CONFUCIAN PURISM AND HAN LEARNING: HUI DONG'S COMMENTARY ON TAISHANG GANYINGPIAN

BY

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Abstract

This thesis examines Hui Dong's commentary on *Taishang Ganyingpian*. Under the influence of Confucian purism, writing a commentary on a Daoist morality book seems improbable for Hui Dong, the most influential scholar of Confucian Classical learning in mid-Qing China. On the contrary, I argue that Hui's commentary can be analyzed to illustrate the profound impact of Confucian purism and Han learning. First, a close examination of *Taishang Ganyingpian* and its prototype indicates that they contain a great number of Confucian elements despite its Daoist origins. The major divergence between Hui Dong and Song scholars is hidden behind the similar ethical codes. I argue that driven by Confucian purism, in the commentary Hui sought to exclude heterodox texts such as Buddhist Sutras and Neo-Confucian texts. He reaffirms the ethical values in the treatise with quotations from the Confucian Classics. They are now authenticated as Confucian values uncontaminated in Hui's purist view. Hui Dong also adopted Han scholars' idea to explain the core concept "*ganying*" of Taishang Ganyingpian, which shows a major divergence from Song scholars. By studying Hui's commentary, we can gain a better understanding of the impact of Confucian purism and Han learning on Hui Dong's scholarship and moral values beyond Classical learning.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This is a study of the Qing scholar Hui Dong's 惠栋 (1697–1758) commentary on a famous Daoist morality book, *Taishang Ganyingpian* 太上感应篇. As a renowned Han Learning scholar and Confucian purist, Hui's commentary on a "heterodox text raises important questions about the impact of purism on Qing thought. As Kai-wing Chow points out, the late Ming witnessed the emergence of Confucian purism as a response to powerful currents of syncretism. Holding syncretism responsible for various social and political problems, late Ming and early Qing scholars, sought to recover the "original" Confucianism by excluding heterodoxy, such as Daoism and Buddhism in Confucian Classics.[1] Confucianism purism continued unabated in driving Classical scholarship through the mid-Qing when Hui Dong wrote the commentary. Since *Taishang Ganyingpian* is presumably a Daoist text, Hui's commentary seems at odds with Confucian purism. By analyzing Hui's commentary and comparing it with other commentaries, this paper will argue that Confucian purism is evident in Hui's commentary. It will also prove that the influence of Confucian purism and Han Learning was not restricted to Classical learning but also had a significant impact on Hui Dong's view of ethical values. The paper is divided into two parts. The first part will try to answer why a Daoist morality seems acceptable to Hui Dong since he is in favor of Confucian purism. The second part will examine the influence of Confucian purism and Han Learning on Hui's commentary and try to explain how popular morality was impacted by shifting focus of Confucian thought. This paper will also demonstrate how he, as a Han learning scholar, succeeded in proving that *Taishang Ganyingpian* is a Confucian text.

[1] Kai-wing Chow: *Publishing Culture, and Power in Early Modern China,* (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 8.

1.1 The Prevalence of *Taishang Ganyingpian*

Taishang Ganyingpian immediately received attention from Confucian scholars after its publication. The great Neo-Confucian master Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 is believed to be the first scholar who wrote a preface to the book. In the preface, Zhen Dexiu introduced his new interest of publishing morality books which was motivated by his unfortunate political career. The morality books he mentioned are *Daxue Zhangju* 大学章句, *Xiaoxue Zixun* 小学字训, and the Diamond Sutra. However, he also pointed out the weakness of these book, saying that Confucian books are for scholars, not commoners, while the Diamond Sutra is esoteric. Compared with them, *Taishang Ganyingpian* explicitly expounds the results of good deeds and wrongdoings, making it a perfect guidebook for everyone. [2] In the Ming dynasty, scholars such as Li Zhi 李贽, Zhou Rudeng 周汝登, Mao Qizong 冒起宗[3] and Gao Panlong 高攀龙[4] all showed keen interest in *Taishang Ganyingpian.* As Hu Shi aptly pointed out: "*The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit* and *Taishang Ganyingpian* are far more influential than *Jinsi Lu* 近思录, *Xingli Daquan* 性理大全 or *Chuanxi Lu* 传习录 among literati-officials."[5] Some Ming and Qing emperors also enthusiastically promoted the book. The Jiajing Emperor also wrote a preface to this book, in which he said: "(This book) can not only supplement the Confucian

[2] See Zhen, Dexiu, and E. Yang. *Xishan Xian Sheng Zhen Wenzhong Gong Wen Ji: 55 Juan, Mu Lu: 2 Juan* (Harvard-Yenching Library Chinese Rare Books Digitization Project-Collected Works. China: S.n., 1665) vol. 27.

[3] See Sakai Tadao, *Zhongguo Shanshu Yanjiu*(Najing: Jiangsu Renmin Press, 2010), 23; You Zi'an, *Quanhua Jinzhen: Qingdai Shanshu Yanjiu*(Tainjin:Tianjin Renmin Press,1994), 102.

[4] Wu Zhen, *Mingmo Qingchu Quanshansixiang Yanjiu* (Taibei: Guoli Taiwandaxue Chubanzhongxin, 2012), 83.

[5] Hu Shi, *Weiren Yu Weixue: Hu Shi Yanlunji* (Beijing: Zhongguo Fangzhi Press, 2015), 233.

Classics, but also help promote moralization. That is why it is of great importance."[6] The Shunzhi emperor commanded the book to be printed and given to government officials as well as degree holders.[7]

As *Taishang Ganyingpian* became widely acknowledged, a number of commentaries had been written by the early Qing. Although some of them were equally popular as Hui's commentary, scholars were impressed by Hui Dong's commentary for its rich citations from Confucian Classics. Many publishers, editors and scholars praised Hui's commentary for its high academic achievement. Hui Dong's commentary easily became the popular version among literati-officials. They also integrated Hui's comments into their new editions.[8] As Lü Haihuan 吕海寰 put it, "Every literati-official has one copy at home and value it highly."[9] Lü may have exaggerated the popularity of Hui's commentary a little bit, but it was undoubtedly one of the most popular morality books among literati-officials.

Certainly, the prevalence of Hui Dong's version does not automatically justify the significance of this study because there were several commentaries that were just as popular as Hui's version.[10] The uniqueness of Hui's commentary is that it echoes the increasing dominance of Han scholarship at his time. Hui's rejection of Daoism and Buddhism in his commentary makes it even more unique. Most of the morality books in late imperial China were syncretic. To be precise, they were composed under the combined influence of

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[6] Chen Xia, *Daojiao Quanshanshu Yanjiu*(Chengdu: Bashu Press, 1999), 43.

[7] Sakai Tadao, *Zhongguo Shanshu Yanjiu*, 555.

[8] For example, *Taishang Ganyingpian Hezhu, Taishang Ganyingpian Zuanyi,* and *Ciguanfenxieben Taishang Ganyingpian Yijingjianzhu,* etc.

[9] Sakai Tadao, *Zhongguo Shanshu Yanjiu*, 563-571.

[10] For example, *Ganyingpian Tushuo* and *Taishang Ganyingpian Zhijiang*.

Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism. According to Sakai, it was common for readers in the late imperial China to pay respect to Buddha, or Daoist and Confucian deities before they opened *Taishang Ganyingpian*.[11] Hui's commentary, however, explicitly excludes Daoist or Buddhist interpretation of *Taishang Ganyingpian* despite the book's Daoist origin. This reflects the impact of purism since the late Ming dynasty. Hui's version quickly became popular and was reprinted many times in the next two hundred years. Before we further analyze his commentary, we must study the expansion of printing in late imperial China that made this "morality books movement"[12] possible.

1.2 Printing and Distribution of Morality Books

Although the purpose of printing morality books is not to pursue profits, the expense is still a key factor in the popularity of morality books. According to Joseph McDermott's study, with the unprecedented boom of imprints in the sixteenth century, the number of texts in print exceeded manuscripts for the first time. [13] Thanks to the rapid growth of commercial publishing since the sixteenth century, the expense of printing morality books became more affordable for ordinary sponsors.

The average cost of producing one copy could be rather low in late imperial China. According to Kai-wing Chow's statistics, the expenses of printing were not too high in the late Ming in the Lower Yangtze area. Cheap pear woodblocks cost as low as 0.03 tael per block.

[11] Sakai Tadao, *Zhongguo Shanshu Yanjiu,* 576.

[12] Ibid., 481.

[13] Joseph P. McDermott, *A Social History of the Chinese Book: Books and Literati Culture in Late Imperial China (*Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press ,2006), 76.

The average cost for cutting one hundred characters was only 0.037 tael. Considering the price of the bamboo paper that was commonly used in commercial publishing was only 0.026 tael per one hundred in the mid-seventeenth century, the cost of printing must be relatively low.[14] Although the statistics were from the seventeenth century, by comparing the expenses of printing with the wages of commoners, we can safely conclude that the cost of printing were not too high as early as the seventeenth century.

A record of the expenses for publishing a morality book in the late Qing dynasty can also prove the comparatively low cost of printing. *Ganyingpian Tushu* 感应篇图说, a commentary on *Taishang Ganyingpian* that was first published in the early Qing, is an eight-volume book with hundreds of illustrations. The entire book consists of 261,418 characters. In comparison, the Four Books have 52,706 characters, just about one fifth of it. Carving these characters costed 196.063 tael. Drawing and carving the two hundred and sixteen illustrations costed 123.11 tael. One hundred copies were printed with high-quality white paper, and other three hundred and thirty-five copies were printed with *shan* paper (山纸). The expense of paper and labor was 175.968 tael. The total cost was 526.308 tael and 435 copies were produced. Since it is an eight-volume book, each volume costed approximately 0.15 tael in the late nineteenth century in Guangzhou. There were one hundred and forty-nine sponsors in total. As a result, publishing morality books for charitable purpose was not very expensive at that time.[15] Besides, the woodblocks can be used to produce more copies in the future. In most cases, the blocks were kept in a bookstore, and anyone could use the blocks free of charge to print more

[14] Kai-wing Chow: *Publishing Culture, and Power in Early Modern China,* (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 19-55.

[15] Sakai Tadao, *Zhongguo Shanshu Yanjiu,* 563-571.

copies. They only needed to pay for the cost of paper and labor.

Most morality books are much thinner than *Ganyingpian Tushuo.* The main body of *Taishang Ganyingpian* merely contains 1,277 characters. Since carving 261,418 characters cost 196.063 tael, it is safe to say that carving the entire text of *Taishang Ganyingpian* would cost less than 1 tael. If we use Chow's statistics, the cost is even lower than 0.5 tael. Consisting of 134 pages, Hui Dong's commentary is thinner than any volume of *Ganyingpian Tushu*. There are about 200 characters in one page. As a result, carving Hui's commentary will only cost around 20 tael or even less. It is an affordable price for sponsors who pay for the carving. For those who use existing woodblocks, they only need to pay for the paper and labor. As for short essays like *Yinzhiwen* 阴骘文, the printing cost must be extremely low. As the expense of printing was quite low, sponsors were able to print and donate more copies at low cost. It accounts for the expansion of morality books since the late Ming.

As the purpose is not about pursuing commercial profit, the distribution of morality books is quite different from commercial prints. Wealthy people sponsor the carving and printing while poor people can also participate in it by paying for the cost of a few copies. Among the 149 sponsors of *Ganyingpian Tushuo,* 47 people only donated 0.72 tael, which is even less than the cost of one copy.[16] The morality books are usually given out for free, and there are several ways to do it. Donors can give them to their friends or relatives as a gift. They can also pay peddlers or mailmen, so that they will help distribute the books. If their target audience is literati-officials, they can leave the books in bookstores, or give them away during the civil service examinations when literati-officials from everywhere come to the city.

The nature of morality books determines that the sponsors will not spend much money

[16] Ibid., 570.

on transportation fees. Therefore, most morality books were only distributed locally. As Catherine Bell points out, most editions of *Taishang Ganyingpian* only circulated primarily within defined geographic areas, but some editions such as that of the renowned scholar Hui Dong may be reprinted in different networks.[17] According to Hui Dong's own preface, the book was initially published with a friend's help in the Qianlong period in Jiangsu Province. Then in the Daoguang period, it was reprinted in Zhejiang Province. It was also reprinted several times in Guangdong Province in the late Qing. We can also find revised editions published in Beijing and Hubei.[18] Evidence supports Bell's speculation about the popularity of Hui Dong's commentary.

1.3 Syncretism, Confucian Purism and Han Learning

Morality books are always under the influence of current thought. Syncretism in the Ming and Qing dynasty had a major impact on morality books. This term refers to the merging of the three major teachings—Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism—in China. The tendency can be traced back to the Six Dynasties Period.[19] In the late Ming, with the efforts of some scholars of Yangming school, morality books became unprecedentedly syncretic.[20] Wang

[17] Catherine Bell, "Printing and Religion in China: Some Evidence from the *Taishang Ganying Pian,"* Journal of Chinese Religions, 20:1(1994), 183.

[18] See Hui Dong, *Taishang Ganyingpain Jianzhu* (Kyoto: Zhongwen Chubanshe, 1970); Hui Dong, Luo Dunyan, *Ciguan Fenxiuben Taishang Ganyingpian Yinjingjianzhu* in *Zangwai Daoshu*(Chengdu: Bashu Chubanshe, 1992); Wang Guichen, "Ti Shangbailuzhaiben *Taishangganyingpian*" in *Keju Conggao*(Guangzhou: Guangdong Remin Chubanshe, 2011); Hui Dong, *Taishang Ganyingpain Jianzhu* in *Yueyatang Congshu* compiled by Wu Chongyao.

[19] Kenneth Dean, *Lord of Three in One: The Spread of a Cult in Southeast China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 21.

[20] Sakai Tadao, *Zhongguo Shanshu Yanjiu,* 415.

Yangming's disciple, Wang Ji 王畿 explicitly stated: " What is called *yinguo* 因果 (karmic retribution) by Buddhists is what we Confucians call *baoying* 报应." Years later, Gao Panlong 高攀龙 restated it in his preface to *Taishang Ganyingpian*: "What is called *yinguo* 因果 (karmic retribution) by Buddhists is what we Confucians call *ganying* 感应."[21] Here Gao Panlong replaced *baoying* with *ganying,* linking it to an early Confucian idea in the *Book of Changes*. As the core concept of *Taishang Ganyingpian* and many other morality books, *ganying* was considered equivalent to Buddhist retribution by scholars who were in favor of syncretism.

Syncretism has always been influential on morality books though it is widely criticized by purist scholars. The term "purism", according to Kai-wing Chow, refers to the efforts of Confucians in late imperial China to purify contaminated Confucianism and rediscover the original, authentic Confucian teachings. Chow argues that the erosion of Confucian social ethics in the Ming dynasty led to didactic responses, including didacticism, syncretism, and populism. However, they did not solve the crisis of the Confucian order, and the belief in the innate goodness of human beings proved to be unreliable. Scholars turned to ancient rituals for the moral standards. The study of ancient rituals then developed into the demands for "original" Confucian Classics. As a result, the late Ming witnessed the rise of Confucian ritualism and purism. By denouncing heterodoxy, namely Buddhism and Daoism, and attaching great importance to ritual practice and moral cultivation, scholars tried to rectify thoughts and revive orthodox Confucianism. [22]

[21] Wu Zhen, *Mingmo Qingchu Quanshansixiang Yanjiu*, 83.

[22] Kai-wing Chow, *The Rise of Confucian Ritualism in Late Imperial China: Ethics, Classics and Lineage, (*Taipei: SMC publishing, 1996), 8

Since its emergence in the late Ming, purism continued to influence the scholarship of Han Learning scholars like Hui Dong in the mid-Qing. Many scholars were convinced that Confucianism had been contaminated by Buddhism and Daoism, causing the lack of moral sense. Neo-Confucians, especially Yangming scholars who were in favor of syncretism, were blamed for the collapse of Ming. Therefore, Qing scholars such as Hui Dong started to deliberately challenge some Confucian ideas that they believed were originally Buddhist and Daoist. Since Buddhism became influential after the Han dynasty, Han scholarship was considered as a reliable source of "original" Confucianism prior to any possible influence from Buddhism. As a result, Han scholarship attracted great attention of Qing scholars. Hui Dong, as a Han Learning scholar, rediscovered the value of Han scholarship. The influence of purism and Han learning can be found not only in Hui Dong's famous study on the *Book of Changes,* but also his commentary on *Taishang Ganyingpian.* By studying Hui's commentary, we can understand the impact of Confucian purism on Qing thought beyond Confucian Classical studies.

1.4 Current Studies

The major change in Confucian thought in the late Ming and Qing dynasty have received many scholars' attention. Ying-shih Yü considers it as a shift from anti-intellectualism to intellectualism. The Han Learning scholars' obsession with precise knowledge of Confucian Classics reflects the rise of Confucian intellectualism.[23] Benjamin Elman examines the transition from Neo-Confucian philosophy to Qing philology in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. He points out the epistemological characteristics of evidential learning and argues that

[23] Ying-shih Yü, *Lishi Yu Sixiang* (Taibei: Lianjing,1976), 91.

the emerging evidential scholarship signaled an intellectualist turn in Confucian discourse.[24] As we can see, both scholars focus on the Classical Learning, intellectualism, and epistemology. However, Han Learning scholars' devotion to establishing new social order is largely neglected. Kai-wing Chow interprets the intellectual change in terms of the rise of Confucian ritualism and purism. The literati-officials in late Ming and Qing dynasty placed the ritual in the pivotal position of their approach to social order and moral cultivation. To rediscover the ancient rituals, they must exclude all heterodox elements in Confucian Classics to find "original" Confucianism.[25] This theory aptly connects moral cultivation with the study of Confucian Classics. As a result, Hui Dong's commentary on a morality book is not his personal interest but should be considered in the context of ritualism and purism.

Some current studies on morality books can also help us understand the impact of purism and Han learning in Hui's commentary. Sakai Tadao's study shows how the state got involved in printing morality books. He specifically draws our attention to the connection between the Sacred Edict and morality books. Sakai points out that in late imperial China, morality books were commonly used as supplementary materials in teaching the Sacred Edict. Many editors attached the Sacred Edict or other imperial edicts to the morality books. [26] These editors used the edicts as government endorsement of their morality books. On the contrary, Hui's commentary resorts only to Classics. Hui Dong claimed that *Taishang Ganyingpian* is not different from the teaching of the Confucian sages because the chief source of its thoughts is *Baopuzi* 抱朴子, which appeared in the Wei-Jin period before Buddhism became influential.

[24] Benjamin Elman, From Philosophy to Philology: Intellectual and Social Aspects of Change in Late Imperial China (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1984), 37-48.

[25] Kai-wing Chow, 1-14.

[26] Sakai Tadao, *Zhongguo Shanshu Yanjiu,* 484-527, 552-579.

The implication is that though *Baopuzi* is a typical Daoist classic, its resemblance to Classical Confucianism and purity make it the perfect morality book for Confucians.[27] As a result, it seems safe to say that in Hui Dong's mind, the value of the text does not lie in the official endorsement but the book's exclusion of Buddhism and connection to original Confucianism. It clearly reflects the impact of purism.

Evelyn Rawski believes that a shared appreciation of popular literary works created a channel that allowed the simplified and transmuted philosophical thoughts find their way to commoners.[28] While Rawski suggests unity, Cynthia Brokaw regards a certain kind of morality book *gongguoge* as elites' responses to the dramatic socioeconomical changes in the late Ming.[29] Thus, morality books were used as a means of redefining social status and class boundaries. Catherine Bell also points out that "these texts seem to affirm the traditional social hierarchy."[30] Admittedly, shared ideas and values transcended social strata in the late imperial China: there is no difference between the text that Hui Dong comments on and the moral lessons that the gentry taught to the peasants. However, the authors are free to create their own discourse. Not only the authors, the editors, the publishers, the preachers even the audience

[27] By Classical Confucianism, I mean Confucianism without Buddhist influence, namely, Confucianism in the Han, Wei-Jin or earlier period. On the emergence of a common popular culture, see Evelyn S. Rawski, "Economic and Social Foundations of Late Imperial China," in *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, ed. David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan and Evelyn S. Rawski (Berkeley : University Of California Press, 1985.) and also Robert E. Hegel, "Distinguishing Levels of Audiences For Ming-Ch'ing Vernacular Literature: A Case Study," in the same book. On morality books' role in it, see Sakai Tadao, *Zhongguo Shanshu Yanjiu.*

[28] Evelyn S. Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1979),124.

[29] Cynthia Brokaw. *The Ledgers of Merit and Demerit: Social Change and Moral Order In Late Imperial China* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991),3.

[30] Catherine Bell, "Printing and Religion in China: Some Evidence from the *Taishang Ganying Pian"*,185.

could interpret the same text according to their own interests and perspectives. The ethical codes may be seemingly the same, but different people usually have different understanding of them.

Wu Zhen has noted that Qing scholars in general believed in spirits and demons as well as other spiritual beliefs. They included evidential scholars such as Dai Zhen 戴震, Qian Daxin 钱大昕, and Zhang Xuecheng 章学诚. Wu Zhen notices evidential scholars' interest and genuine belief in morality books, however, arguing that it contradicts the "scientific spirit" of the evidential learning.[31] Wu claims that there was separation between the Han Learning scholars' life and scholarship. To be precise, in Wu Zhen's view, though Han Learning scholars modeled themselves on Han scholars in terms of scholarship, still they had to adopt Song scholars' ethical codes in real life.[32] This explanation oversimplifies the Qing evidential school and neglects the diversity within it. As discussed above, Han Learning scholars' view of moral cultivation was linked to Confucian ritualism and purism. As a result, the idea of separation between scholarship and life is questionable.

By examining Hui Dong's commentary on *Taishang Ganyingpian*, this paper will reveal the continuity and divergence between the scholarship of Hui Dong and Neo-Confucian scholars. I will also try to explain why Confucian purism and the Han Learning should take credit for the divergence. In next chapter, this paper aims to answer these questions: Why a Han Learning scholar like Hui Dong was interested in a presumably Daoist morality book? Is it at odds with the principle of Confucian purism?

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[31] Many Neo-Confucian scholars frankly admit their doubts of the true value of morality books and only consider it as an expedient means of spreading morality books. See Wu Zhen, *Mingmo Qingchu Quanshansixiang Yanjiu*, 83-89.

[32] Wu Zhen, *Mingmo Qingchu Quanshansixiang Yanjiu*, 507-523.

CHAPTER 2: TAISHANG GANYINGPIAN AS A SOURCE OF CONFUCIAN MORAL STANDARDS

The reason why Hui Dong wrote a commentary on *Taishang Ganyinpian* needs to be examined. According to the preface written by himself, Hui wrote the commentary primarily because of his mother's illness. When his mother fell badly ill in the early Yongzheng period, Hui attended to her carefully and prayed to the gods. He promised to write a commentary on *Taishang Ganyingpian* if his mother would recover from the illness. His prayers seemed to be heard because his mother became well soon. The whole thing looks like a coincidence. However, the question is: Why writing a commentary on *Ganyingpan* was the first thing that came to Hui Dong's mind when he prayed for his mother's health? This chapter will try to explain why for Hui Dong writing a commentary on *Taishang Ganyingpian* is a way of thanking the gods

2.1 *Baopuzi* and *Taishang Ganyingpian*

The connection between *Taishang Ganyingpian* and the inner chapters of *Baopuzi* is highlighted by Hui Dong in his preface. By doing so, he traced the thoughts of *Taishang Ganyingpian* back to the Han dynasty when Confucianism was completely free of Buddhist influence. In the preface, Hui contended that Daoism before Wei-Jin period was not different from teaching of the Confucian sages. Another evidential scholar, Qian Daxin, also explicitly pointed out that the gist of this book was in accordance with Confucius's teaching and was totally different from reincarnation and karmic retribution in Buddhism.[33] However, as a Daoist

[33] Qian Daxin, *Jia Ding Qian Daxin Quanji* vol. 9 (Nanjing: Fenghuang Chubanshe, 2016), 390.

classic, why *Baopuzi* was acceptable to them?

The *Baopuzi* was completed by Ge Hong 葛洪 in 320 A.D., the Eastern Jin period. This book "deals with Daoist subjects, especially immortality and alchemy."[34] Seeking immortality through alchemy is a common Daoist method that is never appreciated by the Confucians. However, aside from alchemy, *Baopuzi* claims that doing good deeds is also an indispensable part to be immortal. It states that those who want to become an immortal should give top priority to loyalty, filiality, harmony, obedience, humanness, and sincerity. Those who are obsessed with alchemy and do not accumulate enough contributions by doing good will never become an immortal.[35] *Taishang Ganyingpian* copied from *Baopuzi* the passage: "He who would seek to become an Immortal of Heaven ought to give the proof of 1,300 good deeds; and he who would seek to become an Immortal of Earth should give the proof of three hundred (欲求天仙者，当立一千三百善；欲求地仙者，当立三百善). "[36]

"*Weizhi*"微旨 is another chapter of *Baopuzi* that is cited in *Taishang Ganyingpian*. There is a paragraph in which the author talks about the taboos of seeking immortality. Hundreds of specific things that are sanctioned here. In the very beginning of the paragraph. Ge Hong introduces the idea of *sanshi* 三尸, which are the "three Spirits of the recumbent body which reside within a man's person."[37] *Sanshi* will ascend to the court of Heaven occasionally and report men's wrongdoings. This part is completely copied from a divination book (*weishu*

[34] William Theodore de Bary, Irene Bloom, Wing-tsit Chan, Joseph Adler, *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 399.

[35] Wang Ming, *Baopuzi Neipian Jiaoshi* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1988), 53.

[36] James Legge trans., "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions" in The Sacred Books of the East (Vol.40) ed. Max Muller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), 238.

[37] James Legge, "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions," 236.

纬书) called *Hetu Jimingfu* 河图纪命符 in the Han dynasty.[38] *Ganyingpian* not only adopts *sanshi* but also adds *santai* 三台(the deities of the three stars called *tai*)and *zaojun* 灶神 (deity of hearth), which can both be found in ancient books that were completed in or before the Han dynasty. They are all "spirits that take account of men's transgressions, and, according to the lightness or gravity of their offences, take away from their term of life."[39] This is probably the only supernatural part in *Taishang Ganyingpian* that explicitly refers to the existence of spirits and deities. This is probably why Hui Dong felt obliged to explain it in his preface. He argued that the existence of those spirits and deities is corroborated by Confucian Classics and Commentaries, and *Ganyingpian* is the oldest morality book (in terms of source of the thoughts).[40]

Following the introduction is a list of wrongdoings, and most of them can also be found in *Ganyingpian.* The first part of bad deeds in *Baopuzi* specifically targets literati-officials. Here are some examples: "bestows rewards on the unrighteous and inflicts punishments on the guiltless; kill men in order to get their wealth, and overthrows men to get their offices; slay those who have surrendered and massacres those who have made their submission;" "casts the law aside and receives bribes; holds the right to be wrong and the wrong to be right (赏及非义，刑及无辜；杀人取财，倾人取位。诛降戮俘……弃法受贿；以直为曲，以曲为直)."[41] Most of them concerned sanctions against corruption of the official. Therefore, this part

[38] Shanghai Guji Chubanshe ed., *Weishu Jicheng* (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1994), 2117.

[39] James Legge, "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions," 235.

[40] Hui Dong, *Taishang Ganyingpain Jianzhu,*31.

[41] James Legge, "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions," 239.

is acceptable to Confucian scholars.

Then there are some wrongdoings related to environment, including “shoots birds”, “hurts the pregnant womb and breaks eggs”, “burning the woods in hunting during spring and summer (弹射飞鸟，刳胎破卵，春夏燎猎)”. These deeds go against the principle of sustainable development promoted by Confucians. Mencius says: “If closed-meshed nets are not allowed in the pools and ponds, there will be more fish and turtles than can be eaten. And if axes are allowed in the mountains and forests only in the appropriate seasons, there will be more timber than can be used.”[42] Xunzi also shares the same idea. The purpose of conserving natural resources is to continuously provide the people with living materials, which is considered as the foundation of benevolent government by Confucians.[43] Another less utilitarian explanation is concerned with compassion or empathy. Hui’s commentary quotes *huashu* 化书: “There is not much difference between beasts, insects and human. Beasts and insects also have dwellings, husband-wife relation, father-child bond, joy of living and fear of death. A crow will feed its parents when they are old, and that is what we call benevolence; A falcon does not hunt pregnant animals, and that is what we call righteousness; Bees have a king, and that is what we call *li* 礼;[44] A lamb bends its front legs when it is fed by its mother, and that is what we call intelligence.[45] A pheasant has only one spouse in its life, and that is what

[42] William Theodore de Bary, Irene Bloom, Wing-tsit Chan, Joseph Adler, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 118.

[43] Confucius says that enough food, sufficient military force and the confidence of people are the most important things for government. See *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 115. Xunzi also believes that satisfying people’s desire is what the sage-kings aim to do. See *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 174.

[44] *Li* is usually translated as ritual, but here it apparently refers to the institutional order of society.

[45] The original text use *zhi* 智, which means intelligence, but the example is commonly used

we called devotion (禽兽虫蚁之于人也何异。有巢穴之居；有夫妇之配；有父子之性；有死生之情。乌反哺为仁；隼悯胎为义；蜂有君为礼；羊跪乳为智；雉不再接为信。) . ”[46] By assuming other living creatures are not so different from human, and they also have feelings and the five virtues that are appreciated by Confucians, he tries to evoke people's empathy and compassion. As Confucius says: "What you would not want for yourself, do not do to others." [47] In Mencian philosophy, compassion is the beginning of humaneness.[48] It is the fundamental element of the good nature of human beings.

The next part of *Baopuzi* depicts bad behaviors in society, such as "conceals the excellences of the others", "encroach on what others love", "destroys the growing crops of others", "admits the water or raise fire", "injures the implements of others to deprive them of the things they require to use", "borrows and does not return", "Uses a short cubit, a narrow measure, light weights, and a small pint" or "mixes spurious articles with the genuine and (thus) amasses illicit gain" (蔽人之善；夺人所爱；败人苗稼；决放水火；损人器物，以穷人用；假借不还；轻称小斗，狭幅短度，以伪杂真，采取奸利。) [49] Unlike the first part, it does not specifically target literati-officials. Most of the bad behaviors involve violation of others' interests, rights or properties. The last two items specifically target merchants, who are generally believed to be dishonest by legalists and some Confucians. It is worth noting that the pursuit of commercial profit is not considered essentially evil. Only dishonest gain is

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as an example of the gratitude to one's parents.

[46] Hui Dong, *Taishang Ganyingpain Jianzhu*, 53.

[47] William Theodore de Bary, Irene Bloom, Wing-tsit Chan, Joseph Adler, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 62.

[48] Ibid., 129.

[49] James Legge, "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions," 241-242.

condemned.

The quoted part of *Baopuzi* has three major themes. First, what wrongdoings you should avoid if you do not want to be a corrupt official. Second, people should conserve natural resources to provide enough living materials for everyone. It is the foundation of a stable society. Or it can also be about having compassion for other living being, which is the beginning of humanness according to Mencius. The last part concerns the lawful rights and interest of the people and public welfare. As we can see, the values promoted in the text are no other than the values that we need to build a stable social order. It does not contradict any Confucian doctrine. On the contrary, it looks more Confucian than Daoist since it is some specific social norms not the transcendental Way. As a result, that is why Hui Dong believes that *Baopuzi* or at least part of *Baopuzi* was not at odds with the teaching of the sages.

2.2 *Taishang Ganyingpian* As a Confucian Text

As discussed above, the prototype of *Taishang Ganyingpian* has already showed some Confucian characteristics. *Taishang Ganyingpian* further strengthens and develops them, making the Confucian elements even more obvious. I will examine the modifications *Taishang Ganyingpian* made and try to explain why they should be regarded as an attempt to underscore Confucian elements.

Both *Baopuzi* and *Ganyingpian* have an introduction of the spirits that are responsible for recording and reporting people's evildoings. Compared with *Baopuzi*, *Ganyingpian* adds *santai* 三台 (the deities of the three stars called *tai*) and *zaoshen* 灶神 (deity of hearth) with *sanshi* 三尸. *Sanshi* is usually considered as a Daoist concept. A renowned Classical scholar, Yu Yue 俞樾 pointed out that *sanshi* is not recorded in any Confucian Classics and

Commentaries (三尸之说不见经传).[50] On the other hand, Yu Yue traced *santai* back to *Zhouguan* 周官, one of the Confucian Classics. He also argued that the sacrifice to *zaoshen* is one of the Five Sacrifices that ancient kings made.[51] Thus, compared with *sanshi*, the two newly added spirits seem to be more acceptable to Confucian scholars since they can be found in Confucian classics.

Then the two books both elaborate on the basic principles of being good. *Baopuzi* starts with "(if a man wants to become an immortal,) he will amass virtue and accumulate deeds of merit. He will feel kindly towards (all) creatures (积德立功，慈心于物) ." *Ganyingpian* keeps it but starts by saying: "If his way is right, he should go forward in it; if wrong, he should withdraw form it (是道则进，非道则退)."[52] Confucius says: "Devote yourself to strange doctrines and principles, and there is sure to be pain and suffering (攻乎异端，斯害也已)."[53] Hui Dong quotes *Xunzi*: "Eyes focused on two things at once are not sharp. Ears tuned to two things at once do not hear clearly (目不能两视而明，耳不能两听而聪)."[54] Therefore, the first thing is to distinguish what is the right way. Aside from accumulating deeds of merit, *Ganyingpian* gives other standards of the right way. It says: "He will be loyal, filial, loving to his younger brothers, and submissive to his elder. He will make himself correct and (so)

[50] Compared with Hui Dong, Yu Yue clearly has a different attitude towards *weishu*. See Yu Yue, *Chunzaitang Quanshu* (Vol.8) (Taibei: Zhongguo Wenxian Chubanshe, 1968), 5568.

[51] Ibid., 5569.

[52] James Legge, "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions," 237.

[53] Confucius, Mencius, Zhuangzi, David Hinton, and Laozi. *The Four Chinese Classics: Tao Te Ching, Analects, Chuang Tzu, Mencius* (New York: Counterpoint, 2013), 241.

[54] Eric L. Hutton, "An Exhortation to Learning." In *Xunzi: The Complete Text, 1-8* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014), 4.

transform others. He will pity orphans, and compassionate widows; he will respect the old and cherish the young (忠孝友悌，正己化人；矜孤恤寡，敬老怀幼).”[55] Loyalty, filiality, love to young brothers and submission to his elder are the fundamental virtues that are advocated by Confucians. Just as Youzi 有子 says, “Among those who are filial toward their parents and fraternal toward their brothers, those who are inclined to offend against their superiors are few indeed……The noble person concerns himself with the root; when the root is established, the Way is born. Being filial and fraternal—is this not the root of humaneness (其为人也孝弟，而好犯上者，鲜矣……君子务本，本立而道生。孝弟也者，其为仁之本与)?” Now we know that being filial and fraternal is the way that we should go forward in it. In this way, one can “make himself correct and (so) transform others” because “the virtue of the noble person is like the wind, and the virtue of small people is like grass. When the wind blows over the grass, the grass must bend.” As we can see, the first two items are qualities of a nobleman in Confucian sense. As for “pity orphans, and compassionate widows; respect the old and cherish the young”, it is also an issue of great concern to the Confucians. According to the Confucian classic *The Record of Rites,* in an ideal world where the Great Way has been practiced, people “did not regard as parents only their parents, or as sons only their sons……the young were provided with an upbringing, and the widow and widower, the orphaned and the sick, with proper care.”[56] The last two items are basically the reiteration of what an ideal world looks like for Confucians.

The next part specifically targets literati-officials. In *Ganyingpian,* the author makes

[55] James Legge, “The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions,” 237.

[56] William Theodore de Bary, Irene Bloom, Wing-tsit Chan, Joseph Adler, *Sources of Chinese Tradition,* 343.

this even more obvious by stating that a man will be punished "if he is disrespectful to his elders and teachers……if he calumniates his fellow-learners." [57] For literati-officials, "the movements (of a man's heart) are contrary to righteousness, and the (actions of his) conduct are in opposition to reason" [58]is what they must avoid in the first place because righteousness 义 and reason 理 are Confucians' fundamental moral standards.

Another newly added item is "attack and expose his kindred by consanguinity and affinity (攻讦宗亲) ." [59] Confucians appreciate the value of kinship. In the *Doctrine of the Mean*, there are nine standard rules that the ruler must follow, and affection towards their relatives is one of them. It also contends that "Benevolence is the characteristic element of humanity, and the great exercise of it is in loving relatives (仁者人也，亲亲为大)." [60] Therefore, loving relatives is the first step to achieve benevolence. The sociologist, Fei Xiaotong 费孝通 regards kinship as the most important relationship in Chinese society. He describes it as "the concentric circles formed when a stone is thrown into a lake."[61] By doing this, he tries to argue that the boundary between public and private realms is quite obscure in Chinese society. Thus, as *The Great Learning* suggests, "public order is achieved by moving toward the center of the discrete circles—that is, toward the family[62].[63] It is safe to say that

[57] James Legge, "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions," 237.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Legge, James, *The Four Books: Confucian Analects, the Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean, And the Works of Mencius* (China: The Commercial Press, 19-?), 383, 387.

[61] Fei Xiaotong, Gary G. Hamilton, and Wang Zheng, *From the Soil: The Foundations of Chinese Society* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1992), 63.

[62] Fei Xiaotong uses the term "family" in a quite broad sense. It can refer to lineage as well.

[63] Ibid., 69.

loving your relatives is the essential beginning for Confucians to establish a stable public order. As a result, attacking one's kindred is what Confucians find extremely inexcusable.

The next item requiring attention is "slights and makes no account of Heaven's people" (轻蔑天民) . The term Heaven's people 天民 have two different interpretations. Yu Yue quotes *Mencius* and *Zhuangzi*, claiming that "Heaven's people" refers to worthy men, and that is why they should be respected. [64] While Hui Dong quotes *The Record of Rites* and the *Zuo Commentary on Spring and Autumn Annals*, arguing that this term refers to ordinary people. They are called Heaven's people because they are loved and much accounted of by Heaven.[65] The *Great Declaration* says: "Heaven sees as my people see; Heaven hears as my people hear (天视自我民视，天听自我民听)." [66] As a result, literati-officials should never slight and take no account of Heaven's people. I find that Hui's interpretation is more convincing because the next part of the text has already contained one item about respecting worthy men. Hui's understanding is also in accordance with the Confucian idea that "the people are the most important."

The next one is a modification that needs to be noted. In *Baopuzi*, the text is "reviles and slanders the immortal and sage; and do harm to Daoist priests (讪谤仙圣，伤残道士) ." However, in *Ganyingpian*, it says that "reviles and slanders the sage and worthy; and assails and oppresses (the principles of) reason and virtue (讪谤圣贤，侵凌道德)."[67] Therefore, people who deserve respect are not immortal but the worthy, and what we should not do harm

[64] Yu Yue, *Chunzaitang Quanji*, 5577.

[65] Hui Dong, Taishang Ganyingpian Jianzhu, 43.

[66] Ibid.,144.

[67] James Legge, "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions," 239

to is the principles of reason 道 and virtue 德 not Daoist priests . The principles and worthy men mentioned here are distinctly in Confucian sense. This modification clearly shows the author's effort to make *Ganyingpian* a Confucian text.

Another new item also attests to this tendency explicitly: "cook animals for food, when no rites require it."[68] Sacrificing animals is an indispensable part of Confucian rituals. When Zigong 子贡 wanted to spare the live of the sheep that would be sacrificed in a ceremony, Confucius rejected. He said, "You love the sheep; I love the ceremony."[69] Although hurting even insects, grass and trees is condemned for cruelty, slaughtering animals for sacrifice is considered proper. It is not contradictory, but only reflects the pivotal position of rites in Confucianism. The rights to slaughter animals for sacrifice is also the manifestation of social hierarchy. According to The *Records of Rites*, the lord must not kill an ox for no reason, nor a senior officer a sheep, nor a lower officer a pig or dog.[70] Therefore, when people slaughter an animal, it must be done according to Confucian rites.

Baopuzi does not contain much about family ethics. As discussed about, family or kinship, in fact, has an essential position in the exercise of humanity in Confucian view. The family is the foundation of the Confucian vision of a society. Therefore, it is not surprising that *Taishang Ganyingpian* adds almost a whole new paragraph about family ethics:

> ……if he quarrels angrily with his nearest relatives; and as man he is not loyal and honorable; if a woman is not gentle and obedient; if (the husband) is not harmonious with his wife; if the wife does not reverence her husband; if he is always fond of boasting and bragging; if she is constantly jealous and envious; if he is guilty of improper conduct to his wife or sons; if she fails to behave properly to her parents-in-

[68] Ibid., 241.

[69] Legge, James, *The Four Books*, 33.

[70] Hui Dong, Luo Dunyan, *Ciguan Fenxiuben Taishang Ganyingpian Yinjingjianzhu* in *Zangwai Daoshu*(Chengdu: Bashu Chubanshe, 1992), 71.

law; if he treats with slight and disrespect the spirits of his ancestors…… (骨肉忿争；男不忠良，女不柔顺；不和其室，不敬其夫；每好矜夸，常行妒忌；无行于妻子，失礼于舅姑;轻慢先灵……)[71]

This excerpt focuses on the wrongdoings that people may commit as husband and wife. The husband-wife relationship and harmony in family seems to be in the private sphere. However, as Fei Xiaotong aptly points out, the boundary between private and public spheres is ambiguous in Chinese society. Therefore, when the Duke Ai of Lu asked how to run the government, Confucius replied: "Husband and wife have their separate functions ; between father and son there should be affection; between ruler and minister there should be strict adherence to their several parts (夫妇别，父子亲，君臣严)." [72] Although husband-wife relationship is in private sphere, the separate functions between husband and wife is one of the three most essential relationships that a ruler must pay attention to when he runs the government. *The Records of Rites* also explains why wedding ceremony is the "root" of ritual. It argues: "From the distinction between man and woman, comes the propriety; from that propriety, comes the affection between father and son; from that affection, comes the correctitude between the ruler and the ministers (男女有别，而后夫妇有义；夫妇有义，而后父子有亲；父子有亲，而后君臣有正)."[73] Since wedding is the start of husband-wife relationship, it should be called the root of ritual.

As we can see, *Ganyingpian*'s modification of *Baopuzi* is clearly driven by Confucian values. It is safe to say that *Taishang Ganyingpian,* though considered as a Daoist morality

[71] James Legge, "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions," 243.

[72] Yang Tianyu, "Liji Yizhu"(Shanghai Guji Chubanshe,2004), 657.

[73] Ibid., 817.

book, is in accordance with Confucian doctrine. It reflects the influence of syncretism in the Song dynasty, but it can also explain why *Taishang Ganyingpian* is acceptable to Hui Dong who was favor of Confucian purism.

CHAPTER 3: HUI DONG'S COMMENTARY: THE INFLUENCE OF CONFUCIAN PURISM AND HAN LEARNING

Now we know that *Taishang Ganyingpian* is acceptable to Hui Dong, however, why did he write the commentary is still unclear. In Hui Dong's preface, the writing of the commentary seems to be primarily the result of keeping a promise he made when his mother was seriously ill. He prayed to gods and promised to write a commentary on *Taishang Ganyingpian* when his mother fell badly ill. The whole thing seems to be private. It is quite natural to consider Hui's commentary as a reflection of his own religious beliefs. However, after finishing this book, Hui planned to "publish it for those sharing the same interests (公诸同好) ."[74] Keeping a manuscript to himself and publishing a book for the public are two different things.[75] As Kai-wing Chow points out, the growth of commercial printing made a major contribution to the emergence of a "literary public sphere"[76] in the late imperial China. This literary public sphere is the place where Hui can produce his discourse by interpreting the classic morality book. It is safe to assume that when Hui decided to publish this commentary, there was a specific intention as well as target audience in his mind. Hui's commentary is an effort to affirm some existing basic ethic codes with Confucian Classics that evidential scholars believe to be authentic. By so, Hui's commentary shows a clear impact of Confucian purism.

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[74] Hui Dong, *Taishang Ganyingpain Jianzhu*, 2.

[75] He did not manage to publish until a few years later. This is probably due to his father's unpleasant audience with the Yongzheng Emperor. After the audience, Hui's father was published to for the fortification of Zhenjiang. As a result, his family was undergoing a financial crisis when Hui Dong finished this book.

[76] He follows Chartier in using this term. "Literary public sphere" refers to "a community of readers scattered over the immense geographical space of China and yet connected by means of their ability to read and access printed texts." See Kai-wing Chow, *Publishing Culture, and Power in Early Modern China,*16.

In the following part, an examination of the term "*ganying*" 感应 will reveal the divergence between the Song scholars and evidential scholars.

3.1 "Ganying" and *Taishang Ganyingpian*: Serious Scholarship and Popular Morality Book

"*Ganying*" is the core concept in *Taishang Ganyingpian*. This term consists of two characters "感" and "应". The former means "to influence"; the later means "to react." We can find this term in the *Book of Changes*. The hexagram *xian* 咸 is believed to be about *ganying.* The *tuan* 彖 commentary says:

> Hsien (xian) is here used in the sense of Kan (gan), meaning (mutually) influencing.
>
> The weak (trigram) above, and the strong one below; their two influences moving and responding to each other, and thereby forming a union; the repression (of the one) and the satisfaction (of the other) …… Heaven and earth exert their influences, and there ensue the transformation and production of all things. The sage influences the minds of men, and the result is harmony and peace all under the sky. If we look at (the method and issues) of those influences, the true character of heaven and earth and of all things can be seen (咸，感也。柔上而刚下，二气感应以相与，止而说，男下女，是以亨利贞，取女吉也。天地感而万物化生，圣人感人心而天下和平，观其所感，而天地万物之情可见矣).[77]

The Great Treatise further explains it:

> The sun goes and the moon comes; the moon goes and the sun comes; – the sun and moon thus take the place each of the other, and their shining is the result. The cold goes and the heat comes; the heat goes and the cold comes; – it is by this mutual succession of the cold and heat that the year is completed. That which goes becomes less and less, and that which comes waxes more and more; – it is by the influence on each other of this contraction and expansion that the advantages (of the different conditions) are produced. When the looper coils itself up, it thereby straightens itself again; when worms and snakes go into the state of hibernation, they thereby keep themselves alive. (So), when we minutely investigate the nature and reasons (of things), till we have

[77] Michael Erlewine, Raymond Van Over, and James Legge. *I Ching* (New York: New American Library, 1971), 172.

> entered into the inscrutable and spirit-like in them, we attain to the largest practical application of them; when that application becomes the quickest and readiest, and all personal restfulness is secured, our virtue is thereby exalted (日往则月来，月往则日来，日月相推而明生焉。寒往则暑来，暑往则寒来，寒暑相推而岁成焉。往者屈也，来者信也，屈信相感而利生焉。尺蠖之屈，以求信也。龙蛇之蛰，以存身也。精义入神，以致用也。利用安身，以崇德也。过此以往，未之或知也。穷神知化，德之盛也).[78]

As we can see, in the *Book of Changes*, the term "*ganying*" is used to describe the interaction between two opposing cosmic energies—*yin* and *yang*. "*Gan*" refers to the influence one energy imposes on the other one while "*ying*" means the reaction the later one has. For example, the going of the sun is "*gan*" and the coming of the moon is "*ying*." In the meanwhile, the coming of the moon is also the "*gan*" of its going, which will then lead to the coming of the sun. The cycle and interaction of the two opposing energies account for the production and transformation of all things. As Cheng Hao 程颢 says, "There is only a *ganying* between Heaven and Earth (天地之间，只有一个感应而已)." Then he points to the dual meanings of *ganying*: one thing (*gan*) leads to another (*ying*). However, when we examine the former one, it can also be *ying* (in another *gan-ying* relation).[79] Zhu Xi further elaborates this idea: "Between Heaven and Earth, the principle is no more than *ganying*. It can account for both natural phenomena and human activities……. Dead and alive, in and out, coming and going, speaking and keeping silent, are all *ganying* (凡在天地间，无非感应之理，造化与人事皆是……一死一生，一出一入，一往一来，一语一默，皆是感应) ."[80]As we can see, the two concepts in every example are prerequisite for each other. It indicates that the two sides

[78] Ibid., 405.

[79] Li Jingde ed., Zhuzi Yulei (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1986), 2438.

[80] Ibid., 1811.

of the same thing can mutually transforms into each other in cycles. As Cheng Yi 程颐 puts out, "if there is a *gan*, there must be a *ying*. What is a *ying* will then become a *gan* (感则必有应，应复为感)."[81] As a result, *ganying* is just another way to describe the interaction between *yin* and *yang*. However, when Zhen Dexiu quotes Cheng Yi's words in the preface to *Taishang Ganyingpian*, he distorts the idea by changing the cycle model to a linear model. He argues that when the evil mind or good mind appears, a consequence appears. Then the consequence will cause another one, and the another will cause the next one. Eventually, when an evil mind or good mind appears, a series of bad or good results will appear with it (尝闻伊川有言曰：凡有动皆为感，所感必有应，所应复为感，所感复有应。动者何？此心之发也…然后善恶形焉，而凶吉祸福亦备).[82] This is how the Cheng-Zhu school is related to *Taishang Ganyingpian*. As we can see, this interpretation was initially used to describe the general rules of the Universe. When it is used to explain retribution, it merely focuses on the natural consequences of human behaviors. Heaven does not play a pivotal role in this system.

Another interpretation can also be found in the *Book of Changes*: "The family that accumulates goodness is sure to have superabundant happiness, and the family that accumulates evil is sure to have superabundant misery (积善之家必有余庆，积不善之家必有余殃)."[83] This interpretation of *ganying* is believed to be inspired by "Hongfan" 洪范 from the *Book of Documents*. In "Hongfan", the author establishes a connection between the ruler's behavior with natural phenomena. In the Han dynasty, Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 develops it into

[81] Ibid., 1813.

[82] See Zhen, Dexiu, and E. Yang, *Xishan Xian Sheng Zhen Wenzhong Gong Wen Ji*, vol. 27.

[83] Michael Erlewine, Raymond Van Over, and James Legge. *I Ching*, 427.

a systematic theory of the interaction between Heaven and human. When the ruler fails to follow Confucian ethical codes, Heaven will first set forth fearful portents as a warning. If he does not stop the wrongdoing, anomalies or calamities will appear. The natural phenomena can only signify the behaviors of the ruler. As for ordinary people, Dong employs a theory called "things of the same kind activate one another (同类相动)." The theory explains what can determine human's fortune with *yin* and *yang*:

> Now if you pour water on level ground, it will avoid the dry area and run to the wet area, but if you expose two similar pieces of firewood to fire, the fire will avoid the wet piece and go to the dry one. All things avoid what is different from them and follow what is similar to them.
>
> A beautiful thing calls forth things that are beautiful in kind; an ugly thing calls forth things that are ugly in kind, for things of the same kind arise in response to each other.
>
> *Yang* increases *yang*; *yin* increases *yin,* for the qi of yin and yang can naturally augment or diminish things in accordance with their kind. Heaven has *yin* and *yang* [aspects], and people have *yin* and *yang* [aspects]. When the qi of Heaven and Earth arises, the qi of people arises in response to it; when the *qi* of people arises, the *qi* of Heaven and Earth also arises appropriately in response to it.
>
> Therefore, rain is not caused by the spirits. People suspect that it is the spirits' doing because its inner principles are subtle and mysterious. It is not only that the *qi* of *yin* and *yang* advances or withdraws according to its kind. Even [the reasons for] misfortune, calamities, and blessings are due to the same thing. It is not that these things do not initially arise from within the self, [but even so,] things become active in response to their kind.
>
> (今平地注水，去燥就湿，均薪施火，去湿就燥。百物去其所与异，而从春所与同……美事召美类，恶事召恶类，类之相应而起也……阳阴之气，因可以类相益损也。天有阴阳，人亦有阴阳。天地之阴气起，而人之阴气应之而起，人之阴气起，而天地之阴气亦宜应之而起……故致雨非神也。而疑于神者，其理微妙也。非独阴阳之气可以类进退也，虽不祥祸福所从生，亦由是也。无非己先起之，而物以类应之而动者也). [84]

According to the excerpt, Dong believes that things of the same kind can activate one

[84] Sarah A. Queen, and Major John S., ed. "Things of the Same Kind Activate One Another." *Luxuriant Gems of the Spring and Autumn*, by Dong Zhongshu (Columbia University Press, New York, 2016), 440.

another. Therefore, Heaven will respond accordingly to human's evil or good behaviors. Although misfortune and blessings are punishments or rewards from Heaven, they initially arise from ourselves. This interpretation of *ganying* introduces Heaven but involves no spirits, because *ganying* is considered as the natural response to human behaviors from things of the same kind.[85]

Hui Dong basically adopted the second approach, but he also made some changes.[86] The most noticeable one is his affirmation of spirits. That is because the spirits mentioned in *Taishang Ganyingpian* are also recorded in ancient Confucian Classics and Commentaries. In the meanwhile, he also introduced Yu Fan's 虞翻 commentary on the *Book of Changes.* Yu Fan is a Confucian scholar who lives in the late Han and Three Kingdoms period. Hui placed great emphasis on Yu's study of the *Book of Changes.* He not only wrote a book to study it, but also based his own theory on Yu Fan's commentary.[87] To explain *ganying*, Hui quoted Yu: "Yu's commentary on the *Book of Changes* considers *kun* 坤 as [the symbol of] ghosts and misfortune, *qian* 乾 as gods and blessings." Then he states that misfortune is *yin*, and blessings are *yang*; *yang* is good, and *yin* is evil.[88] Then he employs the rule "things of the same kind activate one another" , claiming that noble men are *yang*, so they are the same kind with blessings. Mean persons are *yin*, so they are the same kind with misfortune. As a result, good things usually happen to noble men while villains always suffer bad luck.[89]

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[85] The second approach is commonly accepted by evidential scholars. See Yu Yue, 5565.

[86] He uses resonance as an example of "things of the same kind activate one another." See Hui Dong, 5.

[87] *Zhouyi Shu* 周易述.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Ibid., 8.

The examination of the term "*ganying*" proves that *Taishang Ganyingpian* is not merely a popular Daoist morality book. Its core concept of it touches upon the divergence of the cosmology of Confucian schools. Neo-Confucian scholars usually prefer the first approach. For example, Gao Panlong 高攀龙 suggests that *ganying* is a cycle without a starting or ending point. *Ganying* is just reason (义理), and it creates all different things. It is not controlled by spirits but arises from people's mind. [90] In this interpretation, the role of Heaven is largely neglected. The mysterious bond between human behaviors and retribution is just considered as an expedient way to spread moral education among the commoners, but not something a Confucian should believe in. On the contrary, Hui's commentary emphasized the interaction between Heaven and humanity. He explicitly pointed out that misfortune and blessing are both endowed Heaven, but it is human activities that give rise to them. We can see Hui clearly employed a different interpretation from Song scholars' idea. In fact, Hui expressed his tendency very explicitly. He lamented the waning of true Confucianism after the Han dynasty and condemned those Confucians who turned to Buddhism (故经义莫明于汉人，材亦莫盛于汉。自经师亡，而仲山之古训不存，夫子之雅言亦绝。于是有施悖求佛，而疾其师者矣). [91] As a result, we can conclude that the moral values may be ostensibly the same, but there are some major divergences when it comes to the metaphysis.

[90] Ji Yun ed., *Wenyuange Siku Quanshu vol.1292* (Beijing: Beijing Chubanshe, 2012), 561-562.

[91] Hui Dong, *Taishan Ganyingpian Jianzhu*, 83.

3.2 The Characteristics of Hui Dong's Commentary

Hui's commentary is an effort to affirm some existing basic moral values with Confucian Classics that evidential scholars believe to be authentic. By examining some characteristics of Hui's commentary, we may have a better understanding of the impact of Confucian purism and Han Learning on it.

The most obvious one is the massive references to ancient works. According to my calculation, there are more than one hundred books mentioned in Hui's commentary. Based on the examination of these books, we can reach the following conclusions. First, "heterodox" texts such as Buddhist Sutras or Neo-Confucian works are barely cited. Over half of them are Classical Confucian texts. Only two of them are Buddhist texts: *Satyasiddhi Shastra* and *Surangama Sutra.* Zhu Xi's commentary on the *Analects* and *Ximing* 西铭 by Zhang Zai 张载 are the only texts from Neo-Confucianism. Besides, they are just quoted once. Second, most of the quoted texts were written before the popularity of Buddhism. Without doubt, as a Han Learning Scholar, Hui quoted a great number of books that were composed in the Han or even earlier period.

Table. 1 The Most Cited Works in Hui Dong's Commentary

Book	**Period**	**School**	**Times**
The Zuo's Commentary On Spring and Autumn Annals 春秋左传	Pre-Han	Confucianism	80
The Book of Documents 尚书	Pre-Han	Confucianism	37
The Records of Rites 礼记	Han	Confucianism	33
History of the Han Dynasty 汉书	Han	Confucianism	31
Guoyu 国语	Pre-Han	Confucianism	28

Table. 1 (cont.)

Book	**Period**	**School**	**Times**
The Book of Changes 易经	Pre-Han	Confucianism	23
Xunzi 荀子	Pre-Han	Confucianism	21
Shiji 史记	Han	Confucianism	19
Zhuangzi 庄子	Pre-Han	Daoism	17
Huainanzi 淮南子	Han	Daoism and Confucianism	16

Table. 1 demonstrates the most cited books in Hui's commentary. The statistics support the conclusions. All of them were written in the Han or earlier period and eight out of ten are Confucian Classics. Four of the Five Classics can be found in the table. Since the two Daoist texts were written before the Wei-Jin period, they are not much different from the teaching of Confucian sages according to Hui Dong.[92] Without doubt, the statistical characteristic is a reflection of the huge of influence of Confucian purism in the Qing dynasty. In Hui's mind, only the earliest Classics are not contaminated by Buddhism, thus are reliable references.

Confucian purism also prompted Hui Dong to strive to "Confucianize" *Taishang Ganyingpian* by citing passages from Confucian Classics as evidence. As discussed above, *Ganyingpian* is already a quite Confucian text. However, there are still some Daoist elements in it. For example, "suddenly points to the three luminaries; looks long at the sun and moon" are clearly Daoist taboos. Hui explains it with a passage from *Xiaojing Wei* 孝经纬: "The

[92] Ibid, 1.

King has Heaven as his father, Earth as mother, the sun as elder brother and the moon as elder sister."[93] In this sense, pointing at or looking long at the sun and moon is a disrespectful behavior to your brother and sister. The awe of the divine luminaries is transformed into a family ethical principle. Since Hui believes that *Taishang Ganyingpian* is in accordance with the teaching of Confucian sages, it is safe to say that he deliberately transforms some Daoist elements with Confucian Classics.

There is another characteristic that we can tell from Table.1: his special attention to history. The *Zuo's Commentary on Spring and Autumn Annals, History of the Han Dynasty, Guoyu and Shiji* are history books even in the narrowest definition. The four books are cited 158 times in total. That is because Hui Dong always uses real examples from history to illustrate the items in *Taishang Ganyingpian*. Here are some examples: "If he wishes others to have misfortunes and losses; and defames the merit achieved by others," [he cannot be immortal.][94] Here Hui Dong uses Kuang Heng 匡衡 and Li Yi's 李异 stories to illustrate this point. When the general Chen Tang 陈汤 defeated and killed the leader of the Huns, Kuang Heng slandered him and disparaged his achievements. Li Yi did the same thing to Ban Chao 班超. Hui argues that the great achievements of Chen Tang and Ban Chao are still celebrated nowadays while Kuang Heng and Li Yi are despised and laughed at. [95] When he explains why it is wrong to see a beautiful woman and form the thought of illicit intercourse with her, he invokes the stories of many men who died from sensuality.[96]

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[93] Ibid, 118.

[94] James Legge, "The Thai-shang Tractate of Actions and Their Retributions," 243.

[95] Hui Dong, *Taishan Ganyingpian Jianzhu*, 54.

[96] Ibid.,75.

The usage of stories helps illustrate the ideas, nevertheless, it is not the common methods that an evidential scholar would use when he writes a commentary. Evidential scholars are usually obsessed with the true meaning of words, and they do not make a lot of efforts to expound the doctrine. Another uncommon characteristic is his application of parallel style (骈体). Yu Yue criticized him for this because it goes against the principle of writing a commentary (有乖注体) .[97] In fact, the uncommon usage of stories and application of parallel style is quite common in commentaries on morality books. The advantage is obvious: Stories and parallel style can help readers easily understand and memorize the moral lessons. These are the similarities that Hui's commentary shares with other commentaries. It indicates Hui's effort to make his book popular and more acceptable to his audience. In the meantime, there are more distinctions which distinguish Hui's commentary from others. It reflects Hui's academic approach.

Hui Dong's target audience is literati-officials, and it can be told from the writing style of the commentary. He succeeds in balancing the understandability and academic profundity. Later writers all acknowledge his contributions to the popularity of *Taishang Ganyingpian* among literati-officials. As Yu Yue pointed out, "Although this book has been popular among commoners since the Song dynasty, most literati-officials despised this book. Those commentaries are all shallow clichés (自宋以来，虽流传不绝，不过闾巷细民共相诵习，而士大夫辄鄙薄之。其注释注家亦多浅陋邱里之言)."[98] Lü Haihuan also praised Hui Dong for his unprecedented contributions. He explained that all the writers before Hui Dong had focused on collecting stories about karmic retribution. Thus, cultural elites regarded it as dime

[97] Yu Yue, *Chunzaitang Quanshu*, 5565.

[98] Ibid.

novels, and ignored the true value of *Ganyingpian.* The weakness of previous commentaries is that they failed to expound the profound and subtle connotation of *ganying*. The success of Hui's commentary is not just due to its rich citations from Classics, but also his strategic usage of stories and parallel style. Unlike the stories in other commentaries, Hui's stories are from ancient Classics, and they are more about the consequences of human behaviors rather than karmic retribution.

Through his popular commentary, Hui Dong successfully proved that the values in *Taishang Ganyingpian* were the same as those of Confucianism. He reaffirmed the existing moral values with Confucian Classics that Han Learning scholars believe to be authentic. He stressed the centrality of the Five Classics rather than Four Books in Confucianism. [99] Besides, based on Han scholarship, he introduced a cosmology that is different from Song scholars' view. Considering the popularity of Hui's commentary among literati-scholars, it is safe to say that he expanded the influence of evidential scholarship and Confucian purism through his commentary. As a result, Hui Dong's commentary is not merely a reflection of his own religious belief. Instead, it should be considered as Hui's innovative attempts to apply standards of Confucian purism and evidential learning to the commentary on a popular morality.

[99] The Four Books are seldom quoted in Hui's commentary.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

At first glance, Hui Dong's commentary looks suspicious as it is generally assumed that the *Gangyingpian* was a Daoist text. It seems to go against the principle of Confucian purism as Hui was a Confucian purist and a champion of Han Learning. However, after taking a close look at Hui's commentary, this paper reaches a different conclusion. Hui Dong argued that the values in the *Taishang Ganyingpian* are in accordance with the teaching of Confucian sages. That is because he believed the source of its thoughts came from the Han dynasty when Confucianism had not been contaminated by Buddhism. Besides, an examination of *Ganyingpian* and its prototype *Baopuzi* suggests that they both contain a great number of Confucian values. As a consequence, Hui's commentary is not at odds with the principle of Confucian purism. It is misleading to consider Hui's commentary as the continuation of Neo-Confucian scholars' interest in moral metaphysics. Although the ethical values look quite similar, the metaphysics is different. Hui's commentary tries to affirm these basic ethical values with Confucian classics while Ming Neo-Confucians apply concepts like "mind" or "reason" to explain *ganying* and use stories about retribution as an expedient way to educate commoners.

When he wrote this commentary, Hui Dong carefully excluded all what he believed to be heterodox materials. It is obvious that he especially avoided heterodox texts such as Buddhist Sutras and Neo-Confucian works. It reflects the impact of Confucian purism on Qing thought. Through his interpretation, Hui succeeded in presenting *Taishang Ganyingpian* as a Confucian text, authenticating its values with passages from Confucian Classics. When he tried to explain the core concept of this morality book, he adopted Dong Zhongshu and Yu Fan's theory. His preference for Han scholars' view of *gangying* instead of Song scholars' attests to the profound influence of Han learning in his scholarship and moral values.

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