ABSTRACT

Emperor Xuan Zong (reigned 712 – 756) of the Tang Dynasty displayed a well-known reverence for Daojiao. Historical records have showed that Xuan Zong rigorously promoted Daojiao and was actively involved in Daojiao activities. These are actually evidence that Xuan Zong had been implementing Daojiao as his political ideology. However, many scholars did not realize that and hence, past assessment of Xuan Zong’s Daojiao policies had remained superficial and did not reflect accurately the underlying political motives.

This paper aims to shed more light on Xuan Zong’s Daojiao political ideology. Firstly, the inadequacies of previous studies done on Xuan Zong’s Daojiao policies will be pointed out and significant aspects that had been overlooked will be touched on. Secondly, we will look at the factors which influenced Xuan Zong to choose and adopt Daojiao as his political ideology. Lastly, we will examine Xuan Zong’s extensive use of various tools and activities to disseminate his Daojiao political ideology, and how they achieve the objectives of consolidating Xuan Zong’s throne and forming popular opinion favourable to his rule.