact that their thought-waves are in phase with a particular spirit's—which he explains in terms of 'congruent frequency' 頻率符合—thus offering a scientific explanation for Chinese beliefs concerning resonance. The magical capabilities that derive from hosting a spirit's presence are shown to be the result of superpositioning, which is an example of the deity's miraculous response. Due to the double strength of the newly formed wave—manifest as a "dual personality"—the individual is able to perform superhuman feats.[451] Wuguang's explanation of mediumship here is not an endorsement of this practice. This can be seen in his referring to it as other-power and asserting that it is not Buddhist.

Not all forms of spiritual thought-wave superpositioning are positive and result in magical abilities that one has prayed for. Since the unwholesome nature of each wave's frequency is determined by the thought that produced it, negative thoughts will render one's thought-waves coherent with those of malevolent spirits. Due to the negative quality of these spirits, *fushen* would be dangerous. Wuguang uses this logic to explain spirt possession:

> Evil ghosts from the Ghost Realm will possess deviant, selfish peoples' bodies. In this world there are many people who have beceome mentally ill by being invaded by malicious spirits (evil spirits and malicious ghosts). Because the evil spirit entered into the human's body, his consciousness has been changed into a double personality. This force of consciousness agitates the cranial nerves, producing hallucinations and causing the consciousness of the living host to become hazy. In fact, however, there is no god or ghost tormenting the person, it is just that the [host's consciousness] is being mixed with the wavelength of an evil ghost, similar to the effect of a radio receiving a mixed signal. Therefore the thoughts of our consciousness are like a radio whose [signal's] modulation must be safeguarded.

的身上你就成為 雙重人格了. 當你附了另一個人的眼, 你就換了眼, 就不是你的眼睛, 就變成了陰眼, 一般人稱為靈眼."

[451] The clairvoyant and clairaudient abilities are ascribed to a pair of protector deities that commonly flank the main deity in Taiwanese folk religious and Daoist temples. Thus, Wuguang is describing a scenario that would be all too familiar to the Taiwanese religionist.

> If you happen to come across someone suffering due to being possessed by an evil ghost, do not fear! Just visualize yourself as the *nirmāṇakāya* of Mahāvairocana[452] and emit mighty waves of compassionate light to break through his dark shadow, his dark shadows will they be harmonized with yours and the sufferer will recover and return to normal. If you approach it with a hostile mentality, there will be adverse effects.[453]

Here we see that it is only "evil people" who become possessed by evil spirits—an assertion Wuguang based on coherence/resonance. Just as coherence/resonance caused the possession to happen, it also dictates how exorcism must be performed. Since the frequency of the spirit's thought-waves are unwholesome, "If you approach it with a hostile mentality, there will be adverse effects," as hostility is a negative emotion and will not change the possessed person's frequency; rather it will only serve to further solidify the human-spirit connection. For the superpositioning to stop, the exorcist must use wholesome thoughts to combat the spirit's unwholesome thoughts, in order to ensure that they are not coherent. To do so, Wuguang tells us that one must 'jam' the signal being received by emitting a more powerful one that is positive. Jamming is a form of destructive interference[454] that entails intentionally emitting a signal to block the reception of another.[455] Jamming has largely been used as a means of avoiding radar detection and hindering communicative capabilities in times of war. Here, it is the exorcist who is instructed to jam the possessed's reception in order to prevent him from receiving the signal emitted by the malevolent spirit. As this new signal is positive, after the jamming has been

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[452] Throughout the text Wuguang uses the term 'great spirit' 大靈 to refer to Mahāvairocana.

[453] Wuguang, *Shengci zhi dao*. Original text: "靈界之惡靈是會憑依邪見自私的人身的, 世間上多被惡靈（邪靈惡鬼）入侵變成神經病， 因其惡靈入人體之意識變成雙重人格, 精神動力發動腦神經, 起了幻覺, 精神恍惚, 其實沒有什麼一個神或鬼的個體在作弄, 只是惡靈波長雜交, 如收音機不正常收入雜波一樣的結果, 所以吾人的精神思想像收音機要保持真善美正常才行你若遇到被惡靈侵犯的患者, 作不要怕, 要觀想你自己是大靈之化身, 放出強烈的慈光加以沖破其黑影, 其黑影就被你同化, 其患者就會回復正常, 若果以敵視的心理去對待反會副作用。"

[454] For the technical aspects of constructive and destructive interference, see John H. Avison, *The World of Physics* (Cheltenham: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1989), 476.

[455] Martin H. Weik, *Communications Standard Dictionary* (New York: Springer Science & Business Media; 3rd rev. ed., 2012), 485.

successfully accomplished the exorcist's thought-waves will cause those of the exorcised to return to normal.

Astrology

Just as with spirit communication, Wuguang used his definition of karmic, identification of magical forces as energy-waves and the principle of wave-coherence/resonance to explain astrology.

Wuguang believed that the celestial bodies act as agents of karmic repercussions. These celestial bodies had a special role in Wuguang's energetic universe due to the fact that they emit high amounts of energy. In explaining their exact place in the universe, Wuguang depicted Mahāvairocana as a living organism:

> Recognize that the universe is the greatest sole bodied entity of the living *dharmakāya* that encompasses all of the heavenly bodies. The sun, moon and all celestial bodies are cells of the *tathāgata*.[456]
>
> The astrological auspiciousness or inauspiciousness of our nativity determines the genes of our bodies' illness, calamity and short lifespan. Due to previous positive and negative karma, according to the principle of mutual affinity and categorical resonance, an evil person is not coherent with the frequency of an astrologically auspicious [nativity], therefore it is impossible for him to be born during an [astrologically] auspicious time, and will thus be born during an astrologically inauspicious time…[457]

These passages are notable for a number of reasons. First, they confirm Wuguang's belief that celestial bodies exert influence over our lives. One's health—or more precisely, genetic makeup—is determined by the time and location of one's nativity. Notable is the fact that this confirms, rather than contradicts, the laws of karma since the astrological auspiciousness of

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[456] Wuguang, *Mijiao zhi guang yu dao*. Original Text: "認識宇宙是活生生的法身佛之獨一體的最大人格，森羅萬象以及所有天體之日月星辰皆是如來之細胞."

[457] Wuguang, *Fojiao zhenyanzong*, 110-111. Original text: "吾人出生之星度好壞, 即成吾人身體之病禍壽夭之基因, 因為宿業之好壞, 依同類相翕之原則壞者遇星度之真善美頻率不和, 故不能生於真善美之時候, 會生於壞的星度時間…"

one's nativity is determined by karma, which Wuguang explicitly equates with sympathetic resonance. The astrological forces at work are not the cause for one's genetic makeup, they are merely the karmically consequential conditions through which the effects of previous karma are physically transferred from one life to the next. As karma is an energy-wave and celestial bodies produce and reflect light, Wuguang naturally saw them as exceptionally potent karmic mediums. The ways in which celestial bodies transfer karma is depicted as a mechanical process solely governed by karmic laws of cause and effect that render it "impossible" for one to be born at a spatiotemporal point whose frequency is not coherent with one's karmic baggage. These karmic laws are explained through Wuguang's scientific coherence/resonance doctrine.

Building upon Wuguang's explanation, the current head of the MSBL, Huiding 徽定[458] (b. 1956) explained this exact process as Wuguang taught him:

> In the beginning stage of rebirth…one receives influence from the position of the celestial bodies. The human body absorbs the quality of the *qi* out of which we are made that is differentiated according to strong and weak, good and evil. This forms the body's genetic makeup that then ceaselessly metabolizes within the celestial bodies and breathes the atmosphere allelopathically in accordance with the moment.[459]

Here, the energetic universe is portrayed as the womb from which we are born. Within the celestial cells of Mahāvairocana's cosmic body our previous karma is processed based upon its positivity and negativity. This positivity and negativity then determines the exact moment which we will be born. Auspicious and inauspicious moments are explained energetically, astrologically, and in terms of *qi*. Based on the alignment of the energy-emitting stars and planets, each spatiotemporal location has a unique quality. This quality itself is wholly dependent

[458] Huiding is discussed at great length in Chapter 5.

[459] Huiding, *Rangxing fahui jishao* [Explanation on the Star Ritual], (ND). Online: http://www.kmkt.org.tw/kmktchinese/CP.aspx?TabID=249 (accessed Jan. 29, 2016). Original text: "當地宇宙星體週期率性之氣體影響，人身稟受之氣質乃有強弱好惡之異，其所形成之身體基因，於不斷代謝之中與宇宙星體吐納之氣體往來交配，有相生相剋之週期率。"

upon the energy being emitted at that spatiotemporal point, which is itself dictated by planetary and stellar alignments. Then, we are born into a specific spatiotemporal point where the astrologically determined "quality of the *qi*" is coherent with our karma. As we are born, our cells absorb this *qi*, whose strength and weakness at that particular time and place is encoded within our genetic makeup and determines our health and longevity. The quality and constitution of our genetic makeup is thus determined by previous karma.

This process is entirely mechanistic and—as Wuguang saw it—governed by natural laws that are scientifically explicable. These natural laws are karmic and astrological, with the former being primary and the second being merely the former's agent.

Interlude

The reader may have already noticed that the scientific principles that Wuguang based his sophistication of 'superstitious' forms of spirit communication and astrology are all related to thermodynamic principles of energy and transmission technology. The reason for this a twofold one whose folds overlap with one another. In Chapter 2 we saw that Wuguang characterized his religious quest as one in search of "unseen forces, invisible to the naked eye" and had memories of predicting future scientific innovations—namely the propagation of television and the handheld radio—as a child. As thermodynamics deals with invisible forces, this was the discipline that Wuguang believed he could understand—scientifically—the magical forces he had always been seeking. Additionally, as the mechanics of both television and radio broadcasts relate to thermodynamics, it is understandable that his lifelong interest in broadcasting technology would inevitably draw him to this particular scientific discipline.

Another thread that links all of these together is death and the afterlife. Wuguang's writings concerning spirit communication are primarily taken from one of his very first works,

The Path of Life and Death 生死之道. While this is not the case for the astrological material, his astrological explanation was focused on rebirth—which is what happens after death. Thus, while his scientific interests were thermodynamic, his religious ones were necromantic. To understand this, the reader should recall that in Chapter 2, we saw that Wuguang was a well-known exorcist and even performed 'ghost-busting.' Consequently, one must read Wuguang's writings regarding spirit communication as accounts rooted in personal experience—for that is how he viewed them. This means that his explanation was the product of his attempts to come to terms with an ability he believed that he had. People perceived to be inherently endowed with a natural capability to perceive spirits are often referred to as having 'spirit-eyes' 靈眼. We saw Wuguang explain that spirit-eyes are merely a manifestation of coherence/resonance as resultant of one's karma, and not a product of spiritual cultivation. This shows us that Wuguang believed he had been born with this gift.

Wuguang's linking wave coherence with resonance response to explain magic can also be understood in light of his childhood. In Chapter 2, we saw that Wuguang stated that of the three icons in his childhood home, only the Divine Husbandman—whose wrath set Wuguang's religious quest into motion—displayed a miraculous response. Thus, once again, we can see that his doctrines represent his attempt to rationalize his lifelong, firsthand encounters with the preternatural.

The importance Wuguang assigned to astrological influence can also be understood by evoking what he told us about his childhood. He relates that multiple fortune tellers told his parents that he would die—either by accident or suicide—by the age of thirty. He also states that he was a very sickly child. With this in mind, it becomes obvious that his teachings concerning astrological influences were how he explained these predictions and his overall lack of childhood

health. It also shows us why he practiced Daoist longevity practices throughout his life—for he was afraid he was going to die young. Thus, as was the case with spirit communication, Wuguang's astrological doctrines represent his coming to terms with his own life.

Despite the astrologically dealt karmic potential of Wuguang's previous lives, he lived until the age of eighty-three. Nevertheless, he still tells us that longevity is determined by the spatiotemporal location of one's nativity. From this we can see that in Wuguang's worldview, humans are not merely passive recipients of ghostly or astrological forces. In addition to being karmically initiated, they can also be magically manipulated. When Wuguang defined religion as "consciousness controlling matter" he was telling us that religion gives us the power to alter the predetermined conditions that have arisen out of our previous karmically producing actions. As we will see in Chapter 5, this principle—and astrological and afterlife practices—are part of the core of MSBL orthopraxis.

Before exploring how Wuguang instructed his followers to magically alter the world, we will now discuss how his energetic ontology led him to envision a perplexing future for global religiosity.

Section III: Future Soteriological Ramifications

Wuguang saw himself as living on the cusp of a global transition. He passed away during the first year of the twenty-first century and made a number of predictions about what would happen during the years to come:

> We have already entered the Space Age. Advances in learning and technological developments have already led us to discover the secrets of the universe such as electrons, atoms, nuclei and genes, all of which have gradually [shown] that reality and the opinions of esoteric Buddhism [and science] are consistent with one another. We will not sink back into the depths of superstitious mysticism. Śākyamuni's true enlightenment certainly foresaw the science of the future world. Currently, the esoteric Buddhism of this mysterious world is destined to meet the wants and needs of humanity.

> The fast-approaching twenty-first century will [see the actualization of] the world of Zhenyan/Shingon.[460]

Here Wuguang proclaims that the truths of science were foreseen by Śākyamuni Buddha and are contained within the doctrines of esoteric Buddhism. This consistency led him to believe that Zhenyan/Shingon was the most appropriate religion for the modern era. During fieldwork, one of Wuguang's earliest disciples told me that Wuguang often said that the true future Zhenyan/Shingon lies in the West, particularly Europe and America.[461] Thus, Wuguang believed Zhenyan/Shingon would become a global religion. The form of Zhenyan/Shingon that he predicted would be practiced, however, is very unlike anything that has yet to come into existence, which I will now explain.

According to Wuguang's energetic ontology, underlying observable phenomenal diversity is a unified mass of energy. This diversity is thus determined by the specific frequency of each karma-wave's wavelength. Simply stated, the karmic waves we produce are broadcast throughout the universe and 'tune' the energy they come in contact with based on their frequency. This tuning results in all the different 'things' that we see, such as oranges, people, trees and demons, etc. Thus, to turn a skyscraper into a cat merely involves "consciousness controlling matter," by emitting a thought-wave whose specific frequency is tuned to a 'cat' frequency. Now, let us take for example a person whose cat has passed away. If the person had somehow figured out how to determine the cat's frequency and knew how to emit a thought-wave whose frequency matched Fluffy's, he could bring Fluffy back from the grave. Fluffy #2—

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[460] Wuguang, *Zhenyan mijiao yu shidai* 真言密教與時代 [The Era of Zhenyan/Shingon]. Online: http://www.kmkt.org.tw/kmktchinese/CP.aspx?TabID=207 (accessed Jan. 30, 2016). Original text: "時代已進入太空時代，學術進步科學發展，已經發見到宇宙之秘密，如電子、原子、核子、基因都漸漸符合諸現實，已經與密教之宇宙觀相吻合，不再迷信沉溺神秘了。釋迦牟尼之証悟境界的確超越未來的科技世界，現在這個神秘世界之密教亦應運地被世界人類所渴望與需要，不久的二十一世紀就是真言密教之世界。"

[461] Semi-structured interview, Dec. 2014.

according to Wuguang's ontology—would not be a copy of Fluffy #1, he would *be* Fluffy #1 due to Mahāyāna understandings of the Buddhist doctrines of dependent origination, impermanence and emptiness. Both Fluffy #1 and Fluffy #2 lack a permanent, unchanging core and are nothing more than a specific wave-induced 'mysteriously-arranged' organization of energy. This energy is undifferentiated and homogeneous, thus all Fluffies are the same.

Using the logic detailed here, Wuguang made a radical prediction about the future of human religiosity:

> Currently, our ability to produce copies of [material] phenomena is limited to recalibrating the vibrations of a few ionized atoms. Bigger things like human bodies currently remain exceptionally difficult to copy. Nevertheless, I believe that in the near future we will invent ways to copy these kinds of [larger] masses. This will give rise to the method of 'human bodily deconstruction.' Once that invention emerges, the world will change into a paradise devoid of the fear of birth and death. If you want to go to America or Europe, you can just wirelessly transmit your frequency. If you want to be sent to thirty seven places,[462] you can just sit in a chair, press a button, be deconstructed and be transferred there. Upon the arrival [of your frequency], your [body] will be reconstructed. So simple, you don't even need to fear aircraft accidents. [Currently], when someone gets terminal cancer and dies, he is mourned. In the future we will record his frequency, atomically deconstruct him and send his ionized atoms out into space. The next day we could reconstruct him to invite him to a meal and then send him back after the meal. If it was like this, there would be no need to grieve. We would have no need for graveyards or *sūtra* recitation. This would be best…In the future, [this kind of] technology will develop. At that time, there will be no more *kleśas*. Then, we will pass laws requiring people to retire at the age of sixty. We will then let them have fun on earth for five years. At the age of sixty-five, they will surely be deconstructed and sent into space lest the world become overpopulated. You will take your great grandparents, grandparents and elder parents to be deconstructed and send them into space as bringing them back to share a meal will be a simple matter that just requires the financial means to reconstruct them. Once a year you can invite them to eat at a restaurant, then travel with them around Taiwan and then send them back. You will no longer need to perform ancestral veneration. In the future it will be like this. That is what I say, if you even just barely open your eyes you can see that this will undoubtedly be invented.[463]

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[462] Exact meaning is unclear. These thirty seven places could be a veiled reference to the thirty seven deities 三十七尊 of the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*, the thirty seven aids to enlightenment 三十七種菩提分法, a reference to a specific frequency, an unspecified Daoist cosmography, or specific geographical locations. For more information on the former two possibilities, respectively see Orzech, *Politics and Transcendent Wisdom*, 155 and 307.

[463] Wuguang, *Zhaolun*, 2.2-3. Original text: "目前的傳真只做到這些，由聲的震動經電離子傳真，影像亦用電離子傳真，但較大的物質粒子要傳真仍非常為難，如人體。但我個人認為在不久的將來這種物質傳真就會發明，那就是「人體分解術」，等到這個發明出來，地球就能變成極樂世界了，就不用怕生死了。要到美國或歐洲，就用無線電一打；例如要送一個人過去，頻率調好，要送到三十七處的地方，你坐在椅子上，把鈕一按，人就分解了，從這邊傳真到那邊，到了那邊再組織起來，很簡單，不用怕飛機失事。 人若患了癌症將死， 死時會悲哀，所以乾脆就用電離子分解放到空間，將頻率記住，改天要請他吃飯時再將他組合，吃飽後再送他回去，這樣的話就不用傷心，不用墓地，不用唸經，這樣最好…將來科技會更發

This passage contains Wuguang's radical reenvisioning of what life and religion will be like in the future. This paradisiacal land devoid of sickness, death, mourning and airports will come to be through the invention of a machine that is remarkably similar to the 'transporter' from the *Star Trek* franchise.[464]

As strange as this passage may appear, it is also distinctly Buddhist. At its heart is the most basic of Buddhist doctrines, the first of the Four Noble Truths that teaches life constitutes *duḥkha* ('suffering'). Wuguang presents his transporter as a soteriological answer to four of these sufferings: aging, sickness, death, separation from what we love and being trapped within the five *skandhas*. Deconstruction and reconstruction annul these sufferings. As Buddhism is the antidote to suffering, Wuguang's transporter renders Buddhist practice obsolete.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have demonstrated how Wuguang attempted to sophisticate what other Buddhist modernists had deemed 'superstitious' through the use of science. The fact that he was polemically responding to disenchanted Buddhist modernism is attested to by his reliance upon the philosophical and scientific subjects that his predecessors had—matter/mind dualism and energeticism—and rationalization of funerary practices, mediumship and astrology. This reliance

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達，那時就沒有什麼煩惱，然後法律便會規定六十歲就要退休，並讓你在地球上玩五年，六十五歲就一定得改換到空間去，不然人就太多了；把曾祖父、祖父、老爸都解析到空間去，反正回來吃飯很簡單嘛，只要有錢，把曾祖父、祖父、老爸組合好再邀過來，一次請到飯店去吃，吃完再旅遊台灣一週後再送回去。一年請一次，不用另外再祭拜。將來是會變成這樣的，這是我講的，你們僅管睜著眼去看，這種科技一定會發明。"

[464] It is safe to assume that the transporter was in fact the inspiration for this idea as *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, was released in Taiwanese theatres in 1980, twenty years before Wuguang's death. See *The Internet Movie Database* (IMBD), "Star Trek: The Motion Picture, Release Info." Online: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0079945/releaseinfo (accessed Jan. 30, 2016).

and polemical quality enable us to firmly identify Wuguang's teachings as an example of reenchanted Buddhist modernism.

Now that we have a clear and nuanced understanding of Wuguang's life, intentions and teachings, let us take a look at the Buddhist lineage that he founded, the MSBL.

Chapter 5

Wuguang's Lineage

This final chapter discusses Wuguang's influence on modern religiosity in Taiwan as embodied in the MSBL, which has over 6000 converts,[465] international branches and offshoots in Hong Kong and Malaysia.[466] The data presented here were primarily collected through onsite fieldwork and analyzed in an attempt to answer a number of questions. First, given the importance of Dharma-transmission continuity, how did Wuguang attempt to present the MSBL—a new form of Buddhism—as an orthodox Buddhist lineage? Second, how have Wuguang's peculiar energetic-magical-necromantic doctrines and eclectic religiosity been praxiologically translated to serve as a framework for the MSBL's orthopraxis? Third, how has the MSBL fared since Wuguang passed away in 2000? In order to appreciate the MSBL within the East Asian and global religious langscape, after seeking answers to the above questions, we analyze the MSBL from a sociological perspective, approaching it as a 'New Religious Movement' (NRM).

[465] On a refuge certificate from Apr. 27, 2014, it states that Huiding has officiated over 835 MSBL ceremonies, a number that does not include refuge ceremonies conducted by other MSBL members in Hong Kong and Malaysia. Wuguang himself performed over 5000.

[466] The known MSBL offshoots in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Malaysia are discussed in Chapter 6.

Section I: Birth

Like Wuguang's universe and monastic style, the name of the Mantra School Bright Lineage 真言宗光明流 is constructed around the character *guang* 光. The luminous quality of the MSBL's name illuminates the fact that Wuguang designed the MSBL to be a living embodiment of his teachings. This underlying agenda is visually manifested in the 'school emblem' 宗徽 that Wuguang created to signify the MSBL presented above. This image permeates the MSBL's material culture including: T-shirts, bumper stickers, window stickers, mailings, websites, keychains and publications.

This emblem is a combination of disparate elements drawn from South and East Asian as well as Western traditions. It incorporates the Japanese *mitsudomoe* 三つ巴, the Indian *vajra* and the caduceus—a symbol commonplace in Western Occultism and used by the medical profession.[467] Underlying these three prominent elements are subtle references to specific Zhenyan/Shingon concepts that furnish this symbol with a multilayered signification. Wuguang explained the specific layers of signification:

> 1. A pair of wings whose thirty-seven feathers represent the thirty-seven deities of the Perfected Body Assembly 成身會 at the center of the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*. These wings are topped by eight red lotus petals representing the eight petaled lotus at the center of the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*.
> 2. A sword whose three-pronged *vajra* pommel represents the Buddha, Lotus and *Vajra* sections of the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*. The two ribbons coming from the sword symbolize merit and knowledge. Its body represents the ability of *prajñā* to end *kleśas*.
> 3. The circle of the three mysteries [*mitsudomoe*] signifies the use of body, speech and mind.
> 4. Twin snakes whose six semi circles denote the karmic power of the six elements.
> 5. The three pronged [*vajra*] sword's penetrating the double wings, circle of the three mysteries and twin snakes embodies the vital *prajñā* of the activities of the deities in the *Vajra-Garbha* Twin Maṇḍalas.[468]

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[467] For more information on the caduceus see Walter J. Friedlander, *The Golden Wand of Medicine: A History of the Caduceus Symbol in Medicine* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1992).

[468] Wuguang, "*Zonghui de xianghui yiyi* 宗徽的像徽意義 [Meaning of the School's Emblem]," in *Fojiao zhenyanzong wuzhishan guangmingwangsi* 佛教真言宗五智山光明王寺 [Buddhist Zhenyan Temple of Universal

Despite the fact that this symbol hardly looks Buddhist and was obviously inspired by the caduceus, Wuguang wove Zhenyan/Shingon doctrine into the different elements that he used to create it. From his description we can see that this emblem was intended to encapsulate the symbolism of the Twin Maṇḍalas 兩界曼荼羅 that are central to Zhenyan/Shingon[469] and embody esoteric Buddhist practice built around the three mysteries.[470] Notable here is Wuguang's use of the Japanese *mitsudomoe* to represent the three mysteries despite the fact that it usually refers to the triad of heaven, earth and humanity 天地人.[471] To justify his interpretation, Wuguang changed the actual name of the symbol to the 'circle of the three mysteries' 三密環流. The *mitsudomoe* is used in Shingon material culture, which is obviously the reason why it made its way into Wuguang's emblem. However, I am unaware of any pre-Wuguang figure—Japanese or otherwise—who correlates the three blades of the *mitsudomoe* with the three mysteries of esoteric Buddhist practice. Thus, Wuguang changed the meaning of

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Brightness at Mt. Five Wisdoms], NA (Kaohsiung: Yimin chubanshe, 2002), 5. Original text: "1. 雙翼：共三十七羽，代表金剛界成身會三十七尊；羽翼上緣有八瓣蓮葉，代表胎藏界中台八葉九尊。2. 三鈷劍：劍柄三鈷，表示佛部、蓮花部、金剛部三部；劍柄端有二穗帶，代表福慧之鬘；劍身代表能斷煩惱之智慧。3. 三密環流：代表身口意三密妙用 4. 雙蛇：代表六大能生的羯摩力。5. 三鈷劍貫穿雙翼、三密環、雙蛇，代表貫穿金胎兩部諸尊的精神智慧活動。"

[469] The most comprehensive exploration of these *maṇḍalas* in English is A. Snodgrass, *The Matrix and Diamond World Maṇḍalas*. For the Perfected Body Assembly and Eight pedaled lotus Wuguang mentions here, respectively refer to A. Snodgrass, 630-636 and 207-214. For the Buddha, *Vajra* and Lotus sections of the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala* see ibid, 252, Elizabeth T. Grotenhuis, *Japanese Maṇḍalas: Representations of Sacred Geography* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 61 and Nicoloff, *Sacred Kōyasan*, 141. In addition to the maṇḍalic specific elements, Wuguang is referring to Shingon ontological doctrines that teach that the basic material underlying all phenomena are the Six Great Elements 六大. The belief in the Six Great Elements is built upon an earlier Indian model that posits there are four great elements (Skt. *catvāri mahā-bhūtāni*), earth, water, fire and air. This early quadric-elemental schema is found throughout Buddhist literature. In select early Buddhist texts there are two additional elements sometimes mentioned—space and consciousness—which gives us the six that we see Wuguang referencing. For more information see Minoru Kiyota, "Shingon Mikkyō Maṇḍala," *History of Religions* 8, no. 1 (1968): 31-59 and *Shingon Buddhism: Theory and Practice* (Los Angeles and Tokyo: Buddhist Books International, 1978), 66-68.

[470] For more information regarding the three mysteries refer to the Introduction, Section III, "Buddhist 'Schools' and 'Lineages.'

[471] E. Leslie Williams, *Spirit Tree: Origins of Cosmology in Shintō Ritual at Hakozaki* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007), 164.

the Japanese *mitsudomoe*—and even the Western caduceus—in order to imbue them with Zhenyan/Shingon symbolism.

As I have argued elsewhere, Wuguang's creating this emblem was inspired by the Japanese use of 'crests' 紋 to signify different Buddhist lineages.[472] The fact that the *mitsudomoe*—notwithstanding Wuguang's reinterpretation—is used as such a crest in Japanese Shingon strengthens this argument. It also shows us that when Wuguang formed the MSBL he attempted to make it seem as 'official' as possible by mimicking established Buddhist sectarian tactics. This is further attested to by other well established sectarian tactics that he employed. In addition to signifying his sect with a new banner, Wuguang wrote a new lineage poem for the MSBL's members' Dharma-names to be chosen from (see figure 12).

English	Pinyin	Chinese
Thoroughly awakened and perceiving the mysterious, the mind's powers are true and constant.	***Wu che xuan jue,*** ***Xin di zhenchang.***	**悟徹玄覺,** **心諦真常.**
Luminosity shines universally, the transcendent attestation of Mahāvairocana's Pure Land (Skt. *Ghana-vyūha*).	***Guangming puzhao,*** ***Chao zheng miyan.***	**光明普照,** **超證密嚴.**
Completely revealing the nature and characteristics of things, [like] Huiguo and Kūkai.	***Quan xian xingxiang,*** ***Huiguo Hongfa.***	**全顯性相,** **惠果弘法.**
Wondrous virtue expansively transforms, forever bringing esteem to the this school.	***Miaode guanghua,*** ***Yongxiang benzong.***	**妙德廣化,** **永尚本宗.**

Figure 12: MSBL Lineage Poem.

I have highlighted the initial character of each stanza to reveal another code written by Wuguang that involves his monastic names. When these characters are put together they form Wuguang's full monastic name that includes both his Dharma-name and monk's style, Wuguang

[472] Bahir, "Buddhist Master Wuguang's Taiwanese Web," 88.

Quanmiao 悟光全妙.[473] There is another message embedded in this poem, particularly in its second stanza where Wuguang references the Zhenyan/Shingon patriarchs Huiguo and Kūkai—the latter through his posthumous title Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師 (Chn. *hongfa dashi*). This reference and encoded message demonstrate that Wuguang was trying to root his new lineage—and himself—in the past and present both as traditionally Buddhist.

In the next chapter we will see that these two tactics—creating a new religious crest and lineage poem—were copied by Wuguang's students who went on to form their own movements. Now, we will turn our attention to the history of the sect that Wuguang's banner and poem were meant to legitimize.

History

As we saw in Chapter 2, when Wuguang returned from Japan he began propagating his version of esoteric Buddhism at Zhuxi Temple in an isolated corner near its ossuary stūpa before relocating to a small folk religion shrine named Longshan Hall. Two years later, in 1974, the section of this space utilized by Wuguang and his followers was given the name Temple of Universal Brightness (TOUB1) 光明王寺 (literally 'Temple of the Luminous Wisdom King'), a name which evokes the class of deities in the Zhenyan/Shingon pantheon referred to as the Wisdom Kings 明王 (Skt. *vidyā-rāja*)[474]—to which he attached the character *guang*.[475] Although the sanctuary is small and currently rarely used, it still shows evidence of the practices performed

[473] For more information on Dharma-names and lineage poems refer to note 421.

[474] See Patricia J. Graham, "Naritasan Shinshōji and Commoner Patronage During the Edo Period," *Early Modern Japan* 12, no. 2 (2004): 11, n. 1.

[475] The title, 'Luminous Wisdom King' 光明王 is also a translation for the Sanskrit name of the bodhisattva Jvalanādhipati in the retinue of Amitābha. See William E. Soothill and Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* (Digital version: Digital Archives Section, Library and Information Center of Dharma Drum Buddhist College). Online: http://buddhistinformatics.ddbc.edu.tw/glossaries/glossaries.php#soothill-hodous (accessed Feb. 2, 2016). However, I do not believe Wuguang is referencing this deity, but the Wisdom Kings and his energetic ontology.

there and its presence is indicated by a sign at the intersection of the main street and small alley where at whose back it can be found (see figures 13-16).

Figure 13: Alley to TOUB1.

Figure 14: Front of TOUB1.

Figure 15: TOUB1 Lecture Hall.

Figure 16: TOUB1 incense altar.

From this modest space Wuguang's flock steadily grew. In 1980 another, equally humble branch was established in Kaohsiung's Zuoying district. In 1983, the MSBL joined the Kaohsiung chapter of the Buddhist Association of the Republic of China (BAROC) 中國佛教協

會, the Kaohsiung Buddhist Association 大高雄佛教會.[476] That same year, a large plot of land in Wuguang's rural hometown of Neimen was purchased with the intention to construct a large central monastery. It took sixteen years for the temple to finally be completed in 1999, during which time the MSBL Hong Kong branch was opened in 1990, and another has since been opened in Taipei. After completion, the new monastery took on the name of the original Tainan shrine, The Temple of Universal Brightness (TOUB).

What truly made Wuguang's new MSBL an independent Buddhist lineage from its inception is the fact that it has always been self-perpetuating. In lieu of sending students to Japan to receive *abhiṣeka* as is done at Shingon centers in Taiwan—even those who are run by Taiwanese devotees—Wuguang ordained his own *ācārya*s on Taiwanese soil.[477] In Japan, to become a Shingon priest (Skt. *ācārya*) one must go into retreat that lasts roughly 100 days and perform multiple rituals around the clock.[478] Since the MSBL's humble beginnings made hosting such a retreat impossible, Wuguang allowed his students to perform the rituals at home after he had instructed them in the ritual procedures and meanings thereof. After they had performed each of the four elements in the Quadrilateral Cultivation 108 times each, Wuguang would ordain then as priests of his new lineage.

The MSBL's informal *abhiṣeka* process eventually changed. After the land for a central temple was purchased, Wuguang attempted to recreate the 100-day retreat experience that he had

[476] Personal correspondence with an MSBL monastic on behalf of Huiding, Jun 22, 2016. For the BAROC, refer to Chapter 1, Section III.

[477] Two examples of Taiwanese-run Shingon centers who send their disciples to Japan to receive Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* are Kōyasan Jūkon-in 高野山住嚴院 in Taichung and Kōyasan Juntei-in 高野山準提院 in Kaohsiung.

[478] See Nicoloff, *Sacred Kōyasan*, 193-196.

undergone at Kōyasan.[479] This began in October of 1991 when a number of portable trailers were brought to the future site of the monastery to house disciples attending the first '*ācārya* workshop' 阿闍梨講習班. On January 1, 1992 the first batch of MSBL priests to have undergone the retreat received *abhiṣeka*. Once construction for the TOUB was complete, it became the center of all MSBL activity and enabled the *abhiṣeka* retreat to take place inside permanent monastic walls.

After being granted Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka*, a devotee becomes an MSBL 'priest.' The MSBL's clerical divinsions include: monastics, lay members, priests, and refuged-only members. Monastics are Buddhist monks and nuns, while lay members are not. Priests are members who have obtained *abhiṣeka*, while refuged-only members have not. The 'priesthood' is open to both monastics and lay members. Being a priest within the MSBL is not a function, but a title that a devotee is bestowed after completing the retreat just discussed. While social bonds are fermented by becoming a priest, assisting the residents of the TOUB in performing rituals is the only privelege reserved exclusively for priests that I have observed.

Now that we have discussed the early history of this young Buddhist lineage and the contours of its priesthood, let us take a look at its home. Our exploration of this monastic complex begins by detailing its central features and concludes by analyzing their symbolic significance.

[479] This retreat—which is now performed in an actual monastery on the same grounds where the trailers once stood—replicated the ritual procedures and schedule of the retreat in Japan. One major difference however is that unlike Japanese Shingon priestly students, MSBL retreatants do not make any homages or offerings to *kami* as these are considered 'non-Buddhist' and 'foreign' due to their being Shintō. In place of this, local mountain deities are prayed to. Thus, the Japanese Shingon retreat has been appropriated and Sinicized by replacing specifically Japanese elements with their Chinese equivalents.

Section II: Headquarters

The TOUB houses around fifteen resident monastics. It is nestled inside a small mountain cove within a large mountain-top, flat-floor valley. This complex is invisible from the public highway and is therefore easy to pass without ever realizing it. Only during special occasions is the entrance decorated to allow newcomers to find the small winding road that leads up over the mountains and then down into the belly of the cove (see figures 17-18). This cove is surrounded by four mountains at whose center is a humanly enhanced hill. This topography gives this place its name, Mt. Five Wisdoms 五智山, which is an obvious reference to the phenomenological transformation discussed in Chapter 3.

Figure 17: Street Entrance to Mt. Five Wisdoms.

Figure 18: Resident monastic on a scooter along the entry road.

In accordance with traditional Chinese Buddhist custom, the front gate referred to as the 'Mountain gate' 山門 faces south (see figure 19).[480] To the west of the monastery are two lakes, one much larger than the other. The larger one is named Qinglong Pond 青龍池 and the smaller one is known as Yongquan Pond 湧泉池. These lakes are surrounded by a footpath which is often used by visitors for walking meditation or leisurely strolling. On the west bank of Qinglong Pond is a house built as a memorial to Wuguang that is occupied by a number of Wuguang's relatives who are also MSBL members (see figure 20). There are a number of other minor features of the grounds, such as a carpentry workshop, a number of steles and gardens as well as an old study center that is rarely used. To the TOUB's east is a large parking lot and an ossuary stūpa (see figure 21).

Resting atop the central 'mountain' of Mt. Five Wisdoms is the TOUB. Including the basement, the TOUB's main structure is a five-leveled cube that is topped by five stūpas (see figures 22-23). The TOUB is accessed through the mountain gate from where one ascends this 'mountain' by way of a flight of steps whose railing is topped with roaring lions on both sides (see figure 24). Coming to the top of the first flight of stairs, one encounters stone lanterns 石灯籠 and *mitsudomoe* (see figures 25-26). At this point one is level with the monastery's first level, the basement.

[480] See Louise Tythacott, *The Lives of Chinese Objects: Buddhism, Imperialism and Display*, Museums and Collections, 3 (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), 39.

Figure 19: Mountain gate.

Figure 20: Commemorative house overlooking Qinglong Pond.

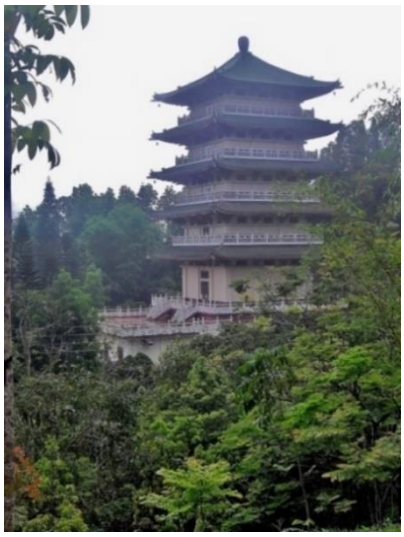

Figure 21: Ossuary stūpa.

Figure 22: TOUB.

Figure 23: Front of TOUB.

Figure 24: Lion flanked staircase.

Figure 25: Stone lanterns.

Figure 26: *Mitsudomoe* on steps at TOUB.

In the basement one finds the dining hall 五觀堂 which is separated into two areas, one for visitors and one for residents. The only demarcation marking this boundary is the difference in furniture, with long wooden tables designated for the former and small, round tables for the

latter. At the northernmost wall—on the residents' side—there is an unassuming shrine dedicated to Wuguang's dharma protector who accompanied him on retreat near the waterfall and one dedicated to Wuguang (see figure 27). On the basement's eastern side one finds the kitchen.

In the center of the first floor is the Illuminating Lecture Hall 遍照講堂—whose name is a reference to Mahāvairocana. It is here that the major public events, lectures and rituals take place. The northern wall boasts a stage that is usually adorned with either a painting of Wuguang holding the mūdra of Mahāvairocana, a statue of him sitting in a lotus posture or both (see figure 28). The support columns in the lecture hall are decorated in a style reminiscent of European architecture with acanthus leaves adorning their crowns (see figure 29). This lecture hall's height extends until the top of the second floor and is thus a two storied room. Flanking the lecture hall on its east and west sides are administrative offices, a public lounge, small book store and library. The corridors separating the lecture hall from the other rooms are used for circumambulation during specific rituals and decorated with pictures of past events, Wuguang and the Zhenyan/Shingon patriarchs (see figures 30-31).

The entire first floor is surrounded by a covered veranda that functions as an extension of the inner corridors during circumambulation. Here one finds two *homa* altars, one on the veranda's northeastern and northwestern corner.[481] The external architecture of the TOUB, like that of the lecture hall, is a mix of East and West as seen from the hanging roofs and veranda's columns and archways (see figures 32-33). This is intentional as the TOUB is meant to look

[481] The *Homa* is found in both Tibetan and Japanese forms of esoteric Buddhism. For more information see Yael Bentor, "Interiorized Fire Rituals in India and in Tibet," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 120, no. 4 (2000): 594-613 and Richard K. Payne, "The Shingon Subordinating Fire Offering for Amitābha, 'Amida Kei Ai Goma,'" *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies*, third series, no. 8 (2006): 191-236.

‘European’ 歐洲建築系列.[482] This design reflects Wuguang’s belief that the future of Zhenyan/Shingon lies outside of Asia.

Figure 27: Basement shrine to Wuguang.

Figure 28: First floor altar to Wuguang. Image by Xiongyu.

Figure 29: Illuminating Lecture Hall, first-second floors.

[482] Chezhen 徹貞, “*Miren xianyu—Taiwan wuzhishan guangmingwang si dadian kaiguang dadian* 密人顯語—台灣五智山光明王寺大殿開光大典 [Exoteric Words of an Esoteric Buddhist—Dedication Ceremony of the Great Hall at Taiwan’s Temple of Universal Brightness at Mt. Five Wisdoms],” ed. Chewei 徹威, *Fengshui Magazine* 30 (1999). Online: http://www.fengshui-magazine.com.hk/No.30-Dec/A6.htm (accessed Feb. 1, 2016).

Figure 30: Images of the Zhenyan/Shingon patriarchs adorning a corridor on the first floor.

Figure 31: An image of Wuguang bathing the Buddha hanging in a corridor on the first floor.

Figure 32: Europeanesque columns.

Figure 33: Hanging roofs on TOUB's roof.

On the second floor, the lecture hall is flanked on both sides by living quarters. Most of these are unoccupied and occasionally used by lay devotees and guests. This floor is gender-segregated, with the men's quarters on the east and the women's on the west. Each room has a window which either faces outside, or into the lecture hall.

The spatial layouts of the third and fourth floors are identical to that of the first and second. This is where the majority of residents live in cells flanking the main sanctuary, the Mahāvairocana Sanctuary 大日寶殿 (see figure 34). Just like the lecture hall, the main

sanctuary's height extends two-stories tall. It is in the very center of the building right atop the lecture hall. The altar on the north side of the wall is flanked by the Twin Maṇḍalas and boasts a large Mahāvairocana behind which is a Buddha relic (Skt. *śarīra*) in the form of a skull fragment from Wuguang's corpse that has been encased within the wall. The rest of his body rests in the form of cremated remains within the ossuary stūpa.

Figure 34: Mahāvairocana Hall, third-fourth floors. Image provided by MSBL member and reproduced with full permission.

Above the fourth floor is a roof from which one can take in entire grounds in a 360° panoramic view. The four corners of the roof are crowned with two-storied square stūpas in the center of which is a single two-storied stūpa whose first floor is square while the second is circular. It is within this the round walls of the central stūpa's second floor where Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* takes place. Thus, it is within this circular space, at the very center and highest point of Mt. Five Wisdoms that Wuguang's transmission chain is perpetuated.

Having explored the core features of Mt. Five Wisdoms we are now ready to look at their significance.

Physical Features: Symbolic Significance

Just like Wuguang's monastic designations, the MSBL's religious emblem and lineage poem, Wuguang intentionally designed Mt. Five Wisdoms to function as a multilayered representation of his beliefs and intentions. As he worked in construction for many years and oversaw the remodeling project at Zhuxi Temple, doing so was well within his skillset. Since this skillset related to architecture, the most architecturally rich element at Mt. Five Wisdoms—the TOUB—is embedded with the greatest profusion of symbolism.

Mt. Five Wisdoms is a massive topographic representation of the Twin Maṇḍalas. This is readily apparent in the location's name—Mt. Five Wisdoms—and its five-peaked topography. The Five Wisdoms discussed in Chapter 3 are iconographically enshrined within both the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* and *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala* in the form of the Five Wisdom Buddhas 五智如來 (Skt. *pañca-buddha*),[483] which is one of the reasons why the number five is a salient theme in Zhenyan/Shingon sacred space.[484] Thus, the entire mountain cove is a physical representation of the Twin Maṇḍalas. As Mahāvairocana is the most esteemed of the Five Wisdom Buddhas, the TOUB—the heart of Mt. Five Wisdoms resting atop the central 'mountain'—architecturally embodies Mahāvairocana. Thus, it is the most significant part of the MSBL's physical maṇḍala. However, this is only part of the story.

[483] In Zhenyan/Shingon iconography, there are two different sets of Five Wisdom Buddhas, one found in the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* and the other in the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*. See Louis Frédéric, *Japan Encyclopedia*, tr. Käthe Roth (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 251.

[484] See Nicoloff, *Sacred Kōyasan*, 21 and 124-167.

The TOUB is not only a piece of the maṇḍala that comprises the entire monastic grounds. It is a smaller, independent structural maṇḍala within the larger, topographic one and a multi-functional stūpa. This dual maṇḍalic identity and stūpa function can be seen in the adamantine throne (Skt. *vajra-sana*) stūpa 金剛座塔 by which it is crowned. Adamantine throne stūpas—also referred to as five buddha stūpas 五佛塔—are distinguished by constituting a central stūpa that is surrounded by four smaller ones.[485] The most well known adamantine throne stūpa is the Mahābodhi Temple in Bodhgayā, India located next to the Bodhi Tree. Adamantine throne stūpas are architectural representations of the *bodhimaṇḍa*, the ground from which the Bodhi Tree grew and upon which Śākyamuni sat when he attained enlightenment—an inference reflected in the fact that the term 'adamantine throne' is another word for *bodhimaṇḍa*.[486] As the TOUB is an adamantine throne stūpa whose five points represent the Five Wisdom Buddhas, it is simultaneously an independent maṇḍala and a stūpa. As stūpas were originally constructed to house Buddha-relics, the fact that the TOUB houses a piece of Wuguang's skull cements this function.

The name of the adamantine throne stūpa atop the TOUB—as well as its function—represents the key to unlocking the symbolism that Wuguang embedded in the TOUB and even Mt. Five Wisdoms as a whole. Wuguang named this five-towered stūpa the Iron Stūpa of south India 南天竺鐵塔.[487] This name is a clear reference to Zhenyan/Shingon's origin myth discussed in this dissertation's introduction. As noted , this myth depicts Nāgārjuna entering an iron stūpa

[485] See Clarence Eng, *Colours and Contrast: Ceramic Traditions in Chinese Architecture* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), 93-94.

[486] The significance of the adamantine throne/*bodhimaṇḍa* is not limited to the spatiotemporal location upon which Śākyamuni sat. It also functions as an omnidirectional soteriological *axis mundi*. See A. Snodgrass, *Symbolism of the Stupa*, 157.

[487] NA, *Fojiao zhenyanzong wuzhishan guangmingwangsi* 佛教真言宗五智山光明王寺 [Buddhist Zhenyan Temple of Universal Brightness at Mt. Five Wisdoms], NA (Kaohsiung: Yimin chubanshe, 2002), 17.

in southern India and becoming the first human link in the esoteric Dharma-transmission chain. Thus, it should be no surprise that since the TOUB's construction was completed, the central tower of this Taiwanese iron stūpa—which the MSBL calls the Stūpa of Ten Thousand Buddhas 萬佛寶塔—is where Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* takes place. Thus, the original iron stūpa in South India is where the Zhenyan/Shingon chain of transmission began and the Taiwanese iron stūpa is where new links are added to this chain. This reveals that when Wuguang designed the TOUB he desired to replicate—in form, function and name—the original stūpa within whose walls Zhenyan/Shingon was brought into the human realm. There is yet one more layer of symbolism that I will now detail.

The TOUB's iron stūpa is not just a simple reference to Zhenyan/Shingon mythology as it is also a polemically motivated sectarian proclamation. I base this argument on a number of the stūpa's architectural peculiarities and specific topographic features in the surrounding area. First, the fact that this iron stūpa is not only a reference to the Zhenyan/Shingon origin myth but also to the birth of Buddhism—as depicted in Śākyamuni's enlightenment upon the *bodhimaṇḍa* and referenced in the adamantine form of the TOUB—shows that Wuguang wished to present the MSBL as an all-inclusive Buddhist lineage whose doctrines and practices encapsulate the totality of the Buddha-Dharma. A single reference to one of these origin myths could be interpreted as simply a reference devoid of polemical intentions. Two references to two entirely independent origination myths indicate that this was a calculated move. The multilayered quality of this calculation implies that Wuguang felt that he had something to prove that may otherwise be called into question. The exact claim that Wuguang was making is that the MSBL is a form of orthodox—and esoteric—Buddhism that is firmly rooted in ancient transmission chains. From Wuguang's emblem and lineage poem—as well as reliance on Buddhist doctrine to articulate his

energetic ontology—it is unquestionable that Wuguang was attempting to establish a new lineage within Buddhism that would be perceived as an orthodox form of Buddhism as opposed to a new religion. The most convincing way for him to validate this claim was to reference the provenance of his different Dharma-transmissions—Chan/Zen and Zhenyan/Shingon—which we see him doing when he designed the TOUB. However, the second transmission, Zhenyan/Shingon, is in fact questionable due to the fact that Wuguang severed his connection to his Japanese Dharma-kin and ordained his own *ācāryas* without their permission. Because of this, Japanese Shingon authorities generally do not recognize MSBL priests as their Dharma-kin since Wuguang rerouted his disciples' transmission by establishing himself as the sole fount thereof.[488] This consequently calls the MSBL's orthodoxy into question.

My interpretation of the TOUB's symbolism as a polemic proclamation is further attested to by the iron stūpa's architecture. The central tower—where Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* takes place—is a many-jeweled stūpa 多寶塔 (Skt. *prabhūtaratna-stūpa*) as it has a square base and circular second floor (see figures 35-36). This design differs from the more common East Asian design whose different levels are all square. This sort of structure began appearing in Japan during the Heian period 平安時代 (794-1185) and has always been associated with esoteric Buddhism.[489] Like the TOUB's deific identification as Mahāvairocana within the topographic maṇḍala of Mt. Five Wisdoms, many-jeweled stūpas are representations of

[488] This is not to say that Japanese Shingon priests generally express disrespect to or refuse to interact with the devotees of the MSBL and its offshoots. In fact, there have been multiple Japanese delegations to Taiwan who have visited the TOUB and centers used by its offshoots. MSBL members and those of its offshoots have also visited Kōyasan—which I have detailed in Bahir, "Buddhist Master Wuguang's Taiwanese Web" and "Relinking the Chain." However, MSBL *ācāryas* are not recognized as 'Shingon' priests, but as priests of a derivative movement.

[489] Hugo Munsterberg, T*he Arts of Japan: An Illustrated History* (Rutland, VT and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1957; Seventeenth printing, 1988), 144.

Mahāvairocana's body.[490] As the many-jeweled stūpa design is a Japanese phenomenon,[491] the presence of one in Taiwan is truly remarkable.[492] This would seem to indicate that the many-jeweled design of the central stūpa atop the TOUB is intended to evoke the Japanese provenance of the MSBL's Dharma-transmission. This is true, however; it is a fact a polemical reference.

Figure 35: Aerial view of the TOUB. Image from video taken by Chun Hrong Lin 林俊宏 and reproduced with full permission.

Figure 36: Aerial view of the Iron Stūpa atop the TOUB. Image from video taken by Chun Hrong Lin and reproduced with full permission.

Notwithstanding that many-jeweled stūpas were confined to Japan for over a thousand years, this Taiwanese stūpa was designed to replicate the Tang Dynasty models that Wuguang believed the Japanese Buddhists of the Heian period had mimicked.[493] Wuguang was not referencing the Japanese provenance of his esoteric Dharma-transmission by constructing a

[490] This is a multilayered association, as many-jeweled stūpas are also representative of the first of the Five Great Elements which are Mahāvairocana's body while the sixth element, consciousness, is his mind. See *Hillary* E. Pedersen, "The Five Great Space Repository Bodhisattvas: Lineage, Protection and Celestial Authority in Ninth-century Japan" (PhD diss, University of Kansas, 2010), 148; Patricia J. Graham, *Faith and Power in Japanese Buddhist Art, 1600-2005* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 29.

[491] Although there are textual references to many-jeweled stūpas that predate this design's Japanese debut, there are no existent examples. See Paul Groner, "Kōen and the 'Consecrated Ordination' within Japanese Tendai," in *Buddhist Monasticism in East Asia: Places of Practice*, eds. James A. Benn et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 197.

[492] The only other one I am aware of in Taiwan was constructed by a Taiwanese Chan monk, Weili 惟勵 (1931-2016) who, like Wuguang, received Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* in Japan. This stūpa was built under Japanese supervision and is located in a monastic complex named Mt. Qinglong 青龍山 that houses the monastery, Acala Temple 不動寺 in Gaoshu Township 高樹鄉, Pingtung County.

[493] Huiding, personal conversation with author, Aug. 2013.

Japanese-styled stūpa on Taiwanese soil. Instead, he was declaring that—despite popular opinion—many-jeweled stūpas are not Japanese at all as their Chinese existence predated their Japanese construction. Hence, rather than evoking the MSBL's Japanese ancestry Wuguang's many-jeweled stūpa is meant to recall the Chinese origins of Japanese Shingon.

This innuendo has ramifications that reverberate throughout Wuguang's resurrecting Tang Dynasty Zhenyan by giving birth to the MSBL. The history of many-jeweled stūpa design is an architectural metaphor for Zhenyan/Shingon. Despite the fact that Wuguang received both from Japan, he is declaring that he was not the original appropriator; Kūkai and his subsequent followers were. Consequently, the MSBL is not a derivative of Japanese Shingon, but a revival of Tang Dynasty Zhenyan of which Japanese Shingon is itself a derivative. The message embedded within the architecture of the TOUB is thus a preemptive response to potential challenges to his religious authority—and the religious beliefs and practices of MSBL devotees—that could arise. Since the MSBL was founded by Wuguang severing the Japanese links in his chain of Dharma-transmission their legitimacy is inherently vulnerable to attacks from more established Buddhist lineages. If such criticism was hurled, MSBL devotees could equally call the legitimacy of Shingon authority into question by asserting that their lineage is no less an expropriation than the Japanese ones are. They could also say that Wuguang was merely emulating Kūkai, who established his own form of Buddhism after studying in China.

The TOUB is not Mt. Five Wisdom's only integrant to make this statement. The two bodies of water due west of the TOUB, Qinglong Pond and Yongquan Pond, are named for two Buddhist temples in China directly related to Shingon's Chinese past. The first one, Qinglong Temple 青龍寺 in the old Tang capital of Chang'an 長安 (present day Xi'an 西安), is where the Zhenyan/Shingon patriarch Amoghavajra (705-774) is said to have taught the esoteric Dharma to

Huiguo and where he in turn transmitted it to Kūkai. Yongquan Pond bears the name of Yongquan Temple in Fuzhou, which we noted in Chapter 1, was the fount of Taiwanese monastic Buddhism.[494] This renders Yongquan Pond a reference to Wuguang's Chan lineage. Nevertheless, this is not this pond's central allusion. When Kūkai set out for Chang'an in 804, his ship was blown off course and landed near Fuzhou where the local authorities initially halted the delegation's expedition for one month.[495] As inscribed upon a stele at Yongquan Temple,[496] there is a tradition—taught by Wuguang's disciples[497]— that Kūkai studied at Yongquan Temple during this time.[498] As Qinglong Pond is obviously a reference to Kūkai's time in China, in light of this tradition it is logical to conclude that Yongquan Pond is as well. Thus, although these lakes are references to Kūkai, they evoke his reliance upon China for transmission of the esoteric Dharma.

The fact that Mt. Five Wisdoms is a massive maṇḍala is a further articulation of Wuguang's sectarian polemic. Kongōbu-ji 金剛峰寺, the core temple at Kōyasan, was designed by Kūkai to be a physical maṇḍala that encompasses the Twin Maṇḍalas.[499] As this was also the guiding template for the design of Mt. Five Wisdoms—in light of all of the above—it is clear that Wuguang intended for Mt. Five Wisdoms to serve as ground zero for Zhenyan/Shingon's

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[494] See page 48.

[495] Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, 114-115.

[496] Hayashi Hiroshige 林廣茂, "*Kūkai to Nagayasu: Kūkai no ashiato o junkō suru* 空海と長安: 空海の足跡を巡行する [Kūkai and Chang'an: In the Footsteps of Kūkai's Voyage]," Unpublished paper, (2008): 2. Online: http://www.hayashihiroshige.jp/travel.html (accessed Feb. 3, 2015).

[497] Edward Li 李居明, *Mizongde miyi yu xingfa* 密宗的秘儀與行法 [The Secret Meaning of Esoteric Buddhism and Cultivation], 2008. Online: http://lifedevotee.likuiming.com/PrearticleDetail.aspx?id=41 (accessed Jun. 16, 2015). Mr. Li was a disciple of Wuguang and is discussed in the next chapter.

[498] See Wu Qingyuan 吳清源, *Zhongde jingshen: weiqi zhi shen wuqingyuan zizhuan* 中的精神: 圍棋之神吳清源自傳 [Moral Spirit: Wu Qingyuan, the God of Go's Autobiography] (Beijing: Zhongxin chubanshe, 2010), 44.

[499] See David. L. Gardiner, "Maṇḍala, Maṇḍala on the Wall: Variations of Usage in the Shingon School," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 19, no. 2 (1996): 245-279.

future in lieu of Kongōbu-ji, a future that he we know he believed lay in the West and is expressed in the TOUB's European architecture.

Interlude

During Wuguang's life, embarking upon the road to priestly ordination merely required asking for permission. This is no longer the case as one must first perform a preliminary esoteric practice[500] in conjunction with reciting specific mantras tens of thousands of times.[501] This transition exemplifies a change in leadership and community-building methodology. As we are already intimately familiar with Wuguang, the MSBL's history and symbolic significance of its spiritual home, let us now discuss how it has fared since its founder passed away.

Section III: Current Status

Since Wuguang's passing in 2000, Huiding 徽定 (b. 1956; secular name Jiang Huixiong 蔣徽雄, Dharma-name Chezhen 徹真, a.k.a. Cheding 徹定) has been the sect's spiritual leader (see figures 37-39). Huiding was born in the Kaohsiung suburb of Yong'an Township 永安鄉 to mainlander parents. He became interested in Buddhism while in high school and took refuge under Wuguang at Zhuxi Temple in 1986 at the age of 19.[502] After graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Taichung's Feng Chia University 逢甲大學 and finishing his mandatory military service, he began studying at the Hua Yen Institute of Buddhist Studies 華嚴專宗學院佛學研究所 in Taipei in 1983. He reports that the curriculum at the Hua

[500] The preliminary practice that one must perform is a rite dedicated to Cintāmaṇi-cakra-avalokiteśvara. This rite's core visualization can be found in Robert H. Sharf, "Thinking through Shingon Ritual," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 26, no. 1 (2003): 66-67.

[501] The mantras that one must recite include the Mantra of Light 光明真言, *Sitātapatroṣṇīṣa-dhāraṇī* 佛頂真言 (T 2131.54.1071c6) and others.

[502] Huiding, semi-structured interview, Apr. 2014.

Yen Institute of Buddhist Studies included *āgama* studies, modern research methodologies, Western and Chinese philosophy, *Yijing* 易經 studies, Japanese, Sanskrit and Tibetan, comparative Chinese-Indian Buddhology, Buddhist sectarianism, *vinaya*, Tiantai and Huayan Studies.[503] After graduating in 1986, he became a tonsured monk under Wuguang and revived full monastic ordination at Kaohsiung's Yuan Heng Temple 元亨寺 later that year. In 1999, Wuguang appointed him abbot of the TOUB. In addition, he currently serves on the board of directors of the Kaohsiung Buddhist Association, the Kaohsiung branch of the BAROC mentioned above.

Huiding's presentation of Buddhism and his vision for the community differ from Wuguang's in many respects. While Wuguang was a betel nut-chewing, cigarette-smoking charismatic leader who often spoke of magical powers and preternatural occurrences, Huiding's persona fits the image of what one would expect of a modern Buddhist abbot. While friendly, he projects an air of authority. One can already see the roots of such a difference in their dissimilar educational backgrounds. Wuguang spent most of his life exorcising ghosts, creating alchemical concoctions and only later studied Buddhist modernism after becoming a monk at Zhuxi Temple. Huiding was introduced to more modern and 'rational' forms of Buddhism immediately after graduating from college. Huiding's teachings are much more exoteric. In fact, in his lectures I have heard him commonly reference Taixu and even Yinshun, despite the fact that the latter was an open critic of esoteric Buddhism and Huiding is the abbot of an esoteric Buddhist monastery. The majority of Huiding's lectures are on the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, Kūkai's Ten Stages of the

[503] Huiding, "*Xian daoshi zhuisi zansong wen* 先導師追思讚頌文 [Memorial Article for Master Xian]," *ALL Ways Monthly* 275 (2011): 60. Online: http://www.huayen.org.tw/allWays/275.pdf (accessed Oct. 18, 2015).

Mind[504] and the *Discourse on Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* 大乘起信論. He runs an ongoing course that meets every four to six weeks at the TOUB. Devotees who were disciples of Wuguang while he was still alive generally do not attend this course. The same is true for the Mantra of Light workshops that he occasionally teaches.

Figure 37: 1994 *abhiṣeka* workshop class. In the center sits Wuguang to whose left sits the taller and younger Huiding. Monastics are dressed in blue robes while lay *ācāryas* are wearing black robes. Image provided by MSBL member and reproduced with full permission.

[504] Refer to note 387.

Figure 38: Huiding leading MSBL members in Kōyasan. Image provided by MSBL member and reproduced with full permission.

Figure 39: Huiding and Wuguang at a Buddha-bathing ceremony at the TOUB. Image provided by MSBL member and reproduced with full permission.

During my fieldwork, Huiding instructed me not to pay attention to the miraculous stories surrounding Wuguang. He never denies the validity of such things, but prefers not to speak openly about them. It is not that his religious beliefs necessarily differ from Wuguang's, rather, he approaches the role of a religious leader differently from how his predecessor did. Whereas Wuguang openly taught the esoteric, Huiding adopts a much more secretive and selective way to disseminate the MSBL's doctrines. This can be seen in Huiding's adding ritual prerequisites to the *abhiṣeka* process. His role as the gate-keeper to the MSBL's spiritual technology is not limited to deciding who becomes a priest. When one wishes to become a member of the MSBL, the first step is to acquire a mantra from Huiding. The devotee is instructed to recite this mantra often, whenever he has the chance and then to report to Huiding on how it has impacted his life and if he has had any insights into the mantra's meaning. Reflecting his role as the lineage-head—despite the fact that there are other MSBL members who studied with Wuguang longer than Huiding did—only Huiding is allowed to instruct students in mantra recitation and ritual

performance in Taiwan.[505] These instructions occur during specific retreats, when taking refuge or by appointment.

Now that we are familiar with the MSBL's home, leader and trajectory, let us look at its religious practices and activities.

Praxis and Activities

The events that take place at the TOUB can roughly be grouped into three categories: cultivational, communal and commemorative. These are separated by their foci and participants. Cultivational activities include the daily rituals performed by the monastics and rituals performed by lay devotees. Communal events are services with greater attendance that are open to the public that are still of a purely religious nature. Commemorative events—which are those with the greatest attendance in terms of both numbers and diversity—mark the life and death of Wuguang as well as key moments in the MSBL's short history.

As we will see, the orthopraxis of the MSBL represents a fusion of Zhenyan/Shingon, traditional Taiwanese monastic Buddhism, Daoism and Tibetan Buddhism. In this next section we will pay special attention to this weave while exploring how Wuguang's esoteric-necromantic-energetic doctrines translated into the MSBL's orthopraxis.

Cultivational

The daily ritual life of the TOUB's residents is centered in the Mahāvairocana Hall on the third-fourth floors. I have created a blueprint detailing the specific features of this hall including the deities, symbolism and layout. The darker area represents a raised platform upon which the

[505] The only other member of the MSBL I am aware of who is allowed to give such instructions is the head of the MSBL's Hong Kong Branch, Chehong 徹鴻 who, although not the MSBL's lineage head, has a role in Hong Kong similar to that of Huiding's in Taiwan.

deities and three Zhenyan/Shingon styled altars are found (see figures 40-41). The central deity is Mahāvairocana, in front of whom are Amitābha (to the west), Śākyamuni (center), and Akṣobhya (east). Each is flanked by their usual accompanying deities whose names are detailed below the diagram. There are two daily rituals that take place in this space, one in the morning and one in the evening.

The morning ritual 早課 begins at 5:00 a.m. Devotees enter the Mahāvairocana Hall in accordance with Zhenyan/Shingon custom with their hands loosely clenched in a fist and held at the waist, giving the appearance that their hands are resting on their hips. Upon choosing a seat that consists of a square meditation cushion in front of a desk containing the liturgical texts, one clasps their hands in respect (Skt: *añjali*) while prostrating three times. Although clasping one's hands and bowing in this manner is largely a universal Buddhist custom, there are nuances to how this is performed. In Japanese Shingon—and the MSBL—one's hands are held in the adamantine clasp 金剛合掌 (*vajra-añjali*) where the fingers and thumbs of the hands are slightly intertwined with one another. This differs from the majority of other traditional Buddhist communities where the fingers are pressed against one another.

On every occasion that I have stayed the night, the majority of the residents who live in the TOUB attend this morning ritual while most of Wuguang's relatives who live in the house built in his memory do not. The key feature of this ritual is the recitation of the *Adhyarthaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* 大樂金剛不空眞實三摩耶經. This text is one of the core texts of Zhenyan/Shingon and also recited daily in Shingon temples in Japan. Rather than reciting the sūtra in accordance with Japanese or even Mandarin pronunciation, the TOUB devotees chant it in Taiwanese—as is the case with all sūtra chanting at the TOUB. The recitation is led by a resident monk on a microphone who also hammers the large woodenfish.

NORTH

Vajra-maṇḍala	*Sukhāvatī*			Mahāvairocana			*Abhirati*			*Garbha-maṇḍala*
	1	Amitābha	2	3	Śākyamuni	4	5	Akṣobhya	6	
	Cintāmaṇi-cakra-avalokiteśvara			Āryavalokiteśvara						
Patriarchs	Esoteric Altar			Esoteric Altar			Esoteric Altar			Patriarchs
	Wooodenfish			Walkway			Bell			
Windows	Female Seating						Male Seating			Windows
Female Entrance										Male Entrance
				Door to veranda						

Names of the deities in the retinues of Amitābha, Śākyamuni and Akṣobhya	
1. Mahā-sthāma-prāpta 2. Avalokiteśvara 3. Samantabhadra	4. Mañjuśrī 5. Candraprabha 6. Sūryaprabha

Figure 40: Layout of Mahāvairocana Hall, third-fourth floors.

Figure 41: The raised platform in the Mahāvairocana Hall on the third-fourth floors. Image provided by MSBL member and reproduced with full permission.

Once the sūtra recitation is well underway three elder members of the MSBL, one by one, make a late appearance. The first two are elderly monks who were among Wuguang's first *ācāryas*. Huiding is the third. As the congregation is in the midst of chanting, no attention is paid to these three when they enter. They make their way from the men's entrance, through the walkway and then up the stairs to the raised platform where they sit at one of the three esoteric altars that has already been prepared. Huiding always sits in the middle one. These altars are both arranged and equipped in accordance with Zhenyan/Shingon liturgical prescriptions that are consistent with those found in Japan.[499] The ritual procedures that these three senior monks perform upon these altars mirror that as found in the Eighteen Postures Ritual 十八道 of the Quadrilateral Cultivation.[500]

[499] This arrangement is detailed in Richard K. Payne, *Feeding the Gods: The Shingon Fire Ritual* (Phd diss, University of California, Berkeley, 1985), 110-116.

[500] See Miyata Taisen, *Handbook on the Four Stages of Prayoga Chūin Branch of Shingon Tradition*, 5 vols. (Kōyasan: Department of Koyasan Shingon Foreign Mission, 1988).

While the three senior members are still performing the esoteric rites, after the congregation finishes chanting the *Adhyarthaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* they then recite five mantras that are associated with the Five Wisdom Buddhas of the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* that are followed by numerous mantras to other deities, the Zhenyan/Shingon patriarchs, Wuguang, the Mantra of Light and finally the dispersal of merit. The three senior members then finish their practices and make their way out of the sanctuary. Once the congregation finishes chanting, they all rise and face the inner walkway with hands in the adamantine clasp. Once these three have made their way out, the congregation—in two, gender-segregated single-filed lines—makes their way down to the first floor. From there, they walk through the corridors adjacent to the lecture hall, exit the building and go to the *homa* altars (see figure 42). The men go to the altar on the east while the women go to the altar on the west. There, they bow to one of the three senior members (on the men's, eastern side it has always been Huiding during my visits) who sits in front of the *homa* altar. Except for those who assist the *homa* ritualist, everyone then goes back to their rooms to change clothing before heading to the basement for breakfast.

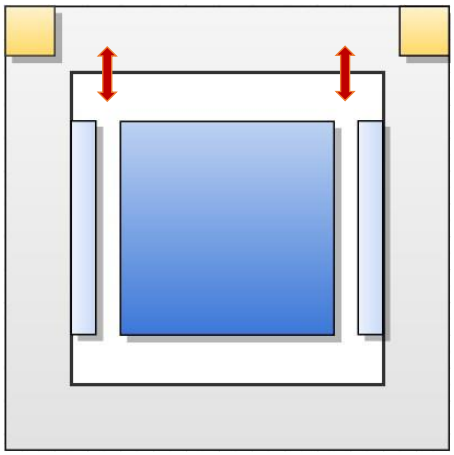

Figure 42: Floorplan of TOUB's first floor. The gray area represents the veranda, at whose northeastern and northwestern corners the *homa* sanctuaries are depicted in yellow. Inside, the Illuminating Lecture Hall is indicated in dark blue and flanked by the administrative offices and library on the west and a room used for classes and meetings on the right. The corridors—indicated by white space—lead out to the north side of the veranda via exits marked in red.

Immediately after breakfast, residents and retreatants dedicate themselves to the upkeep of the monastery. This includes: sweeping, mopping, gardening, window washing, meal preparation (as three meals are served a day) and more overtly religious concerns such as

cleaning up the *homa* altars and changing the offerings in the Mahāvairocana Hall on the third-fourth floors. There are offerings of fruit on each of the three esoteric altars in the Mahāvairocana hall discussed above. These offerings are donated by lay devotees. After breakfast—since the fruits have already been offered—they are taken away to be eaten by the residents or donated to charity. There is an abundance of such fruit at Mt. Five Wisdoms as the surrounding mountains boast a variety of fruit bearing trees cultivated by the monastics. These include kumquats, lychees, oranges, plums and limes. The fruits grown on the monastic grounds are not used as offerings; only those donated by lay devotees are offered. I was told this is in order to 'share the merit' generated by these rituals with members who do not reside at the TOUB and can therefore not partake in the performance of the rituals on a daily basis.

The evening ritual 晚課 is much shorter than the one performed in the morning. It is also more exoteric. No esoteric sūtras are recited, there are no esoteric rituals performed on stage and there is no *homa* at the end. The scriptural recitation is the twenty-fifth chapter of Kumārajīva's translation of the *Lotus Sūtra*. After this is finished, five mantras associated with the Five Wisdom Buddhas of the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala* are recited. The rest of the service is the same as the morning, save for there being no *homa*.

Analysis

The morning and evening rituals showcase the mixture of Chinese Chan Buddhism and Japanese esoteric Buddhism in the MSBL's orthopraxis. It also shows how they have Sinicized these practices. In addition to reciting the *Adhyarthaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* in Taiwanese—rather than Japanese—pronunciation, the way lay members wear their ritual garb is done in accordance with the normal Taiwanese fashion. At Japanese Shingon centers in Taiwan, not only is Japanese pronunciation adopted but also attire as devotees wear Japanese styled black robes

over white kimonos. At the TOUB, lay devotees wear a robe that they refer to as a‘black ocean’ 黑海 (elsewhere widely referred to as a *haiqing* 海青), which is commonly worn by lay Buddhists—and even Daoists—throughout Taiwan. Underneath the black robe devotees simply wear their regular clothes. Thus, although they are performing rituals that Wuguang learned in Japan, they are doing so in Taiwanese Buddhist clothing and pronunciation.

Another small difference is the hand-held incense censer 手爐 used by the MSBL. In Japan, this censer holds powdered incense. At the TOUB, the incense censer holds stick incense (see figure 43). This detail may seem miniscule, but it is yet another example of the ways in which the MSBL has Sinicized their Dharma-transmission. Stick-holding censers are commonplace in Taiwan, particularly in Daoist temples. They range in size, shape and color. Some are very simple, unadorned and thus outwardly resemble those used in Japan. Others are more elaborate and are fashioned in the image of a dragon. Those used by the MSBL are the less conspicuous kind. This is undoubtedly done to distance their rituals from non-Buddhist Taiwanese practices while simultaneously Sinicizing them.

Figure 43: Taiwanese Zhenyan hand-held censer.

These ritual, linguistic and material nuances are the inner, ritual manifestations of Wuguang’s wish to fashion the MSBL as a ‘Chinese’ form of esoteric Buddhism that we saw outwardly expressed in the TOUB’s architecture and the surrounding features of Mt. Five Wisdoms.

In addition to these Japanese-derived ritual nuances, the MSBL's orthopraxis contains one Tibetan element that is firmly rooted in Wuguang's private religiosity—the Tibetan *phowa*. Although members of the MSBL do not openly speak of their *phowa* practices, they do in fact perform them. Due to the secrecy surrounding the MSBL's *phowa*, I have not been given details concerning its nuances. Nevertheless, it represents another aspect of Wuguang's personal spiritual life that made its way into MSBL orthopraxis. The *phowa* was the rite Elder Gongga taught at Zhuxi Temple during the retreat that Wuguang organized, and thus represents his first-known exposure to esoteric Buddhism. Moreover, Shinzen Young reports that Wuguang displayed magical abilities that he explained were outcomes of his *phowa* practice. The MSBL's *phowa* practices are based on a text that Wuguang wrote entitled *The Sūtra of Eternal Life* 臨終不斷經.[501] This work goes into detail about the spirit's postmortem journey and makes allusions as how to navigate the different paths of rebirth. Wuguang's composing a scripture in Chinese in order to make these practices accessible can be considered an additional example of his appropriation and Sinification strategy.

Communal Rituals

The TOUB hosts a bi-monthly *homa* on the first and fifteenth of every Chinese lunar month, which are traditional days of worship in Daoism and Chinese folk religion. These are performed either by monastics, or lay MSBL priests who travel to the TOUB. As these are are not well attended, the following section focuses on the MSBL's five major public religious events: Refuge, Śākyamuni's birthday celebration, the Spring Astrological Blessing ritual, Fall Astrological Blessing ritual and the *Ullambana*. We will now look at these individually.

[501] Wuguang, *Linzhong buduan jing* 臨終不斷經 [The Sūtra of Eternal Life] (Kaohsiung: Guangmingwang si, 1993).

Refuge

The Buddhist refuge ceremony is the Buddhist conversion ceremony. In most forms of Buddhism this entails taking refuge in the Three Precious Gems (Skt. *tri-ratna*) of Buddha, Dharma and *saṃgha*. In certain forms of esoteric Buddhism such as the MSBL, one takes refuge in the Four Precious Gems (*catū-ratna*), which include the additional gem of root teacher or guru. The guru of the MSBL is of course Wuguang. Not everyone who attends classes at the MSBL is in fact a refuged member. One couple whom I frequently spoke with did not take refuge during the first year and a half of their attending Huiding's regularly scheduled classes. This was not due to MSBL regulations, but their own choice. The reason they gave was that since MSBL refuge includes binding karmic affinity *abhiṣeka* that creates a bond between the refuge-taker and the guru, they wanted to be entirely sure that they wished to forge this eternal link.

This karmic bond is cemented by anointing the heads of refuge-takers with a mixture of consecrated oils. This is done with a sacred vase 壺 (also 瓶; Skt. *kalaśa*) that sports a long curved spout. During the ritual—which takes place in the Mahāvairocana Hall—Huiding anoints the head of the each devotee one by one while aided by a senior MSBL member. While being anointed the refuge-taker recites the following:

> Homage to the Guru!
> Homage to the Buddha!
> Homage to the Dharma!
> Homage to the *Saṃgha*![502]

[502] Original text: "南無古魯毘耶! 南無佛陀耶! 南無達摩耶! 南無僧伽耶!"

After this part of the ritual has been performed the attendees are then instructed in the performance of Cintāmaṇi-cakra-avalokiteśvara ritual mentioned above and how to pronounce the Sanskrit text of the Mantra of Light.

The instructions of the *Cintāmaṇi-cakra-avalokiteśvara* ritual are done orally. The only text provided is a small, thin volume with the ritual procedures in which the mantras are written in Siddhaṃ,[503] Chinese and Katakana. During this instruction the students are taught how to pronounce the mantras in accordance with MSBL tradition and the exact way to perform the mudras and the specifics regarding the maṇḍalic visualizations. There are some differences between how the MSBL performs these and how they are practiced in Japan that are discussed in the Chapter 6. They are also given a lesson on the importance of secrecy and instructed never to speak of the nuances of these rituals to the uninitiated.

After becoming a member of the MSBL, the devotees are encouraged to perform the rituals and recite the mantras at home.

Śākyamuni's Birthday Celebration

In Chinese forms of Buddhism, Śākyamuni's birthday is said to be on the eighth day of the fourth Chinese lunar month. During the weeks before and after these dates, Taiwanese Buddhist temples commonly celebrate this occasion through performing the Buddha-bathing ritual 浴佛法會 while some additionally perform a Medicine Buddha ritual 藥師佛法會. At the TOUB, these are celebrated on the same weekend, with the Buddha-bathing preceding the Medicine Buddha ritual. During the former, devotees 'bathe' a small image of the baby

[503] Siddhaṃ is a mono-syllabic Sanskrit script sacred to Zhenyan/Shingon. See Richard K. Payne "Ajikan: Ritual and Meditation in the Shingon Tradition," *in Re-visioning "Kamakura" Buddhism*, ed. Richard K. Payne (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 223.

Śākyamuni with his right hand pointing towards the sky and his left to the ground in reference to his miraculous nativity story.[504] This is an extremely common ritual in Taiwan celebrated in a variety of Buddhist communities. The Medicine Buddha ritual is less common.

The Medicine Buddha ritual takes place on the first floor of the TOUB in the Illuminating Lecture Hall that has already been segregated into an inner and outer sanctuary by means of a portable wall. The ritual begins by circumambulating the hall in a counter-clockwise direction thrice while reciting the mantra of Acala, "*namaḥ samanta vajrānāṃ caṇḍa-mahāroṣaṇa-sphoṭaya hūṃ traṭ hāṃ māṃ*." This circumambulation is gender-segregated, with the men leading the women.

After completing the three circumambulations, everyone finds their seats in either the inner or outer sanctuary after which two different rituals—one inner and one outer—commence. Behind the wall and inside the makeshift inner sanctuary, roughly ten MSBL monastics perform a *homa* while roughly two hundred devotees—who cannot see the *homa* due to the wall—recite the *Medicine Buddha Sūtra*, the Medicine Buddha Mantra, various mantras associated with a plethora of deities, the Mantra of Light and a mantra composed by Wuguang.

The fact that the *homa* is hidden from public eye reveals the secrecy within which the MSBL cloaks its rituals. Although notable, it is in fact quite mild compared to the secrecy surrounding another one of the MSBL's communal rites.

[504] For this story and its relationship to the Buddha-bathing ritual, see Miriam Levering, "The Precocious Child in Chinese Buddhism," in *Little Buddhas: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Texts and Traditions*, ed. Vanessa R. Sasson, Religion, culture, and history series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 132-138.

Astrological Ritual

The astrological rituals 攘星法會 performed at the TOUB are based on Wuguang's views of the celestial bodies as the agents of karma we saw in the previous chapter. It is executed with the expressed intent to counteract the damaging effects on one's lifespan and health caused by past life karma that are made manifest through astrological forces. The ritual is performed in the lecture hall on the first-second floors under strict secrecy. The doors to the ritual space are locked and the windows—which are always unobstructed at other times—are veiled by curtains (see figure 44). Public participation occurs on the first and final days of this ritual when devotees write their wishes alongside their names and those of their loved ones on sticks of wood that will be consumed during the Big Dipper *homa* 北斗七星護摩法 that marks both the beginning and end of this week-long ritual.

Figure 44: Front entrance to the Illuminating Lecture Hall whose doors and windows have been locked and covered with curtains to ensure secrecy and prevent disturbances.

This ritual last for seven days, during which time MSBL priests—both lay and monastic, male and female—share the responsibility of this ritual's performance by taking two hour shifts, twenty-four hours a day throughout the entire week. This happens twice a year, beginning on Chinese New Year's Eve and the first week of the seventh month of the Chinese Lunar Calendar popularly referred to as Ghost Month. Although shrouded in secrecy, the ritual contains elements from Tang Dynasty Zhenyan and Daoism that are discernible in the iconography and liturgy employed as well as the times when the ritual is performed.

I have been told that this ritual centers on the bodhisattva Sudṛsṭi 妙見菩薩 and involves his maṇḍala. During the Tang Dynasty Sudṛsṭi came to be seen as the deified form of the Big Dipper constellation, believed to be in charge of one's lifespan. This occurred during a time when the exact school of esoteric Buddhism that Wuguang was attempting to resurrect—Tang Zhenyan—was creating a fusion between esoteric Buddhist and Daoist astrological beliefs and rituals. The stated purpose of this ritual to counteract the negative effects of one's lifespan and health and the centrality of this deity reveals that Wuguang based this ritual in part on these Tang Dynasty texts.[505]

The Daoist elements contained in this ritual are revealed in the exact times it is performed. A similar, week-long ritual dedicated to the Big Dipper Constellation is commonly conducted at Daoist temples throughout Taiwan at the same times as the MSBL's. This timing is based on traditional Chinese religious beliefs regarding the forces of *yin* 陰 and *yang* 陽 rather than Buddhist doctrine. There is a belief that the changing of the seasons are a result of shifts in

[505] See Henrik H. Sørensen, "Astrology and the Worship of the Planets in Esoteric Buddhism of the Tang," in *Esoteric Buddhism and the Tantras in East Asia*, eds. Charles D. Orzech et al. Handbuch der Orientalistik, 24 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 230-244.

the forces of *yin* and *yang*. The first fifteen days of the Chinese first month is believed to be a time when the forces of *yang* are on the ascent and the forces of *yin* are on the decline. The exact opposite relationship is believed to occur during the midpoint of the year—the beginning of the seventh month—when *yin* is on the ascent and *yang* in decline. Due to these beliefs, these two weeks are some of the most heavily ritualized times in the Chinese calendar.[506] The fact that the MSBL performs these rituals at these specific times is no coincidence and Huiding himself has pointed out the similarities between the ritual as performed at the TOUB and in Daoist settings.[507] From these details it is clear that the MSBL's secretive stellar ritual is the product of Wuguang's integrating Daoist elements into the Tang Dynasty astrological rituals—the latter which already contained Daoist elements. Given Wuguang's lifelong practice of Daoist bodily cultivation, this is unsurprising.

As noted in Chapter 4, *yin* is associated with the netherworld. *Yin*'s ascent during the seventh month played a major role in East Asian Buddhists' choosing the fifteenth day of the seventh month to perform the *Ullambana* festival.[508] At the MSBL, the mid-year astrological ritual concludes the day before the *Ullambana* is performed. As these two rites are inextricable from one another in the context of the MSBL's orthopraxis, let us now explore this connections as well as the rite's nuances. Although it begins in astrological secrecy, it concludes in a very public display of filial piety. As we will see, just as Wuguang's beliefs concerning astrology

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[506] Michael Como, *Weaving and Binding: Immigrant Gods and Female Immortals in Ancient Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 262, n. 30.

[507] Huiding, "*Xu* 序 [Procedure]," in *Xuantian shangdi zhi fazhan* 玄天上帝信仰之發展 [The Development of the Supreme Emperor of the Mysterious Heaven]," ed. Huang Fabao 黃發保 (Taiwan: Daojiao Xueshu, 2010), 22-23.

[508] Como, *Weaving and Binding*, 100.

manifested in the astrological rituals performed at the TOUB, his necromantic fascination can be seen in the MSBL's *Ullambana*.

Ullambana

The other major ritual at the TOUB is the ritual aimed at ferrying the spirits of the dead from a ghostly existence to a more positive one. As noted, this ritual—known to Buddhists as the *Ullambana* 盂蘭盆 and Daoists as the Midsummer Spirit Festival 中元節—came under attack throughout Asia during the rise of Buddhist modernism due to its 'superstitious' nature and the non-Buddhist elements contained therein,[509] so much so that Taiwanese Buddhists themselves, influenced by Japanese Zen, attempted to abolish it.[510] Within the orthopraxis of the MSBL—due to Wuguang's necromantic fascinations—it has been recentralized. This ritual is usually performed on the fifteenth day of Ghost Month 鬼月, the seventh Chinese lunar month.

The ritual as practiced at the TOUB represents a mix of Chinese Buddho-Daoist customs and Zhenyan/Shingon ritual techniques. The ritual elements common in Taiwanese settings such as scripture recitation, familial offerings, candy toss[511] and wearing the crown of Kṣitigarbha[512] are interwoven with mantras associated with the Zhenyan/Shingon pantheon, the Mantra of Light and procedures drawn from the Quadrilateral Cultivation. Unlike the rituals detailed above, this

[509] For more information on the history of the *Ullambana* see Charles D. Orzech, "Saving the Burning-Mouth Hungry Ghost," in *Buddhism in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez Jr., Princeton Readings in Religion (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 278-283 and Guang Xing, "Yulanpen Festival and Chinese Ancestor Worship," *Journal of the Centre for Buddhist Studies, Sri Lanka* 9 (2011): 123-143.

[510] See Chapter 1.

[511] At the conclusion of the liturgical part of the ceremony, the officiating clerics take handfuls of food—most commonly treats such as candy and cakes—and throw them in front of the altar. Children and sweet-toothed adults then descend upon the goodies in a chaotic yet peaceful effort to collect as many of their favorite snacks. Although playful, this is done for the benefit of the spirits of the dead.

[512] Also referred to as a Five-Buddha Crown 五佛冠, this religious headpiece is more commonly found in Tibetan Buddhism but has been increasingly used in Chinese circles since the late Ming Dynasty 明朝 (1368-1644). See Kevin R. E. Greenwood, "Yonghegong: Imperial Universalism and the Art and Architecture of Beijing's 'Lama Temple'" (PhD diss, University of Kansas, 2013), 260 and Ng, *Making of a Savior Bodhisattva*, 98-125.

one is performed facing south rather than north. It is also held in the basement cafeteria rather than the Illuminating Lecture or Mahāvairocana Hall. The esoteric part of this rite—which is not attended by the public—begins during the astrological ritual. In the basement a table is arranged with Zhenyan/Shingon ritual implements in front of scriptures, talismans and images related to the Pure Land where MSBL priests perform rites dedicated to the dead (see figure 45). After the preliminary private rite has concluded on the last day of the astrological ceremony, the basement is rearranged in preparation for the public *Ullambana*.

The *Ullambana* is led by a number of monastics who sit at a long table that has been placed in the middle of the basement cafeteria. This table faces south, overlooking offerings of food that devotees have placed on tables before the ritual's commencement. The prime officiator—indicated by his wearing the crown of Kṣitigarbha, sits at the long table's center. While leading the congregational chant, he performs ritual elements drawn from the Quadrilateral Cultivation on a makeshift altar arranged in accordance with Zhenyan/Shingon formula (see figures 46-47).

Figure 45: Ritual setup for the early, esoteric preparatory part of the *Ullambana* ceremony.

Figure 46: Candy Toss. As the resident monastics perform the concluding elements of the ceremony, devotees scramble to collect treats that have been thrown.

Figure 47: The central seat and altar used by the ritual officiator. Notice the presence of the Zhenyan/Shingon elements such as the *vajra* bell, singing bowl, flower petals and various kinds of incense.

The inclusion of Zhenyan/Shingon elements and relationship to the astrological ritual are not the only characteristics of the MSBL's *Ullambana* that distinguish it from those practiced at other Taiwanese temples. Unlike other religious centers that perform the *Ullambana* once a year during Ghost Month, as is typical, the MSBL performs it an additional two times, coinciding

with the celebration of Wuguang's birthday—which is when the TOUB's completion is also celebrated—and the day of Wuguang's death. When I asked why, I was told that it was in order to share the merit generated by the MSBL with all sentient beings, in all realms, as often as possible.

Public Events

There are four public, commemorative events held annually at the TOUB. The first two are respectively Kūkai's birthday and his date of death. These events are generally not very well attended. Each time I have gone only a handful of followers have come. Kūkai's birth and death are marked by a rite held in the Mahāvairocana Hall centered on reciting the Mantra of Light. The third event is a combined celebration of Wuguang's birthday and the opening of the TOUB. It is held on Wuguang's Chinese calendrical birthday, on the third day of the eleventh month of the Chinese lunar calendar. Wuguang's death is commemorated on twenty-first day of the sixth Chinese lunar month.

In contrast to Kūkai's commemorations, these latter two events are the most widely attended of all MSBL activities. During these days Wuguang's eldest disciples—who rarely come to the TOUB—make it a priority to come and pay their respects. A great many MSBL members who live in Hong Kong also make their way to these events. It is also the only time I have ever seen any of Wuguang's children who did not become priests come to the TOUB.

In contrast to the secretive and somber atmosphere cultivated during the communal religious rituals, these two occasions are celebrated with drum performances, skits and dances put on by children of MSBL members. The events are also catered, with free gourmet coffee stands, snack stands and even cartoon artists present. As mentioned, at the end of each of these another *Ullambana* is performed. These additional *Ullambanas* are not central features of these

events and many MSBL members leave before they begin as they are performed after the main festivities have already concluded.

Analysis

The data just presented reveals the activities of the MSBL, levels of participation, and the various threads from which her orthopraxis is woven. As seen from the mixture of Shingon, Daoist, and common Chinese elements, there has been an intentional effort to Sinify the Japanese components. However, I conclude that there is also a discernible intention to substitute common Chinese religious practices in order to appeal to the common Taiwanese religious palate. This can be seen from the *homas* that are performed on the first and fifteenth of each Chinese-lunar month—which are usual days for ancestor veneration—as well as the astrological rituals that are performed at the same times as their Daoist counterparts. Were these practices not instituted, MSBL devotees—who come from predominantly Buddho-Daoist-folk religious backgrounds—would have to seek elsewhere to have their religious needs met.

This sort of targeted catering speaks to the MSBL's recruitment strategies, why devotees are attracted to it, and adds another layer to our understanding the MSBL's orthopraxis—since it was intentionally constructed by a single person, rather than developing over time. These insights can be gained by sociologically analyzing the MSBL's demographics, history, activities and evolution via the Religious Economy Model (REM) mentioned in the introduction. Now that we have analyzed the MSBL from a ritualistic and ideological perspective, we turn our attention to her place within the Taiwanese religious market.

Section IV: The Sociological Significance of the MSBL

Thus far, this chapter has looked at the history, headquarters, status and activities of the MSBL while explaining their architect's intentions. From the ritual nuances detailed—particularly concerning the astrological rite, multiple *Ullambanas* and *phowa* practices—it is obvious that the magical practices we saw Wuguang explain in the previous chapter in order to rescue them from the category of 'superstition' manifested as the most important public religious events held at the TOUB. Thus, there is an undeniable connection between Wuguang's personal beliefs and the MSBL's orthopraxis. However, the MSBL's significance lies not only in its dead founder, but in its living propagators and its position within the Taiwanese—and increasingly international—context. In order to appreciate this significance, the rest of this chapter offers a sociological analysis of the MSBL.

This analysis is accomplished by approaching the MSBL as a New Religious Movement (NRM), while employing the Religious Economy Model (REM) as utilized by Rodney Stark and like-minded sociologists of religion. To do so, I employ a distinction between magic and religion that is parallel to the binary between orthodoxy and heterodoxy laid out by Wuguang.[513] As cited in this dissertation's introduction, according to Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge, "magic does not concern itself with the meaning of the universe, but only with the manipulation of the universe for specific goals…magic deals in relatively specific compensators, and religion always includes the most general compensators."[514] In simple terms, magic has definitive and worldy goals that can be empircally disproven. Religion does not offer these. Instead, it offers answers about the ultimate meaning of the universe.

[513] See Chapter 3.
[514] Stark and Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion*, 30. Also see this dissertation's Introduction, "Magic."

The Religious Marketplace

As noted, REM frames both religion and magic as 'products,' while treating religious organizations as 'suppliers,' and religious individuals as 'consumers.' As a deductive model for the global religious market, it is used to understand why new religions are born, and predict whether a religion will flourish or flounder. REM applies Rational Choice Theory (RCT) to understand why religious consumers make the choices they do, which is the true driving force behind the contours the religious marketplace since religious suppliers "try to address the needs of their intended constituencies, adapting their services as conditions change or as competition with other suppliers increases."[515] Humans are shown to make predictable decisions based upon 'background factors' that predispose them to joining a religion, and 'situational contingencies' that create the right set of circumstances for them to join.[516] REM explains religious pluralism and the reason NRMs form, since "no single supplier can satisfy the full array of niches in the religious market…other things being equal, there will always be a variety of suppliers, each competing to attract a particular niche or set of niches."[517] Since consumer needs drive the religious marketplace, if a need is not being met by the dominant religious organization or organizations, religious suppliers will form NRMs tailored to meet the unmet market needs.

Within a pluralistic marketplace, consumers will make rational choices largely based on 'getting the most for their capital.' Similar to a consumer who is in need of a specific product will 'shop around,' looking for the product that offers the greatest benefit for the lowest price,

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[515] Graeme Lang, Selina Chan, and Lars Ragvald, "Temples and the Religious Economy," in *State, Market, and Religions in Chinese Societies*, eds. Fenggang Yang and Joseph B. Tamney (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), 149.

[516] John Lofland and Rodney Stark, "Becoming a World-Saver: A Theory of Conversion to a Deviant Perspective," *American Sociological Review*, vol. 30, no. 6 (1965): 864.

[517] Rodney Stark, *Discovering God: The Origins of the Great Religions and the Evolution of Belief* (NP: Harper Collins e-books, 2008), 115.

religious consumers attempt to maximize both their 'cultural capital' and 'religious capital'—which respectively represent the "the investments or sunk costs that culture represents to each person" and "the degree of mastery of and attachment to a particular religious culture"[518]—and are thus attracted to religions whose orthopraxis and doctrines are familiar to them, since they require minimal effort to acquire new capital.[519] The 'need' that the product fills is referred to as 'depravation-ideological appeal,' which is a "long-established point of view on why people join cults and sects combines assessment of the particular appeals offered by a group's ideology with an analysis of the kinds of deprivations for which this ideology offers relief" by seeing "whom its ideology offers the most."[520] In simple terms, what attracts individuals to specific religious suppliers is their belief that it can supply what they are seeking for the least amount of capital. Within a pluralistic religious marketplace, religions will compete with one another, intentionally tailoring their product to meet the needs of specific audiences.

Wuguang and the MSBL as Religious Suppliers

My analysis of the MSBL as a supplier within the Taiwanese religious market frames the organization as a 'cult.' This is based upon typologies put forth by Rodney Stark, Roger Finke, and William S. Bainbridge. Stark and Finke distinguish NRMs according to the amount of tension they have with their sociocultural environment, defining 'tension' as "the degree that a religious organization sustains norms and values different from those of the surrounding

[518] Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Mormonism*, ed. Reid L. Neilson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 65.

[519] Ibid. Also see Rodney Stark, "Why Religious Movements Succeed or Fail: A Revised General Model," *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, vol. 11, no. 2 (1996): 135-136.

[520] Rodney Stark and William S. Bainbridge, "Networks of Faith: Interpersonal Bonds and Recruitment to Cults and Sects," *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 85, no. 6 (1980): 1377.

culture."[521] Equating tension with "subcultural deviance," it is quantified according to three factors (see figure 48).[522]

Defining and Quantifying Tension		
Factor	**Definition**	**Measurement**
Difference	Disagreement over beliefs, norms, and behavior	Differences between acceptable and unacceptable opinions and actions
Antagonism	Mutual harsh judgment and assertions of superiority over the other	Particularism, missionizing to, defending from, and exclusion of outsiders
Separation	Social manifestation of difference and antagonism, resulting in levels isolation	Reluctance to form social bonds with non-members

Figure 48: Stark and Bainbridge's quantification of tension.

Within this framework, 'cults' are low-tension religious organizations, while 'sects' are high-tension ones.[523] Based upon the data I gathered, the MSBL is in a state of low-tension with its surrounding culture. The only tension that I did observe is shared with other religious organizations that cater to the same niche market. In other words, the MSBL is in low-tension with the dominant religio-cultural organizations in Taiwan, but in high-tension with its direct competitors, primarily its offshoots.[524]

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[521] Rodney Stark and Roger Finke, *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 2000), 144.

[522] William S. Bainbridge and Rodney Stark, "Sectarian Tension," *Review of Religious Research*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1980): 108.

[523] Stark and Finke, *Acts of Faith*, 144. It must be noted that Rodney Stark and William S. Bainbridge, "Of Churches, Sects, and Cults: Preliminary Concepts for a Theory of Religious Movements*," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 18, no. 2 (1979): 125, distinguish cults from sects entirely differently. They state that "sects are schismatic groups, they present themselves to the world as something old. They left the parent body not to form a new faith but to *reestablish the old one*." This is in contrast to a 'cult,' which "represent an *independent religious tradition* in a society." According this this earlier distinction put forth by Stark and Bainbridge, the MSBL is not a 'cult,' but a 'sect.'

[524] The behavioral and ideological norms of the MSBL are not in conflict with their surrounding environment, therefore there is little quantifiable 'difference.' Except for the offshoots discussed in the next chapter—and certain criticisms of Tibetan Buddhist groups as well as Japanese Shingon—I have only heard positive opinions concerning other Buddhist or Daoist groups. The MSBL does not actively missionize, nor pressure people

Stark and Bainbridge utilize a tri-category classification system to explain how cults function within the religious market: 'audience cults,' 'magical cults,' and 'cult movements.' Audience cults are the least socially connected and administratively organized. They offer displays of magical powers, but do not offer magical services.[525] Client cults, which often have higher levels of social connection and administrative organization, "deal in serious magic" for a price, but do not offer answers to life's bigger questions.[526] Cult movements have the highest level of social interconnectedness and administrative organization. They can be magical, but their leadership must supply 'religion' by "explain[ing] the meaning of the universe."[527]

Just like cults, cult leaders are categorized according to whether they supply magic, religion, or both. Leaders of audience cults and client cults are categorized as 'magicians,' and leaders of cult movements as 'priests.'[528] None of these categories are static. Although the MSBL—when it was born—can be understood as a cult movement since it has always supplied both magic and religion, Wuguang's role represents a transformation from a magician to a priest. As a magician, he sold herbal concoctions, ghost-busted, and performed faith-healing without supplying answers to universal questions. After becoming a monk at Zhuxi Temple, although we know he continued to supply magic from Shinzen Young's accounts, he also taught courses on

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who come to the TOUB to take refuge. Outsiders are also welcome, leading me to conclude that there is low 'antagonism.' Many MSBL members attend religious services at non-MSBL temples, and maintain close familial ties with non-MSBL members. Thus, I have not observed any 'seperation.'My assesment of the MSBL as low-tension is also based on its membership in the Kaohsiung branch of the BAROC, as well as Huiding's involvement with other Buddhist and Daoist organizations.

[525] Stark and Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion*, 33-34. It must be noted that this classification scheme is based on the earlier cult/sect distinction (see previous note). As the entire point of these classifications and distinctions is explanation—rather than definition—this contradiction is unimportant.

[526] Ibid, 34.

[527] Ibid.

[528] Stark, "Why Religious Movements Succeed or Fail," 134-135.

Buddhism, offered counseling—all the while publishing books and articles whose contents represent a mix of both magic *and* religion.[529]

Although Wuguang returned from Japan in 1972, it was not until 1983 that the MSBL joined the Kaohsiung branch of the BAROC and purchased land for the TOUB. Thus, in its infancy, the MSBL was not an officially recognized Buddhist organization nor did it have a centralized headquarters. As noted, during this time Wuguang still lived at Zhuxi Temple, his students performed the Quadrilateral Cultivations at home, and communal rituals and lectures were held in a small back-alley folk religion shrine. Now, the MSBL has a central monastery, a highly structured path to the priesthood, and multiple branches.

This transformation from a loosely-knit adherents tied to a charismatic figure to an international religious organization can be explained by the changes that occurred within the Taiwanese religious marketplace. REM predicts that tightly regulated religious markets weaken more organized religious groups while strengthening less-organized traditions. Adversely, lax regulation—which increases competition by creating an open religious market—strengthens more organized religious communities while weakening less-organized ones. At an organizational level, one can predict that "when confronted with competitive forces, loosely organized religions tend to fail or to be transformed into congregational religions."[530] As convincingly argued by Yunfeng Lu, Byron Johnson and Rodney Stark, this helps to explain the changes that occurred in the Taiwanese religious landscape during the 20th century. In the early Republican period, the KMT closely regulated religion.[531] During that time, folk religion swelled

[529] See Chapter 2.

[530] Yunfeng Lu, Byron Johnson and Rodney Stark, "*Deregulation and the Religious Market in Taiwan: A Research Note*," *The Sociological Quarterly*, 49 (2008): 140.

[531] See Chapter 1.

while more organized Buddhist and Daoist organizations suffered. Once religious freedom was granted, the opposite occurred. To remain competitive in the new religious marketplace, folk religious leaders, shamans, and mediums began to found highly organized institutions.[532]

Contextualizing the lifespan of the MSBL within the flows of the Taiwanese religious marketplace helps account for its early popularity, as well as the changes it has gone through. It was founded in the early 1970s, when religion was highly regulated. At that time, the MSBL was anything but organized, as it was headquartered in a back-alley folk religion shrine. Later—when the market changed—and religious figures such as the heads of Humanistic Buddhist organizations started to setup centralized religious establishments, Wuguang seems to have predicted the future of the market and followed suit. When the market favored magicians who oversaw unorganized clientele, Wuguang met those needs. When the market changed and favored more organized suppliers of religion, Wuguang adapted.

The MSBL's Niche Market

In addition to offering insight into Wuguang's marketing strategy, REM enables us to understand the reasons that the MSBL arose, what niche market its adherents represent, and why they are attracted to this movement. The answers to these questions lie in the fieldwork data already presented, as well as those gained during targeted data collection yet to be discussed. To answer these questions, I composed a questionnaire that I intended to distribute. I submitted my questions to the MSBL's leadership, who approved them. However, I was instructed that they would assist me in this aspect of my targeted data collection by selecting members for me to interview, rather than allowing me to disseminate the questionnaires. In the end, I conducted

[532] Yunfeng Lu, *The Transformation of Yiguan Dao in Taiwan: Adapting to a Changing Religious Economy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008), 118-119.

semi-structured interviews with nine MSBL members. Four of these members (Group A) had become disciples of Wuguang within ten years of his returning from Japan. Three of them (Group B) had become disciples while the TOUB was under construction and two members (Group C) were recent converts, who started coming to the TOUB over a decade after Wuguang's death. Six of these nine subjects were priests. Two of these priests were also monastics. Two interviewees were from Hong Kong, while the rest were from Taiwan. Three were women, six were men (see figure 49). To safeguard their anonymity, I will refer to each by male pronouns, irrespective of gender. Despite the small sample size, these subjects represent a wide qualitative spread. Additionally, while accompanied by my designated guide, I was allowed to informally ask individuals whom I encountered at public rituals and functions why they had been attracted to the MSBL.[533]

Interviewee Demographics							
	Male	**Female**	**Lay**	**Monastic**	**Taiwanese**	**Hong Kongese**	**Priest**
Group A (x4)	4	0	3	1	4	0	3
Group B (x3)	1	2	2	1	1	2	3
Group C (x2)	1	1	2	0	2	0	0
Total (x9)	6	3	7	2	7	2	6/9

Figure 49: Gender, clerical and national demographics of interviewees.

Although I was not given permission to ask about the socioeconomic demographics of MSBL members, the majority that I did encounter—including those not interviewed—are

[533] These interviews took place at the TOUB during the first two weeks of Aug. 2014.

obviously quite affluent. This is evidenced by the clothes they wear, the cars they drive and details about their lives that came up in conversation. Two members have served as faculty at national Taiwanese universities in scientific fields. I also met a medical doctor and a lady whose family owns an international jade business. A number of devotees who live in Hong Kong frequently travel to the TOUB for special events. Quite a few MSBL members, even those born in Taiwan, are fluent in English—fluency they gained while living in either Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the USA or UK. These details indicate that the MSBL is largely composed of relatively wealthy people.

Without exception, everyone that I asked either in passing or during semi-structured interviews stated that they had already been religious before becoming members of the MSBL. Each one had also been raised in a Buddho-Daoist-folk faith. One of my interviewees had additionally experimented with Tibetan Buddhism before joining the MSBL. Due to this consistency, as well as the religious demographics of Taiwan and Hong Kong, it is safe to conclude that this is representative of the majority of the MSBL's membership base, which also includes one ex-Fo Guang Shan monastic whom I met.

When asked "How did you first hear of Wuguang/the MSBL?," each stated that either a friend or a family member had been the original source. This was true for interviewees and those I asked in passing. When interviewees were asked "What first attracted you to Wuguang/the MSBL?" three narratives arose, largely dispersed along the three different periods of recruitment detailed above.

The first two narratives recalled the teller's initial encounter with Wuguang. Group A made ambiguous references to his presence, saying that there was something special and unique about him that made it obvious to them that he was an enlightened being. This was also the case

for one subject from Group B. The other two subjects from Group B explicitly referenced what they considered demonstrations of magical powers. One of these individuals stated that, after hearing of Wuguang from a friend, he went to Mt. Five Wisdoms to meet Wuguang and had a long conversation about Buddhism. The interviewee in question recalled that Wuguang read his mind during this initial encounter, which convinced him—then and there—to become one of Wuguang's disciples. The other interviewee from Group B stated that when he met Wuguang, he told him that he had been his disciple in a previous life, something that he immediately felt to be true.

The two members who joined the MSBL after Wuguang's death told a very different story. They said they were first attracted to the MSBL due to the lovely scenery of Mt. Five Wisdoms, which is a welcome getaway from the urban jungle in which they live. One of these subjects stated that after coming to Huiding's regularly scheduled classes, reading Wuguang's texts, and participating in rituals, he found Wuguang's and Huiding's attempt to harmonize the magical and scientific appealing—even if not entirely convincing—as it brought together the rational and religious sides of his life that had previously been sequestered from one another. Interestingly, the harmony between magic and science as taught by Wuguang was also mentioned by one subject from Group A. This seemed unimportant to the other subject from Group C, as the main allures of the MSBL that he mentioned in addition to the scenery of Mt. Five Wisdoms were the sense of community and structure that the MSBL provides. On a later date—during a casual conversation—he informed me that the teachings of the MSBL and Huiding's lectures did not resonate deeply with him, and that he preferred the lectures of a Chan

monk at a different temple. However, that temple is located far away, making it impossible for him to go there regularly.[534]

Analysis

The socioeconomic, cultural, and religious demographics of the MSBL help us understand the sect's target audience, recruitment strategies, and the reasons this audience finds the MSBL appealing. From the consistency among those I was allowed to interview, as well as those I spoke to in passing, it is clear that the MSBL's core recruitment happens via word of mouth that travels through ties of kinship and friendship. As demonstrated by Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge, interpersonal bonds are a key factor that predispose an individual to joining an NRM in addition to in addition to depravation-ideological appeal.[535] Thus, if an individual has a friend or family member who belongs to a specific NRM, he is much more likely to join himself. Although it is highly probable that there are MSBL members whose first exposure to the sect occurred via Wuguang's writings, it is unsurprising that each individual to whom I spoke to stated that his social network was the medium by which he was recruited.

Given the socioeconomic affluence and level of education displayed by MSBL members, it is logical to conclude that the majority of their interpersonal bonds run through the same higher echelon of society. Thus, Wuguang and the MSBL's target audience consists of the wealthy and educated who come from Buddho-Daoist-folk religious backgrounds.

Depravation-ideological appeal enables us to further zone in on Wuguang and the MSBL's targeted audience. The socioeconomic and religio-cultural makeup of MSBL members are not the only pre-existing commonalities that unites them. As demonstrated by the conversion

[534] Personal correspondence, Dec. 25, 2015.
[535] Stark Bainbridge, "Networks of Faith," 1376-1395.

stories and recruitment anecdotes that I collected, they are also yearning for something that they felt the MSBL offered. Groups A and B referenced Wuguang's otherworldly presence or magical capabilities. This makes it is safe to assume that they had preexisting beliefs in magic. Thus, Wuguang's target audience—and those who are attracted to join the MSBL—are socioeconomically affluent and highly educated people from Buddho-Daoist-folk religious backgrounds in search of magic.

Viewing Wuguang as a producer/supplier of a particular religious commodity—and MSBL members as consumers within the religious marketplace—demonstrates that Wuguang intended to corner a niche market. To do so, he tapped into a nexus of newly emerging markets with a unique brand. Those emerging markets constituted three different groups of people. These include: Buddhists who found Humanistic Buddhism and other disenchanted forms of Buddhist modernism unfulfilling, people attracted to Tibetan Buddhism—such as one of my interviewees and Chesheng, the founder of an MSBL offshoot who also studied Tibetan Buddhism before becoming Wuguang's disciple[536]—and individuals looking for a way to bridge the modern and the magical. Evidently, Wuguang read the market well, as his magico-scientific, Japanese-appropriated, Tibetan-sprinkled, Chinese revived esoteric Buddhist movement is composed of such individuals.

To distinguish his brand from other producers of religion, Wuguang labeled it 'Zhenyan' and invoked his Japanese initiations in order to testify to both the uniqueness and quality of his product. He was able to do so because—as far as I am aware—he was the only living Taiwanese to be ordained as a Shingon priest when he began his career as a religious leader. Moreover, by

[536] See Chapter 6.

cutting his ties to Japanese Shingon he was able to offer what no one else—except for his disciples—has yet to offer to this day, Zhenyan/Shingon priestly ordination outside of Japan. The allure of this unique product within the context of Taiwan—and later Hong Kong and Malaysia as well—is understandable from the viewpoint of conservation of cultural and religious capital discussed above, which predicts that people are "more willing to join a religious group to the degree that doing so minimizes their expenditure of cultural capital."[537] Due the their familiarity with Chinese culture and its related religious traditions, their preexisting cultural and religious capital minimize the effort needed to become familiar with MSBL orthopraxis and doctrine, which for the most part, closely resemble the dominant forms of traditional religions in the Chinese-speaking world. The importance that cultural and religious capital makes in people's decision to convert to more familiar religions in East Asia has already been noted by Ng Ka Shing in reference to I-Kuan Tao,[538] and Winston Davis in the case of Sūkyō Mahikari.[539] In terms of the MSBL, devotees are offered substantial gains—joining an exotic form of Japanese/Tang Dynasty esoteric Buddhism—at minimal expense. While they could join another religious group with similar expense, the gains would not be as high. Similarly, they could travel to Japan—or even a local Taiwanese-run Shingon center—to study Shingon, but the former requires large monetary capital and both require a lot of cultural capital. These latter options additionally lack the appeal to devotees' Chinese identity that permates the MSBL.

We can see conservation of cultural and religious capital at play in the MSBL's refuge ceremony. Although it differs from others I have attended in Taiwan—such as at a rival

[537] Stark, *The Rise of Mormonism*, 114.

[538] Ng Ka Shing, "Yiguan Dao in Hong Kong : A Case Study of its Organizational Characteristics and Conversion Experiences of Adherents," *Journal of the Graduate School of Letters*, vol. 9 (2014): 47.

[539] W. Davis, *Dojo*, 101-102.

Shingon/Chan group in Pingtung County 屏東縣[540] and the MSBL's offshoot, the Samantabhadra Lineage—in the fact that the audience is communally instructed in esoteric rituals and individually anointed, the emphasis on "initiation, ordination, and lineage affiliation" is in no way out of place within the Taiwanese Buddho-Daoist-folk religious landscape.[541] Moreover, although the majority of converts will find the refuge ceremony's procedural particularities as well as the mantras and mudrās unfamiliar, they will not find them entirely alien, as these consumers come with a lifetime's exposure to similar ritual praxes. Additionally, the liturgical texts used are written in Chinese, the mantras are transliterated into Chinese and a central point of the ritual, the *Heart Sūtra*—"arguably the fundamental text of East Asian Buddhism"[542] and "perhaps the most famous Buddhist scripture"[543]— is something all those in attendance will be familiar with. These recognizable features are sprinkled throughout with understandable, yet unfamiliar features, adding the 'appeal of the exotic,' which is a driving force in the Taiwanese religious market, igniting enthusiasm for esoteric Buddhism.[544]

Thus, Wuguang was able to offer a unique product, with a unique pedigree that required relatively little capital at a time when the market was beginning to take off. In fact, the market niche that caters to people especially attracted to esoteric Buddhism in general, and Zhenyan/Shingon in particular is still growing. In Taiwan, it began with the importation of

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[540] See note 492.

[541] Louis Komjathy, "Adherence and Conversion to Daoism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion*, eds. Lewis R. Rambo and Charles E. Farhadian (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 528. The MSBL is a form of esoteric Buddhism. Despite the vast literature on priestly ordination in various forms of esoteric Buddhism, there is scant material on 'conversion' in esoteric Buddhist circles that takes into account the importance of initiation, ordination and lineage affiliation. Komjathy's piece on conversion in Daoism highlights these aspects.

[542] Stephen Addiss et al, *Zen Sourcebook: Traditional Documents from China, Korea, and Japan* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co., 2008), 3.

[543] Donald S. Lopez Jr., *The Heart Sutra Explained: Indian and Tibetan Commentaries* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988), 3.

[544] Rubinstein, *Taiwan: A New History*, 356-357.

Tibetan Buddhism—which Wuguang himself had a hand in promoting.[545] The emerging Shingon groups in Taiwan, and MSBL offshoots further demonstrate the continuing growth of this niche market. Notably, Chen Kuan 成觀, a Taiwanese Chan monk who traveled to Japan to become a Shingon priest—much later than Wuguang—and went on to found the Maha-Vairocana Temple 大毘盧寺 in Taipei and American Buddhist Temple 遍照寺 in Howell, Michigan, states in his autohagiography that his interest in esoteric Buddhism was initiated by the growing popularity of esoteric Buddhism in Taiwan.[546] He believed that this trend was motivated by an unwholesome interest in magic and decided to study esoteric Buddhism in order to offer a more wholesome, less worldly-oriented form.[547]

Viewing Wuguang as a religious entrepreneur, it becomes clear that he read the market well. He tapped into the emerging popularity in esoteric Buddhism and the need felt by affluent people from Buddho-Daoist-folk religious backgrounds to harmonize their 'superstitious' beliefs with the modern world. Wuguang seems to have also been able to predict market trends and foresee that these niche markets were only going to grow, as "a widespread faith in miracle-working gods and in the magical efficacy of statues, stones, and incense smoke is as much a part of Asia's future as electric cars, stock exchanges, sea level rise, and Prada handbags."[548] He created a competitive product with a uniquely unrivaled brand that met these market needs, and required minimal financial and cultural capital.

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[545] See Chapter 2.

[546] The temples' website can be found here: http://www.abtemple.org/ (accessed Jun. 29, 2016).

[547] Chen Kuan 成觀, *Wode xuemi licheng* 我的學密歷程 [The Course of my Esoteric Studies] (Taipei: Xin xiayaoyuan yi jingyuan, 2013), 10-13.

[548] Denise Byrne, *Counterheritage: Critical Perspectives on Heritage Conservation in Asia* (New York and London: Routledge, 2014), 6.

Selling Point

While REM explains why the MSBL arose, appeals to its target audience, and the reasons Wuguang packaged his teachings and formulated the MSBL's orthopraxis as he did, there is an additional selling point that appears to have to be the driving force that fueled recruitment. This selling point relates to Wuguang's 'charisma,' which Weber defined as:

> …a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a 'leader'… It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma. This recognition is freely given and guaranteed by what is held to be a proof, originally always a miracle, and consists in devotion to the corresponding revelation, hero worship, or absolute trust in the leader.[549]

Here, Weber states that displays of magical powers or unique characteristics inaccessible to ordinary people can legitimate one's role as a religious leader, if those abilities are recognized. These displays etch within the mind of the devotee that the charismatic figure is suited for leadership. Weber presents two vital components of charismatic leadership. The first constitutes a display of "specifically exceptional powers or qualities" on the part of the leader, and the second is "freely given" recognition that is "guaranteed by what is held to be a proof" as perceived by the devotee. In simple terms, a leader's 'charisma' is an individual's *belief* that a religious figure is in possession of supernatural qualities or powers that qualify him to be a leader. This belief derives from the believer having witnessed qualities or powers that he regards are "of divine origin or as exemplary."[550]

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[549] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, eds. Guenther Roth and Ckus Wittich (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 241-242.

[550] This is despite the fact that Rodney Stark states that "Because Weber's discussions of charisma did not move beyond definitional and descriptive statements, and said nothing about the cause of charisma, the concept is merely a name attached to a definition." While I agree with Stark that charisma is often used tautologically, from the above passage we can see that Weber did in fact speak of the "cause of charisma," and defined it from the perspective of the religious consumer. See Rodney Stark, T*he Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 24.

Such 'proofs' that elicit charismatic recognition are found in the initial encounter stories of MSBL members from Groups A and B that I interviewed. These stories told of Wuguang's otherworldly presence or referenced what the devotees considered to be magical powers—clear examples of what Weber referred to as "specifically exceptional powers or qualities…not accessible to the ordinary person." Notably, even those who made ambiguous references to his charismatic presence also recalled miracles he had performed after they became disciples. These miracles included: healing, affecting the weather, mind-reading, the ability to predict the future, and being followed by butterflies. Wuguang's charisma is so well established among those he met that it even extends beyond the grave, manifesting as a type of 'post-life charisma.'[551] One subject from Group A said that after Wuguang passed away, he began to experience serious knee problems. Although he visited a number of specialists and even went through a surgical procedure, the pain did not go away. One night while sleeping, he dreamt that Wuguang visited him, knelt in front of him and placed his hands on his knees. When he awoke, the pain was gone and even now, years later, it has never come back. Similarly, Li Yuansong, who formed his own NRM after converting to Buddhism under Wuguang,[552] stated that Wuguang visited him—during waking hours—the year after his death.[553]

While these stories represent the 'proofs' that MSBL members base their charismatic perception of Wuguang upon, they do not explain *why* such incidents are interpreted as doxastic

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[551] Catherine Wessinger, "Charismatic Leaders in New Religions," in *Cambridge Companion to New Religious Movements*, eds. Olav Hammer and Mikael Rothstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 86-87.

[552] See Chapter 6.

[553] Hua Minhui 華敏慧, "*Wei chang duojie yuan, haodang fu qiancheng* 為償多劫願，浩蕩赴前程 [To Fulfill the Wishes through Countless Eons, Irresolutely Proceeding into the Future]," in *Jingtuzong xiangshan mituo gongxiu huibian* 淨土宗象山彌陀共修會編, *Li yuansong laoshi jinian wenji* 李元松老師紀念文集 [Collected Memorials for the teacher Li Yuansong (Taipei: Jingtuzong wenjiaoji jinhui chuban; Jingtuzong xiangshan mituo gongxiu hui faxing, 2004), 201. Online: http://www.modernpureland.org/ webc/html/buddhist/show. php?num=101&page=2&kind=33 (accessed Mar. 24, 2016).

justification for that perception. However, we have determined that these individuals had a pre-existing belief in magic, and that they were looking for a religious entity that would cater to this belief by providing a sense of enchantment, but one that specifically spoke to their high levels of education, affluence and sophistication. Evidently, Wuguang was skilled at providing this.

Routinization of Charisma

Charisma explains not only the driving force behind the MSBL's recruitment while he was alive, but also how the MSBL has transformed since his death. While longtime MSBL members referenced Wuguang's charisma to explain their conversion to the MSBL, those who joined after his death—and stated that they were initially lured by the beautiful scenery surrounding the TOUB—did not. In fact, when overhearing the stories regarding the miracles that Wuguang during the interview sessions, they said that it was their first time hearing them. Moreover, although I have witnessed Huiding performing religious healing, I have not heard of any miracles ascribed to him. When people speak highly of him, it is his learning and wisdom that they praise. Furthermore, when I asked Huiding about the miracles attributed to Wuguang, although he did not discount them, he asserted that they were unimportant and should not be the focus of my research.

These differences in recruitment, allure, and leadership represent an example of what Weber referred to as the 'routinization of charisma.' Weber stated that, "in its pure form, charismatic authority may be said to exist only in the process of originating. It cannot remain stable, but either becomes either traditionalized or rationalized, or a combination of both."[554] Thus, while charismatic leadership can give birth to religious movements, it cannot sustain them.

[554] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 364.

According to Weber, for an NRM to be anything but an ephemeral phenomenon, its leadership model must transform to gain legitimization and meet its administrative and economic needs.[555] This need for leadership transformation is often realized after the death of the charismatic founder, when the movement faces the problem of succession. This transformation can be actualized via 'hereditary charisma,' where the original charisma is transferred to another individual, possibly through designation or rituals,[556] as was the case with Huiding. Once this occurs, "recognition is no longer paid to the charismatic qualities of the individual, but to the legitimacy of the position he has acquired by hereditary succession...Personal charisma may be totally absent."[557] Thus, although Huiding may not fit the definition of a charismatic leader in his own right, he has inherited the well-established charisma that Wuguang—even after his death—continues to enjoy. This helps us understand why, unlike Wuguang, he does not feel the need to create charismatic moments to recruit new members.

The general rule put forth by Weber that "routinization is not free of conflict"[558] sheds light on the existence of two readily observable MSBL cliques that are distinguishable by levels of reverence to Huiding. Although Huiding is the spiritual leader of the MSBL, he has taken care to keep Wuguang the central guru of the MSBL. This is demonstrated by his not assuming the title 'guru' 上師 nor writing himself into the MSBL's liturgy as Wuguang did. Additionally, despite his position, he shares power with Wuguang's relatives, who arguably also have claims to hereditary charisma due to their blood relations. This became known to me when I discovered two small pamphlets consisting of Huiding's speeches.[559] When I asked about them, I was

[555] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 252.
[556] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 246-248.
[557] Ibid, 248.
[558] Ibid, 252.
[559] Huiding, *Liaowu: zhaohui zixinde gandong* 了悟: 找回自心的感動 [Complete Enlightenment: Rediscovering what Touches your Heart] (Kaohsiung: Fojiao zhenyanzong guangmingwangsi, 2012); *Xing gu:*

informed that their contents had originally been uploaded to the MSBL's website, but were taken down due to high-level members' complaints. As the contents of the pamphlets are anything but provocative, I am forced to conclude that the complaints were due to the pamphlets' author being Huiding, rather than Wuguang. This episode is but the most obvious example of this murmuring power struggle. I have also heard complaints about the requirements for priestly ordination that Huiding instituted, and witnessed Huiding's displeasure when such things are mentioned.

It further helps us to contextualize the reasons why Group C said that they were first attracted to the beautiful scenery of Mt. Five Wisdoms without making mention of Wuguang's post-life or Huiding's hereditary charisma. When routinized, charisma can be transferred and instilled within multiple mediums, not just humans. These mediums include apotropaic devices, texts, and even buildings.[560] We can see multiple layers of this 'textualization of charisma' at Mt. Five Wisdoms. As a topographic maṇḍala, it embodies Wuguang's doctrines. It also represents his achievement of bringing orthodox esoteric Buddhism back to the Chinese-speaking world. The structure at its center, the TOUB—where Huiding lives—is a representation of Wuguang himself as it houses a fragment of his skull within the walls of the main sanctuary. The entire complex's only other main structure—occupied by relatives of Wuguang—is a memorial to him that bears his name. Additionally—from a practical and economic perspective—the grounds testify to his charismatic right to rule due to its size, scale and ornamentation. One glimpse of the TOUB and its surrounding grounds demonstrates that Wuguang was an important figure whose

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huanxing benyoude rulai tixing 心鼓: 喚醒本有的如來體性 [Drum of the Heart: Arousing Original Buddha-nature] (Kaohsiung: Fojiao zhenyanzong guangmingwangsi, 2012).

[560] John S. Strong, "Buddhist Relics in Comparative Perspective: Beyond the Parallels," in *Embodying the Dharma: Buddhist Relic Veneration in Asia*, eds. David Germano and Kevin Traino (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004), 38-39. Also see Mikael Rothstein, "Emblematic Architecture and the Routinization of Charisma in Scientology," *International Journal for the Study of New Religions*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2014): 51-75. In this article, Rothstein demonstrates how the charisma of Scientology's founder, L. Ron Hubbard was transferred to the religion's sacred structures.

importance stretches beyond his grave. Thus, there is no need to familiarize members with the 'proofs' that Wuguang's pure charisma was based upon. Rather than mythological, the proof is physical. Wuguang's charismatic right to lead is self-evident. Thus, it is unsurprising that when identifying their religious affiliation, MSBL devotees commonly state that they are members of "Mt. Five Wisdoms, Mantra School Bright Lineage 五智山光明流," which is also how the MSBL identifies itself on its fliers and in its publications. Mt. Five Wisdoms has thus absorbed Wuguang's charisma through the process of routinization. In doing so, it has in fact replaced him as the central object of veneration for new members.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have sought to contextualize the MSBL within the Taiwanese religious landscape while presenting a robust and nuanced understanding of this movement from the perspective of its founder as well as his living heirs. In closing, I wish to highlight a number of connections that exist between these two perspectives and their surrounding context.

As demonstrated, practices common in traditional Chinese religiosity that disenchanting modernist reformers deemed 'superstitious' were the exact practices that formed the core of Wuguang's personal religiosity, and became the elemental components of the orthopraxis of his followers. Despite the fact that Wuguang was the MSBL's architect, his followers are anything but passive recipients of his teachings. The MSBL is a small organization that shows no signs of wishing to become a dominant religious entity. Recruitment largely happens via word of mouth, and curious religious seekers are welcome to regularly attend MSBL events without being coerced to take refuge, such as the couple mentioned above. Moreover, Huiding has planted obstacles along the group's path to the priesthood. While these details can be interpreted as

strategies to weed out as 'free-riders,' "the Achilles' heel of collective activities…[since] people will not contribute to a collective enterprise, when they can fully share in the benefits without contributing,"[561] I contend that there is something much more organic that enables the MSBL to grow and survive without the need for organized recruiting efforts or an open door policy to the priesthood.

Although the practices that Wuguang attempted to rescue from the category of 'superstition' can be classified as forms of magic, they are vital components of Chinese religious life. Their importance is not peculiar to Wuguang, as they are also important to the average Taiwanese individual. Wuguang's sophistication of 'superstition' is something that readily appeals to modernized, smartphone-using, educated, affluent people who grew up going to incense-filled, idol-populated temples believed to be inhabited by spirits. All of this speaks to the fact that Wuguang's sophistication of 'superstition' meets a need commonly felt by East Asian religionists to distance themselves from 'superstition' while not relenquishing core aspects of their culture's dominant religious practices. Wuguang is not the only figure to try and meet this need, as even Taiwanese spirit-mediums have attempted to explain their practices in scientific terms in order to safeguard themselves from accusations of superstition.[562] As we will see in the next chapter, this market need extends far beyond Mt Five Wisdoms, throughout Taiwan, Hong Kong and even Malaysia, and is being met by Wuguang's emulators.

[561] Stark, "Why Religious Movements Succeed or Fail," 137.

[562] The most in-depth work that I am aware of on this phenomenon is Yi-Jia Tsai, "The Reformative Visions of Mediumship in Contemporary Taiwan" (PhD diss: Rice University, 2002).

Chapter 6

Wuguang's Larger Legacy

This chapter takes a broader look at Wuguang's wider influence on the Chinese-speaking world's contemporary religious landscape. In addition to the MSBL, there are five Buddhist communities which prominently bear Wuguang's influence: the Zhenyan Samantabhdra Lineage 真言宗普賢流, Modern Chan Society 現代禪 (now Modern Pure Land Society 現代淨土), the Xiu Ming Society 修明堂 (a.k.a. Hong Kong Esoteric Group 港密), the Malaysian Mahā Praṇidhāna Parvata Mantrayāna 马来西亚佛教真言乘密宗大願山 and the Kōyasan Muryōkō-in Branch Temple 高野山無量光院別院. Each of these movements—to differing degrees and in different ways—owes its existence to Wuguang. They also represent the MSBL's main competitors, with whom the MSBL has the greatest tension, as they are vying over the same niche market that Wuguang attempted to corner.

As each of these sects are in different locations, use different means of propagation—and responded differently to my research—the data presented below have been gathered through different means.[563] For these reasons, and the impossiblity of presenting an in-depth exploration

[563] The Samantabhadra Lineage is the first of these communities I ever encountered. Due to my living in Taiwan and their receptivity to my research, I was able to conduct long-term onsite fieldwork at its various branches. This included participatory observation, attending their *ācārya* class and performing the first two preliminary ritual prerequisites for entering into the *abhiṣeka* retreat. As the Kōyasan Muryōkō-in Branch Temple is also located in Taiwan, I was able to visit and interview the head of the center. However, since they were not supportive of my research, the data I was able to gain during my single visit was minimal. The Modern Chan Society, since the latter years of its founder, has taken on a new direction. Therefore, I have gathered data regarding this group primarily through secondary sources and the writings of its founder. Since the Xiu Ming Society is located in Hong Kong, I have relied on the writings of its founder. Similarly, the Mahā Praṇidhāna Parvata Mantrayāna's Malaysian location has prevented me from conducting fieldwork at their centers. However, they have a very strong online presence and I have been able to acquire an informant—one of the main priests of the center—who is very sympathetic to my research.

of all five of these movements within a single dissertation—let alone a single chapter—I discuss only one of these movements in great detail while briefly exploring the ways in which the other four are connected to Wuguang.

My analysis of these data demonstrates that elements of Wuguang's personal religiosity and sectarian concerns that permeate the MSBL can also be found in these movements. This is strengthened by the ways in which the founders of the movements mimicked the tactics that Wuguang employed when attempting to establish the MSBL as a new orthodox Buddhist lineage. We begin this chapter by exploring the leadership, history, current status, material culture, doctrines and orthopraxis of the Samantabhadra Lineage. After this we will take a brief look at the ways in which the founders of the others above were influenced by or emulated Wuguang.

Section I: The Samantabhadra Lineage

The Zhenyan Samantabhadra Lineage 真言宗普賢流 is an esoteric Buddhist movement with branches throughout Taiwan, the Pescadores Islands and Hong Kong as well as loose followings in China and New Zealand.[564] It was founded in the late 1990s by one of Wuguang's former disciples, Guru Chesheng 徹聖上師 (secular name Chen Shenghua 陳聖華 1938-). Chesheng received Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* from Wuguang in 1983. However, Chesheng is not a member of the MSBL, he is the Samantabhadra Lineage's 'guru' 上師. Although the Samantabhadra Lineage was officially founded after Wuguang's death, even during Wuguang's life there was tension between Chesheng, Wuguang, and the MSBL. Chesheng has never been to Mt. Five Wisdoms. He was ordained by Wuguang before the MSBL began running the *abhiṣeka*

[564] Parts of this section can be found in Bahir, "Transforming the Appropriated."

retreat during the time when Wuguang's students performed all of the rituals at home. There is little love between the MSBL and the Samantabhadra Lineage. Nevertheless, Chesheng—occasionally—quotes Wuguang during his lectures. He also proudly displays his *abhiṣeka* certificates signed by Wuguang in the main sanctuary of his lineage's headquarters. Unlike Wuguang, Chesheng is not a monk, but a layman. His lineage is similarly dominated by lay, rather than monastic, leadership. This is just but one difference between the MSBL and the Samantabhadra lineage. There are many, however, there are also many similarities that we will now discuss.

Although Chesheng broke away from Wuguang and created his own lineage, he employed similar tactics to found the Samantabhadra Lineage that Wuguang had used to found the MSBL. This can be seen in what Chesheng considers the magnum opus of his religious practice, the Great King of Tantra Maṇḍala 大教王曼荼羅 (GKTM; see figure 50). Just as Wuguang created a new religious banner that encapsulated the Twin Maṇḍalas to designate his lineage, Chesheng uses this maṇḍala to designate his own. Chesheng states this this maṇḍala is so all-encompassing that it combines the contents of all Tibetan, Japanese and Tang Dynasty esoteric Buddhism as well other forms of Buddhism and the wisdom, accomplishments, virtue and characteristics of all Buddhas.[565] So efficacious is this maṇḍala that Chesheng states that its greatness may in fact surpass the *Lotus Sutra*. This maṇḍala is so central to the Samantabhadra Lineage that it is the object of veneration placed upon meditation desks in their affiliated temples while performing the Quadrilateral Cultivation.

[565] Chesheng, *Dajiaowang mantuluo* 大教王曼荼羅 [Great King of Tantra Maṇḍala] (Taichung: Zhenyan Samantabhadra Buddhist Learning center, 2001), 34-35.

五鈷 Five-pronged *vajra*	降三世明王 Trailokya-vijaya-rāja	金剛羯摩 Double *vajra*
中台院 Central Dias (G)	大日如來 Mahāvairocana (V)	成身會 Attainment Assembly (V)
微細會 Sublime Assembly (V)	佛眼佛母 Buddha-locanī (G)	理趣會 Transcendent Assembly (G)
供養會 Offering Assembly (V)	文殊師利院 Mañjuśrī Hall (G)	釋迦摩尼院 Śākyamuni Hall (G)
三鈷 Tri-pronged *vajra*	不動明王 Acala-vidyā-rāja	獨鈷 Single-pronged *vajra*

Figure 50: The Great King of Tantra Maṇḍala and its components. Elements taken from the *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala* and *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala* are respectively indicated by a '(V)' and '(G)' while those not found in either have not been labeled. Layout according to Chesheng, *Dajiaowang mantuluo*, 27. As a received work (see below), Chesheng forfeits all copyright claims to this image.

Although the GKTM first materialized through Chesheng's hand, he asserts that this maṇḍala is a received work. Rather than claiming credit for its begetting, he asserts that he was merely the medium which the buddhas and bodhisattvas chose to disseminate this gift.[566] In explaining why this happened, Chesheng juxtaposes his Buddhist movement with the larger, Humanistic Buddhist movements that dominate the Taiwanese Buddhist sphere. He compares the materialization of the GKTM to Buddhist relief efforts in the wake of the 921 Earthquake that

[566] Chesheng, personal conversation, May. 2, 2015.

ravaged central Taiwan on September 21, 1999. This disaster elicited an immediate response from three of the four large Buddhist organizations in Taiwan, namely Tzu Chi, Fo Guang Shan and Dharma Drum Mountain. The forms of aid they provided were material goods and psychological counseling.[567] Chesheng reports that he observed these organizations instructing survivors to "recite Buddha's name, sit in meditation or pray to Buddhas" 念佛, 要打坐, 要拜佛,[568] but he noticed many survivors had lost faith. This led him to believe that the material, psychological and spiritual help these movements were offering was inadequate. This inadequacy is contrasted with the creation of his maṇḍala. Thus, like Wuguang, Chesheng's teachings represent a reenchanted form of Buddhist modernism that has been designed to the needs of religionists who are dissatisfied with disenchanted forms of Buddhist modernism.

Another way in which Chesheng emulated Wuguang's strategy for lineage establishment was to create his own lineage poem (see figure 51). This poem's first character, *che* 徹 is the generational-character of its author's Dharma-name, Chesheng 徹聖. It is also the second character in Wuguang's lineage poem that we saw in Chapter 5. This attests to the fact that the Samantabhadra Lineage is an offshoot of the MSBL and that Chesheng is one of Wuguang's Dharma-heirs.

[567] Jou-Jou Chu, "Patterns of Public-Private Partnership in Community Reconstruction: The Case of Taiwan after the Chi-Chi Earthquake," in *Community Disaster Recovery and Resiliency: Exploring Global Opportunities*, eds. DeMond S. Miller and Jason D. Rivera, (Boca Raton FL: CRC Press, 2011), 454.

[568] Chesheng, *Dajiaowang mantuluo*, 34-35.

English	Pinyin	Chinese
Deeply [penetrate] the mysteries of the mind school, Mahāvairocana enlightens the spirit.	*Che mi xin zong, dari ling guang.*	徹密心宗, 大日靈光.
The essential truth turns the world, wisdom and joy fulfill [our] aspirations.	*Zhendi lunyuan, hui xi manyuan.*	真諦輪圓, 慧喜滿願.
Bodhi purifies nature, Dharma constantly illuminates you.	*Puti jingxing, fa'er changing.*	菩提淨性, 法爾常明.
The wonderful virtue omnidirectionally shines, together with the attestation of Samantabhadra.	*Miaode bianzhao, tongzheng puxian.*	妙德遍照, 同證普賢.

Figure 51: Samantabhadra Lineage's lineage poem.

Chesheng's Great King of Tantra Maṇḍala and lineage poem constitute two clear examples of Chesheng's emulating Wuguang to firmly root the Samantabhadra Lineage within orthodox Buddhism. Despite his reliance on Wuguang for his Dharma-transmission and strategy at creating a new Buddhist movement, Chesheng did in fact break away from Wuguang. After Chesheng broke away from the MSBL, he did not attempt to present himself as Wuguang's true and rightful successor in opposition to the MSBL's current leadership. Instead, he wished to sever all ties with the MSBL and present the Samantabhadra Lineage as his own creation. This is why I refer to the estrangement between the MSBL and the Samantabhadra Lineage as a break, rather than a schism. A schism would entail a split due to succession controversy, which did not occur. Chesheng states that the reason he broke away from Wuguang was due to his teacher's emphasis on *guang*. In his own words:

> Wuguang went to Kōyasan, Japan, to study the Dharma. After he came back he established the Mantra School Bright Lineage. After I studied with them it occurred to me that I should spread the word that everyone has Buddha nature, everyone has the merit of the Buddhas. Guru Wuguang just propagated that everything has a form of *guang*, the universe has *guang*…everything has *guang* and how to manipulate *guang* to help our lives, [teaching] all of the different ways to manipulate it. I think this approach is a bit dangerous. Everyone [in the MSBL] likes to talk about *guang* and

> how to use it for magical purposes. [This emphasis] makes it easy to neglect cultivating a peaceful life, which is dangerous. Therefore I decided to create the Samantabhadra Lineage to as a corrective. Our message is the doctrine of independence, equality and freedom.[569]

From this, it would appear that Chesheng's break with Wuguang and his MSBL was over Wuguang's emphasis on magic. However, Chesheng himself also believes in—and even performs—magic. During the very earliest stages of my fieldwork Chesheng's chief disciple instructed me to return to the temple with a bottle of alcohol (as this is predominantly a lay Buddhist movement, they are not bound by prohibitions regarding alcohol or even sex). I was not told why. The following day I, along with my alcohol (a bottle of red wine) were taken to a private room where Chesheng handed me a sealed plastic bottle of water and instructed me to drink its contents and then hand the bottle back to him. After I followed his instructions he opened the bottle of wine I had brought and then poured some of its contents into the empty water bottle. Then, he produced a single-pronged *vajra* which he used to perform *adhiṣṭhāna* on the water by carving symbols into the air in front of it while reciting mantras. I was then given two plastic cups into which I was told to pour the contents of the wine—both from the water bottle and the original glass bottle which I had brought. I was then told to perform a taste test to see if there was a noticeable difference between the two.[570] This was intended to demonstrate the fact that he is in possession of otherworldly powers.[571]

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[569] Chesheng, *Shengyi xinyao azi yi*, 12. Original text: "悟光 (上師的上師), 他到日本高野山大學求學修法，回來之後，自創光明流。我(上師) 在那邊學習之後，發覺到應該提倡所有生命應該都有佛性，都有佛的功德。悟光上師的提倡就是生命都是一種光，宇宙有光….什麼都有光，運用光來幫助我們在生活上，各方面上來運作。但這樣的方式，我(上師)覺得有一點危險，大家喜歡說光，能夠怎麼樣運作，談靈異的事情，寧靜的生命容易被忽略，這有一個危險在，所以我(上師)認為要以一個(「普賢流」來說明比較好，我們的提倡是屬於平等自由的學說。"

[570] There was in fact a noticeable difference, as the wine that had undergone Chesheng's enchantment was much sweeter than the unenchanted wine. This was confirmed by an acquaintance whom I asked, "Which of these do you think tastes better?" The acquaintance, preferring sweet wine and not being fond of the taste of alcohol, favored the enchanted wine.

[571] This occurred in Aug. 2011.

Demographics, Organization and Headquarters

The Samantabhadra Lineage is based in Taiwan's third largest city, Taichung. Its headquarters, the Medicine Buddha Hall 藥師院 (see figures 52-53) is located in the first floor of an apartment building adjacent Chesheng's house. Currently, the Samantabhadra Lineage claims to boast an estimated 150 ordained priests and 1000 converts. Like the MSBL, the Samantabhadra Lineage is largely composed of well-educated, financially affluent devotees with enough disposable income to travel abroad and own expensive cars. The sect's operations are overseen and executed by three different committees (see figure 54) and it is funded by donations from its membership.

When entering the Medicine Buddha hall one meets two wrathful door deities. Between these deities is a Siddhaṃ *a*-seed syllable resting upon a lotus flower etched in white upon glass (see figures 55). This letter is central to Zhenyan/Shingon orthopraxis.[572] The first floor is dominated by a large room that functions as the main sanctuary while doubling as a classroom, meeting hall and gift shop. There are two smaller rooms, one that functions as both a changing room and large storage closet and one whose walls are lined with couches and a single chair reserved for Chesheng. Above Chesheng's chair hangs a suspended parasol indicative of his religious authority (see figure 56).[573] This is the room where Chesheng and I shared a glass of wine that was meant to be magical.

[572] The *a*-seed syllable is discussed below.

[573] The parasol is a universal symbol of power and elite social status that made its way into Buddhist symbology to represent religious authority. See A. Snodgrass, *Symbolism of the Stupa*, 326 and Robert Beer, *The Handbook of Tibetan Buddhist Symbols* (Boston: Shambhala, 2003), 2-5.

Figure 52: Medicine Buddha Hall.

Figure 53: The Medicine Buddha Hall's inner courtyard.

Committee Name	Primary Activities
Seven Rays of Light Mindfulness Association 七色光關懷生命協會	Offers counseling and mindfulness retreats
Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhist Learning Association 中華大乘佛學會	Education, religious event organization, outreach and *abhiṣeka*
Chesheng Cultural Foundation 徹聖文化基金會	Publish books and multimedia related to Chesheng and his teachings

Figure 54: Organizational wings of the Samantabhadra Lineage.

Figure 55: Medicine Buddha Hall entrance.

Figure 56: Meeting room.

Figure 57: *Homa* altar with Acala.

Figure 58: Ākāśagarbha altar.

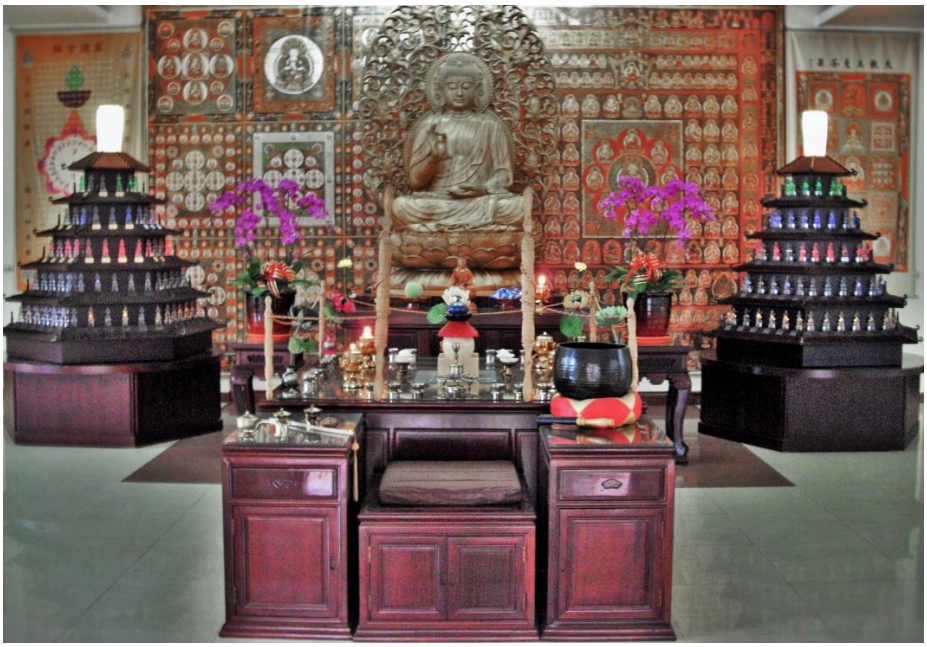

Figure 59: Main Zhenyan/Shingon altar overlooked by Śākyamuni.

Figure 60: Maitreya.

The main sanctuary's iconography is a mixture of exoteric and esoteric Buddhist imagery. There are three main altars along the back wall and a less conspicuous one in a corner. The central one supports a large image of Śākyamuni in the middle who sits in front of the Twin Maṇḍalas and behind a much smaller Avalokiteśvara. To the right is a *homa* altar dedicated to Acala and to the left is an altar with Ākāśagarbha. At the center of the room is a large altar setup in accordance with Zhenyan/Shingon tradition. The smaller, corner altar is dedicated to Maitreya (see figures 57-60).

On most days, the Medicine Buddha Hall is a quiet place. There are no daily public rituals and the sole monthly event is a *homa* that is usually only attended by a handful of members. Oftentimes, however, there are priests-in-training practicing the requisite rituals from the Quadrilateral Cultivation in preparation for the *abhiṣeka* retreat. The ritual manuals used by the Samantabhadra Lineage for the *homa* and the other Quadrilateral Cultivation are those that Chesheng received from Wuguang.

Additional to the ordination retreats and ceremonies, there are four major events held at the Medicine Buddha Hall. The first two are retreats specifically held for visiting members from the Hong Kong branch.[573] These retreats occur during Christmas and Easter since they are public holidays in Hong Kong. While in Taiwan, devotees receive instruction in Samantabhadra Lineage orthopraxis and doctrine. Although run for the sake of the members who live in Hong Kong, attendance is open to all Samantabhadra Lineage members.

The two other major annual events are the Buddha Bathing Ceremony and a calligraphy and art exhibition. The former is held near the Buddha's birthday on the eighth day of the fourth lunar month in the Chinese calendar and the latter during Chinese New Year. The Buddha Bathing Ceremony takes place either in the Medicine Buddha Hall or in a nearby warehouse owned by one of the sect's members (see figures 61-62). The art and calligraphy exhibition takes place at the headquarters and displays Chesheng's work and those of his followers who meet weekly at the center for a calligraphy class. This exhibition also displays Chesheng's books and CD's and operates as a fundraiser.

[573] The center in Hong Kong is named the Zhenyan Samantabhadra Lineage Life Education Center (*Zhenyanzong puxianliu shengming jiaoyu xuehui* 真言宗普賢流生命教育學會). Their website as of Nov. 16, 2014 can be found at: http://www.ple.org.hk/


Figures 61-62: 2015 Buddha-bathing ceremony.

Of equal importance to the rituals held at Samantabhadra Lineage centers is one rite that is entirely ignored, the *Ullambana*. Although this festival is a common practice the second most important in Chinese Buddhism,[574] and as we saw, a core element of the MSBL's orthopraxis, it is entirely ignored at Samantabhadra Lineage centers. The reason for this is that Chesheng believes the practices surrounding this holiday to be non-Buddhist, having originated in Chinese folk religion and are nothing more than superstition.[575] This exemplifies two tensions that run throughout the orthopraxis and doctrines of the Samantabhadra Lineage. The first, between magic and modernity, was already noted above. The second is related to Chesheng's reliance on Wuguang. Despite the fact that the ritual manuals used and legitimization tactics employed by Chesheng were appropriated from Wuguang, Chesheng has designed his lineage to be different from the MSBL. This was done by mixing elements particular to Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan Buddhism. Although these ingredients are also found in the MSBL, the particular elements of

[574] Orzech, "Saving the Burning-Mouth Hungry Ghost," 278.
[575] Semi-structured interview, Apr. 2012.

these ingredients that Chesheng chose to incorporate into the Samantabhadra Lineage are different.

Chesheng's Mix

The tension between Chesheng's reliance on and rejection of Wuguang is further pronounced in the Samantabhadra Lineage's *abhiṣeka* process. Like Wuguang, Chesheng has altered the path to ordination to fit the needs of his disciples. But unlike Wuguang—who began his guru career in a back-alley shrine and eventually built a massive monastery—Chesheng has multiple small yet fully functional sanctuaries under his direction. In order to become a Samantabhadra Lineage *ācārya*, one must be instructed in the Quadrilateral Cultivation and perform each ritual 108 times—as Wuguang himself had prescribed. This must be done at a Samantabhadra Lineage branch temple before entering into the *abhiṣeka* retreat—of which there are two kinds. The first, the 100-day retreat 百日關 requires devotees to live in the apartments above the Medicine Buddha Hall during this time while they perform rituals. The other retreat, called the convenient retreat 方便關 is tailored to people who cannot leave their familial or professional obligations for such a lengthy amount of time and is only six weeks long. The daily schedule during both of these retreats are meant to mirror the grueling ordeal of Kōyasan.[576] After completing either retreat—if deemed worthy—the devotee receives Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* and thus becomes a Samantabhadra Lineage priest. Worthiness of this title is determined by performing a *homa* in front of Chesheng. If the smoke given off by the burning wood is 'too black' it is taken as a sign that the student has not adequately purified himself of defilements and is therefore not ready to become an *ācārya*. I have been told that around one

[576] See page 210.

fourth of students, due to the color of the smoke, are not allowed to receive Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* after completing the retreat.

Figure 63: Samantabhadra Lineage member wearing the green half-*kāṣāya* indicating his low rank.

Figure 64: Chesheng awarding disciple with a red *kāṣāya* indicating his hierarchical progress.

Chesheng has instituted another lay hierarchy in addition to the priestly/non-ordained distinction. As this is a largely lay movement, this is not at all based on monastic ordination but on Chesheng's perception of the devotee's level of spiritual maturation. To advance within this system, one must meet with Chesheng privately, who asks the student various questions and then determines the latter's spiritual level. One's rank within this structure is then displayed on one's religious garb in the form of a half-*kāṣāya* 半袈裟 (see figures 63-64). This garment is predominantly worn by Japanese Buddhists but not commonly found in Chinese Buddhist circles. Half-*kāṣāya*s are often adorned with religious or imperial insignia and can designate the sect and sectarian rank of a Japanese Buddhist. Chesheng has reinvented this garment and created a tri-tiered, color-coded hierarchy wherein a disciple's rank is ascendingly discernible by the green, red or gold of his half-*kāṣāya*. The insignia which adorn Japanese half-*kāṣāyas* have

been replaced by Siddhaṃ letters. Only distinguished members of the sect—such as those who run their own branch temples—wear the traditional Japanese half-*kāṣāya* while all others wear the one created by Chesheng. It is not uncommon for followers to be turned down, multiple times, for advancement.

Chesheng's attitude towards the *Ullambana*, adaptation of the *abhiṣeka* retreat and color-coded lay hierarchy are examples of his altering the Zhenyan/Shingon teachings that he received from Wuguang. Another difference—that simultaneously demonstrates Chesheng's indebtedness to Wuguang—is found in the Tibetan elements of Samantabhadra Lineage orthopraxis. These elements represent a mix of those that Chesheng received from Wuguang—unknowingly as we will shortly see—and those that he directly received from the same person who Wuguang learned Tibetan Buddhism from: Elder Gongga. Before ever studying with Wuguang Chesheng spent years practicing Karma Kagyu rituals under the supervision of Elder Gongga in the early 1980s in Taipei. Although he never received Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* from Gongga in real-time, Chesheng does claim to be her Dharma-heir due to in a series of dreams.[577] Thus, Chesheng claims a dual-esoteric Dharma-transmission, one Japanese from Wuguang and the other Tibetan from Elder Gongga.

This dual transmission is visible in the orthopraxis of the Samantabhadra Lineage. The most prominent example is in Samantabhadra Lineage religious headgear, which is clearly based on Tibetan garb. Tibetan Buddhist sectarian affiliation and ecclesiastical hierarchy are often designated by different forms of headgear. One such distinction, 'red hat' versus 'yellow hat' sects is based directly upon this fact. The Karma Kagyu lineage is known as a 'red hat sect.' One

[577] Chesheng, *Bairi guanxinjing jiangyi* 百日關心經講義椎擊三要訣勝法解合輯本 [Collection of Explanatory Lectures on the Three Essentials from the Hundred Day Heart Sutra Retreat] (Taichung: Zhenyanzong puxianliu foxuehui, 2003), 88-107.

such red hat, the long-eared *paṇḍita* hat is worn by high-ranking priests of Karma Kagyu affiliation. It was also worn by Elder Gongga.[578] In the Kagyu sect the *paṇḍita* or "scholar's hat" is often worn by a master during lectures or religious ceremonies.[579] The Samantabhadra Lineage has a similar—yet distinctly different—red hat created by Chesheng. Commonly referred to as the triangle-hat 三角帽 (see figures 65-67), it is awarded to devotees who complete the initiation retreat during their ordination ceremony. It is worn by Chesheng at special events and rituals such as a Buddha-bathing, conversion or ordination. His followers wear it when performing the *homa* fire ceremony or performing other priestly duties.

Figure 65: Samantabhadra Lineage member performing a *homa*.

[578] An image of Gangkar Rinpoche, Elder Gongga's teacher, wearing a red *paṇḍita* hat is displayed on the front endpaper of Elder Gongga's book entitled *Bai yuanmen de zhuaji: Gongga laoren shan xiuxing ji* (Taipei: *Zhengfa yan*, 1993). Additionally, as of 5/6/2015, an image of Elder Gongga wearing this hat could be viewed at http://album.udn.com/joffy1961/photo/3854907?f_number=5

[579] Giuseppe Tucci, *Religions of Tibet* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 125.

Figure 66: Chesheng wearing the triangle hat.

Figure 67: Samantabhadra Lineage priest wearing the triangle hat while bestowing a blessing.

Despite the fact that Chesheng modeled the hat's shape after the *paṇḍita* hat and chose its color based on Elder Gongga's Tibetan Buddhist lineage affiliation, it is intended to represent a pivotal segment of a maṇḍala central to Zhenyan/Shingon—rather than Tibetan—esoteric Buddhism, the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*. The *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala* is broken up into two major parts, the outer rim which is populated by deities who are mostly of non-Buddhist origin, and the central layer, which is largely populated by Buddhist deities. This central layer is further subdivided in various ways. The most common subdivision scheme breaks it up into three sections. The first is the Buddha-section, which extends across the top, middle and bottom of the central unit in the shape of a capital 'I.' This is the chief section of the maṇḍala. The central column of the Buddha-section is flanked on the left by the Lotus-section and on the right by the

Vajra-section. Directly above the central lotus is a triangle called the Seal of Universal Knowledge. This seal, which is a flaming triangle resting on a lotus, represents the generative powers of wisdom which burns away the three sources of negative karma—anger, greed and attachment. It is also believed to encapsulate the contents of the three inner sections of the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*.[580] Chesheng's triangle-hat is a vestural representation of this seal. Thus, Chesheng's hat—whose shape was inspired by a Karma Kagyu hat worn by Elder Gongga—is meant to symbolize a maṇḍala that is of prime importance in Zhenyan/Shingon that Chesheng studied under Wuguang.

The *paṇḍita* hat was not the only muse for Chesheng's triangle hat. In addition to modeling its shape after a hat entirely absent from Chinese Buddhism, he also incorporated elements from a headpiece—which although more commonly Tibetan—has been increasingly used in Chinese circles that we discussed in Chapter 5, the *Kṣitigarbha* Crown.[581] Similar to the *paṇḍita* hat, this crown is flanked by two lappets**.** However, these are unlike the ears of the *paṇḍita* hat in that they are detachable and not always present. Additionally, the crown's lappets are frequently adorned with mantras, which is also the case with Chesheng's hat. This is despite the fact that an actual Karma Kagyu *paṇḍita* hat's ears are exteriorly bare. Thus, the ears of Chesheng's hat are structurally similar to the *paṇḍita* hat while they ornamentally resemble the Buddha crown.

The writing on Chesheng's hat infuses this vestment even further, multilayered significance and shows his reliance upon Wuguang. On each ear are three Sanskrit seed-syllables (Skt. *bīja*). Seed-syllables are Sanskrit ideographs of particular semiotic significance often

[580] A. Snodgrass, *The Matrix and Diamond World Mandalas in Shingon Buddhism*, 252.
[581] See page 245.

inscribed on trinkets for protection, good fortune, longevity or health. Due to their function as symbolic representations of Buddhist deities and soteriological concepts, they are often chanted and traced in the air when performing *adhiṣṭhāna*. Iconographically, pictorial representations of Buddhist deities are sometimes substituted by images of their corresponding seed-syllables in both Tibetan[582] and Japanese[583] maṇḍalas. Liturgically, seed-syllables can be chanted or visualized alone as monosyllabic mantras or linked together to form longer ones.

One such mantra, "*oṃ āḥ hūm"* is known as the Trisyllabic Mantra 三字明 is central to many forms of Tibetan Buddhism and a key element in specific *guru-yogic* rituals where the three seed-syllables of *oṃ*, *āḥ* and *hūm* respectively represent the three mysteries (in Tibetan forms of Buddhism these are referred to as the 'three *vajras*') of body, speech and mind. In numerous Tibetan Buddhist practices, the recitation of the Trisyllabic Mantra is accompanied by a visualization where the devotee pictures a white, red and blue light at the head, throat and heart chakra when respectively intoning *oṃ, āḥ and hūm*. This is meant to purify the individual's physical, oral and mental karma. If performed within the context of *guru-yoga*, the practitioner visualizes the same points of light radiating from the body and corresponding chakra of a root teacher or Tibetan Buddhist patriarch. Since its nascence, the Karma Kagyu lineage has perceived the Trisyllabic Mantra as "the fundamental guide for mystical realizations and experience."[584] Elder Gongga taught that this mantra should be recited daily.[585] Although these three seed-syllables—*oṃ*, *āḥ* and *hūm*—are key components in many Shingon mantras, chanting

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[582] Susan M. Walcott, "Mapping from a Different Direction: Mandala as Sacred Spatial Visualization," *Journal of Cultural Geography* 23, no. 2 (2006): 82-83.

[583] In Shingon Buddhism, a maṇḍala entirely of seed-syllables is referred to as a Dharma-maṇḍala, which is one of four kinds of maṇḍalas used. For more information see Gardiner, "Mandala, Mandala on the Wall," 265-268.

[584] Pema Dorjee, *Stūpa and Its Technology: A Tibeto-Buddhist Perspective* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1996), 32, n. 22.

[585] Gongga, *Zixing guangming: Jingang shangshi gonggelaoren kaishi lu* 自性光明: 金剛上師貢噶老人開示錄 [The Luminous Self: Records of Vajra Master Elder Gonga's Elucidations] (Taipei: Zhengfayan, 1993), 2.

them as a standalone mantra is not.[586] This is in contrast to Tibetan Buddhism where the recitation of the Trisyllabic Mantra is central.

In Tibetan Buddhist iconography and ritual implements, mantras are most often written in Tibetan or the Sanskrit Lañtsa script while in Chinese circles they are usually written in Chinese or Lañtsa. In contrast, the letters on Chesheng's hat are written in Siddhaṃ, the mono-syllabic Sanskrit alphabet sacred to Shingon and primarily used in Japan. Although Siddhaṃ used to be the primary script that Chinese Buddhists chose for Sanskrit mantra transcription, since the late imperial period it has been gradually replaced by Lañtsa due to the influence of Tibetan Buddhism.[587]

In addition to differing in form, the syllables on Chesheng's hat are also linguistically and semiotically different. The exact syllables on Chesheng's hat—although remarkably similar—do not form the Trisyllabic Mantra commonplace in Tibetan Buddhist practices. While the first and final seed-syllables—*oṃ* and *hūm*—are identical, the middle one is slightly different (see figure 68).

	Script	Transcription	Romanization	Middle Letter	Middle Letter Aspiration
Trisyllabic Mantra	Tibetan	ཨོཾ ཨཱཿ ཧཱྀུ	*oṃ āḥ hūṃg*	ཨཱཿ *āḥ*	Yes
	Lañtsa	𑖌𑖼 𑖀𑖽𑖿 𑖥𑖽𑖿	*oṃ āḥ hūm*	𑖀𑖽𑖿 *āḥ*	Yes
	Siddhaṃ	𑖌𑖼 𑖀𑖽𑖿 𑖥𑖽𑖿	*oṃ āḥ hūm*	𑖀𑖽𑖿 *āḥ*	Yes
Hybrid Mantra	Siddhaṃ	𑖌𑖼 𑖀𑖥 𑖥𑖽𑖿	*oṃ a hūm*	𑖀𑖥 *a*	No

Figure 68: Comparison of the Trisylabbic Mantra and Chesheng's hybrid mantra.

[586] Despite its not being a common element of Shingon practice, the Trisyllabic *Mantra* is in fact found in the *Betsu Gyō* 別行 (T2476_.78.0165c22-24) written by the Shingon figure Kanjo 寛助 (1057-1125).

[587] Jiang Wu, *Enlightenment in Dispute: The Reinvention of Chan Buddhism in Seventeenth-Century China* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 148.

In the Tibetan, Lañtsa and initial Siddhaṃ scripts above, all three syllables refer to the same Sanskrit syllable. The middle seed in Chesheng's hat, however, differs from them all in pronunciation, form and refers to a different Sanskrit seed. Although subtle, this difference has monumental repercussions. As the three seeds of the Trisyllabic Mantra respectively refer to the three mysteries of body, speech and mind and ritually function to cleanse three types of karma. Altering any one of the letters, even slightly, alters the meaning, semiotic correspondence and liturgical function of the entire mantra. The key to extrapolating these repercussions lies in the fact that Chesheng chose to depict this letter in Siddhaṃ. This script—not widely used in Tibetan Buddhism—dominates Shingon liturgy and ritual. In Shingon esoteric ritual manuals, Siddhaṃ is used to transcribe esoteric mantras and as a focus of visualizations. Siddhaṃ's special status as the sacred language of Shingon is demonstrated by beliefs and practices surrounding its first letter, *a*. Based on the Indian tantric idea of 'phonetic emanation,'[588] this letter is believed to be the source of all other sounds. It is also the seed-syllable of the chief deity in the Shingon pantheon, Mahāvairocana who is seen as the first Shingon patriarch, the omnipresent *Dharma-kaya* and the embodiment of the entire universe itself. Mahāvairocana is also a symbol of enlightenment. A common Shingon practice, the *a*-syllable Visualization 阿字觀, is centered on the visualization of this single seed-syllable. It is this letter that occupies the central position in Chesheng's mantra. Thus, rather than referring to the mystery of speech—a particular soteriological concept—this middle letter refers to the very principle of awakening in its totality.

The consequence of this interweaving makes Chesheng's hat an embodied synthesis of Tibetan liturgy and Shingon doctrine. The mixture of Tibetan and Japanese esoteric Buddhist

[588] Richard K. Payne "Ajikan: Ritual and Meditation in the Shingon Tradition," in *Re-visioning "Kamakura" Buddhism*, ed. Richard K. Payne (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 223.

elements found on this hat are not limited to aesthetics. In the key text given to new members of the Samantabhadra Lineage, Chesheng's states that this hybrid mantra encapsulates all others and the purpose of its recitation is to "give rise to the spiritual accomplishments of the *a*-seed."[589] Thus, Chesheng's hat is a polysemic symbol for the integration of Tibetan and Japanese seed-syllables, Tibetan and Japanese interpretations of the three mysteries, the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala* and Shingon theology as well as notions of phonetic emanation.

Provenance of Chesheng's Mix

Notwithstanding the prominent position that this hybrid mantra occupies in Chesheng's movement, he is not its creator. In Wuguang's very first book, he prescribed chanting this hybrid mantra while detailing the performance of a Tibetan-inspired guru-yogic ritual.[590] It is also found within the orthopraxis of the MSBL, though not as prominently. Wuguang's reasons for creating this mantra are likely not limited to Shingon doctrine, but rooted in something much more mundane.

In Elder Gongga's writings, mantras are transliterated into Chinese. In Shingon ritual manuals, they are printed in Siddhaṃ and are often accompanied by pronunciation keys. These pronunciations are written in *Hiragana*, *Katakana* or logographic Chinese characters referred to as *kanji* 漢子 (Chn. *hanzi*) that have multiple, contextually specific pronunciations. In the manuals used by the Samantabhadra Lineage and MSBL, they are transliterated into both *Katakana* and *kanji*.

In Elder Gongga's writings, the Trisyllabic Mantra's aspirated second letter is rendered as 'a' 阿 (see figure 69). This Chinese transliteration is devoid of doctrinal significance and is in

[589] Chesheng, *Shengyi xinyao azi yi*, 65.
[590] Wuguang, *Yujia yangsheng*, 241.

fact a common rendering. However, in the Shingon ritual manuals Wuguang acquired in Japan it is rendered into both *kanji* and *Katakana* as *aku* (Kanji: 惡, Ktk: アク),[591] while the *a*-seed of the Shingon *a*-seed visualization—the unaspirated syllable at the center of the hybrid *mantra*—is rendered as 'a' (Kanji: 阿, Ktk: ア)[592]—which is how Gongga transcribed the aspirated syllable. These renderings are not peculiar to Wuguang and Chesheng's ritual manuals, but are consistent with pronunciation keys found in other Shingon manuals in Japan.[593] It is this tradition of pronunciation—in addition to the significance of the *a*-seed—plus Elder Gongga's transliteration thereof that form the basis for Wuguang's substitution of the middle letter.

Middle Letter	Siddhaṃ	Character	Mandarin	Taiwanese	Japanese
Elder Gongga	X	阿	*a*	*a*	*a*
Shingon Manuals	𑖀𑖽	惡	*e*	*ok*	*aku*
Hybrid	𑖀	阿	*a*	*a*	*a*

Figure 69: Comparison of Sino-Japanese transliterations.

Thus, this hybrid mantra seems to have originated with Wuguang and to be rooted in his studies of Tibetan Buddhism. However, it was not only his Buddhist education that led to his substituting the unaspirated syllable for the aspirated one. As we saw in Chapter 2, Wuguang had a very limited formal education, one that did not include Chinese, let alone Tibetan or Sanskrit. As he grew up during Japan's rule of Taiwan, the only formal language instruction he received was Japanese. As we already know, this resulted in him being not very proficient in Mandarin but only fluent in Taiwanese and Japanese. In addition to the *Katakana* transcription of the aspirated *āḥ as* 'aku' in the Japanese ritual manuals, the *Kanji* transcription—pronounced as a

[591] NA, *Sidu jiaxing: Taizangjie xiuchi yigui* 四度加行: 胎蔵界修持儀軌 [Quadrilateral Cultivation: The *Garbhadhātu* Ritual] (No publication information), 30.
[592] Ibid, 11-12.
[593] Robert H. Sharf, "Thinking through Shingon Ritual," 66.

short ‘e’ in Mandarin 惡—is pronounced ‘ok’ (similar to ‘oak’) in Taiwanese.[594] This is not the case for the *Kanji* of the unaspirated syllable, which is pronounced ‘a’ in Japanese, Mandarin and even Taiwanese. Thus, in decoding how to pronounce Siddhaṃ characters and transcribe mantras that he learned from Elder Gongga, Wuguang seemed to have relied on Japanese transliterations. His understanding of these transliterations was further directed by Taiwanese pronunciations of Chinese characters. It was this reliance that precluded Wuguang from correctly rendering the Trisyllabic Mantra he learned from Elder Gongga—which he would have seen in either Tibetan or Chinese—into Siddhaṃ. As the texts he viewed and the Shingon priests he knew rendered the middle letter of the Tibetan mantra as ‘aku’ rather than ‘a’—his mistake is understandable. This mistake was subsequently transmitted to Wuguang’s student, Chesheng, who also studied Karma Kagyu rituals with Elder Gongga. Given the fact that Chesheng’s Shingon education is limited to self-study and tutelage under Wuguang, the significance of the unaspirated *a*-seed in Shingon and Elder Gongga’s Chinese transliteration thereof as well as the Japanese pronunciation keys, it is logical that he would accept the mantra’s transcription as taught by Wuguang. This is attested to by the fact that Wuguang and Chesheng’s pronunciations and transcriptions of the aspirated and unaspirated letters are all in conformity with the Japanese *Kanji* and *Katakana* transliterations.[595]

[594] In addition to my own multiple observations, this is corroborated by transcriptions found throughout Jhen-Fu Lin 林振福, “The Phonetic Research of Reciting Sutra and Dharani from Universal Door in Taiwanese by three Buddhist Temples in Taiwan 台灣三處道場以臺語唱誦普門品經咒之語音研究” (MA thesis, National Taiwan Normal University, 2011).

[595] This character is in fact *Romanized* by Chesheng as ‘aku’ in *Banruo liqujing jiangyi* 般若理趣經講義 [Commentary on the *Adhyarthaśatikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*], 2 vols. (Kaohsiung: Zhenyanzong puxianliun foxuehui, 2011), 2.89. Wuguang’s transliteration can be found in *Banruo liqu jing jiangji*, 2.499.

Visualization

The fact that Wuguang is this hybrid mantra's author explains a specific ritual consistency between the MSBL and the Samantabhadra Lineage that is not found in Japanese Shingon. This hybrid mantra and its visualization are further integrated into the MSBL's and Samantabhadra Lineage's liturgy. The exact liturgical texts, however, are of Japanese origin rather than Tibetan. The opening of numerous Shingon rituals contain a karmic cleansing, the most common being centered on the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*. During this purification, the devotee performs three mudrās that are each accompanied by a mantra and visualization. These mudrās represent the face of a Buddha, a lotus flower and a *vajra* (see figures 70-71) and are respectively accompanied by a visualization of a specific deity or retinue of deities within the Buddha, Lotus and Vajra sections of the Matrix Realm Maṇḍala. These deities are pictured performing *adhiṣṭhāna* on the devotee to respectively purify the karma of his body, speech and mind.

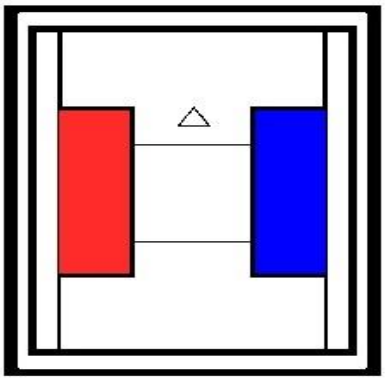

Figure 70: The three sections of the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*.

Figure 71: The Buddha (right), Lotus (middle) and *Vajra* (left) mudrās. Open source image.

Although the visualization instructions in the ritual manuals used by the MSBL and Samantabhadra Lineage are written in accordance with Zhenyan/Shingon and consistent with those in Japan, in practice, they have been replaced. Instead of visualizing deities from these respective sections of the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*, sect members visualize a white *oṃ*, red *a*

(unaspirated) and blue *hūm* as rays of light respectively emanating from the Buddha, Lotus and Vajra sections of the maṇḍala and entering into their head, throat and heart chakras. During training, students are told not to perform the visualization as written in the manual—which is how it is performed in Japan—but to execute this Tibetan-Japanese hybrid visualization. This visualization—despite being appropriated from Tibet—is presented as a form of oral tradition that is only accessible via master-disciple transmission and therefore, not found written in the manual. This oral tradition, as taught by Chesheng and practiced by his disciples, originated with Wuguang, as it also practiced at the TOUB where it is taught as an oral transmission.

Section II: Modern Chan Society

Throughout this entire dissertation we have discussed the castigation and marginalization of 'magic' by attacking 'superstition' and how Wuguang's teachings were a polemical reaction to this. There is another aspect of the attacks on Buddhism during the Meiji and late Qing-early Republican China to which I have yet to give robust attention as it was not central to Wuguang's reenchanted response to disenchanted Buddhist modernism: anticlericalism. As noted, this sentiment expressed itself in the forced defrocking of Buddhist monastics in Japan and was a major trend during the Chinese Buddhist Revival.[596] Nowhere can this anticlerical attitude be seen more clearly than in the establishment of the Modern Chan Society (MCS) 現代禪. Unlike the other movements studied in this dissertation, the MCS has already received scholarly attention, albeit very little. The MCS was a lay Taiwanese Buddhist order created in the 1980s which has been described by Ji Zhe as "one of the most remarkable phenomena in the modern history of Chinese Buddhism."[597] The most radical aspect of the MCS was its rejection of the

[596] See the Introduction, Section II, "Buddhist Modernism: From Disenchantment to Reenchantment."

[597] Ji Zhe, "The Establishment of a Lay Clergy by the Modern Chan Society: The Practice of Modern Chinese Buddhism," *China perspectives* 59 (2005): 56.

traditional Chinese Buddhist communal model that separated adherents into lay and monastic followers. Thus, the MCS was a fully Buddhist, yet simultaneously wholly anticlerical movement.[598]

The founder of MCS, Li Yuansong 李元松 (1957-2003) was a devotee of a new Chinese religious movement popular in Taiwan, Yiguandao 一貫道 when he converted to Buddhism.[599] The monk who oversaw his conversion was none other than Wuguang. In regards to Wuguang's influence Li said:

> Guru Wuguang does not criticize other people. The custom of the Modern Chan Society is also not to criticize or compete with others. Guru [Wuguang] said before, "The true essence of Buddhism can be propagated amongst the masses. If this name 'Buddhism' were to disappear there would be no problem." Just like the ideology of Modern Chan Society is propagated by people, if the Modern Chan Society were to disappear there would be no problem. This is the influence of Guru Wuguang on the Modern Chan Society. Even though Guru Wuguang established Mt. Five Wisdoms, he did it all by himself. Without criticizing others. He worried not about other people or even himself. He allowed other people [to do as they pleased] and allowed himself [to do as he pleased]. He did not interfere with other people and did not interfere with his own self.[600]

Here, Li tells us that the independent spirit of his movement—which is in fact what anticlericalism entails—came from none other than Wuguang. Despite the fact that Wuguang was a monk and a leader of his own Buddhist lineage, the fact that he did so in a non-competitive

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[598] Although there is no mention of the MCS, an overview of the ever-increasing growth of lay Buddhist leadership is discussed in Eyal Aviv, "Ambitions and Negotiations: The Growing Role of Laity in 20th Century Chinese Buddhism," *Journal of the Oxford Centre of Buddhist Studies* 1 (2011): 31-54.

[599] For a full length work on Yiguandao, a new religious movement popular in Taiwan that was imported from China see Lu Yunfeng, *The Transformation of Yiguan Dao in Taiwan: Adapting to a Changing Religious Economy* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Book, 2008).

[600] Jin Ke'an 金柯案, "*Xinforen liyuansong laoshi bingzhong suibi* 信佛人李元松老師病中隨筆 [Essay on Buddhist Teacher Li Yuansong while Ill]," (2003). Online: http://www.unjinkr.url.tw/m_33.htm (accessed Feb. 5, 2016). Original text: "悟光上師與人無諍，現代禪的家風也是與人無諍訟。以前上師曾說，當佛教的真理能普傳，佛教這個名詞消失也無妨，當現代禪的思想有人宏傳，現代禪消失也無妨。 現代禪這個風格多少受到悟光上師的影響，雖然悟光上師創立五智山，但是他都做自己的事。與人無諍訟，與己無諍訟；放過別人，也放過自己；允許別人，也允許自己；放任別人，也放任自己。"

way and essentially 'danced to the beat of his own drum' became a great inspiration for Li to do the same and create his own Buddhist lineage: a lay lineage that was devoid of monasticism.

It was not only Wuguang's free and uncompetitive spirit that inspired Li. In fact, Li states that Wuguang formed Li's standard of truth:

> In my informal writings as well as public publications and recordings, many times I have expressed my gratitude to Guru Wuguang. In my mind, my Guru is an extremely admirable elder monk, as advanced of a practitioner as Kalu Rinpoche. The look in his eyes, his facial expression, the corners of his mouth, his actions and even his idle chatter forever arouse my *prajñā* and have led me to seek out the sources and criteria of verification.[601]

Here we see Li idolizing Wuguang, stating that his mundane bodily motions and even idle chatter were a source of deep spiritual inspiration. We also see him refer to Wuguang as "my Guru" 我的上師 and even put Wuguang on the same level as Kalu Rinpoche (1905-1989), one of the most famous teachers of Tibetan Buddhism whose influence was truly global. We also see Li making a direct references to Wuguang's mystical empiricism that we explored in Chapter 3 in the final sentence where Li says that Wuguang led him "to seek out the sources and criteria of verification." The way Wuguang prescribed to seek verification of the truth was through experiencing mystical visions.

Wuguang's emphasis on direct mystical experiences deeply influenced Li's interpretation of Buddhism. In Li's book entitled, *The Experiential Ideology of the Modern Chan Society* 經驗主義的現代禪 Li opens with a dedication to Wuguang that reads:

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[601] These words were recorded during an interview with Li Yuansong conducted by Yang Huinan 楊惠南 in 1998. See Yang Huinan, "*Li Yuansong Shangshi fangwen ji zhi yi* 李元松上師訪問記之一 [First Visit with Li Yuansong]," (1998). Online: http://buddhism.lib.ntu.edu.tw/museum/TAIWAN/md/md07-06-01.htm (accessed Feb. 5, 2016). Original text: "我曾在拙著和公開發行的錄音帶裏，多次感念地提起我的上師，在我心目中上師是和廣欽老和尚、卡盧仁波切同等一流的大修行者，他的眼神、表情、嘴角、動作以及隻言片語的閒常話，永遠是啟發我智慧，讓我尋求印證的泉源與圭臬."

> I sincerely offer this book to my master, Guru Wuguang, in appreciation to this elderly man, may he have many more years. He always goes to the highest places. Like a lighthouse on mundane ground, leading ships of disciples across the shore.[602]

Despite this influence, the one scholar to write in English about the MCS, Ji Zhe, entirely overlooked the impact Wuguang had on its founder and his teachings. He only mentions Wuguang in passing as the monk to officiate Li's conversion to Buddhism. However, one Taiwanese scholar, Yang Huinan 楊惠南 did recognize this and even quotes Li stating that Wuguang was his greatest influence.[603] He also linked one of Li's main teachings, "Externally Chan, Internally Esoteric" 外禪内密 to Wuguang. This is a multilayered doctrine that Li used as a pedagogical methodology, doctrinal classification system and religious imperative.[604] Even though Yang had the insight to link this statement to Wuguang, I have not found it in any of Wuguang's writings. However, the very first time I ever heard the name 'Wuguang' it was in attribution of this exact doctrine. I received this teaching on August 12, 2011 in the Medicine Buddha Hall from Chesheng. As this was the first time I ever heard of Wuguang—and I had yet to even hear of Li Yuansong and the MCS at this time—it was only after reading Yang that I became aware of the fact that this teaching of Wuguang's that Chesheng quoted was the same one that Li adopted. The fact that two different, disconnected former students of Wuguang uttered the exact same phrase—a phrase I have yet to encounter in Wuguang's writings—means that this was something that Wuguang transmitted orally.

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[602] Li Yuansong, *Jingyan Zhuyi de Xiandaichan* 經驗主義的現代禪 [The Experiential Ideology of the Modern Chan Society] (Taipei: Xiandaichan chubanshe, 1970; second printing, 1981), front endpaper.

[603] Yang Huinan, " Inquiry Concerning the Development of 'New Rain' and 'Zen Now': From Yin-shun's Buddhism for this World' 從印順的人間佛教探討新雨社與現代禪的宗教發展," *Foxue yanjiu zhongxin xuebao* 5 (2000): 275-312.

[604] See Bahir, "Buddhist Master Wuguang's Taiwanese Web," 89-90.

English	Pinyin	Chinese
The luminous mind of the Chan/Zen patriarchs,	*Zuchan ming xin*	祖禪明心
[Enables] one to thoroughly see [his] Dharma-nature.	*Chejian faxing*	徹見法性
The Great Compassionate vow is like an ocean,	*Beiyuan ruhai*	悲願如海
Whose dimensons encompass all sentient beings.	*Guangdu youqing*	廣度有情

Figure 72: MCS lineage poem.

There is another facet of Wuguang's influence readily apparent in the MCS. Just like Chesheng, Li also emulated Wuguang's lineage establishment strategy by writing his own lineage poem (see figure 72). The generational-character chosen from this poem forms the first character in the Dharma-names of Li's followers. As the first member of this lineage, the generational-character in Li's name is the first character of this poem *zu* 祖, meaning 'patriarch.' The second, personal character that he chose for his new, self-given Dharma-name was *guang* 光. According to Li's Dharma-heirs, this was to commemorate Wuguang,[605] who Li reports posthumously visited him in a vision.[606]

From all of this we see that Wuguang's memory and mystical empiricism live on in the Dharma-heirs of Li Yuansong.

[605] Jin Ke'an 金柯按, "*Xinforen liyuansong laoshi nianpu chuguo* 信佛人李元松老師年譜初稿 [Early Chronicle of the Buddhist teacher, Li Yuansong," (2007). Online: http://www.modernpureland.org/webc/html/buddhist/show.php?num=27&page=1&kind=4 (accessed Dec. 25, 2015).

[606] Hua Minhui, "*Wei chang duojie yuan,*" 201.

Section III: The Xiu Ming Society

The Xiu Ming Society was founded in Hong Kong in 1996. It is headquartered in a large complex called Mt. Dharma-propagation 弘法山. The main temple there is called the Grandmaster Temple 大師堂. This is a clear reference to Kūkai, who was posthumously called the Grandmaster of Dharma-propagation, Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師. Its English name is the 'Daishi Place' reflects this. The training center here is named the Chinese Hong Kong Esoteric Buddhist Enlightenment Training Hall 中華港密修明佛院 (see figure 73).

Figure 73: Front of Mt. Dharma-propagation. GoogleMaps, "57 Cumberland Rd, Hong Kong, Kowloon," Feb. 2009, (screenshot taken Feb. 5, 2016).

The founder and spiritual head of this group is Guru Ming 明上師 (secular name Li Kuiming[607] 李居明, English name Edward Li, Dharma-name Chehao 徹豪) from Hong Kong.

[607] Due to Kuiming's Hong Kong setting, it should be noted that the character 居 is transcribed according to the Cantonese pronunciation as Kuiming himself uses, however, in Jyutping it is actually *geoi*.

Ming received Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* from Wuguang in 1982.[608] This is reflected in his Dharma-name, who like Chesheng's, has the generational-character *che* 徹. He later traveled to Japan and received Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* at Kōyasan in 1997. Through the use of multimedia and social media, Ming has made himself extremely famous throughout the Chinese-speaking world. He frequently appears on television, produces many books, DVD's and even has his own radio show. He also has a fan club named 'Li Kuiming's Fan Club' 李居明大師超級 FANS 會.[609]

Although Ming writes prolifically about esoteric Buddhism, the majority of his books, DVDs and CDs have almost nothing to do with Buddhism of any form whatsoever. The topics which he most commonly teaches are Fengshui 風水, magical practices to accumulate wealth and good fortune, dream interpretation, divination and even romantic love.

Despite the fact that his approach radically differs from Wuguang's, Ming states that all of this was inspired by the responsibility that Wuguang gave to him:

> I made a great resolution after my master Wuguang passed away. I was initially very low-key in my propagation of [the esoteric Dharma], but I made up my mind to raise my voice after ten years. Why? To provide the masses with the opportunity to join in the assembly of *ācāryas*, to raise the esteem of the Buddha and ensure the future propagation of Zhenyan in China. Right now, Eastern Esotericism [Zhenyan/Shingon] is a Japanese national treasure that they do not propagate to outsiders. My master [Wuguang] was able to obtain [*abhiṣeka* from] Chūin-ryū, this was truly his karmic reward. While bringing the esoteric Dharma back to China, Master Wuguang would say that it was his responsibility to establish an eastern esoteric root temple in Kaohsiung. Twice he referred to me as the "Vanguard of Luminosity" (*guangming*) and gave me permission to wear the purple robes.[610]

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[608] Edward Li, *Mizong xinyang yu xiuchi*, 密宗信仰与修持 [The Practice of Esoteric Buddhism] (Beijing: Hualing chubanshe, 2010), foreword.

[609] The url, www.likuimingfansclub.com now redirects to a more professional looking website found at http://www.likuiming.com/index.html (accessed on Dec. 25, 2015).

[610] Edward Li, *Mizong qi meng* 密宗启蒙 [Elementary Esoteric Instructions] (Beijing: Hualing chubanshe, 2010), foreword. Original text: "我於悟光師父圓寂後發此大願。本來一向低調傳道，但決意高調十年。為何？是為了提供機會給眾生，以列席一百零八位阿闍梨之位，共襄佛舉，為真言宗將來在中國延燈也。 現

Despite the fact that Ming went to Kōyasan to supplement the esoteric credentials he received from Wuguang, here we see him saying that his mission is the same as Wuguang's, namely, to create a Chinese Zhenyan/Shingon lineage. He also attributes his more commercial approach to Wuguang's having referred to him as the "Vanguard of Luminosity" 光明先鋒. Whether or not this is true, Ming demonstrates a misunderstanding of the meaning of the purple robe that he claims Wuguang allowed him to wear. This robe is meaningless outside of the Japanese ecclesiastical system and being granted permission to wear it—as we saw Wuguang was in Chapter 2—does not make one a successor. However, Ming—and the majority of Han religionists who were the intended audience of this claim—would likely associate this with the 'granting of the bowl and robe' in Chan/Zen succession stories. According to these stories, Chan/Zen masters designate their successor by handing over their begging bowl and monastic robe. Of these, the robe is the most important.[611] However, the Japanese ecclesiastical ranks denoted by the different color of one's robe is a different system that has nothing whatsoever to do with transmission. If Wuguang did in fact give Ming permission to wear the purple robes, it would have been an entirely symbolic gesture devoid of any actual ecclesiastical or successive implications. The majority of Han Buddhists, being unfamiliar with the Japanese system, would not be aware of this and would naturally assume this is a succession story.

Despite these inconsistencies, it is critical to note that Ming draws upon Wuguang—not the Japanese priests from whom he received Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka*—as the source of his priestly authority. Nevertheless, Ming has entirely broken away from the MSBL.

在，東密是日本國寶，從不外傳。吾師能獲中院流法脈，正因機緣。密法歸還中華之時，悟光師父曾言道，他的責任是在高雄市建立東密本山，併兩次以"光明先鋒"四字贈我，又賜其所穿之紫衣給我。"

[611] See John Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 110.

Section IV: Mahā Praṇidhāna Parvata Mantrayāna

The Mahā Praṇidhāna Parvata Mantrayāna is based in Bukit Mertajam, Penang in northern Malaysia. Unlike all of the other groups discussed in this chapter, the Mahā Praṇidhāna Parvata Mantrayāna (MPPM) does not see itself as an offshoot nor different lineage than the MSBL, but as an extension thereof. This is despite the fact that the MSBL in Taiwan does not recognize it as such. It currently is run out of two spaces, an administrative office and an independent temple (see figures 74-75). The temple's name is the Mahā Praṇidhāna Parvata Sahasra Rajya Samghārāma 大願山千光王寺 ('The Great Vow Mountain Temple of a Thousand Rays of *Guang*'). The crest of the MPPM (see figure 76) is meant to be "the flower of one's life rising and returning" and is a clear reference to the lotus rising from the mud as a symbol of enlightenment. The public face of the MPPM is Xiongyu 雄宇 (secular name Tan Yinghao 譚英豪, Dharma-name Xuanyu 玄宇). Xiongyu was not a student of Wuguang, but traveled to the TOUB in 2007 and studied the MSBL's Dharma there. He refers to himself as an MSBL *ācārya*, but those in the MSBL whom I have spoken with say that he only received Karmic affinity-binding *abhiṣeka*.

Xiongyu's teacher and the head of the MPPM, Guru Xiongyao 雄曜上師 claims *abhiṣeka* from the MSBL as well. Xiongyu told me that his teacher Xiangyao is who got him interested in esoteric Buddhism in general and Wuguang in particular. He said it was through the books that Xiongyao had brought back with him from Taiwan that got him interested.[612]

[612] The contents of this section are based on data gathered through correspondence with Xiong on Dec. 24-25, 2016.

The liturgy of the MPPM is the same as that of the MSBL. They celebrate the same holidays and use the liturgical texts that I have seen at both the Samantabhadra Lineage's Medicine Buddha Hall as well as at the TOUB. Similar to both of these movements, the MPPM also runs more festive, family oriented activities (see figure 77).

According to Xiongyu, the MPPM does not 'currently' 目前 provide Dharma-transmission *abhiṣeka* in Malaysia without the oversight of the MSBL. His characterizing this situation as 'currently' leads me to believe that this will happen in the future. If it does, this could mark a new chapter in the history of Wuguang's influence—and contemporary esoteric Buddhism in the larger Sinosphere—by creating a new independent offshoot.

Figure 74: Mahā Praṇidhāna Parvata Sahasra Rajya Samghārāma. Image provided by Xiongyu and reproduced with full permission.

Figure 75: MPPM's administrative office. Image provided by Xiongyu and reproduced with full permission.

Figure 76: MPPM symbol. Image provided by Xiongyu and reproduced with full permission.

Figure 77: MPPM youth event. In the middle sit Xiongyu (left) and his teacher Xiongyao (right). Image provided by Xiongyu and reproduced with full permission.

Section V: Kōyasan Muryōkō-in Branch Temple

Of the five communities discussed in this chapter, the Kōyasan Muryōkō-in Branch Temple is the one that is most loosely connected to the MSBL. It is headquarted in Taipei in the apartment of its founder, Guru Rongyong 融永上師 (secular name, Chou Wen-Kuei 周文魁; dates unknown). Rongyong also oversees another branch in nearby Taoyuan 桃園 and two in Malaysia, one in Kuala Lumpur and another in Puchong.[613] Rongyong received Dharma-transmission from Habukawa Shōdō 土生川正道, abbot of Muryōkō-in 無量光院 at Kōyasan. Thus, Rongyong is in fact a Shingon—not Zhenyan—priest. However, that is only part of the story. One can see that there is more to Rongyong's educational background than what is popularly known simply by his assuming the title 'guru' 上師. As this title is not one used in Japanese Shingon—or other Taiwanese-run Shingon centers—it is clear that he chose it himself. This is not surprising as, before studying in Japan under Habukawa, Rongyong was a member of the Samantabhadra Lineage. In fact, it is reported that he entered the one hundred day retreat but then—for reasons I do not know—left in the middle thereof.[614] After this, Rongyong broke away from the Samantabhadra Lineage and severed his connection with them entirely. Nevertheless, his choice of title displays the fact that he was first introduced to the practice of East Asian esoteric Buddhism via Wuguang's former disciple, Chesheng. As Chesheng relied so heavily on Wuguang for his own study of Zhenyan/Shingon, Rongyong is also indebted to Wuguang.

There is yet an additional connection between Rongyong and Wuguang, an ideological connection. Rongyong has a Master's Degree from Huafan University's 華梵大學 Department of Asian Humanities. His MA thesis entitled "An Investigation of the Shingon Heritage and the

[613] Muryōkō-in Taiwan Beitsuin, Online: http://koyasan.org.tw/index.php (accessed Feb. 5, 2016).
[614] I was told this by a high-ranking member of the Samantabhadra Lineage in Jan. 2014.

Revival of Tang-Esoteric Buddhism during the Early Years of the Republic" is on the Shingon-oriented figures of the Tantric Revival.[615] This shows Rongyong's concern with the Sinic reclamation of the Dharma-transmission chain of Tang Dynasty Zhenyan—something only Wuguang is known to have actually accomplished. Even though Rongyong—as far as I know—has not broken away from Japan as Wuguang did in an attempt to thoroughly Sinicize this chain, he is not against the idea of eventually ordaining his own priests without Japanese oversight.[616] Thus, not only is he linked to Wuguang via Chesheng's Samantabhadra Lineage, but also his own vision of a Chinese form of Zhenyan.

Section VI: Analysis

The existence of the communities discussed in this chapter attests to the widespread influence Wuguang has had on the religious landscape of the Chinese-speaking world. As discussed in Chapter 5, these organizations represent the MSBL's primary competitors, and there is therefore quite a bit of tension between them. This tension manifests as both antagonism and separation. I have observed that these levels of tension correspond with how closely related these communities are with one another. Thus, there is a great amount of tension between the MSBL on the one side, and the Samantabhadra Lineage, Xiu Ming Society, and MPPM on the other. As these movements splintered off from the MSBL, they are her direct descendants. However, the mutual tension between these three sects themselves is less than each's individual tension with the MSBL. Furthermore, while the tension between the Samantabhadra Lineage and Kōyasan Muryōkō-in Branch Temple is observably high, I have yet to observe any tension between the

[615] Chou Wen-Kuei, "An Investigation of the Shingon Heritage and the Revival of Tang-Esoteric Buddhism during the Early Years of the Republic 民初自日本回傳真言宗阿闍黎復興唐密之考察" (Ma thesis, Huafan University, 2012).

[616] Interview, Dec. 2013.

latter and the MSBL. In fact, Rongyong expressed respect for Wuguang when I met him, but showed clear disdain for the Samantabhadra Lineage.

The Modern Chan Society, having never been an overtly esoteric Buddhist movement—and therefore not a direct MSBL competitor—has all but been forgotten by the MSBL. This is in contrast to the Samantabhadra Lineage, Xiu Ming Society and MPPM, all of which the majority of MSBL members I spoke to were aware of. In fact, Huiding downplays the relationship between Wuguang and Li Yuansong, stating that the two only met once.[617] If this is in fact the case, it would seem that Li exaggerated his ties to Wuguang. If it is not true and there was a close relationship between them, then Huiding is either attempting to protect the MSBL, or he simply does not know. If Li's claims are true—which I believe to be the case—Wuguang's teachings had a deep impact on the founder of a revolutionary Buddhist movement. If he chose to exaggerate his relationship with Wuguang, its demonstrates that Li believed associating himself with Wuguang would bolster his religious credentials. Whichever the case may be, Li's evoking Wuguang is another demonstration of Wuguang's importance.

The founders of the Samantabhadra Lineage, Xiu Ming Society and MPPM represent obvious cases of individuals copying Wuguang, as well as attempting to ride his coattails. Chesheng—who criticizes Wuguang—still displays his ordination certificates that Wuguang signed. His relationship to Wuguang is also referenced on the Samantabhadra Lineage's websites.[618] He also emulated Wuguang by composing a new lineage poem and creating a maṇḍala that he claims encapsulates the Twin Maṇḍalas. Although Li Kuiming of the Xiu Ming Society does not seem to have emulated Wuguang to the extant Chesheng has, he references his

[617] Personal correspondence, Dec. 26, 2016.

[618] These sites can be found at: http://www.cmba.org.tw/lineage.html and http://www.pu-hsien.org/intro/ (accessed July 6, 2016).

relationship to Wuguang much more frequently, claims to be Wuguang's self-appointed successor, and quotes Wuguang's teachings quite frequently. Similarly, the leadership of the MPPM, claiming to be an extension of the MSBL despite not having Huiding's recognition as such, proliferate their online presence and publications with images of and references to Wuguang.

From this we see that the founders of the Samantabhadra Lineage, Xiu Ming Society and MPPM are attempting to present themselves as the heirs of Wuguang and inheritors of his charisma. This was also the case for Li Yuansong, who claimed that he was visited by Wuguang's spirit. This demonstrates that, within the niche markets of esoteric Buddhism and modernized magic of the Chinese-speaking religious marketplace, associating one's self with Wuguang is perceived to be profitable. Chesheng's wine and maṇḍala, as well as Li Kuiming's many publications on magical subjects attests to the fact that they are competing over the same corner of the market as the MSBL.

Conclusion

As we have seen, there are five known Buddhist lineages in addition to the MSBL whose existence is indebted to Wuguang. This is not the full extent of Wuguang's impact on global religiosity, as the meditation teacher and author Shinzen Young referenced throughout this dissertation was also greatly influenced by Wuguang. Additionally, even the followers of Elder Gongga owe part of their success to Wuguang's inviting Gongga to preach at Zhuxi Temple, his allocating space for them to stay there and his assistance in establishing a community in Tainan. This all shows us that, despite being overlooked by the scholarly community Wuguang set multiple chains of events in motion that are still unfolding before our very eyes. As this is a living, breathing topic, only time will tell what the future holds for Wuguang's legacy.

Conclusion

This study has looked at the context, life, career, ideology and influence of Wuguang, while demonstrating his erudition and mastery of multiple thought-traditions. Our goal was to reveal the overlooked reenchanted side of Buddhist modernism and illuminate how some magically-inclined, modernist East Asian Buddhist clerics have navigated the tension between their religions' enchanted past and rationalized present by reincorporating magical elements from which their faiths were earlier purged in a previous generation. We also sought to uncover how the reincorporation of magic was translated into religious practice, and why living religionists find this reenchantment appealing. To this end, I began by analyzing the ideological contours of nineteenth-twentieth century Japanese, Chinese and Taiwanese Buddhist discursive engagements with modernity, as well as the historical factors surrounding those engagements. From there, I proceeded to locate Wuguang within these contexts and demonstrate how they shaped the trajectory of his life and the contents of his teachings. This was followed by an in-depth analysis of his writings that illuminated his ideological typology, epistemology, ontology and metaphysics. The final chapters detailed the living incarnation of Wuguang's teachings, the MSBL, as well as its related movements. Data that I presented were gained from textual and historical research as well as long-term, onsite fieldwork at relevant locations throughout Taiwan. Based upon these data, I argued that Wuguang's career and doctrines represent a polemical response to the disenchanting hermeneutic of Buddhist modernism and that this response constitutes a form of 'reenchanted Buddhist modernism.'

In this conclusion, I begin by revisiting the research questions I posed in the introduction, along with my findings, while outlining the ways in which I have argued for my thesis. I then

highlight a number of this study's most provocative peculiarities and present an integrative analysis thereof. From there, I explore this project's broader implications, after which I suggest its contributions. I conclude by discussing the limitations of this study and areas for future scholarly inquiry.

Section I: Findings

In order to understand East Asian clerical attempts to reconcile magic and modernity, I sought to answer several questions that relate to Wuguang's eclecticism and motivations. I strove to discern the identity and provenance of each ideological thread from which he wove his doctrines, and to understand the ways in which this ideological weave resembles, and differs from, those of his predecessors. I also sought to understand Wuguang's means and motivations for sophisticating magic and resurrecting Zhenyan, as well as how these two endeavors are related to one another. Additionally, I set out to account for the allure of the MSBL, analyze its orthopraxis, and contextualize it within its local and global settings.

Wuguang's Eclecticism

I identified the particular threads from which the fabric of Wuguang's doctrines are comprised of, Daoism, Chinese folk religion, Chan/Zen, Tibetan Buddhism, Zhenyan/Shingon, thermodynamics, biology, modern philosophy and Western occultism. I also located the points that Wuguang encountered each of these. Moreover, I traced the paths that these thought-traditions took in order for these encounters to take place.

Wuguang was exposed to Daoism and Chinese folk religion within his childhood home. He deeply probed each in his search for the 'elixir,' and throughout his career as an exorcist, faith healer and related magical and religious leadership roles. He studied Chan/Zen whilst a

monk at Zhuxi Temple. As the education he received there was under the tutelage of the modernist monk Yanjing, this is also the spatiotemporal point that he encountered modern philosophy, and most logically where he was exposed to Western occultism and energeticism as these were popular concepts within nineteenth-twentieth century East Asian Buddhist engagements with modernity. These penetrated Buddhist discourse in Taiwan via Japanese colonialism and exchanges between Taixu's Nanputuo Academy and Taiwanese monks before they came to shape Wuguang's own typology. Wuguang encountered Tibetan Buddhism whilst a student of Elder Gongga and during an encounter with Nan Huai-Chin. Wuguang's interest in biology can easily be explained by his lifelong practices related to Daoist alchemy. His knowledge of Zhenyan/Shingon was born out of his self-study of the Chinese *Tripiṭaka* and his time in Kōyasan, Japan.

Semblance and Divergence

The most prominent similitudes shared by Wuguang's writings and those of his modernist predecessors are the secular-religious-superstitious trinary, the self/other-power binary, material/mental dualism and energeticism. Additionally, the writings of both pay special attention to spirit-communication and funerary rites, as well as to astrology. Like his modernist predecessors, Wuguang adopted the typological trinary and self/other-power binary in order to distinguish science, religion and superstition from one another. He used material/mental dualism to construct an ontological dual-aspect monism based on energeticism that reconciled Buddhism with modern philosophy and science. Wuguang diverged from his predecessors when he explained the aforementioned practices. Japanese, Chinese and Taiwanese Buddhist modernists had concluded that the *Ullambana* had been contaminated by Chinese ancestor veneration and ghost propitiation practices. In opposition to this, Wuguang labeled the native Chinese customs

as a cherished facet of 'Chinese Buddhism' and explained spirit-communication and astrology in terms of thermodynamic principles.[619] Thus, Wuguang appropriated the same typological categories, as well as philosophical and scientific concepts that his modernist predecessors had used to purge these practices from Buddhism, in order to reintegrate them into the tradition in a way that was intended to be intellectually sound. Additional support is found in the fact that all three were pillars of Wuguang's personal religiosity and the first two—as manifest in the multiple *Ullambanas* and astrological rituals—are central facets of the MSBL's orthopraxis.

Wuguang's Motivations

Desire to Sophisticate 'Superstition'

Wuguang's motivation to sophisticate the aforementioned practices was rooted in his personal religiosity, and in historical factors particular to Taiwan. Personally, his childhood experience of the Divine Husbandman's wrath that constituted daemonic dread was so painfully soul-shaking that it endowed him with an unwavering belief in the existence of magic.[620] It also inspired him to embark upon a religious quest that entailed experimenting with different magical technologies in order to evaluate their potency. Thus, once he encountered the disenchanting hermeneutic of Buddhist modernism whilst a monk at Zhuxi Temple, he experienced a crisis of faith. This crisis cut so deeply that he wished to leave the *saṃgha*, but he stayed because he had burned his familial bridges. Seeking answers, he went into two retreats, began practicing Tibetan Buddhism, and finally decided to go to Japan to become a Shingon *ācārya*. His exploration of esoteric Buddhism represents his attempt to harmonize his personal belief in magic with the modernized form of Buddhism that he had studied at Zhuxi Temple. Having found common

[619] See Chapter 4, Section II, "The Metaphysics of Magic."
[620] See Chapter 2.

ground between the religion of his birth and the faith of his adulthood within Buddhism's esoteric sides, he appropriated the same concepts that had been used to disenchant Buddhism in order to sophisticate magic, and thereby reenchant Buddhism. Thus, his doctrines and the orthopraxis of the MSBL are outcrops of Wuguang's personal religious struggle. This is further attested to by the particular scientific concepts that Wuguang drew upon. His lifelong interest in telecommunications technology as well as "unseen forces, invisible to the eye"—which is a clear example of the "mysterious incalculable forces" that Weber asserted required an "intellectual sacrifice" to believe in—rendered thermodynamics and energeticism the perfect playground for his imagination, which is why the scientific principles related to energy-waves dominate his explanations of magical forces.

Desire to Resurrect Zhenyan

Wuguang's desire to redeem magic, in turn, is what motivated him to resurrect Zhenyan. I base this assertion on similarities between Daoist and Shingon ontology and praxis. The ontological roles and energetic makeup of Daoism's Dao and Shingon's Mahāvairocana that lay at the heart of Wuguang's theory of everything, as well as similarities between extant Daoist and Shingon practices, made bridging these two particular traditions relatively unchallenging.[621] Moreover, as the former is described in terms of *qi* and the latter in terms of *guang*, both traditions are intrinsically amenable to theories concerning energy.[622] Thus, Mahāvairocana's ontological role and energetic makeup rendered Shingon doctrine the perfect medium for Wuguang to clothe Chinese forms of magic within in order to explain that they are not 'superstitions.' Moreover, Jason Josephson has highlighted that Shingon was one school of

[621] See Chapter 4, Section I, "Energetic Ontology."

[622] Shingon's amenability to scientific theories concerning energy is attested to by the writings of the Shingon *ācārya*, Oda Ryūkō, analyzed by Katja Triplett and Pamela Winfield. See note 26.

Buddhism whose adherents in fact pushed back against the Meiji-era Buddhist modernists by attempting to show that their magical practices were in fact not undermined by science.[623] Additionally, as Michael Pye has pointed out, Shingon "allow[s] plenty of space for an 'enchanted' view of the world" where divination and divine intercession are not discouraged, even in the modern era.[624] As Shingon represents an enchanted form of 'religion' rather than 'superstition,' Wuguang was able to use its doctrines to ideologically uplift spirit-communication, Daoist bodily transformation and astrology by explaining them in terms of Mahāvairocana's bodily composition, karma and thermodynamics, and thus present them as facets of 'religion' that are compatible with modernity. Thus, for Wuguang, Shingon functioned as an agent of reenchantment. This is further attested to by Shinzen Young, who stated that Wuguang was "interested in establishing credibility for Vajrayāna by linking it to texts that already existed in the Chinese canon, the Tang dynasty Zhenyan works…"[625] As we know that Tibetan Vajrayāna was a vehicle for Wuguang to harmonize his core religiosity with Buddhism rather than his core religiosity itself, Young's statement attests that Wuguang saw Zhenyan/Shingon as a tool for justifying his personal belief in, and practice of, magic.

All of this elucidates Wuguang's motivations to study and appropriate Shingon. However, it does not fully explain why he resurrected Zhenyan. These are two different matters, for he could have simply used Shingon to sophisticate 'superstition' without founding a new revival lineage, which reveals that there were additional factors at play. These factors were born out of the Meiji-era 'Exiting Asia Ideology' 脱亜論 that framed non-Japanese Asian culture,

[623] Josephson, "An Empowered World," 135-139.
[624] Pye, "Rationality, Ritual and Life-shaping Decisions in Modern Japan," 15.
[625] See note 321.

traditions and people as inferior to those of Japan.[626] This sentiment was made manifest in the Japanese colonial efforts to redefine Zhaijiao along Japanese sectarian lines, to eradicate the practice of chanting Amitābha's name from Taiwanese Chan, and to convince the Taiwanese to burn their Chinese gods and enshrine Shintō *kami* in their stead.[627] As the particular disenchanting hermeneutic of Buddhist modernism that Wuguang was rebelling against was one tinged with pro-Japanese, anti-Chinese sentiment, appropriating particular facets of Shingon—a Japanese form of Buddhism—was not enough to sophisticate Chinese forms of magic. He had to reclaim the entire tradition's Chinese forerunner, which was accomplished—in his mind—by resurrecting Zhenyan and founding the MSBL. The fact that Wuguang was consciously responding to Japanese anti-Chinese sentiment is evidenced by the pro-Chinese—and somewhat anti-Japanese—sentiment embedded within Mt. Five Wisdoms discussed in Chapter 5. As Wuguang's redemption of 'magic' was aimed at redeeming 'Chinese' forms of magic from within a Japanese-based typology, his line of reasoning is perspicuous.

The MSBL and Related Movements

By employing the Religious Economy Model (REM), I determined that people attracted to the teachings of Wuguang and his students represent a niche corner in the Chinese-speaking religious marketplace. This market is largely comprised of affluent and highly-educated people from Buddho-Daoist-folk religious backgrounds who are looking for a way to harmonize the religion of their ancestors with the modern world. Wuguang marketed his religious product by Sinifying Japanese and Tibetan religious practices, while leaving enough just enough foreign elements to ensure that his product retained an exotic flavor. Wuguang's main selling point—

[626] See Introduction, Section III, "Inoue Enryō and the Meiji Buddhist Revival."
[627] See Chapter 1.

charisma—is what fueled MSBL recruitment while he was alive, and its routinized and textualized forms continue to sustain the movement since his death.

Due to the success of Wuguang's product—and the growth of his target market—a number of his formal disciples and associates attempt to establish themselves as the rightful heirs of Wuguang's charisma. They have also emulated the ways in which he packaged and promoted his product. As this market is only growing, since the need of Chinese-speaking religious consumers to harmonize their enchanted past with their disenchanted preset shows no signs of satiation, it is probable that this corner of the religious market will continue to become increasingly saturated.

Section II: Provocative Particularities and Integrative Analysis

There are several facets of Wuguang's life, personality and doctrines that render him a particularly captivating figure. Wuguang's personal saga is intriguing on multiple levels. Mundanely, his travels throughout Taiwan, trips to Japan and voyages as a merchant sailor are not only entertaining, but also offer a first-hand account of several pivotal moments in Taiwan's history, beginning during the height of Japanese colonialism, and spanning the period of Republican martial law and the birth of Taiwanese democracy. Wuguang—who was fluent in Japanese and Taiwanese but never mastered Mandarin—tells us how the Shōwa Financial Crisis and Second Sino-Japanese War impacted the lives of the Taiwanese people: the former caused him to venture overseas and the latter to return home, where he was then suspected of espionage. Later, when seeking to study Shingon at Kōyasan, he faced difficulties acquiring the necessary permits to go abroad due to governmental restrictions, a difficulty his disciples no longer face. Religiously, Wuguang's experimentation of multiple religious traditions throughout Taiwan paints for us a vivid picture of the state of Taiwanese religion during the middle and latter half of

the twentieth century. Thus, Wuguang's personal story is a narrative microcosm for the totality of the nineteenth-twentieth century Han Taiwanese religious experience. His story is one that could happen nowhere but Taiwan.

This charismatic person, whose followers attribute magical abilities to and report that he appeared to them in visions after his death, openly smoked cigarettes and chewed betel nut. He was also very forthcoming about his own struggles with monastic life and admitted to breaking his wife's heart when he became a monk. This larger-than-life figure was thus one who stressed his own humanity and admitted his personal shortcomings. Wuguang's down-to-earth character also flavored his writings with a bit of humor. In a passage on how to reply to those who criticize Buddhist deity devotion as 'superstitious,' Wuguang let his mind dwell in the gutter:

> Some religionists claim that Buddhism is superstitious saying: "You pray to wooden Buddhist statues, but if the wood was fashioned in a different form you wouldn't pray to it.…In fact, the same wood can be made into a toilet, would you pray to a toilet?"…We can retort: "Your wife and Buddha are equally composed of the elements of earth, fire, water, air, space and consciousness. Yes, they are the same, however, they are also different…You would kiss your wife's face, but you would not kiss her ass; is she not the same person?"[628]

Perhaps it was this otherworldly monk's down-to-earth persona that made him particularly appealing to his disciples.

Doctrinally, the most perplexing of Wuguang's teachings are undoubtedly his predictions regarding the future of Buddhist religiosity. In addition to believing that Zhenyan/Shingon would become a major religion in not only East Asia, but Europe and the Americas as well, he predicted that 'Buddhism' as we know it will be rendered obsolete by the actualization of the

[628] Wuguang, *Amituo*. Original text: "有些宗教說佛教迷信，說木頭像尊佛你就去拜，若是創造別樣的你就不去拜…其實相同的木材有些被砍下來做廁所板，廁所板你又不去拜？…我們可以反駁：你太太也是人都是地水火風空識，佛祖也是地水火風空識，當然平等之中有差別…你太太的面你就去親，她的屁股你卻不親，不是同一個人嗎？"

Transporter from *Star Trek*.[629] As outlandish as this claim may seem, it was built directly upon Wuguang's understanding of Shingon doctrine. Based upon his energetic interpretation of Mahāvairocana and all phenomena, Wuguang reasoned that Buddhist practice—as it has been practiced for millennia—is nothing more than energy-manipulation. This deduction led him to conclude that machinery capable of manipulating energy at its most primordial level would thus be no different than reciting Buddhist *sūtras*, invoking deities or even engaging in Daoist bodily practices. Albeit wholly untraditional, this prediction reveals that Shingon was not merely a tool for Wuguang to use in order to sophisticate 'superstition,' as it came to shape his Theory of Everything (TOE).

In fact, Wuguang's understanding of Shingon doctrine was what led him to many of his conclusions. This can be seen in an admonishment of dualism where he states that all forms of dualistic thinking are symptomatic of rejecting a monism that is embedded within Shingon iconography:

> The space of the universe has the perfect characteristic of principle and wisdom. 'Principle' refers to natural phenomena while 'wisdom' refers to the cause of consciousness. Within principle there is wisdom and within wisdom there is principle: principle and wisdom are one, not two. People who do not understand that principle and wisdom are one give rise to two different calamities. The first is materialism, the second is idealism…[630]

This passage reveals that Wuguang's rejection of dualism and consequential energy-based dual-aspect monism was directly based upon his understanding of Shingon doctrine. He asserts that a materialist or idealist outlook is merely an outcrop of perceiving 'principle' 理 and 'wisdom' 智 as a binary rather than a singularity. According to Shingon doctrine, principle and wisdom

[629] See Chapter 4, Section IV, "Future Soteriological Ramifications."

[630] Wuguang, *Chan de jianghua*, 16-17. Original text: "何宇宙間有理與智的全德，理是自然理現象，智是精神之因，理中有智，智中有理，理智合一不二，未悟此者，能生出二種病態，第一是唯物主義，第二是唯心主義…"

constitute a non-dual binary, are respectively embodied by the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala* and *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*, and respectively represent the body and mind of Mahāvairocana.[631] As noted, these two maṇḍalas are seen as different sides of the singular 'Twin Maṇḍala' and thus are non-dual, which is also the case for Mahāvairocana's body and mind. As noted by Ryujun Tajima, this multi-layered non-duality is often articulated in terms of principle and wisdom, via the phrase 'principle and wisdom are not two' 理智不二 that Wuguang evokes in the above passage.[632]

These two cases make it clear that Wuguang's understanding of Shingon non-dualism as related to Mahāvairocana and the Twin Maṇḍalas informed both his predictions and ontology. Although I dissected Wuguang's ideologies in order to identify the particular threads from which he wove them, he did combine them into a singular seamless tapestry. My deconstruction of Wuguang's TOE mirrors the way in which he constructed it. First, he deconstructed all of the traditions that he had studied, locating their points of contention and commonalities, and then struggled to make sense of each. Wuguang lays bare this personal struggle when he relates his spiritual crisis at Zhuxi Temple that inspired him to go into two retreats. After having practiced various forms of experientially rich Daoist techniques for years, he found Chan meditation unfulfilling and desired to leave the *saṃgha*. Wuguang put this struggle's ensuing internal dialogue into words when, after acquiring magical healing powers, he noted contradictions between the teachings of Elder Gongga concerning visionary experiences and the disenchanted form of Buddhism that he had studied under Yanjing. In the midst of this personal spiritual crisis born out of contradictory Dao-Buddhist doctrines and enchanted-disenchanted religiosity, he

[631] See A. Snodgrass, *Matrix and Diamond World Mandalas*, 124.

[632] Alex Wayman and Ryujun Tajima, *The Enlightenment of Vairocana*, Buddhist Traditions, 18 (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1992), 227.

turned to Kōyasan for answers. Whilst there, he emerged from this crisis, as Shingon doctrine enabled him to harmonize the conflicting ideologies and modes of religiosity that had been troubling him. This was accomplished by deconstructing the seemingly contradictory traditions and utilizing Shingon as a harmonizing agent to bring them together by locating what he believed to be their undiluted essence. From there, he then constructed an entirely new religious outlook by using those commonalities as building blocks. With a renewed religious zeal and appeased soul, he then set himself to the task of disseminating his comprehensive ideology that harmonized science with Taiwan's dominant religious traditions of Daoism, folk religion, Yongquan-based Chan and Japanese forms of Buddhism as well as the increasingly influential Tibetan Buddhism. Thus, Shingon served as a source of inspiration, solace and harmonizing agent for Wuguang whose doctrines came to shape his notion of 'religion.'

Section III: The Bigger Picture

Esoteric Buddhism and Modernist Reenchantment

To explore the overlooked phenomenon of 'reenchanted Buddhist modernism,' I have built directly upon David McMahan's definition of 'Buddhist modernism.' I argued that the widespread usage of this term ignores magical forms of Buddhist modernism as it is limited to its disenchanted forms. In so doing, I have primarily based my analysis on 'demythologization,' which is but one of three characteristics common to Buddhist modernism that McMahan lists, the other two being 'psychologization' and 'detraditionalization.' I justified this by equating demythologization with disenchantment, and asserting that detraditionalization and

psychologization are secondary aspects thereof.[633] I now return to this argument and, based upon the data I have presented, explore its wider implications.

McMahan confirms the interconnectedness between these three aspects by stating that "demythologization and detraditionalization are often continuous with psychologization,"[634] and that "the interaction of Buddhism with psychology exhibits aspects of both detraditionalization and demythologization."[635] However, he does not hierarchize them as I have. Nevertheless, his key illustration of demythologization—which is a modernist reinterpretation of Buddhist afterlife practices and associated belief in noncoporeal entities—constitutes nothing more than a psychologized interpretation,[636] demonstrating that psychologization is merely a disenchanting hermeneutical trope, and not an independent trend. McMahan's definitive illustration of detraditionalization, which references what Robert Sharf refers to as Buddhist modernism's "Hermeneutic of Meditative Experience,"[637] explores the emphasis on personal meditative practice amongst Western Buddhist communities. McMahan states that detraditionalization represents "a shift of authority from without to within,"[638] which he equates with "the modernist tendency to evaluate reason, experience, and intuition over tradition and to assert the freedom to reject, adopt or reinterpret traditional beliefs and practices on the basis of individual evaluation."[639] I argue that this shift of authority and freedom to reject tradition is related to disenchantment, a claim I base on deductive reasoning and on the basis of living examples, as I will now explain.

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[633] See page 15, particularly note 36.
[634] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 52.
[635] Ibid, 57.
[636] Ibid, 45-48.
[637] See Robert H. Sharf, "Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience," *Numen* 42 (1995): 228-283.
[638] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 212.
[639] Ibid, 43.

In addition to transmission-chain provenance and continuity, the display of magical powers was a common way of legitimizing religious authority in premodern Buddhism, something that even Śākyamuni is canonically depicted as doing.[640] This is not the case within disenchanted modernist Buddhist circles. Jack Meng-Tat Chia, building upon the work of Stuart Chandler, has discussed this difference in his analysis of autohagiographical accounts of the Buddhist modernist Hsing Yun. Chia proposes drawing a distinction between "traditional" and "modern" Chinese Buddhist hagiographies, stating that the former often depict religious authorities as "transcendental being[s] with superhuman powers and spiritual attainments,"[641] which is in contrast to the latter that do not make "overt claims of possessing paranormal powers."[642] Moreover, modernist hagiographies downplay the importance of such powers by emphasizing "that life itself is miraculous…such that even the most mundane acts, such as people's ability to walk and swim, can be regarded as 'magical,'" and highlighting the distinction between magical prowess and liberation from *saṃsāra*.[643] In substitution of magic, authors of modernist hagiographies promote their subjects' authority by depicting them as 'worldling Bodhisattvas'凡夫菩薩 in possession of "bodhisattva qualities such as compassion and wisdom in the this-worldly realm."[644] The displacement of magic within modernist Buddhist hagiographical accounts is a clear expression of disenchantment that evinces how detraditionalization, as related to religious authority, leads to the "shift of authority from without to within" and the "the freedom to reject, adopt or reinterpret traditional beliefs and practices on

[640] See David V. Fiordalis, "The Wondrous Display of Superhuman Power in the Vimala- kīrtinirdeśa: Miracle or Marvel?" In *Yoga Powers: Extraordinary Capacities Attained through Meditation and Concentration*, ed. Knut A. Jacobsen, Brill's Indological Library, 37 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), 97-125.

[641] Jack Meng-Tat Chia, "Toward a Modern Buddhist Hagiography: Telling the Life of Hsing Yun in Popular Media," *Asian Ethnology* 74, no. 1 (2015): 144.

[642] Ibid, 148.

[643] Ibid.

[644] Ibid, 144.

the basis of individual evaluation" that McMahan speaks of. Once the sources of transmission-chains and the magical abilities assigned to the propagators thereof have been disenchanted, the authoritative nature of the contents of these transmissions is open to question. Thus, detraditionalization is a symptom of demythologization/disenchantment. Beliefs and practices whose authenticity and veracity were once considered to be unquestionable, due to their provenance and the authority held by their proponents, are now more open to individual rejection and unbridled reinterpretation. This chain of causation is not particular to disenchanted Buddhist modernism, but is clearly showcased cross-culturally, across faiths. The interplay between questioning traditional modes of religious authority and the quest for 'religious experiences' has been explained by Ann Taves:

> Around 1900, that is, at the height of the modern era, Western intellectuals in a range of disciplines were preoccupied with the idea of experience…thinkers with a liberal or modernist bent…turned to the concept of religious experience as a source of theological authority at a time when claims based on other sources of authority—ecclesiastical, doctrinal, and biblical—were increasingly subject to historical critique.[645]

Since the authorship of scriptural passages attributed to Śākyamuni and other religious figures—as well as their magical powers and those of their perceived heirs—are "shorn of literal truth-value,"[646] they are "transposed into the realm of the symbolic, and thereby effectively neutralized."[647]

Detraditionalization and early forms of Buddhist modernism evolve out of disenchantment, and are intertwined with one another. We see examples of detraditionalization and the emphasis on personal experience in various disenchanted manifestations of East Asian

[645] Ann Taves, *Religious Experience Reconsidered: A Building Block Approach to the Study of Religion and other Special Things* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), 4.
[646] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 13.
[647] Ibid, 106.

Buddhist modernism,[648] and even Wuguang's mystical empiricism. Although the "freedom to reject" traditional beliefs and practices is more prevalent in the Western Buddhist communities that McMahan primarily worked with and is not particularly relevant to this study, there is another trend that McMahan correlates with detraditionalization that—I believe—lies at the heart of this study's broader implications: laicization.[649] Nineteenth century Asian laicization emerged from a sentiment of 'anticlericalism'—defined by Vincent Gossaert as "the rejection of the institutionalization of religion, especially monasteries and professional clerics living off liturgical services"—that was rooted in both Confucianism and the Protestant Reformation.[650] This anticlerical trend expressed itself as the forced laicization of Buddhist monks and redefinition of monastic life in Japan during the early Meiji period.[651] This trend also manifested itself within Chinese Buddhist discourse during the Chinese Buddhist Revival, so much so that Holmes Welch predicted that if the trend were to continue, Chinese Buddhist monasticism would eventually disappear.[652] Eyal Aviv has analyzed later effects of laicization on twentieth century Chinese Buddhism, demonstrating that lay leaders have assumed leadership roles that were previously reserved for monastics.[653]

Laicization and anticlericalism represent a trend that directly relates to the larger issue of disenchantment-reenchantment and, I contend, is intertwined with the growing popularity of esoteric Buddhism in East Asia. As just detailed, demythologization fuels detraditionalization and laicization in part due to the demythologization of transmission provenance and the

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[648] See Sharf, "Buddhist Modernism and the Rhetoric of Meditative Experience."
[649] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 187.
[650] Goossaert, "1898: The Beginning of the End," 308.
[651] See note 155.
[652] Welch, *Buddhist Revival in China*, 267.
[653] Eyal Aviv, "Ambitions and Negotiations: The Growing Role of Laity in 20th Century Chinese Buddhism," *Journal of the Oxford Centre of Buddhist Studies* 1 (2011): 31-54.

disenchantment of magical powers. Once becoming a monastic is no longer equated with becoming a medium between realms, a living reservoir of ancient wisdom, and a possessor of magical powers, monasticism falls from its pedestal—to a certain extant—which in turn elevates the notion of lay Buddhist life. One form of Buddhism where laymen can function as religious authorities and links within Dharma-transmissions is esoteric Buddhism. While monastic life is an important facet of Tibetan and Japanese forms of esoteric Buddhism, lay practitioners thereof can become *ācāryas* and even give certain forms of *abhiṣeka*. This fact greatly irritated Taixu and other Chinese Buddhists, who believed that laity were inferior to monastics.[654] As esoteric Buddhist clericalism is paradoxically compatible with anticlericalism and allows the ordained to lead a secular life; it has an appeal that orthodox Chinese Buddhism—within a modernist mindset—does not. Moreover, as detraditionalization leads to a surge in lay desire for personal religious experience, esoteric Buddhist rituals that consist of highly experiential visualizations and deity invocations render esoteric Buddhism well-equipped to meet the needs of experientially driven seekers. All of this helps to explain the ever growing popularity of esoteric Buddhism that began during late Republican China and continues today. This is not to discount the impact of urbanization, changes in familial structure or other important components that have led to the rise of the laity. Nor do I suggest that monastic roles were historically limited to the soteriological and supernatural. Nevertheless, in the case of esoteric Buddhism within the context of the Chinese-speaking world, I suggest that anticlericalism and laicization are directly related to disenchantment in a significant way that has largely been overlooked.

[654] Luo Tongbing, "The Reformist Monk Taixu and the Controversy about Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhism in Republican China," in *Images of Tibet in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, ed. Monica Esposito (Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2008), 437-438. Also see Aviv, "Ambitions and Negotiations."

As esoteric Buddhism is a form of Buddhism that largely retains its enchantment, detraditionalization—in this study's context—renders reenchantment a probable consequence of disenchantment, since people, out of modernist tendencies, are drawn to an enchanted form of Buddhism. We can see exactly this process in the life of Wuguang—and even his followers and emulators. Having found his religious practice as a Buddhist monastic unfulfilling, he was drawn to esoteric forms of Buddhism. This is a narrative echoed by MSBL members who I interviewed. Thus, as with the case of Wuguang's reenchanted Buddhist modernism, the seeds of reenchantment were planted within disenchantment. This cycle is further demonstrated by two offshoots of the MSBL discussed in Chapter 6.

My stratification of McMahan's three characteristics of Buddhist modernism does not contradict his framework, but adds nuance to it, as he himself relates all of these to Weberian disenchantment.[655] This harmony is further demonstrated by the fact that Wuguang's reenchanted Buddhist modernism, and its living embodiment, the MSBL, fit neatly within McMahan's own predictive characterization of a retraditionalized 'Buddhist postmodernism.'[656]

Global Esoteric Reenchanting Trends

To ensure that it rings clear, I have isolated Wuguang's singular voice among the throng of contributors to the discursive chorus regarding the relationship between science, religion, superstition and magic. As socio-anthropological studies focused on popular religion have long dominated scholarly discussions regarding magic in contemporary East Asia, until further original work has been done, we must broaden our gaze to explore this study's wider

[655] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 12.

[656] Regarding Buddhist postmodernists McMahan states that "they do not necessarily attempt [to] abandon modernity in toto—they often use modern technologies and may draw upon the language of Buddhist modernism—but they have rejected some of its innovations in favor of attempting to reconstruct more orthodox aspects of Buddhism." See McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 246.

implications. While Wuguang's treatment of magic bears striking similarities to interpretive strategies utilized by Western occult figures as already noted,[657] he differed from such figures in the fact that he sought to remain within the confines of an established religious tradition. One clear example that prominently embodies this difference is Aleister Crowley (b. Edward Alexander Crowley; 1875-1947), author of the most well-known emic definition of 'magic' in the world[658] who "represents and encapsulates, almost paradigmatically, the attempts made by occultism as a whole to come to terms with traditional esoteric concepts in a world deeply transformed culturally and socially by the impact of secularization and modernity."[659] Crowley's reconciliation of magic with modernity entailed founding a new religion that he named Thelema.[660] This is in stark contrast to Wuguang, who went to great lengths in order to firmly establish the MSBL as an orthodox lineage within mainstream Buddhism. Because of this, to explore the widest possible implications of this study, it would be prudent—and fruitful—to look at the global discourse itself while briefly referencing a number of its key figures and facets, rather than comparing Wuguang's doctrines with any particular Western thinker.

East Asia was dragged into the modernist discourse concerning 'religion' during the 1890s, a decade that "saw the triumph of the monists."[661] It is no coincidence that monism—

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[657] See page 186.

[658] Henrik Bogdan, "Introduction: Modern Western Magic," *Aries Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism* 12 (2012): 11. Crowley wrote the term 'magic' as 'magick' with an additional 'k' in order to distinguish it from 'superstition' and defined it as, "the Science and Art of causing Change to occur in conformity with Will." See Aleister Crowley, *Magick in Theory and Practice* (York Beach: Maine: Samuel Wieser, 1994), xii-xiii. Also see Egil Asprem, *Arguing with Angels and Demons: Enochian Magic & Modern Occulture* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), 89.

[659] Marco Pasi, "Varieties of Magical Experience: Aleister Crowley's Views on Occult Practice," *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 6, no.2 (2011): 123.

[660] This religion, which is still practiced today, boasts its own sacred canon, Aiwaz (Aleister Crowley), *The Holy Books of Thelema* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1983).

[661] Dominic Green, "Soul Survivor: Metaphysics as Intraphysics in the Age of Re-enchantment," *The Hedgehog Review* 17, no. 3 (2015). Online: http://www.iasc-culture.org/THR/THR_article_2015_Fall_Green.php (accessed Mar. 28, 2016).

which Kokcu von Stuckrad states is the "conception of the cosmos" from which Western esoteric discourses usually emerge[662]—permeates Wuguang's own TOE. In fact, Western magical discourse was being directly influenced by Asian forms of monism at the same time that esoterically-minded occultists—such as Henry Steel Olcott, the 'White Buddhist'—were influencing the South and East Asian pioneers of Buddhist modernism.[663] While Olcott and his like were looking to Asia's traditional religious traditions in order to reenchant their own worlds, their Asian counterparts were looking to the West in order to disenchant the exact sources that were being used to reenchant the West. Thus, the time that this cross-pollination was taking place was one when the actors were moving in opposite dialectical directions.

The particular form of monism that Wuguang—and Inoue Enryō—opined, dual-aspect monism, resembles the thought of Cartesian dualism's most successful critic, Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), the Jewish heretic who "opted for secularism at a time when the concept had not yet been formulated."[664] Rather than seeing the material and mental as two distinct substances, he asserted that they were merely different observable aspects of the same underlying substratum that he referred to in his *Ethics* as "*Deus sive Natura*" ('God or nature').[665] For both Wuguang and Inoue,[666] *Deus sive Natura* was the energetic *dharmakāya*. Although Spinoza spoke in terms of the material/mental binary, it has been argued that he believed that these are merely two of many possible 'attributes' that the beholder assigns to phenomenal manifestations of the

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[662] Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge* (London: Equinox Publishing, 2005), 11.

[663] See note 10.

[664] Rebecca Goldstein, *Betraying Spinoza: The Renegade Jew Who Gave Us Modernity*, Jewish Encounters (New York: Nextbook; Shocken, 2006), 5.

[665] A full-length dissertation on this facet of Spinoza's thought, as well as the validity of the double-aspect interpretation thereof, is Sam-Yel Park, "A Study of the Mind-Body Theory in Spinoza" (PhD diss, University of Glasgow, 1999).

[666] This similarity between the monisms of Inoue and Spinoza have already been pointed out in Godart, "'Philosophy' or 'Religion,'" 80. Also see Kosaka Kunitsugu, "Metaphysics in the Meiji Period," *Journal of International Philosophy* 3 (2014): 297.

substratum, rendering his position a monistic-pluralism with countless aspects.[667] Interestingly, based on his understanding of Shingon phenomenology, ontology and iconography, Wuguang stated the same thing:

> The universe is not dualistic, it is a monistic pluralism, an infinitely pluralistic monism. Modern science says that the universe is pluralistic, they say this now, but the Buddhas and patriarchs had already said that it is a pluralistic monism. Why is it called pluralistic? It is similar to a flower. Just as the multiple petals of a single flower have many different seeds, the universe contains countless physical potentialities.[668] If we were to label and list them, [that list] would be the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala*. However, all of the phenomena that are enumerated within the *Garbhadhātu-maṇḍala* represent but a small portion [of the universe's plurality], there are many others that not enumerated there, and they are innumerable…[669]

According to both Wuguang and the pluralist interpretation of Spinoza, the plurality that mundane phenomena display belies a universal divine unity. For Spinoza, it was 'God or nature', for Wuguang, Inoue and a number of Chinese Buddhist modernists as well as Western occultists, this underlying divinity was understood as a form of energy.

Magically and mechanically speaking, the energetic substratum concretely identified the *spiritus mundi* ('world spirit') of which all is composed, and by which all is connected, that serves as the medium for the practitioner of magic to manipulate reality.[670] Energeticism has been particularly alluring to Western occultists. Again, to quote von Stuckrad, "Wilhelm Ostwald is a prime example of the entanglement of scientific and religious discourses…his work explicitly contributes to the discourses of science, religion, vitalism, alchemy, philosophy,

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[667] See R. J. Delahunty, *Spinoza: The Arguments of the Philosophers* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 105; Amihud Gilead, "Substance, Attributes, and Spinoza's Monistic Pluralism," *The European Legacy* 3, no. 6 (1998): 1-14.

[668] I am translating the term 'virtuous principle' 理德 as 'physical potentiality' for that is how Wuguang defines it later on in the same text. See Wuguang, *Zhaolun*, 2.13.

[669] Wuguang, *Zhaolun*, 2.4 Original text: "宇宙不只是二元， 是多元的一元，無限多元的一元。現在的科學家說社會是多元化的，他們現在才這樣說，但佛祖早就說過了，是多元的一元，一元中的多元。為什麼說多元？好比一朵花，花是一，但花苞含無限多的種子，宇宙一的裡面也有無限多的理德，我們若用一個名詞來總括時，就是胎藏界曼荼羅。而胎藏界曼荼羅所列舉出來的只是一小部份而已，其他沒有列出的項目還有無限的多…"

[670] Wouter J. Hanegraaff, "How Magic Survived the Disenchantment of the World," *Religion* 33, no. 4 (2003): 363.

psychology and art."[671] This popularity is because energeticism "emphasized invisible or hidden phenomena, eliminated ontological dualism" and was seen as "merely a new form of the alchemical idea of transmutation."[672] Hanegraaff explains 'transmutation' within the context of Western esotericism as "a process by means of which man or nature may be changed into a higher spiritual state or even attain a divine condition,"[673] which conspicuously mirrors the notion of 'refining the elixir' at the heart of the Daoist alchemical techniques practiced by Wuguang. Thus, quite remarkably, Wuguang found monism and theories regarding energy to be titillating for the exact same reason. Moreover, as I demonstrated in Chapter 4, Wuguang utilized his interpretation of energeticism to explain possession, mediumship and astrology. His TOE, however, was pointedly Buddhist as he correlated this energetic magical medium with karma.

This universal energy is closely related to another philosophical and scientific theory that, like energeticism, has been misunderstood by both scientific historians and scholars of Buddhist Studies alike: the 'luminiferous æther' or simply 'ether.' The modern notion of the ether can be traced to Descartes,[674] who looked to the celestial bodies and asserted that there had to be a physical mechanism that caused their motion. As explained by Edmund Whittaker:

> Descartes regarded the world as an immense machine, operating by the motion and pressure of matter. 'Give me matter and motion,' he cried, 'and I will construct the universe.' A peculiarity which distinguished his system…was the rejection of all forms of action at a distance; he assumed that force cannot be communicated except by actual pressure or impact.[675]

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[671] Kocku von Stuckrad, *The Scientification of Religion* (Boston and Berlin: Walter de Gruyter Inc, 2014), 80.

[672] Mikhail Agursky, "An Occult Source of Socialist Realism," 249.

[673] Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Western Esotericism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 5.

[674] This is despite the fact that Hammerstrom claims that it originated "in the 1850s and 1860s." See Hammerstrom, *Science of Chinese Buddhism*, 256, n. 37.

[675] Edmund T. Whittaker, *A History of the Theories of Aether and Electricity from the Age of Descartes to the Close of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1910), 3.

The concept of 'action at a distance' Descartes is shown to have rejected here is the belief that material phenomena can affect one another without coming into physical contact. Descartes's rejection was based on his rigid ontological dualism that asserted that material and mental phenomena can only interact with phenomena of the same type. However, he observed that light from the celestial bodies shine down upon the Earth. This presented a quandary, since light does not seem to constitute a material substance. This led him to further speculate about the nature of matter itself and trifurcate it into luminous, transparent and dense forms. The first constituted what we think of today as 'light' while the last, dense matter, was the material on earth which we are all familiar with. Since luminous matter must be transmitted to dense matter via another material substance, he proposed that there exists a medium that is composed of an invisible material that connects the source of light to its destination. This medium was his luminiferous æther. This idea was later taken up by scientists, and although scholars of the humanities and sciences popularly claim that Einstein disproved the existence of the ether, he himself rejected action at a distance, and combined earlier etheric theories with his own. In an address at Leiden University in 1920, Einstein proclaimed, "Recapitulating: we may say that according to the general theory of relativity…there exists an ether."[676]

As noted, the belief in the ether was used by Chinese Buddhist modernists to harmonize Buddhism and science. It continues in widespread use amongst magically inclined Western thinkers.[677] Its religious appeal in the East and West of both past and present can be attributed to the fact that it "held a central position in nineteenth-century physical science whilst remaining

[676] As translated from the German in Galina Granek, "Einstein's Ether: Why did Einstein Come back to the Ether?" *Apeiron* 8, no. 3 (2001): 25.

[677] Mark Morrison, *Modern Alchemy*, passim. Its current popularity is evident in the work of a contemporary occultist already mentioned, Peter J. Caroll. See his *Liber Kaos* (Boston and York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1992), passim.

sufficiently mysterious to allow all kinds of metaphysical speculation regarding its relationship with the psyche and the soul."[678] For Wuguang, this ether was alive, as in reference to astrology we saw him state that "the universe is the living body of the *dharmakāya*…that encompasses all of the heavenly bodies…[which] are cells of the *tathāgata*.[679] Thus, just as his energeticism was particularly Buddhist, his ether was particularly Shingon, for he saw it as synonymous with Mahāvairocana. As an heir to Buddhist modernism, thermodynamics, Daoism and esoteric Buddhism, Wuguang asserted that the ether is the universal substratum that constitutes, connects, and permeates all phenomena. Energeticism was particulalry attractive to Wuguang since it enabled him to harmonize science, philosophy, Buddhism and Daoism.

These multiple similarities are easily attributable to the cross-continental flow of ideas characteristic of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, I would like to heuristically suggest that there is something deeper at work here related to the ideological contents of this discourse, rather than simply the contexts of its contributors: magic and reenchantment. The reason that magical thinkers gravitate towards energeticism in particular and monism in general is that they are aptly suited to a magical worldview in which invisible forces—mutable through ritualized formulae—fill the world. Rather than requiring an intellectual sacrifice, believing in them can be justified by science, the most powerful disenchanting force of all. Perceiving the universe as being singularly composed of an invisible, divine, magical force that science has labeled as 'energy' not only *re*-enchants the world, but in a sense enchants it anew by flipping science on its head and turning it into an enchanting, rather than disenchanting, force.

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[678] David Wright, *Translating Science: The Transmission of Western Chemistry into Late Imperial China, 1840-1900* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 2000), xxv.

[679] See note 456.

Section IV: Contributions

First and foremost, this study both deepens our understanding and broadens our knowledge of twentieth-twenty first East Asian religiosity. This was accomplished by bringing to light the life, exploits and doctrines of a pivotal twentieth-century Buddhist figure. As noted, Wuguang's importance is not limited to Taiwan, as he impacted modern Buddhism throughout the Chinese-speaking world (see Chapter 6), and even influenced the ideology of Shinzen Young in North America. This study makes additional contributions to multiple areas in the fields of Buddhist and East Asian Studies, the study of Taiwanese religion and showcases a the unexplored, reenchanted side of Buddhist modernism. Broadly speaking, this study also contributes to scholarly discourse concerning the disenchantment, and eventual reenchantment, of the world.

Buddhist, East Asian and Taiwanese Studies

Discovering how Wuguang acquired his eclecticism brought to light overlooked aspects of modern pan-Asian intellectual exchange. One example is the fact that energeticism was a key facet of Buddhist engagements with science not only in Japan, but also China and even possibly Tibet, where scholars have consistently misidentified this theory as Einstein's Special Relativity. The same is true for the self/other-power dichotomy. Although Michael Pye had previously noticed that it became a talking-point within modern Japanese Zen circles, its use as a way to distinguish 'religion' from 'superstition' had gone unnoticed.[680] Moreover, my isolation of 'magic' as a non-category within the East Asian secular-religious-superstitious trinary deepens our understanding of magically inclined Buddhist modernists have sought to reconcile magic

[680] See pages 70-73.

with modernity. I have thus nuanced our understanding of nineteenth-early twentieth century Buddhist engagements with Western typologies.

My examination of the MSBL and its related movements as competing religious suppliers vying over the same niche market of affluent, educated, magically-inclined Chinese-speaking religionists adds both breadth and depth to our understanding of contemporary East Asian religiosity. This is in addition to highlighting the hitherto unnoticed phenomenon of Zhenyan revivalism that continues to sweep across this corner of the world.

Taiwanese Religion

In addition to deepening our understanding of Sino-Japanese Buddhist modernism, this study has also brought to light the First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival as well as the historico-ideological factors that gave birth to it. This revealed the anti-superstitious nature of the Kōminka campaign and the career of Wuguang's master-father, Yanjing. Additionally, the early transmission of Tibetan Buddhism to Taiwan is still an under-explored area in which this study has helped advance our knowledge, due to Wuguang's involvement with Elder Gongga and her disciples. As scholarly discourse on contemporary Taiwanese Buddhism has been dominated by discussions on Humanistic Buddhism, it is my hope that this study will serve as a reminder that Humanistic Buddhism is just one of drop within the ocean of Taiwanese Buddhism, and that this is an area whose past and present both warrant future investigation.

Reenchanted Buddhist Modernism

My findings led me to conclude that Wuguang's doctrines represent a form of reenchanted Buddhist modernism. The relevance of this conclusion is not limited to the singular figure of Wuguang, but has wider repercussions. While previous studies focused on the survival and persistence of magic in modern popular religious communities, I additionally analyzed how

a cleric of 'high church' Buddhism intentionally reincorporated magic. Thus, I was able to discover how Buddhist ontology, epistemology and soteriology—whose comprehension thereof is beyond the scope or concern of the average religionist—continue to be reinterpreted to reconcile modernity, magic and high/popular forms of Buddhism. Even though I have largely focused my examination of reenchanted Buddhist modernism to Wuguang, this taxonomy has global applicability as it represents the most visibly vital state of contemporary Buddhism. This study thus breaks new ground and opens up an entirely unexplored area of contemporary East Asian religiosity by revealing the overlooked magical side of Buddhist modernism. There are undoubtedly many like-minded modernist Buddhists who have undertaken interpretive endeavors similar to that of Wuguang. Understanding these endeavors as reenchanted forms of Buddhist modernism—rather than fundamentalism[681]—by applying the framework I have applied to Wuguang will certainly deepen our understanding of contemporary East Asian religiosity and the ever-evolving relationship between Buddhism and modernity.

Reenchantment

This study additionally contributes to the broader issues regarding the disenchantment and reenchantment of religion. Disenchanted and reenchanted Buddhist modernism respectively represent but one religion's nexus of traditions that have been intentionally purged of magic in order to be harmonized with modernity, and later reenchanted in order to reclaim what had been lost. As explained, Wuguang's reviving Zhenyan in order to reenchant Buddhism strikingly resembles a number of Western, esoterically inclined reenchanters who challenged the disenchantment of the world by reviving dormant magical traditions during the 'Occult Revival,' which represents the surge of interest in occult traditions, first throughout Europe and then in the

[681] See pages 9-10.

New World, that began in the nineteenth century that saw renewed passion for the study of heterodox and arcane disciplines such as alchemy, astrology and various other forms of magic. It was during this time that various occult orders and organizations such as the Theosophical Society were formed.[682]

The relationship between the Occult Revival and disenchantment/reenchantment has been discussed by Wouter Hanegraaff. He explains that the birth of 'the occult' or 'Western esotericism' as a typological category "can be seen as a direct outcome of the disenchantment process as formulated by Weber"[683] and that it served as a "waste-basket category of 'rejected knowledge'"[684] and "superstitious arts"[685] such as divination, spirit communication and preternatural powers that "came to be reified as a positive counter-tradition of enchantment (or, eventually, re-enchantment)."[686] Thus, this "waste-basket category" served as a 'typological identity' for magic, and contained the means of reenchantment due to what had been deposited into it. This is in contrast to Wuguang's discursive context, where magic lacked a typological identity within the secular-religion-superstition trinary. As there was no 'typological other' for Wuguang to draw from, he sought out esoteric forms of Buddhism such as Karma Kagyu and Shingon, for they were examples of 'religion' whose enchanted magical contents remained intact. However, like his Western reenchanting counterparts, Wuguang sought out religious

[682] See James Santucci, "Theosophical Society," in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism,* ed. Wouter J. Hanegraaff (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 1114-1123.
[683] Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy*, 254.
[684] Ibid, 230.
[685] Ibid, 232.
[686] Ibid, 254.

technologies considered to be extinct. A number of Western occultists looked to Europe's pagan past, ancient Egypt[687] and the 'Mystic East,'[688] while Wuguang turned his gaze to Tang China.

These similarities and differences demonstrate that this study's relevance is not confined to Wuguang's East Asian context, as it contributes to our understanding of the ever-evolving relationship between modernity and magic across religious traditions. Although separated by geography, culture and language, the particular discourses that Wuguang and other magically inclined, science-embracing reenchanting figures lend their voices to are threads within a much larger, worldwide conversation.

Section V: Limitations and Questions for the Future

As this is the first nuanced investigation of Wuguang, it is anything but exhaustive. There are no doubt details related to his life, career and influence that I have yet to uncover. One example is his encounter with the Buddhist reformer Nan Huai-Chin, the nature, extant and time of which all remain a mystery.[689] Similarly, although I have identified six religious movements that owe their existence to Wuguang (five of which are detailed in Chapter 6), there very well may be additional important religious figures whom he greatly influenced. Moreover, the breadth of Wuguang's influence has precluded the possibility of thoroughly exploring the exact ways in which he impacted each figure who he influenced.

Given this study's limited focus, it did not touch upon other contemporary magically inclined modernist East Asian clerics or their followers. This prevented me from comparing

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[687] See Christopher I. Lehrich, *The Occult Mind: Magic in Theory and Practice* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 1-17.

[688] See Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'the Mystic East'* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 7-35 and passim.

[689] See page 117.

Wuguang's approach with like-minded figures. As it is obvious that magic has not disappeared from East Asian religiosity, searching for other religious figures who have attempted to reclaim magic in a sophisticated way should prove to be a worthwhile endeavor. Moreover, although I successfully identified specific aspects of disenchanted modernist Buddhist discourse that shaped Wuguang's doctrines, the presence of energeticism therein and other figures of the First Taiwanese Buddhist Revival certainly warrant further investigation. Lastly, this study was able to only touch upon a single voice within the global, modern discourse of reenchantment. I suggest that future inquiries into these areas should attempt to identify a number of phenomena highlighted throughout the course of this study. The role that self/other-power played in Japanese Buddhist engagements with modernity is most likely a subject worthy of its own study. The same is true for energeticism and etheric theories.

Wuguang's dizzying eclecticism rendered this study a microcosmic crossroads of the ever-unfolding, universal conversation concerning traditional beliefs and scientific advancement. Although undoubtedly unique in a number of ways, Wuguang and his beliefs were products of their time and location, and were directly informed by ideas that originated on the opposite side of the globe. It is my hope that this study will inspire scholars outside the areas of popular religion, anthropology and folk-lore to turn their attention to the more sophisticated, 'High-Church' side of magic in the modern world, and explore the magical side of religious modernism in general, and reenchanted Buddhist modernism in particular.

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Samenvatting

Boeddhisme Her-betoveren via Moderniserende Magie: De Filosofie en Wetenschap van 'Bijgeloof' van Goeroe Wuguang

Deze studie focust zich op het leven, de ondernemingen en de ideologie van Goeroe Wuguang (1818-2000), een eclectische en invloedrijke Taiwanese Boeddhistische persoonlijkheid die Taoïstische alchemie, verschillende vormen van Chinees, Japans en Tibetaans Boeddhisme, alsook biologie, thermodynamica, filosofie, theologie en occultisme bestudeerde. Dit heeft tot doel om te begrijpen wat er gebeurd wanneer een traditie 'gezuiverd' van haar 'mythische' elementen zich opnieuw belichaamd in de spanning tussen haar 'betoverde' verleden en 'wetenschappelijke' heden. Wuguang is beroemd in de Chinees-talige Boeddhistische wereld om het doen herleven van Zhenyan, een school van esoterisch Boeddhisme die volgens overlevering floreerde in China ten tijde van de Tang Dynastie. De academische gemeenschap heeft Wuguang grotendeels genegeerd, wat dit tot de eerste diepgaande verkenning maakt van deze persoon, wiens invloed echt wereldwijd is. Voortbouwend op David McMahans werk over Boeddhistisch modernisme, Jason Josephons seculier-religieus-bijgeloof *trinary*, wetenschappelijke discussies met betrekking tot Weberiaanse ont-tovering, en gebruik makend van het Religieus Economisch Model, betoog ik dat Wuguangs leer een bewust her-betoverde vorm van Boeddhistisch modernisme is gericht op het harmoniseren van magie met moderne wetenschap en filosofie. Terwijl de wetenschappelijke discussie over Aziatische magie in de moderne wereld beperkt is gebleven tot volksreligie, focust deze studie zich bovendien op het 'Hoge Kerk Boeddhisme' door Wuguangs magisch-wetenschappelijke

interpretatie van complexe Boeddhistische doctrine te analyseren. Dit werd bereikt door elk facet van Wuguangs eclecticisme te identificeren, de herkomst ervan te traceren, en Wuguangs innovatieve gebruik ervan te belichten. Primaire data werd verzameld door tekstueel en historisch bronnenonderzoek, alsook veldwerk ter plaatse, uitgevoerd van 2011 tot en met 2016.

Stellingen

1. Reenchanted Buddhist modernists are not attempting to revert Buddhism to an earlier state. Instead, they seek to make peace between Buddhism's enchanted past and modernized present.
2. Twentieth-century Taiwanese Buddhist intellectual discourse was directly influenced by the modernization efforts that were concurrently taking place in Japan and in China.
3. Japanese Buddhist sectarian boundaries came to play a large role in Taiwanese religious sectarian consciousness. These boundaries were first imposed upon the Taiwanese populace by Japanese colonialists, and then later adopted by the Taiwanese themselves.
4. Energeticism was popular among Buddhist intellectuals in Japan, China and Taiwan.
5. Although a Buddhist, Wuguang's personal religiosity more closely resembled Daoism and Chinese folk-religion.
6. The philosophical concepts and scientific theories that Wuguang used to reenchant Buddhism were ones that had been popular in earlier modernist Chinese and Japanese Buddhist circles.
7. Wuguang's religious exploits can be understood as a quest for the attainment and understanding of magical powers.
8. The living founders of five Buddhist communities invoke Wuguang as their teacher to legitimate their own religious authority.
9. Divine revelation and bouts of psychosis can be difficult to distinguish from one another.
10. Doctrinal, philosophical and scientific explanations regarding the mechanics behind magic need to be taken more seriously by academic scholars of religion.
11. Regularly driving in Taiwan could strengthen a libertarian's dedication to the axiom "taxation is theft," for Taiwanese traffic is an example of a government's failure to keep its citizens safe through regulation. Moreover, a Taiwan without public roads might not be such a bad thing.
12. Fieldwork and textual analysis can enrich each other.

Curriculum Vitae

Cody Bahir was born in Kentucky, USA on April 7, 1979. He earned his Bachelor's degree at the American Jewish University (former University of Judaism) in 2003. He later completed a Master's Degree at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 2005, and another at the California Institute of Integral Studies in 2013. From 2011-2016, he lived in Taiwan conducting fieldwork at various Buddhist, Daoist and folk-religious communities throughout the island.

Mr. Bahir has held faculty positions at American Jewish University, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Skyline College and Fooyin University of Science and Technology. He has recently accepted a postdoctoral position at the Institute of Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.