

# The Expression of Religious Elements and Factors of Religious Thoughts in the Empress's Ceremonial Costume "Hui Yi" of Song Dynasty

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## ABSTRACT

*Hui Yi (袆衣) is the highest standard ceremonial costume to the empress in the Song Dynasty, used for important occasions such as wedding ceremonies, coronations, holding court, and ancestral shrine sacrifices. This paper uses the method of literature research, as well as using the method of mutual demonstration of historical books and image data to summarize the types of religious elements in the Song Dynasty empress's Hui Yi (袆衣). By using interdisciplinary research methods, combined with art, sociology and history, this paper analyzes the reasons for the formation of religious elements. The purpose of this paper is to understand the religious development of Song Dynasty society by the design elements of Hui Yi (袆衣). Studies have shown that the empress's Hui Yi (袆衣) of the Song Dynasty followed traditional Confucianism in costume forms and colours, and the accessories and patterns reflected Buddhist and Taoist elements. This has a lot to do with the religious system and social customs of the Song Dynasty and confirms the integration of the three religions of "Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism" in the Song Dynasty.*

**Keywords:** Song Dynasty; Empress; Hui Yi; Religious Element



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Hui Yi (袞衣) is a kind of ceremonial costume with very high standard for the empress in ancient China. It is the epitome of the feudal costume hierarchy system in ancient China. Etiquette culture of China was conceived in ancient times, until the Zhou Dynasty (1046 BC-256 BC) was finalized and mature, and perfect ritual and music system standards appeared, which were inherited and developed by successive dynasties. “Hui Yi (袞衣)” system was first recorded in Zhou Dynasty. The Zhou Dynasty history book Zhou Li (周礼) (a document that records the Zhou Dynasty official system) records in the chapter, The Court Clothing Functional Department: The empress’s ceremonial costume is divided into six types: Hui Yi (袞衣), Yu Di (揄狄), Que Di(闕狄), Ju Yi (鞠衣), Tan Yi (袒衣), Tuan Yi (褖衣). The empress wears Hui Yi(袞衣) to show respect during ancestral shrine sacrifice (Sun, 1987). Due to the traditional role of the Zhou rites, the later dynasties regarded the Hui Yi (袞衣) as the empress’s highest ceremonial costume, which played an important role in the etiquette activities. From the Zhou Dynasty to the Song Dynasty (960-1279 AD), it has experienced a history of nearly 2000 years. During this period, the six kinds of ceremonial costume were changed into four kinds in the Song Dynasty, namely: “Hui Yi (袞衣), Ju Yi (鞠衣), Li Yi (礼衣), Zhu Yi (朱衣)”. However, Hui Yi (袞衣) is still the highest ceremonial dress (Shen, 2011).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The information about the empress’s Hui Yi (袞衣) in Song Dynasty is divided into historical books and Portraits Information.

The historical documents of the Song Dynasty empress’s Hui Yi (袞衣) are mainly distributed in the official and non-governmental books of the Song Dynasty. According to these historical records and textual research, after the end of the Song Dynasty, people in the Yuan Dynasty officially summarized and wrote Records of Chariots and Horses and Clothes, which detailed the summarized and recorded etiquette system of food, clothing, housing and transportation in the Song Dynasty. In the book, the description of the shape of Hui Yi (袞衣) is as follows: The

background colour is dark blue, and Di (翟) bird pattern (five colours). Di (翟) birds stand in a pair, with a total of 12 lines. Blue yarn single clothes, embroidered with the collar of the pattern, clothing edge (such as collar, cuff, hem, etc.) are made of fine silk. The colour of the cover knee (the big towel hanging down from the middle of the front skirt) is the same as the bottom colour of the lower skirt. The black, red collar edge is decorated with Di (翟) bird pattern, and it is in three lines. The belt is divided into a large belt and a leather belt (the large belt is a wide silk fabric, and the leather belt is a narrow belt made of leather, above the large belt). The big belt is also dark blue with red lining; the upper part of the surface is red brocade and the lower part is green brocade, and it is decorated with buttons made of green ribbon. The leather belt is cyan and decorated with white jade in pairs. Socks, shoes are dark blue, and shoes with gold ornaments. The empress wears Hui Yi (袞衣) on major ceremonial occasions such as wedding ceremonies, coronations, going to Jingling Palace to ancestral shrine sacrifice, and holding court (Tuotuo & Alutu, 1965).

The picture of San Li Tu (三礼图) (Nie, 2006), published in the early Song Dynasty, is an earlier document that has been handed down to this day to explain the ancient Chinese ritual system with images attached. The book is compiled and drawn by the author a Nie, C. Y., a scholar of the former dynasty, according to the records of Yi Li (仪礼), Li Ji (礼记) and Zhou Li (周礼) (Yi, 2014). Among them, the paintings and records of the empress's Hui Yi (袞衣) style are Shen Yi (深衣), deep blue, Di (翟) bird patterns (Figure 1). In fact, at the beginning, the Zhou Dynasty rites recorded that there were two kinds of black and blue clothes, because the empress did not participate in the sacrifice of heaven and earth, mountains and rivers, and nation. The biggest sacrifice they participated in was the ancestral temple, according to the theory of the Five Elements and Eight Diagrams in China. Winter sacrifices belong to water, and its colour is black; in spring, it is wood and its colour is blue (Wang, 2015). However, due to the long history of the Zhou Dynasty, there was no evidence to prove that there was black Hui Yi (袞衣) in Zhou Dynasty. The colour of Hui Yi (袞衣) in Song Dynasty was the same as that in Sui Dynasty and Tang Dynasty, only blue. The author speculates that each dynasty in China has the attribute of five elements. Since the Han Dynasty belonged to water and advocated black, the Sui and Tang Dynasties belonged to fire

and soil. The ceremonial costumes tended to be red and yellow, and no longer advocated black. Therefore, they chose blue Hui Yi (袞衣). The Song Dynasty belongs to fire, and to inherit the previous dynasty, it also uses blue.



Figure 1: The Images and Written Records of the Empress’s Hui Yi in the Painting of San Li Tu

In addition, the portraits of the emperor and empress of the Song Dynasty in the Nanxun (南薰) Hall of the Palace Museum are also powerful image supporting materials in the form of Hui Yi (袞衣). Among them are six seated statues of the empress of the Northern Song Dynasty and three statues of the empress of the Southern Song Dynasty. The time span is from the Emperor Zhenzong (真宗) stage in the early Northern Song Dynasty to the Emperor Ningzong (宁宗) stage in the middle and late Southern Song Dynasty, which lasted nearly two hundred years. These portraits were made by court painters in the Song Dynasty, and were used for worship (Jiang, 1974). It is not difficult to imagine that due to the needs of the court, their appearance may be beautified, but the image of the clothes painted should not be far from the regulations of the system, which can reflect the basic characteristics of the clothing system of the period and provide a reference for the image of the Hui Yi (袞衣) (Fang, 2008).

Comparing with the regulations of the empress's Hui Yi (袆衣) of the Song Dynasty, combined with the styles, colours, patterns and accessories shown in the portraits, it basically fits with the public service system, and it can be determined that they are wearing ceremonial costume Hui Yi (袆衣). The nine-empress painted in the portrait (Figure 2) are all sitting upright, wearing a crown of dragons, phoenix, and flowers on their heads, wearing deep blue sleeves, and decorated with Di (翟) bird patterns all over (Zhang, 2019). The top style is cross-collar right gusset, sparse and wide sleeves, decorated with cloud and dragon patterns on the collar, sleeves and placket, and a belt around the waist. In addition, the portrait also shows some details that are not reflected in the literature, such as the empress's Hui Yi (袆衣) of the Song Dynasty all dark blue, but there are different degrees of colour difference. There is no description of the decoration on the back crown in the literature, but it is very clearly reflected in the portrait. The Di (翟) bird pattern on the belt is not three lines, but denser. This article analyzes the religious elements in the styles, colours, patterns, and accessories of the empress's Hui Yi (袆衣) of the Song Dynasty based on the mutual corroboration between historical book materials and images.



**Figure 2: A Sitting Statue of the Empress of the Song Dynasty in Nanxun Hall (Taipei)**

## **Classification of Religious Element Types**

### **Confucianism**

Hui Yi (袷衣) is an orthodox Confucian standard system. It is embodied in the traditional Shen Yi (深衣) system (the top and the bottom are connected), the concept of five colours and the implication of Di (翟) bird pattern.

### **Shen Yi (深衣) System**

Shen Yi (深衣) is a gown that connects with the upper and lower skirts. It is the most orthodox style of clothing in traditional Chinese Confucianism. A man's deep clothing represents the noble status and good character of a gentleman, while a woman's deep clothing symbolizes the noble status of women and the faithful to the spouse unto death standard.

The homonym of Shen Yi (深衣) means "deep meaning", which means that each part of the design is full of profound meaning, reflecting the idea of harmony between man and nature and governing the country with etiquette. First, it is divided into two parts of the upper garment and the lower garment, symbolizing the Liangyi (两仪) (representing heaven and earth); the upper garment is cut and stitched with four pieces of cloth symbolizing the four seasons of the year, and the lower garment is cut and stitched with twelve pieces of cloth, which symbolizes the time of the year. Second, the wide cuffs and the right-angled collar symbolize the circle and square of the world, which is the space. Third, the back is composed of two pieces of cloth stitched together with a thread that runs through the upper and lower sides, and the waist should be worn with a large belt representing the privileged class, which symbolizes that one must be upright and honest, and those in power must be fair as this is humane (Hua, 2015).

The cuffs, the collar, the back seam and the edges of the bottom of the clothes correspond to the five tools of "Gui (规)", "Ju (矩)", "Sheng (绳)", "Quan (权)" and "Heng (衡)". "Gui (规)" is a tool for drawing

circles. The cuffs of the Shen Yi(深衣) are designed to be round, which symbolizes the sky and the profound knowledge and integration of Confucian scholars. “Ju (矩)” is a tool for drawing right-angled or square patterns. The neckline of the Shen Yi (深衣) is designed as a square, which symbolizes the ground and warns that Confucians should possess integrity and kindness. The “Sheng (绳)” is the ink rope used by carpenters to draw lines. The back seam of the Shen Yi (深衣) is required to be straight and perpendicular to the ground. It means that Confucians must abide by the rules, practice impartiality, and maintain integrity. The “Quan (权)” and “Heng (衡)” are tools for measuring the weight of objects, where the “Quan (权)” is a weighing mass and “Heng (衡)” is a weighing rod. The bottom of the Shen Yi (深衣) should be flush with the scale and at the same level, which symbolizes that Confucians must be fair and strict. The design of the ancient deep clothes embodies the requirements and rules of Confucianism for the words, deeds, and morals of Confucians (Wang, 2012).

The symbolic meaning of harmony between heaven and earth and the universe is dressed in one suit, and the requirements of Confucianism for character are added. Therefore, Shen Yi (深衣) is the most appropriate style of empress's Ceremonial Costume.

### **Di (翟) Bird Pattern**

The pattern of the Hui Yi (袞衣) adopts the Di (翟) bird pattern, which is derived from the twelve-chapter pattern in the emperor's crown, symbolizing brilliance. Di (翟) bird is a kind of divine bird with five colors. The five colors correspond to the five elements. It is consistent with the traditional orthodox color concept in Chinese Confucianism.

The twelve-chapter pattern is the most orthodox emperor's dress pattern under the Confucian ritual system. Using the sun, moon, stars, mountains, water, fire, dragon, Huachong (华虫) and others, the Di (翟) bird pattern is the Huachong (华虫) in the twelve-chapter pattern. The appearance of Di (翟) bird is similar to the golden pheasant in the real world, but it is more dazzling. It is the virtual bird pattern of the myth and the prototype of the phoenix pattern. The Di (翟) bird pattern is associated with the twelve-chapter pattern, both representing the supreme imperial

power and a symbol of dignity. At the same time, Di (翟) bird has five colours which symbolizes the virtue of the empress. The five colours are blue, red, yellow, white, and black. They are the most orthodox colours in traditional Chinese Confucianism. Other colours are counted as variegated colours. The orthodox colours and the intermediate colours indicate the symbol of respect and inferiority and the rank of noble and inferior. The Di (翟) bird pattern in the Hui Yi (袞衣) uses the five orthodox colours to express the noble status of the empress (Figure 3).



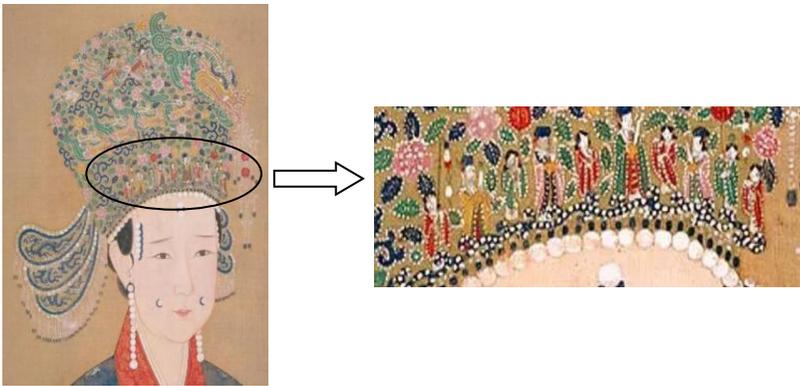
**Figure 3: The Di Bird Pattern in the Hui Yi**

## **Taoism**

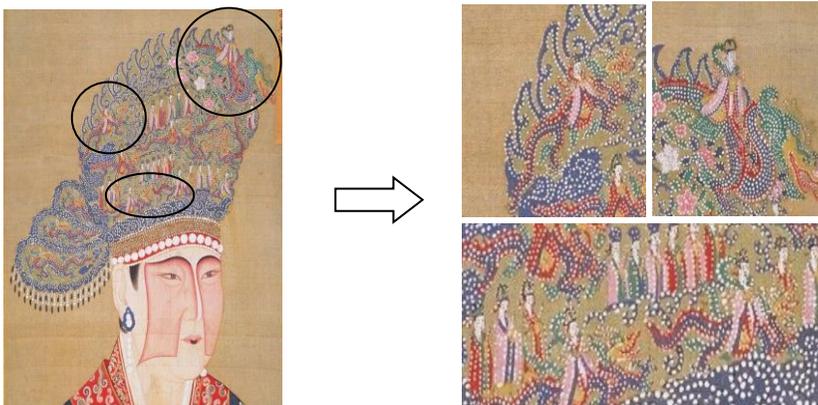
The Taoist element in the empress's Hui Yi (袞衣) of the Song Dynasty is reflected in the design element of the crown. Although the shape of the empress's crown is not mentioned in the Song History material, there is information about this part in the history books of the Jin Dynasty Jin (金) History: “ nine dragons, four phoenixes, the front is a big dragon biting a tassel of pearls, there are twelve flower plants at the front and back, and decorations such as peacocks, cloud cranes, empress mother fairy team, petals, fairy riding dragon, etc., the bottom two Bobin (博鬢) (a wig bun hanging over the ears, decorated with emerald, pearls and other gems).” Combined with the literature records, and then looking at the portraits, there are two special religious elements: “Immortal Procession”

and “Fairy Riding Dragon” (Yang, 2019). This kind of design element is a typical Taoist pattern, which reflects the idea of Taoist immortality.

The term “Immortal Team” refers to a group of immortals. This pattern was used in the crown of the nine empresses, except for the second empress Renzong (仁宗) whose portrait was not clear and uncertain to use; the other eight were used. Taking the crown (Figure 4) of the empress of Qinzong (钦宗) as an example, we can see ten beautiful fairies, depicting the procession of Taoist immortals. It shows that the Wufang Dijun (五方帝君) and the immortal families go together to worship the supreme god of Taoism, Yuanshi Tianzun (元始天尊).



**Figure 4: Analysis of the Details of Empress Song Qinzong's Crown**



### **Figure 5: Analysis of the Details of Empress Song Zhenzong's Crown**

The “Fairy Riding Dragon” pattern was used in the nine empress’s crown except for the portrait of the second Empress Renzong (仁宗), which is unclear and uncertain. Taking Zhenzong (真宗) empress’s crown as an example (Figure 5), on the side, you can see one large and two small “Fairy Riding Dragon”. The “Fairy Riding Dragon” in the empress’s crown originated from the story of the Langyuan (阆苑) female fairy figure in Taoism. Langyuan (阆苑) is a place where the goddess lives and plays. The Taoist painting “Langyuan (阆苑) Female Fairy” shows female fairies in various forms reading, playing Guqin, writing, flying on cranes and dragons, or walking on the sea. The fairy riding dragon comes from here. Because the empress’s crown has nine dragon decorations, it just matches the fairy riding dragon. This design is very clever and reflects the important position of Taoism in the Song Dynasty.

### **Buddhism**

The Buddhist element on the Empress HuiYi’s (袞衣) crown is the small Falun (法轮) flower. This pattern interspersed between the pair of Di (翟) bird patterns in the fabric of her coat. The small Falun (法轮) flower is originated from Buddhism’s Rotating King and it is from the era of the ancient Indian Maurya Dynasty. According to the Buddhist theory, it is the title of the ideal monarch in the secular world. It refers to those who can govern or support the development of Buddhism in the spirit of Buddhism. “The Rotating King” is an important theory of political imperial power in Buddhist thought. It spreads greatly in East Asia and is inextricably linked with imperial power in China. The appearance of the Rotating King is significant to the Chinese rulers. The Buddhist paintings on the “Rotating King” emphasize the concept of “Forebode”. It indicates the coexistence of Rotating King and the pure land. This kind of prophecy is conveyed in two forms: one is the image of Maitreya’s birth, which indicates that the Rotating King that will appear; and the other is the birth of Sakyamuni and the “Seven Treasures” appear at the same time (Cheng, 2016). Falun (法轮) is a kind of Qibao (七宝), which often appears on Buddhist costumes. The picture below (Figure 6) shows the Falun (法轮) pattern in the costumes of the characters in the Buddhist paintings of the Song Dynasty. It is

consistent with the small Falun (法轮) flower pattern on the Empress Hui Yi's (袞衣) costumes, which shows the importance of Buddhism in the Song Dynasty.



**Figure 6: The Details of Falun Patterns on the Clothing of the Characters in Buddhist Portraits**

## **DISCUSSION**

Empress Hui Yi's (袞衣) system in the Song Dynasty imitated the historical traditional norms, and at the same time, there were new designs in the details of the clothing, which has combined with the aesthetic culture of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. The influencing factors of this phenomenon includes the background of social and religious development, the political needs of the ruling class, the people's psychological sustenance needs, and the secularization of religion at that time.

### **The social background of the integration of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism**

Confucianism and Taoism are the local cultural resources in China. In the early stage, they were complementary to each other. Buddhism was introduced into China at the end of the Han (汉) Dynasty, and Taoism was formed by then. From then on, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism

became the most important religious beliefs in Chinese feudal society. Confucianism attaches the importance to morality and ethics, emperors and ministers, the orderly relationships among fathers and sons. Taoism advocates the unity of life and Taoism, and the pursuit of immortality is its greatest feature. Buddhism advises people to be good, cultivate their moral character and pursue the afterlife.

These three religions have always been in a state of mutual influence and opposition. Confucianism is a traditional Chinese moral belief that are people-oriented, for the purpose of governing the country. It has given full play to its effectiveness in Chinese history. However, it contradicted with the ruling principle as the belief focuses more on ethical preaching which means it reduces the intention to conquer for ultimate settlement and stabilization of life for the country and political ambitions. This structural defect can only be eliminated continuously in the course of history. The scholars in Song Dynasty took the responsibility of perfecting Confucianism, and officialdom bureaucrats participated in Zen and Taoism. During long-term coexistence with monks and Taoists, they focused on Confucianism, absorbed the essence of Buddhist and Taoist theoretical thinking, and combined the ontology and epistemology of Buddhism and Taoism with Confucian ethics. The combination of ideology and political philosophy has developed a new theory of Confucianism, which states that a gentleman should respect virtue, be good at learning and questioning, follow the doctrine of the mean, and respect etiquette with a simple and honest attitude. Do not proud in the upper, and do not betray when in the lower position. When the national politics is clear and bright, we should strive to be accepted and adopted, and when the national politics is dark, we should keep ourselves silent (Lyu, 1996). In addition, Buddhism and Taoism hope to have a firm foothold in the real society, and they must absorb ideas and nutrition from Confucianism. In the constant conflict and fusion, the three religions gradually tend to be consistent, and the trend of turning inward and advocating the heart has created an atmosphere of tolerance and frank coexistence among people, which is of great significance to consolidate the feudal rule and enhance social stability.

### **The Political Needs of the Ruling Class**

At the beginning of a new dynasty establishment, it is important to gain the acceptance and respect from ordinary people as soon as possible,

and focus on the concept of to rule by virtue and to respect Gods. For Confucian scholars, they use traditional Confucian doctrine to regulate their words and deeds, and their duties are clear. As for the common people, they use the means of worshiping gods, mythological rulers, so that the people are awed.

The Song Dynasty was richer based on traditional Confucianism, integrating natural views, epistemology, and human nature theory, serving ethics and morals, and becoming sleeker and more philosophical. The “Li (理)” is a law inherent in nature and human society and must be followed together. The movement and change of all objective phenomena in nature, such as the sun, moon and stars, mountains, rivers, lakes and seas, wind, rain, thunder, and lightning, all follow the internal quality “Li (理)” of the natural world. Human society also follows its “Li (理)”, which is based on the feudal moral theory with the “three principles and five permanent principles” as its core (Ouyang, 2011). It is a feudal moral theory with the three principles: The officials obeyed the emperor, the son to the father, the wife to the husband. the five permanents: refer to benevolence, justice, Courtesy, wisdom, and faith. From heaven and earth to parents, to heaven and earth, to emperors, to officials, to common people, whomsoever social status is an arrangement of fate, to accept their own destiny, and abide by moral norms (Lyu, 1996), to maintain the stability of the feudal social order.

The most common method to stabilise the feudal social order is to worship a mythical ruler of a glorious ancestor. The mythological ruler has the story of Emperor Han Gaozu killing the white snake, and Empress Wu Zetian (武则天) of the Tang Dynasty claimed that she was the Rotating King to greet Maitreya. As for the worship of ancestors, the Tang Dynasty considered Lao Tzu (Li Er 李耳) as the ancestor of the Tang Dynasty and built palaces to worship the royal family together with distant saints. Song Taizu (宋太祖), the first emperor of the Song Dynasty, also sponsored the translation of Buddhist scriptures and the construction of many Buddhist temples, and associated himself with King Ashoka. In the palace of the Song Dynasty, Taoist “Inner Dojo” was held many times. During the reign of Zhenzong (真宗), the most famous Book of Heaven and God, Mount Tai (泰) consecrated Zen, Emperor Xuanyuan (轩辕) built Jingling (景灵) Palace for the ancestors of Zhao’s (赵) ancestors. All of these have not

only showed the Royal support for religion, but also showed the Song Dynasty's eagerness to establish its own political power. It is recorded that in the Jingling Palace, there were statues of the Yellow Emperor and the ancestors of the Song dynasties for posterity to sacrifice. When the Jinci (晋祠) temple was renovated in the Song Dynasty, the image of the Mother God in the Temple was built to sacrifice to empress the grandmother of Song Zhenzong (宋真宗), Empress Du (杜), the mother of Emperor Taizong (太宗) of Song Dynasty. All of this "statue making" actions can also be a response of the ruling class in the Song Dynasty to stabilize their own political power.

### **The People's Psychological Sustenance Needs**

The three religious forms in Song Dynasty met the psychological needs of most people in society. Such as the Scholars (officials and students) who believed in Confucianism, and ordinary people (merchants, workers, and peasants) who believed in Buddhism and Taoism.

The Song Dynasty emphasized literature over military affairs, and intellectuals had a high social status, Confucianism is a great source of morality in the minds of many scholars. It was their ultimate dream to achieve official career through learning and transform society. The first is that intellectuals can realize their academic dreams. Because of the transformation of Confucianism in the Song Dynasty into Neo-Confucianism, namely "Li (理)", which is more oriented towards philosophical theory. The issues discussed mainly include: 1) The origin of the world, 2) The nature of the mind, advocate that the mind is the master of human perception, temperament, and 3) Epistemological problems, that is, the source of knowledge and cognitive methods. Many schools appeared in this period, which is an important period in the history of Chinese philosophy. Secondly, the Song Dynasty Confucianism advocated "to rule the world with others" to achieve political ambitions. In the Song Dynasty of ancient Chinese, literati had the highest enthusiasm for participating in politics and had a sense of historical responsibility, and put forward rich ideas on the construction of social ideals, which contributed to the Song Dynasty becoming a peak in the development of ancient Chinese politics, economy, ideology and culture, left a rich heritage for traditional social ideal theory.

During the Song Dynasty, the secularization and popularization of religious beliefs led to the phenomenon of worshipping Buddhism and Taoism in all social strata. There were many Buddhist and Taoist followers in the Song Dynasty (Pi, 2009). During the Tianxi (天禧) period, the number of Buddhists was 458,854, and the number of Taoists was 20,333; during the Qingli (庆历) period, the number of Buddhists was 396,525, and the number of Taoists was 20,190; the number of Buddhists in Xining (熙宁) period was 232,564 and the number of Taoists is 19,222. The people in Song Dynasty actively participated in religious activities in their own ways. The historical book Menglianglu (梦梁录) records: On the third day of the third lunar month, Shangsi (上巳) Festival, the people burned incense and gathered in Taoist temples or temples to pray for the peace and health of the country and the people. Rich people prayed and donated money, even the poor people also hold a simple prayer ceremony (Meng, 1985). For the civilian class, the stabilisation of political power has nothing to do with them. In addition, immortality and rising by day were too far away and hard for them to reach. Thus, most of them wished to meet the psychological needs of curing diseases, eliminating disasters and seeking wealth and happiness instead.

## **The secularization of Buddhism and Taoism**

Buddhism was introduced to China from India in the Han Dynasty. Since then, it has been associated with “sinicization” and “secularization” (Liu, 2003). The prosperity of Buddhism in the Song Dynasty was actually the result of Buddhism’s secularization, the social basis of secularization was the civilian of believers. At the beginning of the introduction of Buddhism into China, the believers and supporters were centered on the upper-class aristocracy, but the Song Dynasty was very different. It involved all layers of the society - adults, children, officials, businessmen, men, and women could believe in Buddhism. There is a saying that “every family Guanshiyin, Amitabha everywhere”. In addition, the Song Dynasty implemented the Dudie (度牒) system (that is, the monk’s identity certificate, which can be exempted from taxes and military service), which caused a sharp increase in the number of Buddhist monks, and another aspect of the prosperity of Buddhism.

Taoism takes “Tao” as its supreme belief, and its ultimate goal is to attain Taoists into immortality and harmony with Taoism, its pursuit is

to stay away from the world. However, in the Song Dynasty, the images, status, venues, and character behaviours of the immortals transformed from Taoist teachings showed secular characteristics. First, in the initial Taoist beliefs, gods and immortals are mysterious, admirable, and dare not to blaspheme. Taoist priests are mostly images of superhuman beings. After the secularization of the Song Dynasty, gods often appeared in the mundane world with ordinary appearances. Like to travel in the world, there are many stories preached by Taoism that ordinary people are helped, and they do not know that other parties are gods. Secondly, immortal's activity space has moved from the illusory and far-away fairyland to the real society, with famous mountains and rivers and even streets and lanes. Finally, the behaviour of Taoist figures has become secularized. From the initial separation from the world, the noble and holy, they change to no longer mysterious. They are like ordinary people with the joys, sorrows, jealousy, and hatred of the world. In many Taoist stories, they also drink alcohol, play and even prank. As a result, since the bridge between Taoism and the people is getting close therefore it is easier to be accepted.

In order to gain a foothold in society, Buddhism and Taoism, in addition to expanding their influence by secularization, actively moved closer to the orthodox Confucianism of the time, advocated the unity of the three religions, integrated Confucian ethics and morals into the teachings, and advocated patriotism, loyalty to the monarch, and filial piety. Therefore, it was accepted by Song Dynasty rulers.

## **CONCLUSION**

Empress Hui Yi's (袆衣) ceremonial costume of Song dynasty revealed the combination of new social forms based on inheriting the traditional etiquette system and transformed them into new design elements to add to the details of costume. The article summarizes and analyzes the religious thoughts embodied in the Empress Hui Yi (袆衣) from Song Dynasty based on the mutual corroboration of historical books and portraits. At the same time, it analyzes the reasons for the religious patterns of the Hui Yi (袆衣) in combination with the social and religious customs of the Song Dynasty. Empress Hui Yi (袆衣) combined the elements of the three main religions of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism - Confucian traditional clothing style and Di (翟) bird patterns, Taoist immortal team and fairy

riding dragon, and Buddhist small Falun (法轮) flower patterns. This phenomenon originated from the social background of the Integration of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, the political needs of the ruling class, the psychological needs of the public, and the secularization of Buddhism and Taoism.

Although China is a country with a long history of clothing civilization, since the founding of the people's Republic of China, western style clothing has become the main body to cater to the global fashion trend, and the traditional clothing culture has declined slightly. The Chinese government has been advocating the revival of traditional culture for sustainability, and clothing culture is an important part of excellent traditional culture. The research on Empress Hui Yi (袆衣) from Song Dynasty enriches the academic achievements of the Song dynasty woman's costume research which would help people to understand the traditional dress etiquette system deeply. At the same time, it allows people from a new perspective to understand the social and religious atmosphere of Song Dynasty especially from the perspective of interdisciplinary analysis of the religious design elements from the traditional clothing of the Dynasty. The design service with creative ideas and design elements of Empress Hui Yi (袆衣) also provide significance values for contemporary woman's ceremonial dress design.

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