

EXAMINING TANG AND SONG YINGTANG IMAGE HALLS FROM A CLAN SACRIFICIAL PERSPECTIVE¹

Wanli Cheng²


Abstract: During the Tang and Song Dynasties, the ordinary officials' patriarchal clan gradually dominated the clan community. This phenomenon has destroyed the strict hierarchical sacrificial system. Therefore, as a new form of private sacrifice, the *yingtang* image hall appears in the ordinary officials' residence or at ordinary people's homes. At present, when a statue is replaced by an image, this new cultural symbol will lead every worshiper to reach social recognition psychologically and emotionally. Through the images or portraits hanging in the hall, the worshippers can confirm whether they can create a spiritual realm visually, so that they can communicate with their ancestors or tell their prayers.

Keywords: Tang and Song Dynasties. Sacrificial Philosophy. *Yingtang* Image Hall(s). Form.

INTRODUCTION

“Every visual pattern - be it that of a painting, a building, an ornament, a chair - can be considered a proposition which, more or less successfully, makes a declaration about the nature of human existence (ARNHEIM, 1969, p. 296).” In the Song dynasty, gentry-officials, such as Zhang Zai and Cheng Yi, initiated reconstruction of the clan's organization to reshape the social ethos and order.

¹ This project was supported by the National Social Science Fund of China under the Title “Historical Restructuring of the Chinese Sacrificial Image” and Grant No. 20AF008.

² School of Art, Southeast University, Nanjing 210096 – China.  <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-5692-6136>. Email: wanli_cheng0@163.com.

<https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-3173.2023.v46n3.p229>



This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License.

The clan is the oldest and most prevalent social group of China. (FENG, 2009, p. 1). But what does it mean really? As for anyone, his father's relatives are called *zong*, and his mother's or wife's relatives are *zu*. What does *zong* mean? It means a well-venerated noble clan. The clan is connected through blood, and all members of this clan worship a common ancestor. The ritual claims that, when something happens to any member, all the others would come to help him. Why did a *zong* clan exist in ancient times? It was established to maintain long-term harmony in patrilineal blood families. What does *zu* family mean? This implies that everyone in the family, from great-grandparents to great-grandchildren, gathers for a shared passion and interest. When something happy happens to a family, all the families involved get together to celebrate. Such families enjoy pleasant ties while they are living and grieve when a family member dies. They are called ancestral families because they come together for some special purpose.

A clan head managed sacrificial affairs and all the clan's members. A man has been regarded a descendant of his male ancestors throughout the history of Chinese clans. A scholar argues that the patriarchal bloodline forms part and parcel of any clan. To put it another way, the Chinese clan's core body is a patriarchal group.

Patriarchal communes expanded through time into enormous clans of political and economic significance, as well as private religious groups, spanning from the imperial palace to aristocrats and, lastly, ordinary households. During the long-time span, the clan's places of ancestral sacrifice kept changing so that the image became a crucial medium between the ritualist and his ancestor.

When the Song dynasty supplanted the Tang dynasty, the style of power operation changed dramatically (YOU, 2006, p. 327). The emergence of a new bureaucracy greatly facilitated some regional personages' further expansion of their interests and social circles. In the Northern Song dynasty, Sima Guang initiated the image hall system. Later in the Southern Song dynasty, Zhu Xi not only created a clan organization model that was both relevant to and distinct from the well-established clan framework (LIU, WANG, 2007, p. 107), but also transformed the *citang* clan's shrine into the central site of ancestor worship and a symbol of cohesion among clan members. As there is little research in this regard, the author can delve into relevant documents and come up with new ideas despite all difficulties.

1 EMERGENCE OF THE IMAGE HALL

During the Yin and Shang dynasties, rituals were closely related to religious divinity and the patriarchal lineage system. The ruler was *Tianzi*, means the Son of Heaven, who derived his authority to govern the secular world from the gods. The ruler maintained his authority under the doctrine of kings' divine right. The Son of Heaven was both the leader of human society and the gods' secular leader. The sacrifice was a religious ritual for the ruler to communicate with the gods and the heavens. The sacrifice was a prayer to the heavens for seasonable weather with gentle breeze and timely rain. The sacrifice was also a manifestation of the ruler's political power, for only the Son of Heaven had the right to make sacrifices. Other tiny clans or nobility under the Son of Heaven, let alone common people, are not entitled to do so. *Tianzi* is the largest *zongzhu* under the *zongzu* system, and the clan of *Tianzi* is the major clan, while the other clans are the minor ones. The ceremonies and requirements for sacrifices differed from the *Tianzi* to the general people due to the hierarchy in this clan structure. There are the *Son of Heaven's* seven temples, the vassals' five temples, the great officials' three temples and the soldiers' one temple. The common people are not eligible to build temples.

In Tang and Song dynasties, the Chinese society underwent a significant transformation. To put it more clearly, influences of forces and prestige on clans were weakening and such clans were having fewer and more indirect relations with the regime. The clan was cut off from official appointments, particularly after the Song dynasty, when the *keju* imperial examination system and the *zhiguan huibi* official avoidance system both advanced. Although gentry-families still produced a majority of gentry-officials, this advantage was already jeopardized to a great extent. Meanwhile, the clan sacrifice lost its political implications so that the clan and the regime were no longer connected directly.

The Tang society saw significant developments, including as a sharper concentration of power that stripped the earlier clannish cliques of their control over politics and the armed forces. At first, Emperor Taizong compiled the *Clan Gazetteer*. Later on, Emperor Gaozong renamed the *Clan Gazetteer* as a *Record of Clan Names*, listing all the officials and officers up from the fifth rank. At last, Emperor Zhongzong also composed the *Record of Tang Clans*. The stereotypical shizu gentry-clan structure was given a last and deadly blow, particularly in the second attempt. Of actuality, certain powerful clans in the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties were not just founded on internal

blood links, but also renowned for their political and military prowess. As the political and military authority were deregulated, these clans unleashed their potential for self-organizing creativity. Later when the imperial examination system and resulting official bloc developed in the Tang dynasty, the court politics became increasingly less noble and more bureaucratic.

No wonder that only the royalty, nobility or senior officials built their *jiamiao* family temples because there were strict regulations on temple size and ancestral lineage. In the Song dynasty, Zhang Zai advocated for the construction of private family temples and advised that no one should live in any ordinary official family's main sacrifice hall since it was a temple. This thinker argued, "The main hall of any common family can be called a temple, like the main hall of the imperial palace for the lord. This hall should not serve as a residence because sacrificial ceremonies, weddings or funerals may be held there (ZHANG, 1978, p. 315)." That is to say, nobles or top officials should be no longer distinguished from common officials or ordinary people in this regard.

A new kind of private sacrifice, the image house, was generally accepted by both ordinary officials and commoners when the rigorous, class-based sacrificial system fell out of favor.

In the Tang and Song Dynasties, the official temple system had the defect of difficult construction of official temples. In addition, a few influential ministers' temples were built without authorization. These phenomena have seriously hindered the construction of the image museum. Later in Northern Song Dynasty, Sima Guang put forward a simple image hall in line with the ceremony, which made up for the defects of the official family temple system. Meanwhile, this measure has been recognized by the government and widely used in many areas.

Zheng Binglin believes that the *zhentang* true hall is another name of the *yingtang* image hall. Qi Ji wrote the following poem, "Before the pure white lotus pool stands the image hall of the 18 worthies. Oh, the portraits of Liu Chengzhi and Lei Cizong still look so solemn. They each had no interest to serve the lord, but vowed to spread Buddhism. Recluse Tao Qian didn't want to live there since no wine was available; Xie Lingyun wanted to join them, but was rejected because of his secular mixed thoughts. Who comes here to miss their glorious feat? The hall wall is dotted with verdant mosses and grey patches. (QI, 2008, p. 9536)." The poem demonstrates that both

words relate to the same location. According to Zheng Binglin, both were constructed to house an ancestor or master and were often seen in regular people's homes or common officials' palaces.

Zheng Yi admits that they have much in common, but still points out their subtle differences. First, the true hall houses monk and layperson portraits as well as Buddhist statues, but the image hall usually enshrines a master of the sect or temple. Second, whereas the image hall has one topic, the true hall contains several subjects. Third, the true hall may be erected temporarily by a gathering gen as those monk or layperson portraits on silk could be put aside, but the image hall usually is a deceased man's former residence or a high monk's nirvana place. However, there is little or no difference between them if they are located at a mausoleum.

“In the Song Dynasty, the clan's sacrificial ancestral hall was also known as the statue hall.” The image hall is a venue for enshrining its ancesto image or portrait. The *Annotations to Ancient and Present Works* says, “The character miao here points to mao appearance or features. So, the image or portrait is created to reflect one's ancestor's appearance. Various common official clans build their image halls while Buddhist followers use this term to name the place where the Buddha's statue is located (ZHENG, 2006, p. 70).”

At first, the statue hall was not used to sacrifice ancestors, but to commemorate the dead eminent monks. When Chan Master Yuangui passed away, people erected a stupa on the east side of the mountain and built a hall of images in the temple. The image hall could also be found in the following poem, “The Master has reached the other shore, this path [to his hall] well beyond the din and dust. Now his form is not mortal and his body is no longer like before. At the Gate of Emptiness, his nature is far from dead; around the lane where he lived, his enlightenment can still be felt. Don't point to the image in the hall - how can it be compared with the Master himself (PENG et al., 1960d, p. 5819)?” The poet exhaled in relief that, while the master was no longer among them, his character and wisdom would endure. Anyway, the image paled greatly in comparison with the eminent monk. To sum up, there are 20 or so Tang and Song verses about missing Chan masters or offering sacrifices at image halls (QU, 2012, p. 116). Besides, the *Complete Tang Poetry* includes more than 30 poems involving the image hall (LIU, 2010, p. 127). Many related images may be found in ancient literature, such as Chan Master Fakong's image hall at Anguo Temple, Chang'an quoted from Duan Chengshi's *Record of Temple Pagodas* (DUAN, 1964, p. 6) and Chan

Master Jianxuan's image hall at Shiquan Temple, Huishan ,quoted from the *Miscellaneous Records of Youyang*. Such halls were built for Buddhist purposes, such as paying condolences to late high monks or commemorating them.

2 SACRIFICIAL IMAGES

Spontaneous statue hall worship was designed in the Tang Dynasty, as state regulations did not allow any private temple building. Gentry officials of the succeeding Song dynasty modified the meaning of clan shrines while still using the term and referred to any newly constructed places of worship as family temples. In this way, they could still adapt their practices to the state policy on family temple construction. In the ritual regulations of the Han Dynasty, it was the wooden plaque that should be enshrined instead of the portrait, such as the ritual regulations stipulate that those who enter the ancestral temple should chop the two-cun-long wood, which is called the plaque, and sacrifice the plaque instead of the portrait in the mind. The code of the Tang dynasty still continued the practice of the preceding dynasty. "The character *zong* means a well-respected clan and *miao* here means one's appearance or features. Such an ancestor is engraved on wood and placed at a hall for enjoying sacrificial offerings regularly. For this reason, the hall is referred to as a *zongmiao* ancestral temple (ZHANGSUN et al., 1983, p. 7)." "The *Etymological Dictionary of Characters* says, the wooden tablet at the ancestral temple is called a *shi*. *The Analects* argues that the Xia royalty used pine, the Yin Shang royalty used cypress and the Zhou royalty used chestnut wood. *The Essential Meanings of Five Classics* claims that a wooden tablet has four corners and there is a hole in the center, through which you can reach any corner. The lord's tablet is two chi and two cun long and a marquis' tablet is one chi long, but a *shi* posthumous title is engraved on the rear side of each tablet (Xu, 1962b, p. 322)." But in reality, images had become a widespread subject of sacrifice. In the third month of the fourth year (745) of Tianbao period, "Yang Songgui of Fengqiu, Chenliu Commandery lost his mother and made a tomb by carrying earth on his back. Besides, he erected a sacrificial table with his parents' portraits and offered sacrifices for more than a decade (WANG et al., 1960b, p. 1680)." "In the fourth month, Yan Yiqian of Jizhou lost his parents and engraved their images in wood, worshipping these engravings at the hall day and night. For this reason, his townsmen spoke highly of him (WANG et al., 1960b, p. 1681)." Actually, the customs of the Han dynasty are what gave rise to these behaviors. "The *Biographies of*

the Worthies of the World says, Chen Ji, styled Yuanfang, was famous for his astonishing talent and virtue and acted as Chamberlain for Dependencies. Later on, he quit his post and served his father Chen Shi closely. Governor of Yuzhou praised his conduct and submitted a memorial to the Chief Steward for Writing to paint his image and spread it across various cities for the change of devastating customs.” Sun Sheng wrote in his *Stories of the Recluses*, “Ding Lan of Henei lost his parents in his young days. As he didn’t have the chance to support them, he engraved two wooden images as if they had been with him. Moreover, he treated them as his parents and paid respects to them day and night. Later neighbor Uncle Zhang’s wife wanted to borrow some article from his wife. This woman reported it to the wooden parents and they felt upset. For this reason, the article was not borrowed finally. When the uncle got drunken, he came cursing the wooden parents and hit their heads with his stick. As Ding Lan returned home, he saw the wooden parents were upset and asked his wife, who told him the whole thing. Instantly, Ding Lan wielded his sword at the uncle and killed him, being caught by the police. When he left the wooden parents, they shed tears. The county and commandery governments admired him for his amazing filial obedience and painted his image on the cloud terrace (XU, 1962a, p. 422).” “When Governor of Dunhuang Cang Ci passed away, the local officials and people felt extremely sad as if they had lost a close relative. They even found some artist to portray him and commemorate his merits (CHEN, 1962, pp. 512-513).” As offerings were provided to the ancestor’s portrait and virtuous officials were praised in front of an image, the image and the sacrifice had become increasingly correlated. Especially, improving expertise in human portrayal provided a strong support for this practice. Some emperors were even portrayed or enshrined when they were still alive, such as Lu Tanwei’s portrait of Song Emperor Mingdi (Ji, 1986a, p. 15) and Zhang Sengyao’s portrait of Liang Emperor Wudi (JI, 1986b, p. 659) of Southern Dynasties. Moreover, some temples enshrined the portraits of Emperor Wendi in the Sui dynasty, judging from the quote “The inscription is handwritten in clerical script anonymously. A pagoda was erected at Hengyue Temple in the first year of Renshou (601) and officials and commoners were mandated to perform a seven-day burial ritual with a gift of ten coins apiece. Additionally, the current emperor was painted in portraits. Stone monuments were built by Zhang Guo and others.

Because of their particularity, such portraits would definitely be created by court painters so that many famous artists emerged in this aspect. However, only those who fulfilled “moist brushwork and amazing depiction (JI, 1987b,

p. 369)” would be regarded as masters. To symbolize the distinct lineage of the monarchy, emperor portraits or pictures used on sacrifice occasions were often constructed and displayed in the imperial ancestral temple after death. Then how was any common people’s ancestor painted for a private image hall?

Wang Jian also wrote a poem about the image hall, “The brick stupa is closed in the mountain while a new image hall is erected below pines. Alas, I didn’t have the chance to recognize you! Now I come to worship your portrait (PENG et al., 1960a, p. 3420).” As the image hall was completed after the master’s death, this poet went to the hall and expressed his regret not knowing him previously in that poem. In the Tang dynasty, rituals like *shishi* corpse acceptance by the deity, *sushi* corpse cautions and *yushi chouzuo* corpse feasting by living people and vice versa in the *Rituals and Ceremonies* disappeared in the *Rituals of the Kaiyuan Period*. Back then, sacrifice was usually received by late emperors’ tablets or portraits, which marked a giant leap forward (WANG, 2010, p. 50). There were portraits at image halls really (QU, 2012, p. 118) and such portraits were likely painted on the wall, judging the poems or notes from Tang and Song dynasties. Li Bai, for instance, made reference to this in an ode to his ancestor, “A pure man’s mind is like an image reflected in the mirror. It may vary greatly, but there is something unchanged. The artist created this vivid image, which presently reminds me of the artisan who had chopped off a bit of white clay from a man’s nose in Ying, the capital of Chu. Oh, this is a portrait of my clan’s worthy ancestor. His appearance is painted on the wall, but dust has accumulated thereon. The ancestor has left me and ascended into heaven. Now he keeps silent, but his image will live on (Dong, 1983, p. 3543).” The ancestor’s appearance has been eaten away by dust. Mid-Tang poet Bao Rong put it more clearly in a poem, “The west wall of the old house features a portrait of Monk Zhen, whose complexion varies from last night to this morning. As a guest from afar, I feel relaxed, adding some incense to the altar and gazing at the void (Peng et al., 1960c, p. 5529).” In the prologue of a poem from the Song dynasty, monk Huihong wrote: “Reading the old stele, I know that it is the previous site where the Chan Master taught Buddhism. At present, the wall features a vivid portrait of him, who looks as solemn as previously. Is that because he preached the grand Dharma to care about all sentient beings born through four ways (JI et al., 1987a, p. 867)?”

3 EXTANT ARTWORKS

Because ancient Chinese structures were often composed of wood and exposed to the weather or combat, the majority of picture halls have now disappeared. You may locate a Haihui Hall in Huayan Temple in Datong, Shanxi province. It is the master monk's image hall to the left of the Hall of Bhagavat Sutra Repository. It is confirmed that this hall is the oldest image hall in China (QU, 2012, p. 116), let alone any clan's ancestor portrait on the wall. But in many memorial grottoes of Dunhuang, and especially Mogao, numerous family members, whether alive or dead, were painted as per their seniority like a genealogy (HU, 1993, p. 33). Those sites give us a glimpse into the structure of Tang and Song image halls. Clan images of Dunhuang can be broken down into two types: first, portraits on silk, flax or paper; second, statues or frescoes inside the grotto. Taoist Wang Yuanlu's discovery of the Mogao Grottoes on the 25th day of the sixth month of the 26th year (1900) of the Guangxu dynasty gave rise to a new field known as Dunhuang studies and propelled it to popularity. Research shows (MA, 1978, p. 21-33) that Grotto No. 17 was Hongbian's *yingku* image grotto or *yingtang* image hall. He was a high monk of Dunhuang and a monk supervisor of Hexi in late Tang period. Fan Jinshi stated that the image grotto or image hall is one kind of grotto, namely a commemorative venue where a monk is portrayed (JI, 1998, p. 23). This grotto was built no later than the third year (862) of Xiantong period and those sutras were likely placed inside the grotto later. Today national treasures such as several thousand paintings on silk, flax and paper (academically known as the *Remaining Paintings of Dunhuang*) are scattered around museums, libraries and private collections in the UK, France, Russia, the USA and Japan among other countries, including 134 paintings with the benefactor's portraits or images.

What is a benefactor? It refers to the donor who provides money for excavating one or more grottoes³(Ma, 1996, pp. 160-168) as well as his or her clan kin (Duan, 1995, p. 113; Zheng, 2014, p. 111). As the name implies, each giver's image is created based on real-life people. From the Han Dynasty to the early Song Dynasty, there were many clans in Dunhuang, such as Zhang, Li, Suo, Zhai, Yin, Yan, Si, Linghu, Murong, Song, Du, Wu, Luo, Kan, Kang and Ma. They spent money in the construction of several grottoes, particularly those major ones, and were none other than the grotto owners or primary

³ Ma De mainly defined this term as one entity sponsoring or participating in grotto construction. It may be a person, family, group or organization or several people or families.

contractors over the different eras of the Mogao Grottoes. Grotto owners and their clans [including their ancestors or posterity (HE, 1986, p. 194)] were painted, with names and posts indicated. These benefactors, along with their wives, daughters, grandchildren, servants and other clan members, formed the bulk of the clan imagery of Dunhuang from the ninth year of the Sui Dynasty (613) to the early years of Wu De of the Tang Dynasty (618-626). In reality, even when clans have declined or local or national governments have changed, their image in ancestor or family temples may still be harmed or destroyed. The Buddhist grottoes, on the other hand, were preserved and handed down from generation to generation. The certain clans' grottos will be maintained by regional Buddhist groups even if they have no offspring. The management will not be damaged by humans, therefore it will always stay intact.

By far the best preserved early clan portrait on the floor of Mogao Cave No. 285 was built by Wang Yuanrong or Yin, the king of Dongyang during the Northern Dynasties. As the only cave with a definite date, 124 or 125 portraits of the patron are preserved intact under the transmission paintings on the east and north walls of the cave, along with 50 patron inscriptions. The four benefactor's vows⁴ on the north wall of that grotto (no similar vows discovered anywhere else in any early Mogao grotto) (ZHANG, 2014, p. 36) and inscriptions indicate that Wang Yuanrong's and his family were the one female philanthropist in the opposite way and the three male benefactors below the first Dharma-preaching artwork on the north wall. Those people below other six frescoes came from Yin, Shi, Hua, Ding, He and other clans. In the Eastern Jin dynasty, Northern or Southern Dynasties, Buddhist monks and laypersons founded *yiyi* religious societies (HAO, 1992, pp. 90-105) to conduct various activities, such as statue-making.

Many benefactor's figures from the Five Dynasties or Song period had grown to be as huge as or greater than the Buddha or bodhisattva of the same grotto (DUAN, 1995, p. 101). Mogao Grotto No. 231 indicates that it was built to "repay the kindness of the lord and that of the grotto owner's parents (ZHENG, 1992, p. 238)."⁵ This is also the first grotto where a painting of a secular couple (late parents) seated across from the donor could be seen above the eastern entrance. Instead, during the Eastern Han dynasty, this kind of image regularly appeared in tomb murals to convey the owners' intense love

⁴ Actually, there are five vows of the Northern Dynasties, one about the Cao Tianhu Pagoda of Northern Wei and four engraved on the north wall of Grotto No. 285.

⁵ The inscription on construction of the grotto says why the grotto owner built it.

for their deceased parents. The *Record of Auspicious Gratitude-Showing Grotto* P. 2991 says, “Alas, alack! My parents have gone through many hardships producing me and bringing me up. I want to repay their kindness, but now I have to rely on the great blessing of my offspring. ... The eldest son of mine is so filial. Though unable to see my parents personally, he has painted their portraits. May these portraits keep intact for endless epochs and my clan will continue for one thousand years (Zheng, 1992, p. 331).” The grotto mentioned above was undoubtedly dug to express thanks on the owner’s part to his parents. Grotto No. 144 built during the governance of Zhang’s Army Back on Duty shows that the owner not merely wrote characters “Mr Suo Vowed to Cut a Niche to Commemorate His Parents” between their portraits, but also had himself painted as a servant (WANG, 2012, p. 101) in front of them. The *Record of Suoyi Bian’s Grotto-Making Feat* also includes many passages about filial duty (LI, 2013, p. 207), such as “Suo Yibian not only fulfilled well his loyalty and filial duty, but also showed a great talent for civil and military affairs;” “his eldest son Monk Changzhen is of refined mien and treats him with utmost obedience. Moreover, he assists his uncle, also a monk, in grotto construction from the beginning to the end;” “spread the last vow and gained great fame as a filial son;” “the grotto painting and sculpture not only embody the benefactor’s wishes to repay the four types of kindness to his parents, the king, three jewels and all sentient beings, but also praise the orthodoxy of the unique vehicle that leads all sentient beings to Buddhahood.” Image halls honoring the owner’s deceased parents or grandparents were merged into religious grottoes under the influence of the filial responsibility that permeates Confucianism. Zheng Yi argues that compared with the traditional grotto benefactor images, the images of those late parents or grandparents did arise from hybridization of Han Chinese’s ancestor image-making and Buddhist grotto construction. The design of family grotto altered along with the layout of the grotto wall as a result of the new photos. It was no longer a mere Buddhist hall, but brought together a Buddhist hall and a shrine worshipping the owner’s late parents as well as others. According to the actual location of the ancestor offering, there was not only no discernible distinction between the family temple, shrine and image hall, but also a mixed usage of these titles along with growing sacrifice ritual. Overall, the image hall became popular in the Tang dynasty. More precisely, it served as a site of ancestor worship for non-monks after serving as a sacrifice for high monks who had passed away. In the Song dynasty, the image hall served more strongly as a venue of such worship and even gained new functions through Sima Guang’s commendation in the *Book of Rituals*. In this way, it supplemented the inadequacy of the official

family-temple system and thus gained governmental recognition. For quite a long period, the image hall had been a mainstream option for those who wanted to worship their ancestors and even become closely bound up with a clan's daily life (LIU, 2010, p. 126-130; Zhao, 2008, p. 43). However, the *yingtang* image hall is still different from the *yingku* image grotto.

4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE IMAGE HALL

Since the belief in spirits emerged, sacrifice-oriented religious activities had become an important element of people's daily lives. After a long period of turmoil in the late Tang and Five Dynasties, a new Song Dynasty was established. At that time, the nobles mainly chose small tombs, which were characterized by ritual, secular and family ties. This change was caused by a change in the tomb owners' class. Previously, a person's clan reflected that person's status and position, as those influential clans controlled society. Beginning in the Song Dynasty, ordinary officials and commoners gained higher and higher status and formed their own clans, ending the long-standing influential clan governance. As mentioned above, the presence of patriarchy had been oriented to nobility since the Western Zhou dynasty so that major clans and minor ones were established and granted different degrees of power in terms of ancestor sacrifice. However, from the Eastern Han dynasty, gentryclans got a predominating status. During each period of turmoil, the patriarchal and sacrificial systems disintegrated. In the period that followed, each social upheaval further dismantled the patriarchal and ritual systems of the nobility. The Tang Dynasty carried on the *jiamiao* family's temple system of the Western Zhou period, but the government also highlighted the significance of *simiao* private temples. Senior officials gave sacrifices in a family temple, while lower-ranking officials and common people did so at the *qin* main hall. Later, Five Dynasties emerged and brought about a long period of disturbance, greatly damaging the well-established ritual and culture. No one inherited the title, thus no temple was erected; instead, sacrifices were performed in the main hall of peoples' homes. It is evident that the change in the structure of socio-political power, i.e. the shift in the political system from aristocratic to bureaucratic, led to a shift in people's rituals from aristocratic clan temples to civil shrines.

Since the Song dynasty, common clans have dominated the clannish society and enhanced everyone's sense of family via shrine and tomb sacrifice.

Ordinary people placed offerings at the *qin*, which is known as the *zhengting* main hall in present terms. Any ritual should be conducted as per *yi* ceremonies. For a wealthy or gentry family, just one image hall is sufficient. During the Ming Dynasty, as ordinary people have no ancestral temple, they could build an image hall to the left of the main hall to place their ancestor's tablet. The specific rituals and objects of worship differ for both ordinary and wealthy families, but all hold rituals to pay tribute to common blood ancestors within the clan. This situation has become the mainstream of society.

Ancestral tablets were the main form of worship before the late Tang Dynasty, after which image worship became mainstream. Clans' sacrificial portraits were widely used at tomb chambers, image halls, temples and other places. In the sixth year of King Renzong Tiansheng's reign (1028), Ren Zhongzhi, Minister of Rites Ren Zhongzheng's brother, "built a new hall with three rooms" in his hometown of Caozhou, Shandong Province, and "worshiped the portraits of his ancestors all year round. Some Taoist or Buddhist temples built an image hall for laypersons. For example, when Luo Congyan (1072-1135) of Sha County, Fujian Province, died between the Northern and Southern Song dynasties, his portrait was added to his ancestral tablet because his eighth ancestor had built the Yi'en Temple for Tiandi. Obviously, without this temple, this family's ancestor worship would not have been possible. This connection linked ancestors' commemorative venues on the ground and their tombs under the ground. Actually, each commemorative venue and tomb were depicted using symbolic horizontal and longitudinal axes of the sacrificial space. Each executor of the sacrifice was able to establish psychological and emotional affiliation with the community thanks to the clan's shrine or image hall: a new cultural marker. To be frank, a clan's history is meticulously constructed through a set of sacrificial procedures.

Ancestor worship has been bolstering up a clan's sustenance. When it comes to governing the people, ritual or etiquette matters more than anything else. Though there are five classics in this regard, the one about sacrifice is of greatest importance. When it comes to governing the people, propriety or etiquette is more important than anything else. Among them, the one on sacrifice is the most important. In the beginning, ancestor sacrifice primarily aimed to ask for protection and blessings. It is obvious that ancient Chinese had formed the mentality that any ancestor, living or dead, may bless his posterity or clan. In fact, a clan worshipped ancestors because the ancestors could bring them blessings and support their survival. Rituals involved in

ancestor sacrifice became the most crucial means of boosting their relations with spirits like ancestors. At first, the ancestral temple served as a major venue of ancestor worship and back then the sacrificial ceremony was highly hierarchical. To put it more clearly, the various ancestors' status and divinity were placed in decreasing order according to their seniority. While royal members or aristocratic people were allowed to construct ancestral temples to give sacrifices to their earliest ancestors, ordinary people were only allowed to worship their fathers, ancestors or close relatives at home. However, only the king or lord was entitled to directly offer sacrifices to the *Tiandi* Heavenly Sovereign, Mythical or Royal Ancestor. Ancestral temple activity added a large amount of political implications to people's thoughts about their dead forefathers. In other words, the ancestral temple was a religious venue as well as a vital political venue. It embodies the clan's survival, eligibility to receive offerings, power and blood politics. Ancestor-oriented ritual systems are designed to allow people to remember their ancestors and ancient things by going back to their roots. Sacrificial activity helped intensify clannish blood relations and order. From the beginning of the Zhou Dynasty, a feudal patriarchal system based on the full-blooded son succession was introduced, so that not only were clans divided into major and minor ones, but also the nobles' descendants were bound by a strict legal hierarchy. Lords had seven temples, dukes or marquises had five temples, and dons had three ones, but commoners had to worship their ancestors at home in the main hall of the gin house. In the feudal patriarchal hierarchy described above, each level of clan was a minor clan compared to the superior and a major one compared to the inferior, which implied a patriarchal and political relationship between them. The clans' heads at each level were also administrative officials of the same level; for each duke or marquis, their clan and the regime were directly united.

To be sure, before writing began, hieroglyphs were the best means of transmitting information, and also a magical tool or "some kind of ceremony" (LEVEY, 1987, p. 1).

In Gombrich's opinion, the primitive pictograph-making in the remote past was originated from sorcery instead of art (WANG, 2016, p. 14). In other words' images and statues have mystical significance. Since pictographs had specific purposes at the time, ancient people tended to highlight the most important aspects of their subjects in the most straightforward way possible in order to achieve magical effects. To this end, they always conveyed their wishes with the greatest degree of clarity. So, they didn't pursue likeness, but

focused on the integrity and religion of image-making. The picture hall was constructed with this purpose in mind to see whether they could create the spiritual world through which they could speak with their ancestors. In a sense, the well-defined image hall had been evolving under the influence of such hidden order. The process of creating and utilizing images has evolved from the simple scribbling of prehistoric humans into the pinnacle of elite life while being impacted by social, religious and cultural traditions, even if there is some common order or law. Images provide a kind of order, which is essential to the size of human social life. The image hall not only fulfills aesthetics and ornamentation, but more essentially reflects the social requirement for ritual.

CHENG, W. Examen de los salones de imágenes de Tang y Song Yingtang desde una perspectiva de sacrificio de clan. *Transformação*, Marília, v. 46, n. 3, p. 229-248, Jul./Set., 2023.

Resumen: En las dinastías Tang y Song, los clanes zongzu oficiales comunes dominaron gradualmente la comunidad de clanes, lo que interrumpió el riguroso sistema de sacrificios orientado a los estratos. Por lo tanto, como una forma emergente de sacrificio ancestral privado, la sala de imágenes yingtang apareció en las mansiones de los funcionarios comunes o en las casas de la gente común. Cuando la estatua anterior dio paso a una imagen, este nuevo signo cultural llevó a cada ejecutor del sacrificio a lograr una identificación psicológica y emocional con la comunidad. A través de imágenes o retratos colgados en los salones, los albaceas pudieron comprobar si se podía crear visualmente un reino espiritual para comunicarse con sus antepasados o contarles sus oraciones.

Palabras clave: Dinastías Tang y Song. Filosofía del Sacrificio. Sala(s) de imágenes de Yingtang. Forma.

REFERENCES

ARNHEIM, R. **Visual Thinking**. Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1969.

BAI, T. Y.; SHA, W. Study of the Donor Portraits of Yin Bolun and His Wife in Cave 231 at Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang. **Dunhuang Research**, v. 26, n. 2, p. 6, 2006.

BAN, G. **Expositions of the White Tiger Hall**. Qianlong Jiachen Baojingtang edition, 3, 13, 14, 1784.

CHANG, J. H. **The Emergence of Zongzu from the Song and Comparison of Clans in Difference Areas**. Beijing: People's, 41, 43, 2013.

- CHEN, G. C. **The Dressing Embodiment of Cao's Family in Dunhuang Frescoes under Marriage Alliance**. 2006. (Master's Thesis) – Donghua University, Shanghai, 26-27, 29, 2006.
- CHEN, S. **Record of Three Kingdoms**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 16, 512-513, 1962.
- CHENG, H.; CHENG, Y. **Collected Works of Two Chengs**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 1, 285, 1981.
- DNOG, G. *et al.* **Complete Tang Prose**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 350, 3543, 1983.
- DONG, G. *et al.* **Complete Tang Prose**. Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books, 14, 66, 1990a.
- DONG, G. *et al.* **Complete Tang Prose**. Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books, 22, 106, 1990b.
- DONG, G. *et al.* **Complete Tang Prose**. Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books, 38, 175, 1990c.
- DUAN, C. S. **Record of Temple Pagodas**. Beijing: People's Fine Arts, 6, 1964.
- DUAN, C. S. **Miscellaneous Records of Youyang**. Jinan: Qilu, 3, 104, 2007.
- DUAN, W. J. Benefactor Portraits and Grottoes. **Dunhuang Research**, v. 15, n. 3, p. 101, 113-115, 1995.
- DUNHUANG, Y. **A General Catalogue of the Dunhuang Grottoes**. Beijing: Cultural Relics, 11, 1996a.
- DUNHUANG, Y. **A General Catalogue of the Dunhuang Grottoes**. Beijing: Cultural Relics, 288, 1996b.
- DUNHUANG, Y. **Complete Works of Dunhuang Grottoes**. Hong Kong: Commercial, 2003. p. 9, 97-98.
- FENG, E. **A History of Chinese Clans**. Shanghai: Shanghai People's, 1, 2009.
- HAN, C. P. Determining Sutra-Collecting Grotto No. 17 as the Image Hall or Grotto of Monk Hongbian. **Journal of Dunhuang Studies**, v. 26, n. 4, p. 271, 2007.
- HAO, C. W. Buddhist Societies in Eastern Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties. **Historical Research**, v. 39, n. 1, p. 90-105, 1992.
- HAO, C. W. **The Social Life of Dunhuang Monks and Nuns From Late Tang Period to Early Song Period.**, Beijing: China Social Sciences, 1998. p. 76-96,
- HE, S. Z. **Dating the Construction of Some Mogao Grottoes according to Benefactor Inscriptions, Benefactors' Inscriptions at Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes**. Beijing: Cultural Relics, 194, 1986.
- HU, T.Q. An Introduction to Dunhuan Grotto Art. **Dunhuang Research**, v. 13, n. 3, p. 29, 33, 1993.
- JI, Q. Y. **A Study of Tang Dynasty's Filial Culture**. 2011. (Doctoral Dissertation) – Shaanxi Normal University, Xi'an, 2011.

- JI, X. L. **A Grand Dictionary of Dunhuang Studies**. Shanghai: Shanghai Dictionary, 23, 1998.
- JI, Y. *et al.* Ready Guide. **General Catalogue of the Four Branches of Classical Literature**, v. 4, Taipei: Commercial, 1986.
- JI, Y. *et al.* **Imperial Catalogue of Calligraphies and Paintings from the Peiwen Studio, Four Branches of Classical Literature**. Taipei: Commercial, 1986a. Fasc. 45, 821, 15.
- JI, Y. *et al.* **Imperial Catalogue of Calligraphies and Paintings from the Peiwen Studio, Four Branches of Classical Literature**. Taipei: Commercial, 1986b. Fasc. 16, 964, 659.
- JI, Y. *et al.* **Imperial Catalogue of Calligraphies and Paintings from the Peiwen Studio, Four Branches of Classical Literature**. Taipei: Commercial, 1986c. Fasc. 95, 823, 237.
- JI, Y. *et al.* **Record of Famous Paintings in Yizhou, Four Branches of Classical Literature**. Taipei: Commercial, 1986d. Fasc.1, 812, 488.
- JI, Y. *et al.* **Record of Famous Tang Paintings, Four Branches of Classical Literature**. Taipei: Commercial, 812, 365, 1986e.
- JI, Y. *et al.* **The Primary Divination Turtle of the Records Office, Four Branches of Classical Literature**. Taipei: Commercial, 1986f. Fasc. 37, 902, 593.
- JI, Y. *et al.* **Painting Collection in the Xuanhe Period, Four Branches of Classical Literature**. Taipei: Commercial 1986g. Fasc. 5, 813, 99.
- JI, Y. *et al.* **Record of Buddhist Anecdotes, Four Branches of Classical Literature**. Taipei: Commercial, 1987a. Fasc. 2, 1052, 867.
- JI, Y. *et al.* **Record of Famous Tang Paintings, Four Branches of Classical Literature**. Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books, 812, 369, 1987b.
- KANG, P. **A Grand Collection of Tang and Five Dynasties' Notes and Stories**. Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books, 2, 1488, 2000.
- LEI, W. The Imperial Icon and the Sacrifice in the Tang Dynasty. **Journal of Tang Studies**. Beijing: Peking University Press, 9, 265-266, 2003a.
- LEI, W. The Imperial Icon and the Sacrifice in the Tang Dynasty. **Journal of Tang Studies**. Beijing: Peking University Press, 9, 270-273, 2003b.
- LEVEY, M. **A History of Western Art**. Trans. Sun, J. *et al.* Nanjing: Jiangsu Fine Arts, 1, 1987.
- LI, J. J. **Research on Yibian Su's Cave of Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes**. 2013 (Doctoral Dissertation) – Lanzhou University, Lanzhou, 2013.

LI, Q. Q. New Image of the Entire Hall Celebration - Song and Jin Dynasties' Tomb-Owner Portraits and Tang-Song Tomb Customs' Changes. **Art Journal**, v.77, n. 2, p. 20, 2013.

LI, W. Z.; JIANG, T. X. **Relations between the Patriarchal Clan System of China and Clannish Fields and Coffin Storehouses**. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 21, 2000.

LI, Y. N. Sutra on Repaying the Grace of Parents and Relevant Sutra Paintings in Mogao Grottoes. **Chinese Grottoes: Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes**, Beijing: Cultural Relics Publishing'4, 190, 1987.

LI, Y. P. Northern Song Painting of the Sutra of Reciprocating Parents' Affection on Silk. **Cultural Relics World**, v.29, n. 4, p. 48, 2015.

LIU, G. Y. **A Research Study on the 'Cao Painting Academy' in Dunhuang**. 2016. (Master's Thesis) – Jiangnan University, Wuxi, 2016.

LIU, J. W. The Historical Change of Chinese Ancient Clan Clustering and Clan Form. **The Northern Forum**, v.49, n.1, p. 107, 2007.

LIU, X. *et al.* **Old Book of Tang**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 10, 249, 1975.

LIU, Y. P. Studies on Tang and Song Image Halls and Ancestor Sacrifice. **Social Sciences in Yunnan**, v.30, n.4, p. 126-130, 2010.

LU, M. Z. A Treatise on Song Scholar-Officials' Thoughts of Family Temples and Clan Shrines. **Zhejiang Academic Journal**, v.55, n. 3, p. 183, 2017.

LUO, C. Y. **Collected Writings of Master Yuzhang**. Four Branches of Classical Literature, 1792. Fasc. 16, 1135, 772.

MA, D. Monk Supervisors' Family Grottoes and Grotto Construction. **Dunhuang Research**, v.9, n.4, p. 54-58, 1989.

MA, D. **Historical Research on Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes**. Lanzhou: Gansu Education, p. 68-69, 1996a.

MA, D. **Historical Research on Dunhuang Mogao Grottoes**. Lanzhou: Gansu Education, p. 160-168, 1996b.

MA, S. C. Several Issues on Dunhuang Sutra Grottoes. **Cultural Relics**, v.29, n.12, p. 21-33, 1978.

OUYANG, X.; SONG, Q. **New Book of Tang**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 146, 4736, 1975.

PENG, D. Q. *et al.* **Complete Tang Poetry**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 1960a. Fasc. 301, v. 9, 3420.

PENG, D. Q. *et al.* **Complete Tang Poetry**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 1960b. Fasc. 436, v. 13, 4829.

PENG, D. Q. *et al.* **Complete Tang Poetry**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 1960c. Fasc. 486, v. 15, 5529.

PENG, D. Q. *et al.* **Complete Tang Poetry**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 1960d. Fasc. 510, v. 15, 5819.

PENG, D. Q. *et al.* **Complete Tang Poetry**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 1960e. Fasc. 534, v. 16, 6095.

QI, J. **On the True Hall of 18 Donglin Worthies, Complete Tang Poetry**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 2008. Fasc. 844, v. 24, 9536.

QU, T. A Study on the Yingtang. **Chinese Culture**, v.24, n.2, p. 116-118, 2012.

QU, T. **Construction of Maiji Grottoes from the 10th to the 13th Century, Liangqian Nian Dunhuangxue Guoji 2000 International Symposium on Dunhuang Studies**. Lanzhou: Gansu People's, 3, 411-414, 2003.

SHA, W. T. Examining Benefactor Portraits of Dunhuang Grottoes during the Rule by Tibet. **China Tibetology**, v. 16, n. 2, p. 82-83, 2003.

SHI, W. X. **Great Clans and Dunhuang**. Collected Papers on Dunhuang. Lanzhou: Gansu People's, 163, 1982.

TAKAKUSU, J.; WATANABE, K. **Taisho Tripitaka**. Taipei: Shin Wen Feng Print, 3, 128, 1983.

WANG, H. M. Study of Jiamiao in Tang Dynasty. **Historical Review**, v. 25, n. 6, p. 50, 2010.

WANG, P. **Collected Regulations of the Tang**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 47, 836, 1955.

WANG, Q. **An Aesthetic Study of Gombrich's Visual Art Theory of Cognition**. 2016 (Master's Thesis) – Heilongjiang University, Harbin, 2016.

WANG, Q. R. *et al.* **The Primary Divination Turtle of the Records Office**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 946, 11143, 1960a.

WANG, Q.R. *et al.* **The Primary Divination Turtle of the Records Office**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 139, 1680-1681, 1960b.

WANG, Y. C. **Xiaoxu Collection of Wang Huangzhou**. Sibucongkan Chubian edition. Beijing: Commercial, 14, 9b-10a, 1919.

WANG, Z. M. *et al.* **Collected Transformation Texts of Dunhuang**. Beijing: People's Literature, 1, 124, 1957.

WANG, Z. X. Yin Jiazheng's Parents as Devotees: Dunhuang Mural Painting from Tubo Period. **Journal of National Museum of China**, v. 34, n.3, p. 101, 2012.

WU, H. **What is Bianxiang?** On the Relationship between Dunhuang Art and Dunhuang Literature. Beijing: Sanlian Bookstore, 52, 1, 119, 1992.

WU, J. **Political Essentials of Zhenguan Period**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 7, 498, 2011.

- XIANG, Y. F. A Study of Buddhist Grottoes' Benefactors. **Dunhuang Research**, v.17, n.1, p. 99-100, 1997.
- XU, J. **Writings for Elementary Instruction**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 17, 422, 1962a.
- XU, J. **Writings for Elementary Instruction**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 322, 1962b.
- XUE, J. Z. **Old Book of Tang**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 117, 4369, 1976.
- YOU, B. C. Ancestral Hall, Sacrifices and Others in the Song Dynasty. **Journal of Anhui Normal University** (Hum. & Soc. Sci.), v. 3, p. 327, 2006.
- ZHANG, J. F. **Research on Family Yin at Dunhuang and the Mogao Grottoes**. 2014. (Doctoral Dissertation) – Lanzhou University, Lanzhou, 36, 2014.
- ZHANG, P. J. Probing Into Benefactor Images of Paintings Unearthed at Dunhuang Sutra Grottoes. **Dunhuang Research**, v. 27, n.4, p. 93, 95, 2007.
- ZHANG, X. T. Statue-Making of Ancient Benefactors in Dunhuang. **Dunhuang Research**, v. 27, n.4, p. 67, 69, 2007.
- ZHANG, X. T. Investigating the Development of Mogao Grottoes' Benefactor Portraits from a Buddhist Historical Perspective. **Journal of Dunhuang Studies**, v.26, n.4, p. 96, 102, 2008.
- ZHANG, Z. **Thesaurus of Principles for the Study of the Classics**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 315, 1978.
- ZHANGSNU, W. J. *et al.* **Commentaries and Explanations of the Tang Law**. Beijing: Zhonghua Book, 7, 1983.
- ZHAO, X. Discussing the Sacrificial Ritual System of Tang and Song Dynasties' Private Ancestor Worship. **Journal of Chinese Historical Studies**, v.30, n.3, p. 3, 28, 30, 43, 2008.
- ZHENG, B. L. **Collected Interpretations of Dunhuang Stele Inscriptions**. Lanzhou: Gansu Education, 238, 1992.
- ZHENG, B. L. True Halls in Dunhuang Manuscripts and Relevant Issues Project 1 of Mogao Grotto Benefactor Portraits. **Dunhuang Research**, v. 26, n. 6, p. 70, 73, 2006.
- ZHENG, B. L. **Collected Interpretations of Dunhuang Stele Inscriptions**. Lanzhou: Gansu Education, 331, 1992.
- ZHENG, Y. From Sacrifice to Merits: The Space and Ritual of Tang and Five Dynasties' Lifelike Portraits. **Art Magazine**, v.65, n. 7, p. 111, 113-114, 2014.

Received: 17/11/2022

Approved: 16/01/2023