Currently, the distribution of the most common twenty-six of over one hundred surname groups in the villages of the Putian plain is as follows: Chen 陳 are found in 320 villages; Lin 林 240; Huang 黃 184; Zheng 鄭 150; Wu 吳 115; Li 李 104; Zhang 張 76; Cai 蔡 61; Liu 劉 60; Weng 翁 51; Fang 方 44; Guo 郭 40; Zhu 朱 38; Xu 許 37; Wang 王 33; Zhou 周 31; Yao 姚 27; He 何 25; Peng 彭 21; Su 蘇 19; Xie 謝 18; Yu 余 14; Cheng 程 14; Kang 康 12; Ou 歐 11; Song 宋 10. The current distribution of several of these lineages is mapped out in Appendix One below.

These numbers do not discriminate between separate lineages or distinct lines with the same surname, so they only provide a rough measure of the relative size of different surname groups. In some cases, district-wide or pan-prefectural lineage genealogies were drawn up, mostly in the late Qing and even in modern times (this is the case for the Huang and the Zhu). Such efforts to link ever more broadly distributed surname groups into a common lineage requires ever deeper (and less and less likely) historical claims about common shared ancestors linking the various lines of groups with the same surname.

In all these cases, we find an early ancestor, an initial place of settlement, often a division into lineage branches, and a distribution of the descendants of different branches in different villages. In some surname groups, other lines of descent with the same surname moved into Putian at different times, leading to some confusion. Efforts to link together such disparate lines were a fairly late phenomenon. Note however that many villages were multiple surname villages, with only a minority having full-fledged ancestral halls. Thus many villagers would have lacked such highly elaborated centers for ancestral worship, and would have had to carry out their rites either in older ancestral homes or in their own homes, where the scope of ancestral worship may have been far more limited than in a fully articulated ancestral hall.

Currently, many lineage halls have begun to revive ancestral worship rituals on the Winter Solstice, and support the sweeping of ancestral
graves on the Qingming festival. It is difficult to say whether any lineages now carry out a full range of ancestral worship rites such as those described in the *Putian Fushan Dongyang Chenshi zupu* 莆田浮山東洋陳氏族譜 [Lineage Genealogy of the Chen Surname of Fushan in Putian] of Jiaqing 22 (1817). There we read of elaborate rituals performed for the ancestors in the ancestral hall and at the many widely scattered gravesites of various ancestors. On the anniversaries of the deaths of the founding ancestors, elaborate and highly formalized rites of offering and sacrifice were carried out in the ancestral hall. Younger lineage members were selected to act as *Lisheng* (Masters of Ritual) in these rites. Great care was taken to emphasize seniority and hierarchy in the order and scale of offerings, in the formal bows and prostrations made before the ancestor’s spirit tablets, and in the distribution of food after the ceremony. The *Family Regulations* of the Chen lineage genealogy mention that seven lineage members were to be selected each year to act as *Fushou* (headsmen of good fortune) to carry out offerings to the tutelary god of the nearby Haopushê temple. A fund had been established by the lineage to ensure that these ritual responsibilities would not prove too difficult for any particular *Fushou* to bear. Lineage representatives were also expected to participate in the Rites of Universal Salvation for the Hungry Ghosts (*zhongyuan pudu*) that were held each lunar 7/15 at the Buddhist temple in the village which had been built with lineage funds. The founding of the Haopushê 濱浦社 temple of the earth god in Dongyang village during the Ming Jiajing (1522–1566) period is explained in a stone inscription included in the lineage genealogy. Clearly this was not an official *lishê* altar established at the beginning of the Ming, but was instead a symbol of the power and influence and ritual independence of the Chen of Dongyang. The *Family Regulations* also include a provision calling for one of the *Fushou* to pay an annual visit to a *shê* temple in Putian city which had branched off from the Haopushê, in order to collect a contribution acknowledging the primacy of the Dongyang founding *shê* temple.

While many historical connections between lineage and *shê* temples and Buddhist monasteries can be seen in the case of the Dongyang Chen lineage, the contemporary example of the Huang lineage of Shiting may be used to examine more recent interconnections between lineage and territorially based god cult worship in the Putian plains. During a *Yuanxiao* ritual held in the semi-repaired ancestral hall of the Huang in Huangxiang in the late 1990s, representatives from each