

## Article

# Evolution of the Sacrificial Ritual to the South Sea God in Song China

Yuanlin Wang <sup>1,\*</sup> and Aiyun Ye <sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup> College of Humanities, Guangzhou University, Guangzhou 510006, China<sup>2</sup> School of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou University, Guangzhou 510006, China

\* Correspondence: twyl@gzhu.edu.cn

**Abstract:** Previous studies on the Nanhaishen Temple 南海神廟 (Temple of the South Sea God) in Guangzhou in the Song dynasty focus mainly on its state sacrificial ritual and local temple fairs, without fully discussing the differences of the sacrificial ritual between the Southern and Northern Song dynasties or the changes of the sacrificial ritual in Lingnan after the Song dynasty. This paper aims to illuminate the following five points. First, after the reunification of the Northern Song dynasty, the sacrificial ritual to the South Sea God in Guangzhou was advanced. Second, when the South Sea God and his temple were conferred with the holy titles for the fourth time, the god's role to bless local stability was further manifested, which means the imperial power gradually permeated into the Lingnan culture. Third, the blessing of the South Sea God was more prominent than ever before because of its geographical location in the southeast of the state during the Southern Song dynasty, and thus the Nanhaishen Temple Fair was the largest of its kind in Lingnan. Fourth, the stele inscription of *Liuhou Zhi Ji* 六侯之記 (Records of the Six Lords) shows that local people attempted to incorporate their folk beliefs into the canonized sacrifice to the South Sea God, and thus many religious spots were built in other places in Lingnan as detached palaces (*ligong* 離宮) of the god who was generally endorsed by the local officialdom. Fifth, the sacrifice to the South Sea God in Guangzhou in the Song dynasty had a far-reaching influence, as the god was worshipped by the later generations in the temples which also accommodated the worship of Buddhism and Daoism. In summary, the lengthy process for the South Sea God to evolve from a national god to a local patron is the result of the country's long-term implementation of the ritual system as far as the ritual culture is concerned.

**Keywords:** the South Sea God; sacrificial ritual; national god; folk god; localization



**Citation:** Wang, Yuanlin, and Aiyun Ye. 2022. Evolution of the Sacrificial Ritual to the South Sea God in Song China. *Religions* 13: 939. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13100939>

Academic Editor: Jinhua Jia

Received: 6 September 2022

Accepted: 3 October 2022

Published: 9 October 2022

**Publisher's Note:** MDPI stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



**Copyright:** © 2022 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## 1. Introduction

The Nanhaishen Temple 南海神廟 (Temple of the South Sea God) was one of the most important ritual places, and the sacrifice to the South Sea God constituted a significant part in the ritual system of political power in traditional China. However, most studies only examine the temple as a significant historical relic along the ancient Maritime Silk Road, though the sacrificial ritual to the South Sea God at the temple was similar to the sacrifice to *yue-zhen-hai-du* 嶽鎮海瀆 (sacred peaks, strongholds, seas, and waterways), which, as a state sacrificial ritual, displayed the central government's jurisdictional right to its vast territory and significant landmarks. Therefore, sacrifice to the South Sea God was initiated by central and local governments and was often performed by important officials. In retrospect, the South Sea God was a secondary sacrificial subject to many other *diqu* 地祇 (Earthly deities) in the state sacrifice ritual at the capital in the Han dynasty (202 B.C.–A.D. 220). In the Sui dynasty (581–618), temples were built for the spirits when the sacrifice to *yue-zhen-hai-du* was practiced at the local level. Regardless of the change of dynasty, the South Sea God kept his secondary position as one of the spirits worshipped at Ditan 地壇 (Earth Altar) near the capital suburbs, and the new locations of the capital

did not disrupt its actual sacrifice at the local level. Moreover, the South Sea God was one of the eighteen gods of the five sacred peaks (*wuyue* 五嶽), five strongholds (*wuzhen* 五鎮), four seas (*sihai* 四海), and four waterways (*sidu* 四瀆). Amongst the gods of the four seas, the altar of the South Sea God (i.e., the Nanhaishen Temple) was the only one that never changed his location. How did such a national god of the South Sea evolve into a local patron? What cultural connotations can we draw from the many detached palaces (*ligong* 離宮), big and small, of the Nanhaishen Temple that still exist today?

Before answering these questions, we need to point out that the ancient Chinese gods can be roughly divided into two types according to their sources: the national gods and folk gods. However, through a series of ritual practices, the national gods can be endorsed by the local people and become their patrons, which was evidenced by the case of the South Sea God, whereas the folk gods can evolve from local patrons to national gods that were incorporated into the state sacrificial system, such as the goddess Tian Fei 天妃 (Heavenly Consort)<sup>1</sup>. Previous scholarships have examined the beliefs of this type of gods that broke through geographical boundaries, the rituals of sacrifice to them, their temples, and their devotees. For example, in her book *Changing Gods in Medieval China, 1127–1276*, American historian Valerie Hansen focuses on the change of gods in the Southern Song dynasty and their integration into the shifting markets and commodities. She summarizes that a large number of gods that used to be confined to a single area went beyond physical boundaries to exert their influence, and they can be categorized into local, regional, and national gods according to their influence (Hansen 2016, p. 7). Chinese historians Wang Jianchuan and Pi Qingsheng outline the process of Zhang Wang 張王, Wu Tong 五通, and other gods that constantly had their temples built and their influences disseminated, and the two historians analyze the forces of the dissemination of the influences (Wang and Pi 2010, pp. 150–201). Pi further summarizes four dissemination models and discusses the relationship between the disseminators and the origin of the ancestral faith, the composition of the disseminator groups, the relationship between the temporary ancestral temples and the ancestral temples, the social function of the temporary ancestral temples, and so on. Pi and Wang’s dissemination model, which is based on historical studies, reveals a macrotrend of the expansion and transformation of gods, i.e., the flow process from place A to place B. Pi’s research, however, does not investigate the relationship between religious beliefs and individual devotees (Pi 2008, pp. 208–24). In addition, the previous studies mainly focus on the local religious practice of the temples and shrines in the Song dynasty. Though national gods such as Zhenwu Shen 真武神 (True Martial God), Wenchang Dijun 文昌帝君 (Superior Lord King Wenchang, known as the God of Culture and Literature), and Guan Gong 關公 (Guan Yu, 160AD–220AD) are mentioned, these studies mainly take them as examples to prove the relationship between Daoism and the state power (Wang and Pi 2010, pp. 206–304) and, therefore, they rarely delve into the state ritual system of *yue-zhen-hai-du*. Chinese historian Wang Yuanlin, nevertheless, analyzes the similarities and differences between the South Sea God and Tian Fei in terms of their sacrificial procedure and title conferring in the Song dynasty (Wang 2006, pp. 101–26). Yet there are still many questions open for discussion: What is the connection between the constant manifestation of the South Sea God’s supernatural power and the localization of worshipping him in Lingnan? What are the similarities and differences in sacrificing to the South Sea God between the Southern and Northern Song dynasties? How do inscriptions, temple fairs, and legends prove the South Sea God as the patron of the local people? What were the influences exerted by the sacrificial ritual to the South Sea God in the Song dynasty upon the following dynasties? Taking these questions as points of departure, this paper utilizes ample textual evidence, including official archives, stele inscriptions, local gazettes, and other documents, to investigate the changes in the sacrificial rituals in the Nanhaishen Temple in the Southern and Northern Song dynasties. The purpose is to explore how the state sacrifice to the South Sea God was locally implemented in Lingnan, which was merely evidenced by the local governments building dispatched palaces in many counties, and yet it was an important step for the South Sea God to become a local patron.

## 2. Sacrificial Ritual to the South Sea God in the Northern Song Dynasty

As early as the Sui dynasty, temples were built in Lingnan to worship the South Sea God, but the state sacrifice to the god was only implemented in a physical form. It was not until the Tang dynasty that a dual system of suburban sacrifices near the capital and actual sacrifices in Guangzhou was established to worship the South Sea God. Since then, the central government began to attach importance to the local sacrifices and sent commissioners to supervise the sacrificial ceremonies in Guangzhou (Wang 2021). In the seventh month of the sixth year of Qiande (968), for instance, there was a petition that the South Sea God should be sacrificed in the traditional way in Guangzhou because the ritual system of sacrificing to *yue-zhen-hai-du* in the Northern Song dynasty did not conform to the system of the Tang dynasty (Ouyang 1996, vol. 49, p. 521). At that time, Guangzhou was still under the control of the Southern Han regime; thus, it was only possible for people to sacrifice to the god by looking from afar. In the second month of the fourth year of Kaibao (971), Liu Chang 刘鋹, the emperor of the Southern Han dynasty, surrendered to his rivals, and thus the unification of the Northern Song dynasty was completed. To ensure the ideological and cultural unification of the new regime, it was necessary to rectify the state ritual system, remove the titles of the South Sea God and his wife given to them by the Southern Han dynasty, and change the clothes that symbolized royalty to clothes of the first-rank officials of the Song court (Ouyang 1996, vol. 49, p. 521).

In the sixth month of the fourth year of Kaibao (971), when the reunification was completed, the central government dispatched Li Jifang 李繼芳 from the capital city Bianliang 汴梁 to Guangzhou to offer sacrifices to the South Sea God and to announce the reunification of the country. At the same time, the *Kaiyuanli* 開元禮 (Kaiyuan Ritual) of the Tang dynasty was revalidated (Li 1992, vol. 12, pp. 265–66). In the fourth month of the sixth year of Kaibao (973), the 200 juan of *Kaibao Tongli* 開寶通禮 (General Rituals in Kaibao) and the 100 juan of *Tongli Yizuan* 通禮義纂 (Collection of General Rituals) were compiled and promulgated nationwide (Li 1992, vol. 14, p. 299). Compilation of the state rites cannot exist without political legitimacy and the power of rulers in people's minds. Therefore, in the Northern Song dynasty, the ritual system of the Tang dynasty was restored, and the sacrifice to the South Sea God was implemented in the suburban and local areas, and the god was still called "Guangliwang 廣利王 (King Guangli)" (Ouyang 1996, vol. 49, p. 521).

In the early Song dynasty, the sacrifice to *yue-zhen-hai-du* was one of the nine medium sacrifices (*zhongsi* 中祀), and they were worshipped in the capital city and local areas according to the ritual scheme called "greeting the seasonal *qi* in the five directions" (*wufang ying qi* 五方迎氣). On the occasion of amnesty, local government officials also offered sacrifices to *yue-zhen-hai-du* by following the ritual system which stipulated the use of altars, animal utensils, jade and silk, food utensils, fasting, and others (Tuqto'a 1977, vol. 98, p. 2425). Meanwhile, the *Kaibao Tongli* was still in practice. From the years of Dazhongxiangfu 大中祥符 (1008–1016) to Tianxi 天禧 (1017–1021), during the reign of Emperor Zhenzong of Song, when there was an outbreak of drought, locusts, and no snow, officials at the capital and in the local prefectures began to perform sacrificial rituals to the spirits of the four seas, including the South Sea God (Tuqto'a 1977, vol. 102, p. 2490).

Emperor Taizu of Song specified the management rules and personnel of the Nanhaishen Temple in Guangzhou, which can be seen in the following two cases during the period of Kaibao. The first case took place in the fifth year of Kaibao (971) when the emperor ordered the local District Magistrate (*xianling* 縣令) to serve as the temple magistrate and the District Defender (*xianwei* 縣尉) to serve as the temple premier of the Nanhaishen Temple, as other temples of *yue-zhen-hai-du* did. Thus, the local officials were in charge of the sacrificial ritual, as they were required to "constantly inspect the temple to ensure the temple was clean and to register the number of sacrificial utensils" 常加按視，務於蠲潔，仍籍其廟宇祭器之數, and "the head official of the Prefecture should inspect the temple once a month" 本州長吏每月一詣廟察舉 (Ma 2011, vol. 83, p. 2556). As the Nanhaishen Temple was located in Nanhai County 南海縣 (and Panyu County after the third year of Huangyou (1051)), its daily management was in the charge of the local and county-level officials,

instead of the Daoist priests and monks, in the subsequent dynasties. The second case took place in the sixth year of Kaibao (972) when the Nanhaishen Temple was renovated. The renovation was recorded in a stele inscription, and amazingly the stele is still standing to the west of the temple's front gate today. On one side of the inscription, it illustrates the achievements of the South Sea God; on the other, it also gives credit to Emperor Taizu of Song for unifying the country. The two sides stayed in harmony to praise the two masters, and it was part of the tradition in Lingnan to set inscriptions to praise the royal masters on Earth and the spiritual masters in Heaven. The stele was inscribed with the signatures of several officials, including Pan Mei 潘美, the highest official of Guangzhou, who was then the Transport Commissioner of Guangnan Circuit (*Guangnan zhuanyunshi* 廣南轉運使), the Magistrate of Prefecture (*zhizhou* 知州), and the Maritime Trade Commissioner (*shiboshi* 市舶使) of Guangzhou, Xie Chupin 謝處玘, who was in charge of "renovating temples" 修廟 as the Assistant Prefect (*tongpan* 通判) and the Administrative Assistant of Maritime Trade (*shibo panguan* 市舶判官) of Guangzhou, and others (Huang and Zhang 2014, pp. 24–26). The two examples embody the local government's emphasis on the renovation of the Nanhaishen Temple. In particular, the renovation was funded by the local maritime trade revenue, so the maritime trade officials were mainly responsible for the financing.

The abovementioned two cases of sacrificing to the South China Sea God in Guangzhou during the Kaibao period had no precedent rituals to follow. Similarly, on the 12th day of the second year of Chunhua (991), during the reign of Emperor Taizong of Song, Li Zhi 李至, the Director of the Palace Library (*mishujian* 秘書監), proposed that sacrifices to *yue-zhen-hai-du* should be performed on the day of "greeting the seasonal *qi* in the five directions". Li also proposed to carry on the tradition in the Tang dynasty to offer sacrifice to the South Sea God in Guangzhou on the summer solstice, and the local officials served as the Supplicants of the Three Offerings (*sanxian liguan* 三獻禮官)<sup>2</sup> (Tuqto'a 1977, vol. 102, p. 2498).

It was during the reign of Emperor Zhenzong of Song that a rigid sacrificial ritual system came into being. In the fourth and the tenth months of the second year of Xianping (999), it was stipulated that the sacrificial vessels and materials (i.e., all kinds of sacrificial supplies) should be clean, and the incantation should be correct (Xu 2014, p. 747). In the eighth month of the fourth year of Jingde (1007), the writing on the prayer tablet (*zhuban* 祝版) should be carefully proofread and the prayer tablet should be sealed in a wooden box on its way to the temple, and the local officials should perform the sacrificial ritual in a solemn way (Xu 2014, p. 749). In the sixth month of the first year of Dazhongxiangfu (1008), the model of choosing the sacrificial offerings was also stipulated (Xu 2014, p. 749). In the ninth month of the fifth year of Dazhongxiangfu (1112), "during the sacrificial ceremonies at all the temples of the sacred peaks, waterways and four seas, when the *jiao* 醮 (offerings to spirits) ceremony was set up, one should not only place the talisman but add the incantation on the divine tablet in the temples as well" 嶽瀆四海諸祠廟，遇設醮，除青詞外，本廟神位並增祝文 (Li 1992, vol. 78, p. 1788). In the fifth month of the seventh year of Dazhongxiangfu (1114), it was stipulated that the sacrificial wine was brewed separately and should not be mixed with regular wine, which stood testimony to the rigidity of the sacrificial ritual system (Xu 2014, p. 751). Moreover, in the fourth month of the sixth year of Xianping (1003), Emperor Zhenzong of Song announced that "those who sacrificed to the shrines and temples of the sacred mountains in a private manner cannot make imperial chariots, yellow tassels, saddle scarfs, or gather a crowd of people and carry arms, or they would be punished the same way they broke the laws" 民祠嶽者，自今無得造輿輦、黃纓繖、茜鞍帕及糾社衆執兵，違者論如律 (Li 1992, vol. 54, p. 1188). It thus distinguished the canonized sacrifice from the folk sacrifice.

It is noteworthy that in the first year of Zhihe (1054), there was a grand sacrifice to the South Sea God during which the Buddhist and Daoist singing sessions were held for ten days (Huang and Zhang 2014, pp. 37–39). Existing inscriptions of the Song dynasty suggest that the Buddhist monks, Daoist priests, and government officials travelled together to the Nanhaishen Temple and inscribed characters on the temple, which could be found in

the steles inside the temple today. For instance, Han Yu's 韓愈 "Nanhaishen Guangliwang Miaobei" 南海神廣利王廟碑 (Stele in the Temple of the South Sea God King Guangli) is still standing on the east side of the main gate of the temple in Guangzhou. To be specific, in the second paragraph of the inscription, we can read that in the seventh month of the second year of Huangyou (1050), Zu Wuze 祖無擇, the Administrative Assistant of Transport Commissioner of Guangnan (*Guangnan zhuanyun panguan* 廣南轉運判官), and other government officials went together with the monks and priests to the temple to pay tribute to the god. Another record is that "He Kecong 何可從, a Daoist priest who played a musical instrument, inscribed characters" 彈琴道士何可從鐫字. Judging by the inscription, it is safe to conclude that the temple at the time was very large as it could accommodate a number of officials, monks, and priests when they attended the ceremony, and it must be a famous scenic spot in the region as well. Furthermore, in the third year of Huangyou (1051), Tian Yu 田瑜, a district magistrate, inscribed his name in the temple where one of his attendants "Monk Zongjing inscribed characters" 僧宗淨刻字 (Huang and Zhang 2014, p. 31). Again, in the first year of Zhihe (1054) and the fifth year of Huangyou (1052), "Monk Zongjing was the inscriber" 僧宗淨刻 on the "official documents used by the Secretarial Chancellery" 中書門下牒 (Huang and Zhang 2014, p. 39). This monk attended the ceremonies three times and inscribed characters twice, which symbolized his close relationship with the temple. This corroborates with the legend of the Buddhist Master Xiujie 休咎禪師 in the Tang dynasty, who wanted to take the South Sea God as his disciple (Jiang 2007, vol. 25, p. 144). It can be seen that during the Tang and Song dynasties, Buddhist monks had a close relationship with the Confucian national god as they showed up from time to time in the worship of the South Sea God.

### 3. "Manifestation of Power" of the South Sea God and the Local Stability in Lingnan

It is said that the South Sea God responded to the prayers during an uprising led by Nong Zhigao 侬智高, the biggest social unrest in Lingnan in the Northern Song dynasty. In the fifth month of the fourth year of Huangyou (1052), Nong Zhigao led his troops to attack Duanzhou 端州 (present-day Zhaoqing, Guangdong). On the 22nd day of the month, he left Duanzhou and fled to Guangzhou. Guangzhou officials and local people prayed to the South Sea God, who responded by ordering a storm to stop Nong and his troops. The storm was so fierce that it lifted the ladders and set his troops on fire, and the rain was so timely that people in the city could drink to quench their thirst. After this, people believed that the South Sea God had the power to protect the city. To reward the god as the people required, Yuan Jiang 元絳, the Transport Commissioner of East of Guangnan Circuit (*Guangnandonglu zhuanyunshi* 廣南東路轉運使), appealed to the court to entitle the god and his wife. In the fourth month of the fifth year of Huangyou (1053), an edict was issued to confer a special title "Nanhai Hongsheng Guangli Zhaoshunwang" 南海洪聖廣利昭順王 (Holy and Successful King of Facilitation in the South Sea) to the god and his wife, which lengthened the title even further to include six Chinese characters. Hence, a new plaque arrived along with the new title to display the honor. The emperor's edict, coupled with the supernatural power of the South Sea God, left an indelible impression in the minds of the people, and subsequently, the god became the local patron. Henceforward, the detached palaces of the god were built in various places and were generally named Hongshengwang Miao 洪聖王廟 (Temple of King Hongsheng) or Hongshengwang Ci 洪聖王祠 (Shrine of King Hongsheng); the title was derived from the name "Hongsheng" 洪聖, which the South Sea God had already been called by the people.

Since the South Sea God answered the prayers of local people and protected the city, as mentioned above, the general public in Guangzhou "all praised the South Sea God" 皆稱道南海神事 (Huang and Zhang 2014, p. 39). During the years of Xining in the reign of Emperor Shenzong of Song (1068–1077), the South Sea God again gave his blessings to the city construction in the west of Guangzhou, and people believed that it was the god that blessed them with good weather, proper rain, abundant crops, peace, and prosperity. Moreover, in the course of the city's construction, Hongshengwang Miao (later called the

West Temple) was built to the west of the Hanghaimen 航海門 (Gate of Navigation). The purpose of building the temple was not for the South Sea God to answer the prayers but to suppress the ominous atmosphere in the Huangyou War 皇祐戰爭 and eliminate the sense of killing (i.e., the original Nanhaishen Temple, 80 miles east of the city, was later called the East Temple). On the day the western city was built, a mirage suddenly appeared, and the new city remained in the water for a long time, which overwhelmed people along the coast so much that they were convinced of the power of the South Sea God (Huang and Zhang 2014, p. 222). In addition to blessing the city construction, the South Sea God also answered the prayers during the drought in Lingnan in the sixth year of Xining (1073) and the seventh year of Xining (1074). Therefore, Cheng Shimeng 程師孟 paid six visits to the Nanhaishen Temple (from the twelfth month of the sixth year of Xining, i.e., 1073, to the tenth month of the seventh year of Xining), where he prayed to the god for the rain (Wang 2006, pp. 150–51). During the years of Xining, Cheng once dreamed that the god answered his prayers. In addition, local people went to the Nanhaishen Temple to pray for retaining Cheng when he was about to leave office, and it turned out he was able to continue his service in the region, which strengthened people's belief in the god (Huang and Zhang 2014, p. 222).

More importantly, the god managed to demonstrate his power in defending the regime. In the eleventh month of the eighth year of Xining (1075), Cochinchina 交趾 invaded Qinzhou 欽州 and Lianzhou 廉州, and in the first month of the following year, Yongzhou 邕州 was invaded as well. At the same time, the court of the Northern Song dynasty dispatched troops to fight back and sent commissioners to sacrifice to the South Mountain and the South Sea, which eventually led to the Southern Expedition (Tuqto'a 1977, vol. 15, p. 290). In this case, the worship of the South Sea God by the local people and by the central government should be understood through the cultural significance of the state ritual system in defending state power. The South Sea God was considered an essential sacrificial subject not only because he had manifested power to bless local prosperity and save people from distress, but also because the worship of the god was also considered important in the state ritual system.

The abovementioned Hongshengwang Temple, built to the west of the Gate of Navigation in Guangzhou, was the first building attached to the Nanhaishen Temple near the city. Due to the constant manifestation of the power of the South Sea God for eliminating disasters, more and more Hongshengwang Temples, or detached palaces of the god to be exact, were built in other prefectures and counties in Lingnan. Since then, the South Sea God had been considered more capable of answering people's prayers, especially during the reign of Emperor Renzong of Song when the local people were protected, and the city was defended under the god's blessings. Hence, the god gained more titles and honors bestowed by the court. As it is recorded that "shrines were constructed in all the towns and cities along the coast" 瀕海郡邑靡不建祠 (Guo 1994, vol. 9, p. 272), we have reason to believe that from the reign of Emperor Renzong of Song to the demise of the Northern Song dynasty, detached palaces were built in various parts of Lingnan to protect the local community. In this way, the South Sea God gradually expanded his influence from the high-level state ritual system to the lower-level local (or folk) practice, and as a result, a change can be observed from sending commissioners by the central or Guangzhou government to worship the god, to building shrines at the coastal counties for the local people to worship the god in Lingnan. These county-level projects of building shrines were initially funded by the local officials and built by the local people; therefore, they were the shrines shared by the official and the general public. For example, during the early reign of Xining, a Nanhaishen Temple was built in the eastern suburb of Dongguan County 東莞縣. In the first year of Chonghe (1118), Jiang Tuo 姜駝, the District Defender of Dongguan, relocated it to an island and expanded it in size. In Huizhou 惠州, a Nanhaishen Temple, which was called Guangliwang Temple at the time, was also restored from the first year of Yuanfeng (1081) to the fourth year (1084).

Another example of restoring the Nanhaishen Temple occurred in the eleventh month of the first year of Yuanyou (1086), when a rebel called Cen Tan 岑探 led a crowd of 2000 people to surround the city of Xinzhou 新州 (present-day Xinxing, Guangdong). Jiang Zhiqi 蔣之奇 fought back and finally sent Yang Xianzhi 楊先之 to beat the rebels (Tuqto'a 1977, vol. 343, pp. 10915–917). This time when Jiang Zhiqi supervised the restoration project, he ordered to rebuild the Nanhaishen West Temple, which was near the city of Guangzhou and the original Nanhaishen East Temple (Guo 2012, vol. 10, p. 385) in order to thank the god for suppressing the riot led by Cen Tan. Moreover, during the Zhenghe period (1111–1118), Fan Zhou'an 范周安 ordered the restoration of the East Temple (Guo 2012, vol. 10, p. 385). In all these cases, government officials played an important role in rebuilding the Nanhaishen Temple.

According to the *Songshi* 宋史 (Song History), “temples and shrines were granted imperial plaques and holy titles during the periods of Xining (1068–1077), Yuanyou (1086–1094), Chongning (1102–1106), and Xuanhe (1119–1125)” 故凡祠廟賜額、封號，多在熙寧、元祐、崇寧、宣和之時 (Tuqto'a 1977, 105. 2562), and the Nanhaishen Temple was included. In addition, the South Sea God's family members were entitled in the eleventh month of the sixth year of Xuanhe of Huizong (1124) as follows: his wife Mingshun Furen 明順夫人 (Lady Mingshun) was entitled Xianren Fei 顯仁妃 (Consort Xianren); his eldest son, Fuling Hou 輔靈侯 (Lord Fuling); his second son, Zanling Hou 贊靈侯 (Lord Zanling); and his daughter, Huiyou Furen 惠佑夫人 (Lady Huiyou) (Xu 2014, pp. 1030, 1085). The fact that the wife and children of the South Sea God were conferred proved the god's rising status and people's increasing devotion. To sum up, the acts of conferring titles, restoring temples, and building detached palaces during the Northern Song dynasty were closely related to the constant appearance of the South Sea God in maintaining the local stability, completing the construction of the western part of the city, and bringing proper rain. This might also be related to the fact that the state power took advantage of the South Sea God's appearance in the local area to reinforce the ruling and promote the culture. As an increasing number of local people believed in the South Sea God due to his constant appearance, the national god further established his status and became localized in Lingnan. At the same time, the state ritual extended its influence in the region.

#### 4. The Nanhaishen Temple Fair: The Largest in Lingnan in the Southern Song Dynasty

Once the Southern Song dynasty was founded, the practice of worshipping the gods of the five directions was back in place in the four seasons of the year. To be specific, the South Mountain God and the South Sea God were both worshipped on the summer solstice. In this way, the previous state ritual system of sacrificing to *yue-zhen-hai-du* resumed (Tuqto'a 1977, vol. 102, p. 2496), and the sacrifice to *yue-zhen-hai-du* was held in the suburb of the capital and at the local level. The geographical scope of the jurisdiction of the Southern Song dynasty was reduced to the entire southern part and some of the eastern part of the previous sovereignty. Therefore, the sacrifice to the gods in the South, particularly the South Sea God, gained special attention from Emperor Gaozong of Song. For instance, the Nanhaishen West Temple was restored from the third year (1133) to the fifth year (1135) of Shaoxing (Guo 2012, vol. 10, p. 385). In the ninth month of the seventh year of Shaoxing (1137), while the ritual system of building imperial constructions for sacrifice was restored, “the South Sea God was additionally conferred as the King of Hongsheng Guangli Zhaoshun Weixian” 加封南海神為洪聖廣利昭順威顯王 (Li 1986, vol. 114, p. 558; Xu 2014, p. 1030). Such a long title, composed of eight Chinese characters, embodied the eminence of the god. It was believed that the South Sea God blessed Lingnan by providing people living on the coast with sufficient fish and crabs, safe voyages, no floods, and no droughts. Therefore, the South Sea God deserved the new title, which was even longer than his former title (i.e., a six-Chinese-character title) during the years of Huangyou and Yuanyou, as well as the six-Chinese character title “Yuansheng Guangde Zhushun” 淵聖廣德助順 (Great Holiness, Vast Virtue, and Facilitation) bestowed to the East Sea God. This

unusual event is recorded in many sources. One source says that “since [Emperor Gaozong of Song] crossed the river, only the Nanhaishen Temple of the South Sea God had been granted incantations hand-written by the emperor and thus the officials in Guangzhou had been ordered to perform the rituals” 自渡江以後，惟南海廣利王廟歲時降御書祝文，令廣州行禮。Because “the state was stationed in the southeast, meaning the East Sea and the South Sea are within the territory” 國家駐蹕東南，東海、南海實在封域內，the gods of East Sea and South Sea were considered particularly important. Hence, in the fifth year of Qiandao (1169), the advice of Lin Li 林栗, the Vice Minister in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*taichang shaoqing* 太常少卿) was accepted, where an eight-Chinese-character title “Zhushun Fusheng Guangde Weiji” 助順孚聖廣德威濟 (Facilitation, True Holiness, Vast Virtue, Prestige, and Kindness) was bestowed to the East Sea God that helped to bless a victory of the war in Jiaoxi 膠西 in the years of Shaoxing, and the spot of sacrificing to the god was changed from Laizhou 萊州 (present-day Yexian, Shandong) in Northern Song dynasty to Mingzhou 明州 (present-day Ningbo, Zhejiang) (Ma 2011, vol. 83, p. 2560). Since then, the South Sea God and the East Sea God both had a new title, “Weixian” 威顯 (Prominence) and “Weiji” 威濟 (Prestige), as an attempt to bless the ruling of the Southern Song dynasty.

The reason why the gods were conferred with long titles is that Emperor Gaozong could only manage to rule the southeast part of China. A Qing scholar criticized that “a country that is content with its partial territory and unable to make efforts for prosperity, merely granting titles to spirits to expect a blessing, this is the so-called listening to the mandate of the gods” 國勢偏安，不克振作，徒以加封神號為望祐之舉，所謂聽命於神也 (Qin 1986, vol. 47, p. 51). Because the southeast was the land of prosperity for the Southern Song dynasty, performing sacrificial rituals to the East Sea and the South Sea undoubtedly was on the top of the agenda of the new rulers. They sent commissioners not only to the suburbs to sacrifice to the five mountains, four waterways, and the four seas, but also to the local areas to sacrifice to the South Mountain, the South Sea, and the South Waterway in different years, including the 13th year of Shaoxing (1143) (Zhongxing lishu 1996, vol. 30, p. 129), the 16th year of Shaoxing (1146) (Zhongxing lishu 1996, vol. 30, p. 133), the 25th year of Shaoxing (1155) (Zhongxing lishu 1996, vol. 31, p. 136), the 28th year of Shaoxing (1158) (Zhongxing lishu 1996, vol. 31, p. 138), the 32nd year of Shaoxing (1162) (Zhongxing lishu 1996, vol. 32, p. 140), the first year of Gandao (1165) (Zhongxing lishu 1996, vol. 32, p. 141), the sixth year of Gandao (1170) (Zhongxing lishu 1996, vol. 32, p. 148), and others.

Compared to the Northern Song dynasty, the sacrificial music played for the sacrifice to *yue-zhen-hai-du* in the suburbs in the Southern Song dynasty was more complex. According to “Lezhi Shiyi” 樂志十一 (The Eleventh Record of Music) of the *Songshi*, “there were forty-three pieces of music in the years of Shaoxing for the sacrifice to *yue-zhen-hai-du*” 紹興祀嶽鎮海瀆四十三首 (Tuqto’a 1977, vol. 136, pp. 3196–97), together with the addition of “sixteen pieces of music in the years of Chunyou for the sacrifice to the sea gods” 淳祐祭海神十六首 (Tuqto’a 1977, vol. 136, pp. 3201–3). As a result, the suburban sacrificial music was diverse with more pieces. Such special attention paid to sacrificial music manifested the importance attached to the sea gods by the court of the Southern Song dynasty.

While the court was actively initiating sacrificial ritual to the gods of the sea in the suburb of the capital, people in the local areas also frequently paid tribute to the South Sea God. Hong Kuo 洪適 was one of them. From the 11th month of the 17th year of Shaoxing (1147) to the 4th month of the 28th year (1158), Hong Kuo served as the Prefect of Military Prefecture of Jingmen (*Zhi Jingmen jun* 知荊門軍) and at the same time, he took care of his father Hong Hao 洪皓 for nine years and then observed mourning for his deceased father for three more years. During his twelve years in Lingnan, he wrote plenty of sacrificial and elegiac essays. For instance, in *Zhu Wen* 祝文 (Incantation), the 71st juan of *Panzhou wenji* 盤洲文集 (Essay Collection of Panzhou), we could find “Essay of Praying for Clear Days and the next twenty-seven essays are written on behalf of the chief official in Guangzhou” 《祈晴文》以下二十七首系代廣帥作。Among them, eight essays were directly related to ceremonies of sacrificing to the South Sea God (Hong 1986, vol. 71, pp. 720–23). In fact,

most of this kind of his writing was about sacrificing to the South Sea God, accounting for nearly thirty per cent of the total. From all these writings, we can conclude that in the middle and later years of Shaoxing, the chief official in Guangzhou was rigorous in organizing the sacrificial ceremonies on the summer solstice. He had to ensure the time was correct and the West Temple was also rebuilt. He prayed to the South Sea God for good harvests, pleasant weather, no pirates, no buglers, no maladies, and fewer lawsuits in Guangzhou during his term of office, and he also personally prayed for good health and a safe journey home for him and his family. Another example can be found in the summer of the third year of Qingyuan (1197) when the Guangdong government raised taxes on tea and salt, and Xu Anguo 徐安國 "sent people into (Daxi) Island to rob smuggled salt, which disturbed the islanders. As a result, more than a thousand islanders gathered to make a living by going to the sea and finally became pirates" 遣人入 (大溪) 島捕私鹽, 島民不安, 即嘯聚千餘人入海為盜 (Liangchao gangmu beiyao 1995, vol. 5, p. 81). Daxi Island 大溪島 is present-day Hong Kong's Lantau Island, outside of the Pearl River estuary. Qian Zhiwang 錢之望, the newly appointed Prefect of Guangzhou, "wrote to the (South Sea) God" 即為文以告於 (南海) 神 to pray for pacifying the chaos and dispatched troops to fight with more than 40 ships from Daxi Island at Fuxukou 撫胥口 on the sea. During the combat, "the soldiers took the initiative to fight hard, shouting the name of the (South Sea) God to pray for protection" 軍士爭先奮擊, 呼 (南海) 王之號以乞靈, setting fire to the pirates' boats, capturing the head pirate Xu Shaokui 徐紹夔, and arresting the rest of the crowd. They all attributed the victory to "the power and blessings of the South Sea God who answered to the prayers of the official (i.e., Qian Zhiwang)" 益仰王之威靈, 凡臣 (錢之望) 所禱, 無一不酬. Subsequently, both the soldiers and the civilians appealed for granting the god a title and giving him a temple as a reward. Therefore, the official spent the government revenue to renovate the temple right away, and in the fifth month of the next year (1198), the Imperial Secretariat (*Shangshusheng* 尚書省) granted a plaque with the name Yinghu Miao 英護廟 (Yinghu Temple) to the South Sea God (Huang and Zhang 2014, pp. 43–44). This is another honor of the god after he had been conferred with the eight-Chinese-character title not too long prior, and this time it was his temple that gained the title.

Moreover, the rising status of the South Sea God was more due to his blessings for social stability than for safe voyages. The Nanhaishen Temple played an irreplaceable role, at both the local and the central level, in praying for victories in military combats, rain to end droughts, peace and stability, defending the country and the community, and ensuring safe voyages on the South Sea. In particular, in the first month of the ninth year of Xining (1076), the court sent commissions to sacrifice to the spirits of the South Mountain and the South Sea to bless the upcoming southern expedition to Cochin and other relevant actions, which were all supposed to happen within the scope of the South Sea God. As mentioned above, many combats, riots, and droughts ended after people prayed to the god; he was entitled as King three times and his temple was also once honored with a title. In this way, the South Sea God became an important sacrificial subject whenever there was a sacrificial offering to the gods at the central and local levels. Consequently, the folk sacrifice to the god and the temple fairs were in full swing. Relatively speaking, the rising status of the South Sea God was mainly because of his assumed capability to bless the stability of the local society, and his role in protecting maritime traffic was less significant.

Judging from the historical records, we can see that the Nanhaishen Temple was the largest scenic spot and the most important temple of official worship in the Song dynasty, as many officials and celebrities wrote about their visits to the temple and Yuriting 浴日亭 (Bathing Sun Pavilion) next to the temple. The first scene of the "Eight Sceneries of Yangcheng" (Yangcheng bajing 羊城八景) depicted in many Song literati's writing was the "Bathing Sun Pavilion of Fuxu" (Fuxu yuri 扶胥浴日) (Cui 2017, vol. 2, p. 65). Su Shi 蘇軾, a famous writer in the Song dynasty, also wrote a poem "On the Bathing Sun Pavilion" 浴日亭 (Su 1986, vol. 22, p. 330). This poem is now as equally famous as the writing of Han Yu, which remains on the stele inscription of the Nanhaishen Temple in Guangzhou today.

All these writings and inscriptions of the officials and celebrities undoubtedly endowed cultural significance to the temple and thus attracted more visits from poets, scholars, dignitaries, and other cultural elites. The officials and the ordinary people participated in the annual temple fair on every summer solstice in a festive mood, turning the sacrificial event into an unprecedented carnival. Such a merry occasion was recorded by Yang Wanli 楊萬里 in his writing “Getting Up Early on the 13th Day of the Second Month to Visit the West Temple” 二月十三日謁西廟早起. On that day, Yang got up early to sacrifice to the South Sea God, as he described “when I finished getting up, washing face and getting dressed, burning incense, eating porridge for breakfast, the sun had not risen outside the window yet. Though it was said that spring nights were short, (on the day of sacrificing to the god) I found that night rather long when I heard the bell ringing at the fifth-period” 起來洗面更焚香，粥罷東窗未肯光。古語舊傳春夜短，漏聲新覺五更長 (Yang 1986, vol. 16, p. 168). We can find other evidence of the popularity of the temple fair in Liu Kezhuang’s 劉克莊 poem “Ten Spontaneous Poems” 即事十首: “Incenses are offered at every household in the second month of the year, and almost everyone left home to attend the temple fair of the Sea God” 香火萬家市，煙花二月時。居人空巷出，去賽海神祠 (Liu 1986, vol. 12, p. 127). In conclusion, the Nanhaishen Temple Fair was the largest of its kind in Lingnan in the Song dynasty, demonstrating that the South Sea God had gained popularity among the local people and thus had become a critical god worshipped by many.

### 5. The South Sea God as the Local Patron and the Four Lords as the Auxiliary Gods

The local officials in Lingnan played an important role in continuously holding official sacrificial ceremonies for the South Sea God, petitioning the court for bestowing titles on the god and imperial plaques on his temple, and supervising restoration projects. It is precisely because of all the indoctrination and promotion of local officials that the god became increasingly popular with the local people. Generally speaking, it was a complicated process for the folk gods to become national gods. First, the gods must manifest enough supernatural power to make people’s prayers come true. Second, the gods must protect the country and the people with miracles, and the sacrificial rituals must conform to Confucian etiquette. When the court bestowed a title on the god and a plaque on his temple, it meant the god was supernaturally powerful. In order to be worshipped at the Nanhaishen Temple, the local gods must be popular enough in folklore to prove their power. Therefore, people in the local community did not hesitate to tell this kind of folklore to create different gods. In such a local god-creating campaign, the general public needed the engagement of government officials and cultural elites who believed in Confucianism to legitimize the folk gods. As a result, the local officials in Guangdong played a role in adding auxiliary gods to the South Sea God, and the inscription of *Liuhou Zhi Ji* 六侯之記 (Record of the Six Lords) is the best example in this regard.

In the 11th year of Shaoxing in the Southern Song dynasty (1141), Fang Jian 方漸 worshipped the South Sea God in Guangzhou and learned about the deeds of the Six Lords as the auxiliary gods when he read the inscription on the six tablets. He was worried that the deeds of the Six Lords would not be passed down, so he engraved them on the “Stele of the Record of the Six Lords” 六侯之記碑 (Huang and Zhang 2014, pp. 144–47). Nevertheless, Fang Jian only briefly recorded on the stele that the South Sea God’s eldest son was entitled Lord Fuling and his second son Lord Zanling, without illustrating other deeds of the two (Xu 2014, pp. 1030, 1085), and the rest of the four Lords were also briefly mentioned when full accounts were given to the Guangzhou officials and major events. Apparently, this was related to the god-creating campaign in the local community (Wang 2006, pp. 156–74).

The detailed narratives of the remaining four Lords are as follows. The first one is about the third Lord called Daxi Sikong 達奚司空 (Daxi, the Minister of Work). During the Qingli (1041–1048) period, Ruan Zun 阮遵 recorded that Bodhidharma 菩提達摩, the alleged founder of Chan Buddhism, brought his two younger brothers to China to spread Buddhism. One of the brothers was called Daxi, and he did not return home but instead

turned into a god figure in the Nanhaishen East Temple; this folktale is an example of mythicizing Daxi Sikong. In the middle years of Yuanfeng (1078–1085), Zeng Bu 曾布, the Prefect of Guangzhou (whose tenure was from the second month of 1077 to the eighth month of 1085), prayed to Daxi Sikong to stop the rain because it had been continuously raining in that autumn. Miraculously, the rain stopped. Zeng Bu then decorated the god's statue in the temple and entitled him Zhuli Hou 助利侯 (Lord Zhuli) as a gesture of thanks (Huang and Zhang 2014, pp. 144–47). Although there was no official record of Daxi Sikong being entitled as a Lord in the Northern Song dynasty, we can refer to the folklore to see how the government official helped the god to obtain legitimate status. Moreover, we are certain that in the Southern Song dynasty, the Zhuli Hou Temple 助利侯廟 was located next to the Nanhaishen Temple (Wang 2005, vol. 89, p. 3065), which is also the reason why the figure of Daxi Sikong was erected to the east of the main gate of the Nanhaishen Temple in the Ming dynasty (Guo 2012, vol. 10, p. 370). Daxi Sikong was the one with the most abundant miracles among the Six Lords of the South Sea God, and his apotheosis was thus the first narrative.

The second narrative is about the fourth of the Six Lords, Dugong Sikong 杜公司空 (Du Gong, the Minister of Work), who was elevated from an ordinary man to a god. It is said that during the mid-Daozhong (1032–1033) period, Dugong Sikong supervised the restoration of the Nanhaishen Temple. After the temple was built, he was willing to stay in the temple permanently to assist the South Sea God in managing the soldiers in the underworld, and thus countless bats flew out of the temple in fear. Then, amid the two rebellions led by Nong Zhigao in the mid of Huangyou period and by Cen Tan in the years of Yuanyou, Dugong was said to manifest his supernatural power in defeating the rebels (Huang and Zhang 2014, pp. 144–47). Apparently, a connection was deliberately made between the miraculous power of the South Sea God and Dugong Sikong.

In the third narrative, the fifth of the Six Lords was elevated from a navy general who used to patrol the sea. Because of his power to calm down the sea, his figure had already been established in the Nanhaishen Temple as early as the sixth year of Yuanfeng (1083), though his surname was unknown. In the fourth month of the sixth year of Yuanfeng (1083), Mei Jing 梅菁, the District Magistrate of Boluo County 博羅縣, was on his trip to the new post, and he encountered strong winds and waves in the Fuxu Sea in front of the Nanhaishen Temple. Right after he shouted to the South Sea God for help, he saw a god in gold armor and then the storm miraculously stopped. After the narrow escape, he arrived at his new office, wrote a thank-you note, and sent people to set up a memorial tablet for the god immediately. He then awarded the god by entitling him Jiying Hou 濟應侯 (Lord Jiying) (Huang and Zhang 2014, pp. 144–47).

In the last narrative, the Sixth Lord was also elevated from a navy officer and was the last to become a god. On the night of the 13th of the fifth month in the fifth year of Yuanyou (1090), Cai Bian 蔡卞, the Prefect of Guangzhou, dreamed of a very tall man wearing a purple robe and a gold belt. This man told him that he had just died the day before, and the South Sea God appointed him as a subordinate to patrol the sea. Therefore, he asked Cai to set up a tablet for him in the Nanhaishen Temple. The next day, Cai immediately set up a memorial tablet for the navy officer whose surname was said to be Pu 蒲 (Huang and Zhang 2014, pp. 144–47). The tale that a person surnamed Pu in Guangzhou became a god should be related to the large number of foreign traders who shared the same surname. Therefore, the foreign traders also participated in the local campaign of making auxiliary gods of the Nanhaishen Temple, and the government officials were the key to legitimizing the new folk gods.

Unlike the tales of the two sons of the South Sea God, the abovementioned tales of the remaining four Lords becoming gods were made up of various sources, as some were convincing while others were confusing (Wang 2006, pp. 173–74). It is obvious that the government officials helped to create the six folk gods on various occasions, and the inscription of Fang Jian's "Record of the Six Lords" assembled them together. In short, the essence of making the Six Lords gods is the local obedience to the national ritual system,

and the coexistence of the folk and the national gods in the Nanhaishen Temple proves that the officials and the people reached an agreement on whom they worshipped.

In addition, the fact that the Six Lords were incorporated into the state sacrifice at the turn of the Southern and Northern Song dynasties provides evidence for the localization of the South Sea God. The local community believed in the Six Lords, and they happened to be related to the South Sea God in the stories mentioned above, so they were listed as the auxiliary gods of the South Sea God. Similar to the story that Jiang Zhiqi in the Song dynasty believed that the South Sea God was a disciple of the Buddhist Master Xiujie in the Tang dynasty (Jiang 2007, vol. 25, p. 144), the stories of the Six Lords shared the purpose of using the influence of the South Sea God to make the folk gods or masters and to enshrine them in the Nanhaishen Temple. Nevertheless, the results of the stories were not the same, as one was to be subordinated to the South Sea God and to share his temple while the other aimed to occupy the temple and finally ended up in a new spot nearby called Linghua Monastery 靈化寺. In these stories, we can see that Confucianism, Buddhism, and local beliefs were in contention for power. It was Confucianism that showcased its supreme importance given by the regime, as government officials submitted reports to turn the four local gods, which conformed to the ritual system, into the auxiliaries of the South Sea God.

## 6. Changes in the Sacrifice to the South Sea God in Lingnan after the Song Dynasty

As he became a folk god in the Song dynasty, the South Sea God held a dual status as both a national and a folk god and exerted significant influence in the following dynasties. The national sacrifice to the god was conducted as usual, whereas the local community kept making new stories about the god. In general, the following changes can be observed in the sacrifice to the god in Lingnan after the Song dynasty.

First, the state sacrifice to the South Sea God was still carried out in the Ming and Qing dynasties, but the ceremonial procedures were static, and the ceremonies were held mainly when the emperors and empresses celebrated their birthdays, conferred titles, prayed for giving birth to sons, and dealt with other personal affairs. Though these sacrificial ceremonies were also related to some major national events, most of them did not take place in Lingnan and only remained a part of the state ritual system of sacrificing to *yue-zhen-hai-du* (Wang 2010, pp. 73–77), standing in sharp contrast to the frequent manifestation of the god's supernatural power and bestowing imperial titles in the Song dynasty. The role of state sacrifice in the Ming and Qing dynasties is far less important than that in the Song dynasty. We can yet find sporadic references to the South Sea God answering their prayers, such as suppressing the rebellion in Guangxi 廣西 in the second year of Chonghua (1466) (Han 1986, vol. 15, pp. 805–6) and defeating a pirate called Liu Xiang 劉香 in the seventh year of Chongzhen (1634) (Huang and Zhang 2014, pp. 298–99), but these miracles were celebrated and recorded far less often than those in the Song dynasty.

Since the Northern Song dynasty, local officials had implemented the state sacrificial rituals, and on such a basis, local rituals advocated by Neo-Confucians were developed in the Southern Song dynasty (Faure 1999, pp. 65–72). As the ritual system was implemented locally, the concept of the state was accepted by local people who gradually sacrificed to the national gods as well. By bestowing titles and building temples, the state convinced the local people that their folk gods were officially recognized; as a result, the local gods became more and more supernaturally powerful, and with that, local people began to endorse the state gods. The temple fair, which was the biggest local sacrificial event, is the most typical example of local people's beliefs in the South Sea God. At the temple fair, the most significant officials in Guangzhou served as the Supplicants of the Three Offerings, and the sacrificial ceremonies were as grand as they could be. It was also through such official promotion and guidance that local people gradually honored the state ritual system and that the South Sea God eventually became the most powerful god in Lingnan.

Second, the detached palaces of the South Sea God in different areas of Lingnan in the Song dynasty symbolized that the god had been fully localized. This lengthy process can be traced to the Sui dynasty when the construction of temples was only a physical means to

worship the god. Then, in the Tang dynasty and the Southern Han dynasty, the localization of the god was not completed until the Song dynasty, when local people firmly endorsed the South Sea God as their patron. In detail, the localization process was composed of the following steps: the god showcased his supernatural power; local officials petitioned for bestowing titles to the god; the central government rewarded the title to the god and the divine plaque to his temple; the temple received a special honor; a detached palace was built; a grand temple fair was held, and finally the local officials and people both joined the sacrificial ceremonies. In this process, the construction of detached palaces was the key as more local people could visit the temples nearby to worship the national god. Hence, the South Sea God gained a dual status as a national and local god.

The sixteenth century was an important period in which Confucianism was gradually taught and eventually popularized among people in Guangdong to counterbalance the folk beliefs, as local people attached importance to worshipping their ancestors and building their family temples (Inoue 2003, pp. 41–51). In order to legitimize the worship of their ancestors, they donated lands and money to the South Sea God to bring their ancestors into the Nanhaishen Temple by building different family temples. Qugong Ci 屈公祠 (The Qu Family Temple), for instance, was built by Qu Jian 屈鑒 and Qu Huaiyi 屈懷義 in Shating Village 沙亭鄉 of Panyu 番禺 by donating their land to sacrifice to the South Sea God (Cui 2017, vol. 2, p. 62) and worshipping their ancestors inside the temple because their ancestors, similar to those of the other local big clans, had contributed to the sacrifice of the god. Another example was Qujue Chengong Ci 蘧覺陳公祠 (The Chen Family Temple of Qujue) built by Chen Dazhen 陳大震 (1228–1307), a cultural celebrity of Sha Village, Panyu County (Cui 2017, vol. 2, p. 65). These family temples demonstrate that the local clans gained sacrificial rights of legitimately worshipping their ancestors inside the temple at the cost of their land. In essence, it was an expression of their power as big local clans while honoring the state ritual system.

Third, local people kept inventing new sacrificial ceremonies, such as *shibaxiang feng hou* (十八鄉奉侯 Eighteen Villages Offering Sacrifices to the Lords) and *wuzi chao wang* (五子朝王 Five Princes Paying Tributes to Their Father King), while honoring the state ritual system. This demonstrates that local people were obedient to the ruling of the state and, thus, the belief in the South Sea God was expanded geographically.

Furthermore, in the second year of Hongwu (1369) during the Ming dynasty, the Nanhaishen Temple received the nickname of Boluomiao 波羅廟 (Boluo Temple) because there were boluo trees (i.e., pineapple trees) in front of the temple. Even though the ceremony of offering incenses in the temple was directed by a Daoist monk called Xiao Deyu 蕭德興 from Yuanmiaoquan 元妙觀 (Yuanmiao Monastery), as it had been in the Yuan dynasty (Cui 2017, vol. 6, pp. 151–52), local people and chronicles kept calling the Nanhaishen Temple by its nickname Boluo Temple and the temple fair by the name Boluodan 波羅誕 (Boluo Dan Temple Fair). Therefore, at present, there is a folk saying: “Join the Boluo Dan Temple Fair this year, and you can get a wife next year” 第一遊波羅，第二娶老婆. People follow the tradition to buy an artefact *boluoji* 波羅雞 (Boluo Chicken) as a souvenir of good luck when they attend the fair (Cui 2017, vol. 2, p. 65). The localization could also be seen in the case of the wife of the South Sea God who received a surname of Cen 岑 (Cui 2017, vol. 2, p. 45).

During the reign of Emperor Kangxi of the Qing dynasty, it was recorded that in Panyu County, “the villages in Xinjiao, Tangdu, Banqiao, Gangwei, and Xinting all sacrificed to the god on their own” 新茭、塘都、板橋、岡尾、新廳各鄉皆分祀之 (Wang 2007, vol. 14, p. 248). Among them, eighteen villages in Gangwei jointly built the Gangwei Temple of the South Sea God in Tanshan Village 潭山村. During the Qianlong period, every year, the temple fair was held in Guangzhou before the birthday of the god. People in these eighteen villages organized parades on *jiaori* 筊日<sup>3</sup>, and “each village took turns to run the parade by putting on their best performance for a couple of days until the temple fair was held. Theater performances and praying activities were held for seven days, though these annual local parades were not as grand as those at the Boluo Dan Temple Fair” 依仗執事春色，分

鄉輪值置辦，爭新鬥豔，周而復始。至誕期，演戲七日，歲時祈賽之盛亞於波羅 (Ren and Tan 2007, vol. 8, p. 117). In this way, the local sacrificial ceremonies were no longer solely organized by a single village or a single clan but by the joint forces of different villages. Eventually, the local forces were integrated to organize “the sacrificial ceremony for many villages” 多鄉之祀 and to continue the role of the shared structure of villages, towns, and militia clubs in the ceremony (Zhu and Liu 2017, p. 272).

The custom of worshipping the South Sea God in this new manner in many villages is the most critical evidence of the ultimate localization of the god. In *Boluo Waiji* 波羅外紀 (Stories of Boluo Temple), there is a similar story called “Eighteen Villages Offering Sacrifice to the Six Lords” 十八鄉各奉六侯. According to this story, eighteen villages near the Nanhaishen Temple, including Lubu 鹿步, Duntou 墩頭, and Fangyuan 芳園, each enshrined the statues of the Six Lords by placing them in the form of the guards of honor to the South Sea God (Cui 2017, vol. 2, p. 65). In addition to the written records, the folktale “Five Princes Paying Tribute to Their Father King” also proved the localization of the South Sea God in Lingnan. In the folktale, a small sacrificial ceremony was held every year, a medium sacrificial ceremony every three years, and a large sacrificial ceremony every five years, and local people took turns being in charge of the ceremonies every year. The folktale also says that every three villages enshrined one god statue who represented one of the five sons of the South Sea God, and the five sons had the following names, respectively: Da’an 大安, Yuan’an 原安, Shi’an 始安, Chang’an 長安, and Zu’an 祖安. Each of the sons’ names has two Chinese characters, and they both deserve some explanation. On the one hand, the first Chinese characters of the names all emphasize “first” and “foremost”, revealing the local community’s intention of sharing the blessings equally. The second character, “An” 安, on the other hand, is the same in each of the names, and it is interchangeable with the homonym “An” 案, which refers to the divine table in the sacrificial parade. Unlike the record of the “Eighteen Villages Offering Sacrifices to the Six Lords”, this folktale depicts the heroes as the six princes to show closer blood ties to the South Sea God, proving that the local gods were constantly changing in the local sacrificial system. However different they are, the written record and the oral folktale both demonstrate that since the mid-Ming dynasty, the local community had been seeking orthodoxy on the subject of the Nanhaishen Temple and the right to gain *shatianliyi* 沙田利益 (Shi 2021, vol. 8, pp. 72–82)<sup>4</sup>. In other words, local people constantly changed the discourse of the sacrifice to the South Sea God to set up their own sacrificial system. In addition to the sacrifices as mentioned earlier to the auxiliary gods related to the South Sea God, there were also local gods whose statues could be seen in the corridors of the Nanhaishen Temple, such as Jinhua Furen 金花夫人 (Lady Jinhua) in the east of the main gate of the temple today. People in subsequent generations followed suit and added their own interpretations to enrich and change the sacrificial ceremonies of the South Sea God over time.

Fourth, Buddhism and Daoism continued participating in state sacrificial ceremonies to the South China Sea in Guangzhou. During the Yuan and Ming dynasties, the Nanhaishen Temple was managed by Daoist priests, and in the Qing dynasty, Daoist priests and monks continued to supervise many affairs related to the god, thus turning the Haiguang Si 海光寺 (Haiguang Shrine) and Ningzhen Guan 凝真觀 (Ningzhen Monastery) into parts of the Nanhaishen Temple (Cui 2017, vol. 2, pp. 60–61). Though so many constructions of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism shared the worship of the South Sea God, the central role of the Nanhaishen Temple was not weakened. Instead, the temple gained affluence because the monks and priests became rich in the Ming dynasty, and money was lent to people in the name of the South Sea God (Dong 1988, vol. 9, p. 237). In the Qing dynasty, there were two rooms in the Haiguang Shrine, east of the Nanhaishen Temple, in which some monks placed their calligraphy and paintings, inscriptions, posts, insects, fish, flowers, plants, and even sex tools and obscene pictures for sale, just right in front of the god status.

Moreover, it was believed that people could receive a son after they placed their hands on the navel of the reclining figure of Buddha. Buddhism was secularized to meet the needs

of the people, and so was Daoism. There was also a room in the Ningzhen Monastery, west of the Nanhaishen Temple, where the Daoist priests lived. They rented their room to the government officials and sold the inscriptions on the divine tablets for money. In fact, the Buddhist monks and Daoist priests jointly charged land fees and managed the temples (Cui 2017, vol. 2, pp. 60–61). All of these practices in the Yuan and Ming dynasties were completely different from those in Sui, Tang, and Song dynasties, when only the District Magistrate could manage the temples (Wang 2006, pp. 218, 220, 229, 253).

Fifth, the South Sea God and Tian Fei are both popular on the southeast coast of China today, which is closely related to their development trajectories after the Song dynasty. However, unlike Tian Fei who changed from a folk goddess to a national goddess, the South Sea God took the opposite path to be fully localized, as he was able to answer people's prayers, and the central court ordered the building of temples and conducted sacrifice ceremonies and activities in the local area. In the Song dynasty, for instance, the South Sea God was entitled and bestowed holy plaques to his temples four times, which showed the role of his blessings to the state and local stability. Amazed by his miraculous power, local people prayed to the god for better lives and livelihoods, safe trips and voyages, good rains and winds, peace, and prosperity, all to which the god answered, and thus he was endorsed as a local patron. The grand temple fairs in the Southern Song dynasty also proved how the South Sea God had become the most powerful god in Lingnan. On the contrary, Tian Fei originated from the folktale. Before gaining her first title Linghui Furen 靈惠夫人 (Lady Linghui), she was only one of the many local goddesses in Putian 莆田, Fujian. As foreign trade and diplomatic activities thrived in the Song dynasty, she became a national goddess in the fifth year of Xuanhe (1122) because she assisted the government troops in clamping down on an incident in Goryeo 高麗. As the record shows, "she was entitled to fifteen times since her first title as Linghui in the Song dynasty, including titles of Lady and Consort and so on" 宋自靈惠封十五次，更曰夫人、妃等 (Cheng 1986, vol. 4, p. 354).

As mentioned above, the South Sea God received the reward of the Yinghu Temple for he had manifested his power and granted blessing during the suppression of the rebellion on the Daxi Island in Guangdong in the third year of Qingyuan. In the same incident, Linghui Fei 靈惠妃 (Consort Linghui, later called Heavenly Consort) also helped by "ordering fog to blind the rebels" 以霧障之 (Zhang 2000, vol. 9, p. 185), which is obviously a miracle made up by later generations to prove her power. As similar miracles continued to appear with the blessings of Tian Fei on many other occasions, the folk belief spread to the southeast coast. In Lingnan, as Liu Kezhuang wrote, "the people in Lingnan worshipping the goddess are no different from those in Putian, so the goddess's power is far-reaching" 廣人事妃，無異於莆，蓋妃之威靈遠矣 (Liu 1986, vol. 36, p. 391). However, the Tian Fei Temple in Lingnan is still incomparable to the influence of the South Sea God. Although the worship of Tian Fei was performed in more places and had spread a wider influence than the worship of the South Sea God, the latter maintained his position as the most worshipped god in Lingnan (Wang 2006, pp. 183–96).

## 7. Conclusions

In this paper, focusing on the coherent theme of the evolution of the state sacrifice to the South Sea God in Guangzhou in the Song dynasty, we examine the localization of the South Sea God in his detached palaces in many counties in Lingnan. We argue that it is a crucial step for the national god to become a local patron, even though the local government officials merely supervised the construction of the detached palaces, because both the state ritual system and the local practice exerted an influence on the development of the Nanhaishen Temple. We indicate that the sacrificial ritual at the temple seemed to be merely an official ceremony, but in essence, it was a symbol of "all under Heaven" (*tianxia* 天下) in a geographical sense and of "orthodoxy" in a political and cultural sense. The sacrificial ritual was a symbol of state power in Lingnan, and it was also the result of the official implementation of the state ritual system in the local region. Five major arguments

and conclusions are drawn from the examination of the evolution in the Song dynasty, which affected the sacrifice to the South Sea God in later generations.

First, the state sacrifice to the South Sea God in the Northern Song dynasty was advanced, as the country was unified and the new ruler rectified the ritual system by following the precedents in the Tang dynasty. The suburban sacrifices near the capital and actual sacrifices in Guangzhou were both carried out as before, and local officials continued playing their role as supplicants at the special and usual sacrificial ceremonies and as supervisors at the projects of restoring the Nanhaishen Temple. The restorations were mainly funded by the Trade and Tax Revenue Departments in Guangzhou and sometimes by personal donations of some officials.

Second, state sacrifice became a critical way to defend the regime. The imperial titles were granted to the South Sea God during some major events, which was a cultural means of strengthening the ruling in Lingnan for the Song regime. Though the sacrifice to the South Sea God had been established in the Tang dynasty, it was in the Song dynasty that the god was localized in Lingnan. In the localization process, local officials played an important role. On the one hand, they were the most faithful promoters of the state ritual system, and on the other hand, they were the witnesses of local stability and prosperity. They served as a bridge to connect the central court with the local community, and thus they were crucial in the sacrifice to the South Sea God.

Third, as Lingnan was located at the southeast end of the Southern Song dynasty territory, the South Sea God had a more prominent function of defending the regime than his blessings of local stability and maritime trade. In particular, there were differences in sacrificing to the same god between the Southern and Northern Song dynasties. In the Southern Song dynasty, an eight-Chinese-character new title “Weixian” was bestowed to the god, together with the Yinghu Temple and a special selection of sacrificial music, crowns, clothes, and accessories, which were evidence of his increasing influence on the Lingnan. In addition, the Nanhaishen Temple Fair in Guangzhou was the largest of its kind in Lingnan, and both government officials and ordinary people participated with great joy.

Fourth, detached palaces of the South Sea God were built due to the proposal of government officials and the constant manifestation of the god’s power. Therefore, the god became the local patron as people were impressed by his blessings of defending the state and protecting the locals. Moreover, the stele inscription of “Stories of the Six Lords” proves that local people endorsed the state sacrificial ritual and created four auxiliary gods, such as Daxi Sikong, to the South Sea God.

Fifth, after the South Sea God became a local patron in the Song dynasty, people in later generations mainly sacrificed to the god in the East Temple while building many detached palaces in their neighborhood. By then, the state and local sacrifices were in harmony in the local community. In the subsequent dynasties, people in Lingnan interpreted their worship according to their own needs, which was important in localizing the official sacrifice in the Nanhaishen Temple. The new rituals of “Eighteen Villages Offering Sacrifices to the Lords” and “Five Princes Paying Tribute to Their Father King” prove that local people fought for *shatianliyi* and the sacrificial rights of the South Sea God. Local folklore also helped the continual localization of the god in Lingnan.

Overall, as this paper demonstrates, unlike Tian Fei who was elevated from a folk goddess to a national goddess, the South Sea God changed from a national god to a local patron, which cannot occur without the contribution of the government officials. Beginning in the Song dynasty, followers of Buddhism and Daoism participated in the state sacrifices to the South Sea God in Guangzhou. In the Yuan and Ming dynasties, the heads of the Nanhaishen Temple were Daoist priests. In the Qing dynasty, Daoist priests and monks continued to participate in many affairs of the South Sea God. As a result, the Nanhaishen Temple, the Haiguang Shrine, and Ningzhen Monastery were complementary to one another as important carriers in the sacrificial system of the South Sea God. However, the Nanhaishen Temple was still the key venue for state sacrifice, which displays the unchanged central role of Confucianism in the state ritual system.

**Author Contributions:** Writing—original draft, Y.W.; writing—review and editing, Y.W. and A.Y. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Tian Fei is an official title of Mazu 媽祖, the Chinese patron goddess who is said to protect seafarers. In the past several decades, many scholars have made significant contributions to this field of research in many languages; see, for example, Li (1978), Xu and Chen (1998), Ruitenbeek (1999), Liao (2000), Lin and Zhang (2003), Takahashi (2009), Stewart and Strathern (2009), and Cai (2013).
- <sup>2</sup> The term *sanxian liguan* 三獻禮官 refers to the three supplicants at the sacrificial ceremonies to *yue-zhen-hai-du*, namely, *chuxian* 初獻 (the First Supplicant), *yaxian* 亞獻 (the Second Supplicant), and *zhongxian* 終獻 (the Third Supplicant), who take turns to offer sacrifices to the gods in the numerical sequence. According to the Tang scholar Du You 杜佑, who took an excerpt from the classic into a new work titled *Tongdian* 通典 (Compendium of Comprehensive Institutions), an auspicious date was carefully chosen as divined, preceded by three days of partial abstinence (*sanzhai* 散齋) in residence and two days of complete abstinence (*zhizhai* 致齋) in the temple. The First Supplicant was normally the highest-level official in the local government, while the Second Supplicant and the Third Supplicant were also the senior local officials (Du 1988, vol. 112, pp. 2897–903). The sacrificial ritual to *yue-zhen-hai-du* in the Song dynasty was normally the same as in the Tang dynasty.
- <sup>3</sup> The term *jiaori* 筊日 refers to the day for people to throw the divining blocks in front of the god statute to ask for the god's permission in traditional China. Divining blocks are made of wood or sometimes bamboo. They are shaped similar to a crescent moon, with one side convex (also called *yin* 陰) and the other side flat (also called *yang* 陽). If the blocks fall with one flat, one convex, it means that the “sacred combinations” (*shengbei* 聖杯) are gained, and the god grants his permission. One should obtain three “sacred combinations” in a row to finish the ceremony, or he should throw the divining blocks again.
- <sup>4</sup> The term *shatianliyi* 沙田利益 literally means “the profits of sand fields”. Beginning in the Song dynasty, many dykes were built at the Pearl River Delta, causing a large amount of sediment in the Pearl River to be deposited and reclaimed to form sand fields. The newly silted sand fields can be used to plant crops and to harvest fish and shrimps, and thus to generate profits. As a result, disputes constantly occurred as people fought for the ownership and the profits of sand fields (see Qu 1985, pp. 51–54). In order to resolve disputes, people sometimes turned to the South Sea God for help. They either arranged negotiations in front of the god figure or held a sacrificial ceremony to throw the divining blocks so as to share the profits fairly.

## References

- Cai, Xianghui 蔡相輝. 2013. *Mazu Xinyang Yanjiu* 媽祖信仰研究 [Study on Mazu Belief]. Taipei: Xiuwei Information Technology Company.
- Cheng, Duanxue 程端學 (1278–1344). 1986. *Jizhai ji* 積齋集 [Jizhai Collection]. Siku quanshu 四庫全書 ed. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan.
- Cui, Bi 崔弼 (1747–1835). 2017. *Boluo waiji* 波羅外紀 [Stories of Boluo Temple]. Guangzhou: Guangdong People's Publishing House.
- Dong, Yue 董說 (1620–1686). 1988. *Fengcaoan ji* 豐草庵集 [Fengcaoan Collection]. Congshu jicheng xubian 叢書集成續編 ed. Taipei: Xinwenfeng Publishing Company.
- Du, You 杜佑 (735–812). 1988. *Tongdian* 通典 [Compendium of Comprehensive Institutions]. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Faure, David 科大衛. 1999. Guojia yu liyi: Song zhi Qing zhongye zhujiang sanjiaozhou difang shehui de guojia rentong 國家與禮儀：宋至清中葉珠江三角洲地方社會的國家認同 [State and Rituals: The Integration of Local Society into the Chinese State in the Pearl River Delta from Northern Song to Mid-Qing]. *Journal of Sun Yet-san University* 5: 65–72.
- Guo, Fei 郭棐 (1529–1605). 2012. *Lingnan mingsheng ji* 嶺南名勝記 [Record of the Famous Scenic Spots in Lingnan]. Xi'an: Santai Chubanshe.
- Guo, Wenbing 郭文炳, ed. 1994. *Kangxi Dongguan Xianzhi* 康熙東莞縣志 [Dongguan Chronicle in the Reign of Kangxi]; Dongguan: General Office of the People's Government of Dongguan.
- Hansen, Valerie. 2016. *Bianqian zhishen: Nansong shiqi de minjian xinyang* 變遷之神：南宋時期的民間信仰 [Changing Gods in Medieval China, 1127–1276]. Translated by Weimin Bao 包偉民. Shanghai: Zhongxi Book Company.
- Han, Yong 韓雍 (1422–1478). 1986. *Xiangyi wenji* 襄毅文集 [Essay Collection of Xianyi]. Siku quanshu 四庫全書 ed. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan.
- Hong, Kuo 洪適 (1117–1184). 1986. *Panzhou wenji* 盤洲文集 [Essay Collection of Panzhou]. Siku quanshu 四庫全書 ed. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan.
- Huang, Zhaohui 黃兆輝, and Shuhui Zhang 張淑暉. 2014. *Nanhaishenmiao beike ji* 南海神廟碑刻集 [Collection of Stele Inscriptions in the Nanhaishen Temple]. Guangzhou: Guangdong People's Publishing House.
- Inoue, Toru 井上徹. 2003. Weixiao de daohui yinciling yanjiu: Guangdong minjian xinyang yu rujiao 魏校的搗毀淫祠令研究——廣東民間信仰與儒教 [Study of Wei Jiao's Ordinance on Extinguishing Yinci Popular Religion and Confucianism in Guangdong Area]. *Historical Review* 2: 41–51.
- Jiang, Zhiqi 蔣之奇 (1031–1104). 2007. *Linghuasi ji* 靈化寺記 [A Record of Linghua Monastery]. In *Guangdong lidai fangzhi jicheng* 廣東歷代方誌集成 [The Integration of Guangdong Local Chronicles]. Guangzhou: Lingnan Art Publishing House.

- Li, Tao 李燾 (1115–1184). 1992. *Xu zizhitongjian changbian* 續資治通鑑長編 [Full Edition of History as a Mirror]. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Li, Xianzhang 李獻璋. 1978. 媽祖信仰的研究 [Study on Mazu Belief]. Tokyo: Tianshan Relics Press.
- Li, Xinchuan 李心傳 (1166–1243). 1986. *Jiannan yilai xinyanlaolu* 建炎以來系年要錄 [Major Records of the Chronicle from the First Year of Jiannan]. Siku quanshu 四庫全書 ed. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan.
- Liangchao gangmu beiyao 兩朝綱目備要 [Outline of the Two Dynasties]. 1995. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Liao, Disheng 廖迪生. 2000. *Xianggang tianhou chongbai* 香港天后崇拜 [Worship of Tianhou in Hong Kong]. Hong Kong: SDX Joint Publishing Company.
- Lin, Meirong 林美容, and Xun Zhang 張珣, eds. 2003. *Mazu xinyang de fazhan yu bianqian* 媽祖信仰的發展與變遷 [Development and Evolution of Mazu Belief]. Taipei: Taiwan Religious Association Press.
- Liu, Kezhuan 劉克莊 (1184–1269). 1986. *Houcun ji* 後村集 [Houcun Collection]. Siku quanshu 四庫全書 ed. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan.
- Ma, Duanlin 馬端臨 (1254–1340). 2011. *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 [A Companion of Literature]. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Ouyang, Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), ed. 1996. *Taichang Yingeli* 太常因革禮 [Rituals in the Northern Song Dynasty]. Xuxiu Siku quanshu 續修四庫全書 ed. Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe.
- Pi, Qingsheng 皮慶生. 2008. *Songdai minzhong cishen xinyang yanjiu* 宋代民眾祠神信仰研究 [Study on the Popular Folk Gods of Temples in the Song Dynasty]. Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe.
- Qin, Huitian 秦蕙田 (1702–1764). 1986. *Wuli tongkao* 五禮通考 [General Study on the Five Rites]. Siku quanshu 四庫全書 ed. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan.
- Qu, Dajun 屈大均 (1630–1696). 1985. *Guangdong Xinyu* 廣東新語 [New Discourse of Guangdong]. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Ren, Guo 任果, and Cui Tan 檀萃, eds. 2007. *Qianlong panyu xianzhi* 乾隆番禺縣志 [Panyu Chronicle in the Reign of Qianlong]. In *Guangdong lidai fangzhi jicheng* 廣東歷代方誌集成 [The Integration of Guangdong Local Chronicles]. Guangzhou: Lingnan Art Publishing House.
- Ruitenbeek, Klaas. 1999. Mazu, the Patroness of Sailors, in Chinese Pictorial Art. *Artibus Asiae* 58: 281–329.
- Shi, Mingli 史明立. 2021. Boluodan wuzichaowang yu shibaxiang gefeng liuhou: Ming qing difang shehui zhengduo shatian liyi de jiegou 波羅誕“五子朝王”與“十八鄉各奉六侯”——明清地方社會爭奪沙田利益的結果 [“Five Princes Paying Tribute to Their Father King” and “Eighteen Villages Offering Sacrifices to the Six Lords” at the Boluo Temple Fair: The Result of Fighting for Shatianliyi in the Local Community in the Ming and Qing Dynasties]. *Collection of Beijing Folk Studies* 8: 72–82.
- Stewart, Pamela, and Andrew Strathern. 2009. Growth of the Mazu Complex in Cross-Straits Contexts (Taiwan, and Fujian Province, China). *Journal of Ritual Studies* 23: 67–72.
- Su, Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101). 1986. *Dongpo quanji* 東坡全集 [Complete Collection of Dongpo]. Siku quanshu 四庫全書 ed. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan.
- Takahashi, Seiichi 高橋誠一. 2009. Nihon ni okeru tenpi sinkou no ten kai to sono rekisi tiri gaku teki soku men 日本における天妃信仰の展開とその歴史地理学的側面 [Historic Geographical Profiles of the Belief in Voyage Goddess (Tenpi) in Japan]. *Higasi azia bunka koushyou kenkyuu* 東アジア文化交渉研究 [Journal of East Asian Cultural Interaction Studies], 121–44.
- Tuqto'a 脱脱 (1314–1356). 1977. *Songshi* 宋史 [Song History]. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Wang, Jianchuan 王見川, and Qingsheng Pi 皮慶生. 2010. *Zhongguo jinshi minjianxinyang: Song yuan ming qing* 中國近世民間信仰：宋元明清 [Folk Worship in Contemporary China: Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties]. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House.
- Wang, Xiangzhi 王象之 (1163–1230). 2005. *Yudi jisheng* 輿地紀勝 [Geographical Record]. Chengdu: Sichuan University Company.
- Wang, Yongrui 汪永瑞. 2007. *Kangxi Guangzhou fuzhi* 康熙廣州府志 [Guangzhou Chronicle in the Reign of Kangxi]. In *Guangdong lidai fangzhi jicheng* 廣東歷代方誌集成 [The Integration of Guangdong Local Chronicles]. Guangzhou: Lingnan Art Publishing House.
- Wang, Yuanlin 王元林. 2006. *Guojia Jisi Yu Haishang Silu Yiji: Guangzhou Nanhaishenmiao Yanjiu* 國家祭祀與海上絲路遺跡：廣州南海神廟研究 [State Sacrifice and the Relics of Maritime Silk Road: Study on the Temple of the South Sea God in Guangzhou]. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Wang, Yuanlin. 2010. Mingqing guojia lizhi zhong de sihai jisi 明清國家禮制中的四海祭祀 [Sacrifice to the Four Seas in the State Ritual System in the Ming and Qing Dynasties]. *Exploration and Free Views* 4: 73–77.
- Wang, Yuanlin. 2021. Tangdai nanhaishenmiao jisiliyi yu guanyuan yanjiu 唐代南海神廟祭祀禮儀與官員研究 [The Sacrificial Ritual and Commissioners to the South Sea God in Tang China]. *Religions* 12: 960. [CrossRef]
- Xu, Song 徐松 (1781–1848). 2014. *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 [Draft of Song Institutions]. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe.
- Xu, Xiaowang 徐曉望, and Yande Chen 陳衍德. 1998. *Aomen Mazu Wenhua Yanjiu* 澳門媽祖文化研究 [Study in Mazu Culture of Macau]. Macau: Macau Foundation Press.
- Yang, Wanli 楊萬里 (1127–1206). 1986. *Chengzhai ji* 誠齋集 [Chengzhai Collection]. Siku quanshu 四庫全書 ed. Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu Yinshuguan.
- Zhang, Xie 張燮 (1574–1640). 2000. *Dongxiyang kao* 東西洋考 [Study on the East and West Seas]. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Zhongxing lishu 中興禮書 [Book of the Zhongxing Ritual]. 1996. Xuxiu Siku quanshu 續修四庫全書 ed. Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe.
- Zhu, Guangwen 朱光文, and Zhiwei Liu 劉志偉. 2017. *Panyu lishiwenhua gailun* 番禺歷史文化概論 [Introduction to the History and Culture in Panyu]. Guangzhou: Sun Yat-sen University Press.