

COLLECTED WORKS OF JAO TSUNG-I: XUANTANG ANTHOLOGY



A Collated and Critical Study of the  
*Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi*

老子想爾注校證

*Edited and Translated by*

David Chai

BRILL

A Collated and Critical Study of the *Xiang'er Commentary* to the *Laozi*

# Collected Works of Jao Tsung-i

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Chen Zhi  
Nicholas Morrow Williams  
Adam C. Schwartz

VOLUME 5

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LEIDEN | BOSTON



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# Contents

## Collected Works of Jao Tsung-i: Xuantang Anthology—

- Series Introduction IX
- Acknowledgments XIII
- Figures XIV
- Translator's Preface XV
- Preface XVII
  
- 1 Explanatory Abstract 1
  
- 2 Recorded Commentary of Xiang'er 10
  
- 3 Annotative Discussion 93
  
- 4 Annotative Notes 103
  - 1 The Origin of the Name "Daoist Religion" 103
  - 2 The Genuine Dao, Genuineness of the Dao, and the Genuine Text 104
  - 3 Tenets of the Dao 108
  - 4 Person of Dao, Daoist Priest, and Transcendent Person 111
  - 5 Guarding the One 114
  - 6 On Joy and Anger, Auspicious and Inauspicious Fortune 117
  - 7 The Sound of Rapidly Plucked Strings in Equilibrium 119
  - 8 On Life and Studying Life 122
  - 9 Auspicious Talismans of Great Peace 123
  - 10 The Natural 125
  - 11 Harmonizing the Five Elements 126
  - 12 Issuing Forth Prosperity to Overcome Confinement 127
  - 13 Halos of the Sun and Moon, and the Guest Who Defiantly Does Not Shine 130
  - 14 The Arsenal and Tower, Wolf and Fox, General and Cavalry Officials, Chamber and Spearhead Stars 132
  - 15 The Dragon Is without Sons, False Arts 136
  - 16 Jade Maiden 137
  - 17 Writings of the Yellow Emperor, Mysterious Maiden, and Rong Cheng 138
  - 18 Enriching the Marrow and Cherishing the Essence 140
  - 19 The Dao Prohibits Sacrificial Tributes to the Dead 142

- 20 Disaster Returns to One's Descendants 144
- 21 Great Yin 145
- 22 Officials of Earth 146
- 23 Officers of Heaven and the Life-Count 147
- 24 The Corpse and Corpse People 150
- 25 The Compass 152
- 26 The Bright Hall 153
- 27 Straw Dogs 154
- 28 Xi Zhong Made Carts, the Yellow Emperor Made Rooms 155
- 29 Great Virtue 156
- 30 The Character *Zhuo* 𠄎 158
- 31 The Ladle 159
- 32 Rhymed Words in the *Xiang'er Commentary* 160
- 33 The Title of Laozi's Book 160
- 5 Different Explanations of the *Xiang'er Commentary* 162
- 6 The *Xiang'er Commentary* and Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse* 167
- 1 Part 1 167
- 2 Part 2 172
- 7 Comparison between the *Xiang'er Commentary* and Suo Dongxuan Edition 178
- 8 The *Xiang'er Commentary* and *Scripture of Great Peace* 187
- 9 Supplement to the Lost Texts of the *Xiang'er Commentary* 195
- 10 Examining Zhang Daoling's Writings 197
- 11 The Nine Precepts and Three Harmonies of the *Xiang'er Commentary*, with Additional Discussion on the Newly Published Critical Edition of the *Scripture of Great Peace* 210
- 12 Continued Discussion of the *Xiang'er Commentary* 225
- 1 Preface 225
- 2 Addendum to Manuscript Number 6825 in the Stein Catalogue 226

3	Sun Simiao Citing the <i>Precepts of Xiang'er</i> , with Further Discussion of Xiang'er Being Called a Transcendent Person	227
4	The Nine Practices of the <i>Xiang'er Commentary</i> and Lord Lao's <i>Visualization Diagram</i>	228
5	On the <i>Xiang'er Commentary</i> 's "First was the <i>Scripture</i> then the <i>5,000-Character Classic</i> as the Daoist Numerical System"	233
6	The <i>Xiang'er Scripture</i> as Received by the Preceptor of Eminent Mystery	236
7	Discussing "Do Not Harm the Kingly Breath" in the <i>Twenty-Seven Precepts of Xiang'er</i> and the <i>Scripture of Great Peace</i>	238
8	A Brief Record of Daoist Writings Citing the <i>Xiang'er Commentary</i>	243
9	Conclusion	245
13	<b>Four Points on the <i>Xiang'er Commentary</i></b>	246
1	The Jixia Academy and the Theory of Essence and Breath	248
2	The State of Chu and the Theory of Proper Breath and Primal Breath	250
3	Huang-Lao and the Theory of Identical Breath, Profound Breath, and Tyrant Breath	252
4	The "Five Elements" Silk Text and the School of Rites' Theory of the Breath of Benevolence, Breath of Righteousness, and Breath of Ritual	254
5	The <i>Scripture of Great Peace</i> 's Theory of Preserving the Primal Breath and Wang Fu's Theory of the Breath of the Dao	256
6	The Early Han Mawangdui Recipe for Nourishing Life and the Theory of Contracting Breath as the Root of Zhang Daoling's Thought	259
	<b>Appendices</b>	267
	<b>Postscript</b>	269
	<b>Bibliography</b>	270
	<b>Index</b>	280





## Collected Works of Jao Tsung-i: Xuantang Anthology—Series Introduction

Jao Tsung-i 饒宗頤 (1917–2018, studio name Xuantang 選堂) was one of the most remarkable scholars of the 20th century, in any country. He combined erudition in his own language with polyglot awareness of the major European languages and a mastery even of Sanskrit; he was a tireless, prolific researcher, who produced important books and articles without cease throughout seven decades; and he possessed phenomenal powers of memory to which the familiar adjective “photographic” barely does justice, since he had immediate recall of whole books of history, of calligraphic forms in all the different Chinese scripts, of millennia of music and painting and poetry. Indeed, perhaps the most remarkable thing about Jao Tsung-i as a scholar is that his achievements were not at all limited to scholarship. He was a true artist in the manner of the literati of past ages, whose paintings, poetry, and especially calligraphy grace museums and collections around the world.

Though scholarship was just one of the domains in which Jao excelled, then, it is this polymathic and polymorphic creativity that lies at the foundation of Jao’s achievement as a scholar as well. As a scholar he combined a restless curiosity extending to more or less every domain of Chinese culture and beyond, with a depth of insight and fastidious attention to detail that led him to break new ground in each of the topics he addressed. His scholarly work is often fearsomely technical, as he is willing to devote page-long footnotes to clarifying distinctions among textual variants or different graphical forms of a single Chinese character. But it is also dazzlingly broad, as he surveys vast topics like the creation myths of all ancient cultures, or the relationship between morality and rhetoric. Despite his whole-hearted love of China’s traditional culture, he is never content to rest with facile generalizations about that culture, but always pursuing a more nuanced understanding of its particular facets at different historical moments.

Jao was a scholarly prodigy who had already published an independent article under the editorship of one of the leading historians of the era, Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛 (1893–1980), before he was twenty years old. Yet his earliest scholarly production, coauthored with his father at the age of seventeen, was a *Bibliography of Literary Productions of Ch’ao-chou*, included in the local

gazetteer of his hometown of Chaozhou in Guangdong province.<sup>1</sup> Jao later edited the complete gazetteer of Chaozhou, published in 1949, and throughout his life drew inspiration from the culture of his hometown. In the same year, though, he relocated to Hong Kong, where he would reside for most of his life and teach at both the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. From that time on his scholarly work took full advantage of the international opportunities afforded to him there. In 1959 he was awarded the prestigious Prix Stanislas Julien from the College de France for his massive study of diviners in the oracle bone inscriptions. He studied Dunhuang manuscripts in Paris and collaborated on a still-unmatched bilingual study of Dunhuang lyrics with the Swiss scholar Paul Demiéville (1894–1979), published in 1971. And yet his scholarly horizons continued to expand after that, as he continually visited Japan to identify precious Chinese texts preserved there, and spent many months memorizing Vedas in India.

By the year 2003, Jao's scholarly works were collected into a twenty-volume set encompassing well over 10,000 pages, the *Rao Zongyi ershi shiji xueshu wenji* 饒宗頤二十世紀學術文集, published first in Taipei and then reprinted in Beijing in 2009. Though this collection is not quite comprehensive, as Jao remained prolific up to his passing in 2018, it provides convenient access to his main scholarly achievements. The main topics covered are the origins of Chinese civilization, the oracle bone inscriptions, bronze inscriptions, Buddhism, Daoism, historiography, Sino-foreign relations throughout history, Dunhuang studies, classical poetry and other literary forms, Chaozhou history, musicology, art history, and many other fields as well. Last but not least, the final volume contains Jao's own classical Chinese compositions, in itself a vast corpus of iridescent poetry and prose.<sup>2</sup> The fact that Jao was one of the great modern masters of classical Chinese composition is not irrelevant to evaluating his scholarship, for Jao's scholarly studies are written in elegant prose that is often closer to classical Chinese than the modern, colloquial register.

Indeed, Jao's scholarship is necessarily daunting even to many Chinese readers or to professional sinologists today, for three fundamental reasons: his oeuvre is composed in highly allusive and erudite prose; it comprises an extraordinarily large quantity of publications in diverse domains; and finally, it

1 On Jao's life see Chen Zhi and Adam Schwartz, "Jao Tsung-i (Rao Zongyi) 饒宗頤 (1917–2018)," *Early China* 41 (2018): 1–7; Yan Haijian 嚴海建, *Rao Zongyi zhuan: Xiangjiang hongru* 饒宗頤傳: 香江鴻儒 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2012).

2 For a selection of these works in English, see Nicholas Morrow Williams, trans., *The Residue of Dreams: Selected Poems of Jao Tsung-i* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell East Asia Series, 2016).

employs extensive quotation of primary sources, many of them in themselves quite obscure for the modern reader. For these reasons, Jao scholarship has often been admired at a safe distance but not necessarily studied as closely as it deserves by other scholars, both in China and the West. Moreover, although the *Rao Zongyi ershi shiji xueshu wenji* has made his scholarship accessible to readers throughout greater China, there are relatively few works introducing or adapting his key insights into Western languages.

In light of the great value of Jao's scholarship and its relative lack of appreciation in the West, the Jao Tsung-i Academy of Sinology, Hong Kong Baptist University has decided to produce a series of volumes translating key scholarly works by Jao into English, with annotation and explication making them accessible to 21st-century readers in the West. The first volumes will introduce major articles on Chinese musicology, Dunhuang studies, cosmology and origins of Chinese civilization, literature and religion, and oracle bone inscriptions. Future volumes will continue to highlight key areas of Jao's accomplishment. The translation series is by no means comprehensive; a complete translation of Jao's collected works would easily occupy fifty English tomes and is not conceivable at present. Instead, these volumes introduce key insights from Jao's scholarship and provide a gateway to his intellectual universe, showing the potential of a cosmopolitan vision that is never unfaithful to the demands of Chinese tradition.

First and foremost, the Jao Tsung-i Academy of Sinology and the project team would like to extend our sincere thanks to The Jao Studies Foundation for their generous support in funding this ambitious translation project and heroic efforts to make Professor Jao's lifelong scholarship accessible to a worldwide readership. From its outset, this project has received the full blessing of the Jao (rendered Yiu in Cantonese) family, most notably Professor Jao's daughters Ms Angeline Yiu and Ms Veronica Yiu, Permanent President and Permanent Administrative Director respectively of The Jao Studies Foundation.

Throughout the years, the Academy has been fortunate enough to be surrounded by like-minded people from all walks of life and benefited from their friendship and wisdom. A special mention goes to Dr and Mrs Simon Siu Man Suen, BBS, JP. Dr Suen is a remarkable entrepreneur, connoisseur of the arts, and champion of the humanities, whose generous support has enriched our work immeasurably.

The voluminous project that came to be known as *Collected Works of Jao Tsung-i: Xuantang Anthology* was first set up under the aegis of Hong Kong Baptist University and the leadership of former President Professor Roland Tai-hong Chin, BBS, JP. It continues to thrive under the auspices of

the research-led, liberal arts University under the Presidency of Professor Alexander Ping-kong Wai. We would like to express our gratitude to both Presidents and the University.

The Academic Advisory Committee of world-class Sinologists, namely Ronald Egan, Bernard Fuehrer, David R. Knechtges, William H. Nienhauser, Jr., Lauren Pfister, and Edward L. Shaughnessy, offered us timely advice at different stages of preparation and implementation. The Editorial Board, composed of leading academics in their own fields, has also served as a bank of expertise and experience for guidance and assistance.

It has been a delight to publish the Xuantang Anthology with the Leiden-based academic publisher Brill and to work side by side with Acquisitions Editor Dr Shu Chunyan, whose professionalism and know-how were instrumental in making the process both smooth and efficient.

Last but not least, we have our professional team translators and proof-readers to thank. Since our team continues to grow with the addition of new volumes, full credit for individual contributions will be given in individual volumes, but special thanks go to the Research Associate of the project, Dr. Linda Yuet-Ngo Leung, for her meticulous work in post-editing and further proof-reading for the entire series.

*Nicholas M. Williams*

*Adam C. Schwartz*

*Chen Zhi*

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I would like to thank the Jao Studies Foundation, Simon Suen Foundation, and the Hong Kong Baptist University Jao Tsung-i Academy of Sinology for the opportunity to translate this portion of Jao Tsung-i's corpus. At Hong Kong Baptist University, thanks are owed to May Wing-Mi Lai for her assistance on administrative matters, and Linda Yuet-Ngo Leung for her instrumental role in locating Jao Tsung-i's undocumented textual references and for compiling the bibliography. Lastly, special thanks to Wei Wu for guiding me through the peculiar world of religious Daoism.

## Figures

- 1–26 Fragmented scroll of the *Xiang'er Commentary* to the *Laozi* 老子道經想爾注殘卷 xx–xxxii
- 27 Master Xi edition of the *Daodejing* from the 10th year of the Tianbao reign period of the Tang Dynasty 唐天寶十載係師定本道德經寫卷 xxxiii
- 28 Ancient edition of the *Daodejing* by the Daoist priest Suo Dongxuan 古鈔道士索洞玄經 xxxiv
- 29 Text of Tang Zhenjie's ordination ceremony at the end of the *Classic of De* scroll from the 3rd year of the Jinglong reign period of the Tang Dynasty 唐景龍三年寫本德經卷末唐真戒受戒文 xxxv
- 30 Item four, *wenshu* 文數, in the Dunhuang edition of Cheng Xuanying's *Introduction to the Laozi* 敦煌本成玄英老子開題第四「文數」 xxxvi

## Translator's Preface

Jao Tsung-i's writings on the *Xiang'er Commentary* to the *Daodejing* are contained in volume 5 of his *Collective Works* (*wenji* 文集). These essays were first gathered together and published in book-form in 1958 before being reissued in 1991 and 2015 under the title: *A Collated and Critical Study of the Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi* 老子想爾注校證. The present translation preserves the order and titles of the ten chapters comprising the main body of the book, and three of the five supplementary chapters that appear afterwards.

Jao Tsung-i's skill in philology and textual history are on full display in this book. The breadth of material he consults is impressive to say the least but Jao Tsung-i never loses sight of the object of his attention: the *Xiang'er Commentary*. Just as the Sinological world was stunned to learn of the unearthing of a silk-manuscript version of the *Daodejing* at Mawangdui 馬王堆 in 1973, and again in 1993 when a bamboo-slip version was discovered at Guodian 郭店, the publication of Jao Tsung-i's research on the *Xiang'er* caused a sensation amongst scholars of early China. While Jao Tsung-i's work instantly established a new sub-field of study on the *Daodejing* in the Chinese-speaking world, Anglophone scholars have been slow to show interest in the *Xiang'er*. One notable exception is Stephen Bokenkamp, whose translation remains as indispensable today as when it first appeared.<sup>3</sup> The present work not only includes a complete translation of the *Xiang'er Commentary* but Jao Tsung-i's research notes on this long-lost text.

Had it not been for the detective work of Jao Tsung-i, the complex social and religious factors shaping the composition of the *Xiang'er Commentary* would have remained at best murky, and at worst, completely unknown. Had it not been for Jao Tsung-i's interest in late-Han Dynasty thought, especially the *Scripture of Great Peace* (*Taiping jing* 太平經), the similarities between it and the *Xiang'er Commentary* might never have come to light. This translation of the *Xiang'er Commentary* and Jao Tsung-i's findings will prove a boon to anyone interested in the formative years of Celestial Masters Daoism, the reception of the *Daodejing* before Wang Bi 王弼 would put his indelible stamp on it, as well as intellectual historians of China. Jao Tsung-i does not pontificate on the philosophical or religious meaning of the *Xiang'er Commentary* but lets the text speak for itself; I have followed this example and refrained from

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3 See Stephen Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).



cluttering the translation with expository notations. In Jao Tsung-i, the world is truly fortunate to have had such an erudite person amongst us.

*David Chai*

## Preface

Regarding the theories of the Three Primes (*sanyuan* 三元) and Eight Assemblies (*bahui* 八會), and the arrangement of the Four Auxiliaries (*sifu* 四輔) and Seven Labels (*qiqian* 七籤), they are mysterious and remote, being of such an obscure nature that they cannot be spoken of. However, displaying what one expounds to arrive at its principle are words attributed to the Lady of Purple Tenuity (*Ziwei furen* 紫微夫人); having certainty with one's decisions leads to an understanding whose intentions can penetrate the *Jade Instructions* (*yujue* 玉訣). The calendar is separated into days and months, a practice whose roots stretch back to the time of Xuan Yuan 軒轅 (also known as the Yellow Emperor, Huangdi 黃帝). Grasping things as images is rather abstruse but words for them were eventually established in Ku 苦 county [i.e., Laozi's hometown]. Examining the beginning of the myriad things and that which never leaves them, it must have given birth to itself prior to Heaven and Earth. This is why scholars having insight into the subtle know how to properly use it, while those who spread the magical arts (*fangshu* 方術) do so according to the times. The *Hanfeizi* 韓非子 showed this in its "Yu Lao" 喻老 chapter while the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 did so in its "Dao Ying" 道應 chapter. Master Lin 鄰氏 extracted the declining threads of the *Daodejing* 道德經, while Anqiu 安丘 promulgated its profound meaning. Liu Xiang 劉向 (Commander of the Capital Guard 中壘校尉) of the palace library similarly discussed four of its chapters, and Jizhang 季長 (also known as Ma Rong 馬融) wrote a complete commentary behind the scarlet curtains. For many generations, these works were not transmitted. As for Wang Bi 王弼 (also known as Fusi 輔嗣), he analyzed the content of the *Daodejing* and understood everything begins with nothingness. Heshang Gong 河上公 reached its wellspring of profundity, that immortality lies with the mysterious female. Since the Wei Dynasty, the two schools of Wang Bi and Heshang Gong have been transmitted. They are akin to a long night encountering dawn or myriad tributaries flowing into the sea, whereby each generation receiving the *Daodejing* further clarifies its philosophy, each discourse becomes more refined, and each transcription increases its value, such that libraries are filled with them, houses are stuffed with them, and carts overflow with them. How glorious!

That Anqi Sheng 安期生 received the teachings of Laozi is a matter recorded in historical biographies, as is Gong Chong 宮崇 visiting the Han Dynasty capital to present the miscellaneous shamanistic (*wuxi* 巫覡) writings of his master [i.e., Gan Ji 干吉]. It is said a great peace will be achieved upon completion of this book with bluish-green headers. How could the Han Dynasty not come to an end once the Yellow Turbans (*Huangjin* 黃巾) rose up in revolt? When the

prophesized calamity of 350 years came to be, the 170 scrolls of Gan Ji's text were written in accordance with Yin 陰 and Yang 陽 and to eliminate disasters and peculiar events. There was also the Daoist priest on Mount Heming 鶴鳴山 who created "ghost teaching" (*guijiao* 鬼教). He made a hand-copied edition of this text for the Three Officials (*sanguan* 三官), established charity lodges for the Five Pecks of Rice (*wudoumi* 五斗米) order, led discussions on the teachings of the 5000-Character Classic (*Wuqian wen* 五千文), and established the 24 dioceses to ascend to perfection. He spread and promoted his wondrous intentions, which blew across the commandery of Shu 蜀, earning him quick praise for his mysterious words, hence he was entrusted to devise the *Xiang'er Commentary* (*Xiang'er zhu* 想爾注). He clarified the aim of "guarding the One" (*shouyi* 守一), was guided by celestial beings and became spiritually connected to them, and recommended methods for longevity of life by first dulling one's anger. He used non-deliberate action (*wuwei* 無為) as the root of discarding evil, establishing the primordial beginning of Daoist religion.

The Master Xi 係師 (also known as Zhang Zhennan 張鎮南 or Zhang Lu 張魯) edition deletes auxiliary words from the text, setting one on the path of immortality whereby one will find great peace and joy. In the *Purse of Pearls from the Three Caverns* (*Sandong zhunang* 三洞珠囊), Wang Xuanhe 王懸河 explained the transmission of talismanic writings (*fuwen* 複文) in the Three Caverns; the genuine trace of this school is displayed in the truncated characters such as "thirty spokes" (*sa fu* 卅輻). It is a pity there are times of peril and prosperity whereby the Dao is either evident or obscure. This is especially true during the chaos and destruction in the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period when the ashes of secret scrolls were scattered everywhere, Mongke Khan of the Yuan Dynasty 元憲宗 burned the Daoist scriptures housed in the Xuandu temple. Thus, of the teachings of inner alchemy, only the *Northern Dipper Scripture* (*Beidou jing* 北斗經) could be consulted while the *Yellow Writ* (*Huang shu* 黃書) disappeared with the setting sun in the west. Shenyinzi 神隱子 can thus be forgiven for not collecting everything;<sup>4</sup> even the *Daoist Canon* (*Daozang* 道藏) has its lacunae! The ancient edition by Zhang Zhennan merely left behind its name while the unusually titled Xiang Yu 想余 edition is unexplainable. Those who like to read texts buried in obscurity, investigating them without any clues, as admirers of antiquities they would surely be dismayed by this. In the Qing Dynasty, the wall concealing a secret room in the Mogao Grottoes (*Mogao shiku* 莫高石窟) at Dunhuang 敦煌 was at last dismantled, however, the presumed lost *Li* chapters of Yanzhong

4 Trans. note: Shenyinzi is said to have collected and restored the classical texts and scriptures of the Three Caverns of the *Daoist Canon* following the chaos of the Huang Chao Rebellion 黃巢起義 from 874–884.

淹中 from the state of Lu 魯 were looted by the camel caravans heading west, and Wang Fu's 王浮 *Laozi's Scripture on Converting the Barbarians* (*Laozi huahu jing* 老子化胡經) disappeared when Laozi rode a blue ox to the west. An ancient scroll from the Tianbao 天寶 reign period of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty 唐玄宗 is only enough to discern a hairsbreadth while Cheng Xuanying's 成玄英 *Introduction to the Laozi* (*Laozi kaiti* 老子開題) helps further unmask this complex material. What is especially wonderful is that the fragmentary *Xiang'er Commentary*, whose whereabouts were unknown for so long, has resurfaced. Thus, the *Profound Covenant of Orthodox Unity* (*Zhengyi mengwei* 正一盟威), which was previously obscure, has now become clear. The commentary to the Three Heavens by the keeper of the archives—the “scribe beneath the pillar” (*zhuxia shi* 柱下史) [i.e., Laozi]—has subtle words that will never fall into decay. Best to reveal the profoundness of the Lady of the South Celestial Pole and treasure the harmony of her multitude of notes, or unroll *Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Lüshi Chunqiu* 呂氏春秋) and with the Primal share the same breath (*qi* 氣).

I am nourished by the simple and common and derive joy from empty vacuity. I have yet to cut off the learning that gives birth to worry and envelops me without end. After my lectures, I use my free time to broaden my familiarity with and examination of these matters, for my cursory understanding is akin to a one-inch-wide shadow on a sundial, or a horse of poor ability trying to compete with its frail shadow. Is purity of the heart-mind enough to attune and accommodate oneself to ascend great heights? With Heaven and Earth about to collapse, I wish to ask Huang Liao 黃縑 [from the “Dao Zhi” 盜跖 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子] about this. Progressively reading this book, I truly value the foresight of my predecessors in that wherever my gaze wanders, my spirit roosts and I tentatively gain the smallest of insights. These modest efforts in traversing and explicating the *Xiang'er* has resulted in many topics that guide us through its majestic vastness and are akin to the *Zhuangzi's* tale of drilling holes into chaos (*hundun* 混沌). In explaining its winding descriptions, one should avoid randomly revising them without first clearly distinguishing the words of Laozi and Xiang'er. My shortsighted and narrow perspective stemmed from a lack of erudition and I feel quite ashamed by this. Now that I know fragrant grass exists within a hundred miles and orchids and chrysanthemums will not vanish for another thousand years, my hope is that the present work will offer a sliver of insight into the *Xiang'er* and be of assistance to scholars in the future.

*Jao Tsung-i*

Department of Chinese, The University of Hong Kong

April 5th, 1956

凡民不爭不議不問不報... 心實其腹心者視也中有言山善惡服者道...  
 食實慎則易治上之化下視風之...  
 如此上學當知信道候知者不敢不為上信...  
 道不物少知之文即有那心補慈是非見上...  
 道師而用之又不益且貴中知中知行之...  
 志意不可盈盈遠道誤因以萬物之柔道也...  
 人行道不遠我則深似道往其能解其心...  
 者心方欲而慈忘者慈也皆非道軒書心...  
 為惡按還之格欲寬寬解之勿使五歲格也...  
 自廣以道後自勵以未生於此處當守守...  
 致解所以者過積失道慈傷死以疾五歲以...  
 道不能治道法之重教之丁寧五歲所以...  
 者皆金木水火土氣不和也則則相主戰則...  
 射隨格事情解有解...一歲則射射解...

(一) 老子道經想爾注殘卷(一)

病延年之過陽者哉四列王怒而元傷顯下...  
 死如敗可如人棄者於王則曰禍成矣如其...  
 是則其虛情性不動委慈不致五歲皆和同...  
 相生與道同光虛也湛以常存如此德與常...  
 常在不言不知報子像帝之先者道也帝...  
 先者不道也與元名萬物始同一可未和...  
 子能行此道能行者彼像道也以帝先夫天...  
 地不仁以萬物為芟苗天地像道仁於萬善...  
 不仁於濟慈救萬物惡者不愛也視之如...  
 芟草如芟腐可服人不仁以百姓為芟草...  
 法天地仁於善人不仁惡人當王政以慈不...  
 視之如芟苗也是以人當積善功其精神與...  
 天通故能得密者天降教之廣之人皆是...  
 芟苗之徒可精神不能通天所以者齊如...  
 賦險惡不致見部失也精暴自從與天不親...  
 生死之際天不知也彼帝仁假和後世意放...  
 芟草芟苗以置門戶上故言後世門戶皆芟...  
 之徒可人不解黃帝微意也而放之而惡心不...  
 故可謂大恩也天地之間其獨善善道柔用...  
 清微不見食而之類莫不做仰恩者不信故...  
 補者治工排榮者可以吹竹柔動有骨不...  
 可見故以喻以解恩也虛而不屈動而...  
 愈正清氣不見像如虛也然呼吸不屈焉之動...  
 之愈益出夕明眼窳不知音中少知汗芽不...

(二) 老子道經想爾注殘卷(二)

FIGURES 1-26 Fragmented scroll of the Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi 老子道經想爾注殘卷

知守道念身素養聊窮暇。非一也。不如學生  
 守中和之道。存神不死。是謂玄牝。存者。坎也。精  
 始為神。故令神不死。當結精自守。死者地也。體  
 性。安女像之。故不擊男欲結精。心當像地。如女  
 勿為。事先至北門。天地。祀北地也。女像之。陰。祀  
 為門。死生之官也。所要。故若。祀男。茶。石。根  
 綿綿。若存。陰陽之道。以若結精。為生。手。以知命  
 當名。自止。平。少之時。雖有。當。閩省之。綿。者。復  
 也。從其。後。少。若。少。則。長。存。矣。今。以。乃。為。大。皆  
 道。道。之。何。道。重。雖。利。後。觀。不。能。欲。令。合。精。益。生  
 故。教。之。羊。少。後。有。不。絕。不。終。之。勉。力。也。勉。力。之。計  
 忠。愚。人。之。心。可。實。可。從。道。乎。上。德。之。人。志。操。陸。陸  
 能。無。結。度。生。少。時。便。純。又。善。神。早。成。言。此。者  
 道。精。也。故。令。天。地。元。子。仙。人。靈。五。女。元  
 夫。其。大。信。也。用。之。不。動。能。用。此。道。應。得。仙。亦  
 男。女。之。事。不。可。不。勤。也。天。長。地。久。天。地。所。以  
 能。長。久。者。以。其。不。自。主。故。能。長。久。能。法。道。故  
 能。生。而。長。久。也。是以。聖。人。法。其。身。而。身。先  
 此。長。生。者。不。勞。精。思。我。體。卷。身。不。以。无。功。到  
 層。厚。祇。以。榮。身。不。食。五。欲。以。然。衣。華。履。身。不  
 與。他。爭。即。為。法。其。身。也。而。日。此。得。仙。亦。難。得。矣  
 睡。人。先。即。為。身。先。外。其。身。而。身。存。與。上。同。教

(三) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

以。其。无。尸。故。能。成。其。尸。不。知。長。生。之。道。身。皆  
 尸。行。可。非。道。所。行。志。尸。行。也。道。人。所。以。得。仙  
 壽。者。不。行。尸。行。與。位。別。異。故。能。成。其。尸。命。為  
 仙。士。也。上。善。若。水。善。利。萬。物。又。不。爭。水。善  
 無。爭。的。像。道。去。高。能。下。避。賢。讓。處。常。因。利。萬  
 物。終。不。爭。故。能。令。人。法。則。之。也。志。報。人。之。所  
 應。故。樂。於。道。水。能。與。地。居。不。柔。之。物。像。像。道  
 也。看。善。地。心。善。則。水。善。得。聖。聖。像。君。止。為。則  
 剛。悍。也。與。善。仁。人。當。法。水。心。常。樂。善。仁。言。善  
 信。人。當。常。相。教。為。善。有。善。信。發。善。治。人。君。理。回  
 當。當。法。道。為。政。則。能。治。事。善。能。人。可。當。政。事  
 知。道。善。也。無。善。時。人。故。舉。動。勿。違。道。誠。不。可  
 得。得。又。善。夫。不。多。說。无。无。唯。智。也。无。大。也。人  
 能。能。能。不。多。說。不。過。大。善。持。而。滿。之。不。看。其  
 已。得。而。悅。之。不。可。長。實。道。教。人。結。精。成。神  
 今。世。間。偶。依。法。講。道。說。說。帝。主。古。聖。子。容。成  
 之。文。初。教。使。女。不。施。恩。還。精。補。髓。心。神。不。一  
 失。其。肝。守。其。神。耗。不。可。長。實。若。如。也。不。知。直  
 自然。如。也。金。玉。滿。室。莫。之。能。守。人。之。積。善。滿  
 滿。善。无。是。善。之。者。不。肯。自。毀。明。心。而。神。耗  
 之。身。大。逆。矣。百。貴。而。臨。自。道。善。精。結。成。神。陽  
 正。有。無。強。當。日。愛。明。心。逆。念。不。可。驅。除。也。強  
 驅。即。成。又。木。樵。未。復。百。貴。而。臨。世。即。有。怨。也

(四) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

名成功遂身退天之道名與功身之成功名遂  
 身即滅故道哉之范重乘舟主道意謀信不隱  
 身不利是其功也裝管蠅抱一能逐離鬼白  
 也故精白與元同包身為精非精落就雷戰  
 誓之神成並未戰誓人身成念此功元離一  
 者道也今在人身何許守之云何一不在人身  
 也滿附身者志世間常病非真道也一在  
 天地外入在天地間但能入身中可解其  
 真志是非獨一兼一散形為真形為太上  
 老君常治崑崙或言虛元或言自然或言无  
 名皆同一可今非道法教人守我道不違昂為  
 守一矣不行其法非為夫一也世間常病徒  
 指五藏以名一腹目思想欲使求福非也夫  
 生遂遂矣身氣致未能嬰兒嬰兒天為故命  
 道但不知自利知稍王故逐走頭或為未幾其  
 法現小時除除主職能元疾人身像天地隨處  
 也疾應也非道所意當除一身行必余无也  
 愛民治國而无和人者欲愛天合赤濟治國今  
 太平當精心養道音教民皆令知道真九念如  
 佛道邪知也明白四達而无為上之心道自身  
 所知之愚而意知善能行勿教為惡事也天  
 地開闢而為雌男如陰陽化也男當法地如  
 女前童已託美生之畜之生而不有為而不

(五) 老子道經想爾注殘卷(五)

持長而不宰是謂玄德去天也常法道行如此  
 欲令人法也世幅共一欲當其元有車之用  
 古未有車時退道道道美仲作之愚者得車  
 貪利而已不合行道不覺道神曉者見之乃  
 知道恩惠而自屬重守道貞也延頰為器當  
 其元有器之用不與車同能鑿戶滿以為室  
 當其元有室之用道使貴帝為之罪與車同說  
 有之以為利元之以為用此三物本難作非  
 道不成俗人得之但貪其利不知其元曉者見  
 之還守其用之道為本隨量之心如南与北万  
 不同此三之義指如是可今世間為徒回錄貞  
 元故注巧言道有天報人身有數身元為某  
 端指形為極端又指胎練形當如主為凡時又  
 言道有戶隨在人身中皆邪術不可用之者  
 大逆矣五色令人目盲日光散散育五音令  
 人耳聾非雅音也解術之聲悅神傷人罪過  
 神支法龍五味令人口實道不食之口爽者  
 康瓠生齋馳野田鴉令人心放狂心不念但  
 念慈元罪之罪當得政狂難得之憤令人行  
 妨道所不效也行道致生不致覺之有為乃  
 逐債好道矣是以聖人為腹不為目故主依  
 取此腹與目前章以說矣主依應行取此道  
 誠也寵辱若驚貴大患若身道不意強求導  
 竟有寵辱有辱若如也得之當如驚不意也

(六) 老子道經想爾注殘卷(六)

若者謂傲人也必遠道求榮辱願若身美何  
 謂寵辱為下得之若驚失之若驚是謂寵辱  
 若驚為下者食寵之人計之下者可非道所  
 貴也何謂貴大患若身如前既吾所以有大  
 患為我有身吾道也哉者吾同道至尊常畏  
 患不敢求譽思欲損身低食寵之人身豈能  
 勝道守為身而違該非也及我无身吾有何  
 患吾我道也志欲无身但欲養神可樂令人  
 自法故云之致貴以身於天下若者謂低有  
 身食寵之人若以食寵有身不可託天下之  
 身也所以者此人但知食寵有身必欲好衣  
 美食廣宮室高臺榭積珍寶則有為今日  
 姓皆弊故不可令為天子也故如道意有身  
 不憂不末榮好不奢侈欲食常弊薄氣行有  
 天下必无為守操養合道意矣人但當保身  
 不貴愛身何謂也奉道誠積善功積積成神  
 神成仙亦以此為身寶矣食華寵勞精思以  
 未野美食以隱身此為愛身者也不合於道  
 也愛以身為天下若可寄天下與上同視視  
 之不見名曰愛隱之不聞名曰帝得之不得  
 名曰微美者且廣希者大度形微者道是  
 清此三事欲歎道之德美可此三者不可致  
 諸故混而為一此三者淳託道之美道者天

(七) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

下万事之卒語之者所况多竹素不能勝數  
 也故還願一少者何傷操微薄薄更入耶故  
 不可活也其上不暇冥下不怠道天常上下  
 經營天地內外所以不見清微也上則不暇  
 下則不怠已有所也現現不可名復願於无  
 物道如是不可冠名如无所所有也是无狀之  
 狀无物之像道至善微而隱无狀無形像也  
 但可促其誠不可見知也今世間倘依相承名  
 道今有服色名守狀製長短非也也耶何月  
 是謂樞樞迎不見其首圓不見其後道願不  
 可見如无形像也執古之道以辨今之有以  
 以知此道今端有觀古得仙者善行之以  
 得如今俗有不絕也以故古始是謂道紀能  
 以古仙亦若喻今日鬼屬守道真身得道經  
 紀也古之善為士者儼如去道不天也古之  
 仙士能守性儼如與天相通深不可測人行  
 道奉法微氣歸魂為氣洞心深也深不可測也  
 夫唯不可識故強為之者唯獨也者无狀也相  
 行道微願測保不知者名之云何強名之善為  
 士者道是美天也豫若卷涉川願若畏四鄰  
 卷涉川者恐懼也其四隣不敵為非恐鄰里  
 知也導道奉法之入相強行凶之開常當畏  
 如此強若本注不敵犯難若密室主人堂也

(八) 卷殘注爾想經道子老



觀若水將洶情慈應慈格慈慈事道所不該  
 心後規之使昂則止解會命如冰見日散灼洪  
 若獲職若谷免信道真素耶知守本獲無他  
 思慮心中曠已但信道如谷水之志東以故解  
 海也耽若潤潤以靜之徐清永生之人哭不謝  
 事不限不隨俗轉初真思志道學和清靜意  
 當時如疾固也以能疾固標且欲就矣然後  
 清靜能觀衆做向自清明不致於俗情靜大要  
 道微所樂天地滋味則堂起靈性万物滋潤正  
 音風起則漢路初成道真常不固處人法  
 天地故不得地處常清靜為獨展暮露上下  
 人身氣早布主即故展暮清靜為大要故顯天  
 地有夫為人為我靜能自反還靜道素人德不  
 及焉其有天道主不厭靈當自約將也安以動  
 之保主人散舉事先考之道真安思真教不  
 犯道乃徐施之生道不主保此道者不以盈  
 不致志意盈溢思念惡事也夫唯不盈能解  
 復成尸死為弊尸生為成相能守道不盈溢  
 故能改弊為成可致直守道守道真自有  
 常德人不勝明之必復命暮世間常仙位回  
 出故標指形名道命有康所取色長道有小  
 顯而思相之皆無无福報此道亦可強欲命  
 道詐為真甚無不如守靜自易也萬物並化

(九) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

吾以觀其頂夫物云云各歸其根万物會道  
 精靈作物主起時也吾道也觀其精儀時皆  
 歸其根故令人實慎根也歸根曰靜道氣歸  
 根愈當清淨矣靜曰復命復命曰常知實根  
 清靜復命之常法也知常明知此常法乃為  
 明可不知常委作也世常偏依不知常意妄  
 有指書故志凶知常容知常法蓋常保形容  
 容能必以道保形容為天地上容家天地間不  
 見此故公也以能生能行道公政政常生也  
 生能天能長生則則天也天能道天能久  
 生法道故也道能久人法道意便能長久也  
 沒身不死太陰道積德之官也世有不可  
 悉隨者避主託死過太陰中而復一息生傳  
 沒而不死也仙人不能積善行死便真死屬  
 地官主也太上下知有之知道上知也知也思  
 第下知也雖有上知實具誠愚若改之不故為  
 也其次觀之舉之見亦善之人既道意可觀  
 也見學善之人意者看可觀舉也後教勸之  
 勉力助道宜教要次畏之見惡人夫為說善  
 其人明哉則無可改也說也道法示之畏  
 以天威今日改也保之為惡人說善不化而  
 漸嘆之者此即步首之儀可非人也可敬憐之

(十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

勿與語也信不足有不信芻蕘之位因信不足故不信善人之言也猶其貴言成功事遂道之所言无一可棄者得仙之士但貴道言故神成功事遂也百姓謂我自然我仙士也百姓不學我有貴信道言以疑此功而善我自能者示不肯公及效我也大道者有仁義上古道同時以人為名皆行仁義同相傳類仁義不別今道不同人急弊薄時有一人行義使表表別之故言有也芻蕘出有大偽真道幾耶文出世開常俗徒稱道者皆為大禍不可用何謂耶文其五經半入即其五經以外眾書傳記尸人所性志耶可六親不和有孝慈道同時家已善孝皆同相類慈孝不別今道不用人不善孝六親不和時有一人行善孝便共表別之故言有也國家昏亂有忠臣道同時帝王躬奉行之雖明其意以臣處於此矣民莫有不法知者知道蓋賤死貴仙顯行忠孝其謀顯端以臣為首忠相類不別今道不用臣皆學耶文昌推詐隨心情而言善內懷惡時有一人行善其德共表別之故言有也道同時臣忠子孝國則易治時臣子不思君父也乃是天神存冥行不得仙棄故自是誠既為忠孝不欲令君

(一十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

父知曰聖而行政學天報後君父知之必賞以高官教以意氣如此功蓋天福不至是效假而行之不效見功今之臣子雖忠孝皆欲以買君父求功名過時不顯要之便并怨之言无所知此類外是內非元王誠廣天之行故令國亂治今教復此疾要在帝王當守心信道誠也絕假象知民利百倍謂詐假知邪元者夫假人天所犯立必有美河唯著名然常宜貞不至矣有誤邪道不信明聖人之言故令千百歲大限演具陰除罪至今人元狀表通經算未貴道真便自稱祖不曰本而章篇自稱不能得道言元為身不動民具道可得仙亦備善自勉及言仙自有骨銀非行所辨之元王道、善欺人此乃罪惡三子為大惡人至今流學者不俱信道元、不從子不念供養民不念回但述學煩師門畫某病到於窮年會不能忘孝至誠廣天民治身不能仙亦彼者不能忘及平民用此不思倍誠已虛空是效絕非假耶知不能復假道知也純仁素義民臣孝慈治國注道職任天下仁表之人勿得假道也所以者善大其化廣開道心人為仁表自當至誠天自賞之不至誠者天自習之天必察於人皆知尊道見天仁義便至誠矣今天既顯貴之民不俱辨天見人可欺假詐為仁義

(二十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

欲求報實旁人眼知員都文見得官報便復慕  
之作爲仁義終不相及也世人察之不審故幾  
勿責其惡而復慕才矣此義乎竹伯夫心久、自  
解明道合矣人若迷當明之也絕巧乘利盜賊  
无有邪巧也利所得財寶也世不用之盜賊其不  
利也此三言爲文未足故今有邪見乘利探  
三言天下大敵之源欲演戲之機又復不足竹  
素不勝矣嘆故令屬此道又不在外者也據說  
夏大略可知之爲敵原少故實故道之邪說也私  
少故於世俗可絕學无暴唯之與何相主幾何  
未知者復能問之絕邪學道與之何邪與道相  
去近遠絕邪學相背道、之與之邪道與邪學  
甚遠道主邪說、屬地主屬天故極遠天、之與  
相去何若未知者復能問之極知美惡相去近  
遠何如道與邪學近遠也今非可美善也主  
欲屬天也此非屬地也人之所取不可不與善其  
未與道說主以賞善故以以威懲死是人之所  
取也仙王士與凡人同知民死樂法但所行異可  
猶人法、未與死也凡人眼是死所不信道好  
爲惡事奈何未與死也仙士是死信道守法  
欲與生也衆人眼是若亨大亨若春若夏  
報信之人不信道樂爲惡事若欲食之春發  
高臺也我魂未死若嬰兒未孩野无邪歸我

(三十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

仙士也但樂信道守法不樂惡事主惡事之爾  
无心意如嬰兒未生時也衆人皆有解我相若  
遺報信人眼惡常有解意計念惡應仙士道中  
都遺惡之无所也我惡人之心此、仙士味道  
不知信事純、若我眼、凡人眼、凡人不信道但  
見邪惡利得肥肥甚明也我相若愚仙士明心  
不想惡邪惡利得若昏、實也凡人察、知何  
事審明也我相問、不知俗事也忽若昏  
冥邪止仙士意志道如醉思臥安休不復雜  
事也稍思止於道不止於俗事也衆人皆有已  
我相爾以醉俗人於世間自有醉實功是仙士於  
仙相爾也我眼異於人而貴食母仙士与凡人  
異不貴榮祿財寶但貴食母者身也於肉爲骨  
主立成氣俗人貪食、飽便死仙士有報食之是則  
食氣、脾胃即賜重慶也腹之爲實前章已說之  
矣孔德之客唯道是從道甚大教孔立爲知強  
世不信道又但上孔者以爲无其道彼明之善  
海噴道之爲初唯惟惟道他獨能惟惟不可  
見也惟惟中有物惟惟中有像不可以道不見  
故無也中有大相氣被喻靈爲空實中有精大  
除中也有道精亦之明万物乃初精共一本其精  
甚真主死之宜也精其真靈寶之也其甲有信  
古仙士實精以主今人去精以死大信也今但結精

(四十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

使可得乎不也。要清行當慎所以精者道之別。氣也。入人身中為根本持其平乃先言之。夫欲實精自行當備萬善當著調和五行意。無善者未嘗左。善者有餘。善者乃守之。善人實精。自苦然不居必自他。也。心應規。削萬事。故。明。雲三。道。而。陽。那。陰。者。以。中。正。度。道。集。精。并。喻。傳。池。承。身。為。池。堤。封。善。行。為。水。原。后。斯。三。傾。池。乃。金。陸。心。不。尊。善。元。堤。封。水。必。去。行。善。不。積。源。不。道。水。如。燔。于。決。水。既。對。堤。如。堤。以。舉。堤。在。源。不。堤。必。果。空。行。堤。新。築。而。病。至。主。斯。三。不。慎。池。為。空。預。也。自古及今。其名。不。主。古。今。常。矣。此。一。道。不。主。繼。人。也。以。開。終。南。道。有。以。來。東。閩。終。始。非。一。也。前。者。如。也。吾。何。以。知。終。南。之。從。以。此。音。道。也。可。以。知。古。今。終。始。矣。此。一。道。真。事。如。此。也。四。則。合。無。也。月。無。光。四。流。金。明。學。道。及。信。當。時。如。四。不。足。也。後。不。今。明。則。正。在。不。四。也。四。則。正。學。道。及。信。獨。自。勤。苦。當。時。如。相。使。在。也。流。終。正。空。則。無。散。產。意。也。行。元。息。真。志。空。道。喻。以。善。精。女。居。善。處。使。為。善。無。端。故。為。善。則。新。物。舉。舉。更。新。學。道。無。弊。法。更。新。福。也。古。則。得。步。則。處。險。力。難。解。矣。今。自。足。天。與。之。无。憂。方。可。得。精。守。道。不。心。則。成。一。那。那。之。也。是以。聖。人。抱。一。為。天。下。一。道。也。故。誠。聖。人。行。之。為。抱。一。也。帝。藏。天。下。焉。

(五十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

法也。不自是。故。意。明。者。樂。之。既。誠。教。之。不。樂。者。是以。不。守。我。是。后。非。勿。與。之。爭。也。不。自。見。故。明。眼。人。注。道。有。功。不。少。不。見。悔。能。也。不。自。代。故。有。功。惡。者。代。身。之。介。也。眼。人。注。道。不。為。惡。故。不。代。身。常。念。其。功。也。不。自。矜。故。長。那。人。注。道。但。念。積。行。令。身。長。生。之。行。殆。辱。貧。賤。不。矜。傷。身。以。好。未。美。貪。與。之。也。夫。唯。不。爭。故。莫。能。與。爭。眼。人。不。與。俗。人。爭。有。爭。性。之。高。道。俗。人。如。何。能。與。之。共。爭。乎。古。之。所。謂。四。則。金。堂。產。語。致。成。金。而。聯。之。誠。四。道。全。明。非。產。語。也。惡。人。不。解。故。重。中。示。之。也。希。言。自。然。自。然。道。也。樂。情。靜。希。言。入。情。靜。合。目。然。可。久。也。飄。風。不。終。朝。趨。雨。不。終。日。不。合。情。靜。自。然。故。不。久。竟。日。也。樂。為。此。天。地。數。謂。也。天。地。為。飄。風。逆。為。善。人。為。誠。不。合。道。故。令。不。久。也。天。地。尚。不。能。久。而。況。於。人。天。地。尚。不。能。久。人。欲。為。煩。躁。之。事。思。應。那。計。安。能。得。久。乎。故。促。事。而。道。得。之。而。如。也。人。舉。事。令。如。道。善。欣。得。之。日。自。然。也。因。於。德。者。德。得。之。人。舉。事。與。德。合。德。欲。得。之。也。因。於。夫。有。道。失。之。人。舉。事。不。懼。畏。道。欲。去。道。意。道。昂。主。之。自。愈。如。此。信。不。足。有。不。信。前。章。已。說。之。也。喘。者。不。久。用。氣。喘。息。不。合。情。靜。不。可。久。也。跨。者。不。行。欲。行。千里。一步。而。跨。之。以。漸。今。大。跨。而。立。非。能。行。者。也。不。可。久。

(六十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

也曰見不明目是不蔽曰鏡無功曰於不長  
復解前章之意曰其在道欲求仙果天福要在  
信道守誠守信不為靈過靈成結在天曹石印  
无到而常不覆在餘也曰餘食傲行物有惡  
之行道者主失道者死天之凶法不在於餘食  
祠也道欲榮榮醜禱祠明之重爵祭傲與邪道  
同故有餘食器物道人終不食用之也故  
有道不處有道者不處榮傲禱祠之閒也  
有物洪成先天地王家皆漢獨立不改國行  
不殆可以為天下母數元名大道之巖也也  
莫天下之母也吾不知其名字之曰道合道  
也選欲道天數可名字故曰道也吾選為之  
名曰大道其大言選者死不選不能割其  
德也天曰道、天也大神元能制者使立能去  
之也故曰道俞彼能去也速曰及俞前  
彼能選及也道大天大地大主天四大之  
中何者大乎道大也滅中有四大而生  
赤一四大之中所以今主一者主道之別  
辨也人法地、法天、法道、法自然自然  
者與道同乎吳解令史相法皆共法道也天  
地廣大常法道以法地人可不敬道乎重為  
敬根節為深看道入當曰重精神清靜為本  
是以君子終日行不離端重、精神清淨君子  
端重也終日行之不可離也雖有某樹然處

(七十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

越於天子王公也雖有某樹為人研尋務當  
重情節奉行道法也如何萬乘之主以身輕  
天下天子乘人之權尤當畏天尊道謹意  
白謂尊貴不懼懼天道昂為白雖其身於天  
下也輕則失本則失若輕路步道適度則  
受爵辱夫貝不身三貝尊推矣善行元德述  
信道行善惡惡也善言無礙過人非道言  
惡天翰尊等今信道言善惡不帶則元德  
也善計不用某等明計者心解不俱用等  
主心信道者終日至誠不俱旁人自動善則其  
關飛不可明心三川陽即陰皆思當明之勿用  
中道為正主誠能明即志者眼無明提永不  
關不主誠者眼有明提猶可明也善始元德約  
不可解結志未生勇促道致至誠者為之眼  
五德約未不可解不主誠者眼有德約補可解  
也是以聖人常善救人而無棄人常為善見  
惡人不棄也龍柱救之示道救渡莫人不化不  
可如何也常善救物而無棄物與上同義也  
是謂觀彌覆常明也能如此意明也善人不  
善人師不善人促善人學善人為師終元善  
人促不善人學善也不善人善人之道善人  
真德乃以惡人為道不善人見人真德不可  
善人益白物初不貴其師不棄其道與知太  
善不善人不貴善人之、不以惡人自故皆

(八十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

為大迷也此謂要始明如此甚要始也知其確  
 守其要為天下誤歎令積如賢莫何也不此  
 惡也知要安精神身得天下之要常極不離  
 復聯於嬰兒專精無為道極常不離之更及  
 為聖現知曰守其黑為天下玄精白與元五圓  
 同色黑太陰中也於人在頭精氣之安如不用  
 為守黑天下常法也常德不離復聯於元  
 極知守黑者道德常在不在人德必當積之  
 不如自有也行去士廷無子容歲之志志欲發  
 何人文當德若者乎故令不得也唯有曰守純  
 心明念者大元極也知其葉守其屬為天下  
 各有葉必有居道人畏居故不食葉但聯志  
 於道唯願長生如天下谷水之極東流聯於海  
 也為天下谷常德乃足頂聯於極志道當如  
 谷水之志欲聯海道德常足樣道今系也人  
 行道聯樣順道合樣散為器聖人因為官長  
 為器以聯道矣不當令樣散也聖人能不散  
 之故官長古人能致太平是以大制元制道  
 人同知極事高官重祿好底失食珍寶之時  
 可皆不能致長、之、為大福為道人欲制  
 大故自忍不以伯事割心情也將欲取天下  
 而為之狂者之人易改莫欲天必無之不可為

(九十) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

也吾見吾道也同見天下之尊非當所為不  
 為之惡人寧能勝道乎為之故有害也其不  
 得已固不可一日元居五帝精主阿雅若無  
 七情精見五神合天明受天任而命為之其  
 不獨已耳非天下所任不可辱庶幾也天下  
 神不可為為者敗之氣者失之非天所任  
 位必敗失之矣夫物或行或隨自強相成也  
 行善道隨之行惡皆隨之也或隨或以噴過  
 吹寒善惡同視禍福同視眼得勝隨阻法以  
 寒得福損禍未或強或弱強法必更贏之復  
 及更強先求強者強必有贏道入於先求贏  
 故更強強法隨身常當自生安精神為本  
 不可恃人曰扶搖也夫危固之居臣臣推之  
 不則之夫病人願生救之不則則死是以聖  
 人主善主舍去善主善惡及善也也以道依  
 人主者不以兵強天下治國之君務循道惟  
 忠且順位務在行道、普德澤太平生矣夫  
 民懷慕則易曰矣志如信道皆仙矣矣不可  
 服與強也矣者非古語也道之設眾以成不  
 化不可身心甘樂也道故并庫釋道法教時  
 軍騎官房外若辭墨備其主無欺但當信道  
 於武略買其多好選以安定事傷並不應度  
 其無禍又選人身長子孫師之所處約其法

(十二) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

天子之軍稱師兵不合道所存得見然暴不  
 見人兵但見刑株生教善者果而已不以師  
 強果也為善至武而已不得飲兵而應以  
 自強果而勿賜至武守善勿賜上人果而勿  
 賜至武守善勿矜身果而勿代至武守善勿  
 伐身也果而不得已果而勿矜至武守善  
 勿貪矣或當時使帝王福矣當不得已而  
 有勿甘樂也勿以帝為難也此後使武帝代  
 出元臣使使武帝代封皆不得已而為之可  
 物性則去謂之非道非道早已聞道不能行  
 改去、不止早已矣夫徒兵者不祥之器則  
 或想之法有道不處兵者非道所養有善者  
 不處之君子居則貴左用兵則貴右左石驛  
 也兵者不祥器非君子之器重則真山事也  
 不得已而用之前身已死之也恬恬而上故  
 不美道人情懷不美矣也若美也聖之是也  
 以夫樂無者不可得意於天下明樂矣樂送  
 不可也故音事尚充樂事尚左右石驛也是  
 以備將軍居左上將軍居右備將軍不導樂  
 生之禮傳左上將軍專送像右言以乘禮處  
 之然人眾多以悲真位之賦勝以乘禮處之  
 不得已而有者神三申五令示以道誠願更  
 真終不促者當因傷悲之如家相乘以書

(一十二) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

快也道常无名不名大託假小也操職小天  
 下不假臣道職假小為天下母改不可得臣  
 王集若能守萬物將自有人不可以貴道  
 當之万物皆自賓伏天地相合以降甘露王  
 者行道天地意世博生民莫之令而自均王  
 者專道是民貪濁不畏法律乃畏天神不敢  
 為非惡賢欲金身不願令劫而自爭均始則  
 有名道人也立不食業名今王集承先人之  
 道有業名不強求也道職之但欲令獨專道  
 行誠自賜也名不既有夫不將知止王集  
 承先人之道既有名當知止是不得復思高  
 尊強求也知止不殆諸知止是終不危殆解  
 道在天下無以谷與江河道在天下解如江  
 海人一心志道當如谷水之流解也知人  
 者獨知平他人善惡知不合道德道人也自  
 自者莫身令不而於死地勿平他人也自知  
 者明如此善明矣勝人有刀好勝人者但名  
 有刀可自勝者強自補身行善勝此乃強  
 也知足者當道強也強行有志道誠甚顯  
 仙出得之但志可非有技巧也不失其所者  
 久而貴實眼各自守道為強至強者道與之  
 實勝者兵自斷強強求而貴也不強求者為

(二十二) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

不夫其而致又也又一說曰善怒五行戰錫  
 者人病死不復待黑滿也今當和五行令各  
 安其位勿相犯不久也死而不止者素道人  
 行循道神歸之避世托死過天陰中隱生去不  
 不亡故素也俗人元善切死者屬地官俾為  
 亡矣大道記其可左右記厥也道真廣大赤  
 赤的與信人爭教人以決慎者宜忘群不誠  
 慎者宜忘群篤物情以主而不群不群謝恩  
 道不負也成切不名有衣被焉物不為主  
 可名於小道不名切常稱小也萬物歸之  
 不為主可名於大歸仰也以為主既不負  
 思讓不名主道乃能常大可是以聖人終  
 不為大故能成其大法道常此稱小法必  
 能成者長生與道等素執大集天下法  
 王者教心法傳大道天下歸往應塞重歸  
 向風而至道之為化日高而群指謂王者  
 故貴一人制九二君是以帝王常當行道  
 然道乃及吏民非獨道士可行王者兼有也  
 上聖之君師道至行以教化天下如曰太平  
 符籙皆成人切所積致之者道是也中隱之君  
 志信不此故復執法能任隨良臣例之以道觀  
 存國會不薄、夢精躬勤良願朝去某因與  
 危則不在上故在彼去臣所以有化是也無次

(三十二) 卷殘注爾想經道子老

不江河雖有良臣常與然臣既群那維改制  
 君神道非朕真文以為人神可又隨之王者  
 道可久素相道善且神終不能人改故精  
 靈異以、將以決諸道隱却祖亂極必理道  
 意必宜是以帝王大臣不可不用心思懇者  
 樂之為往而不墮王有行道、未歸往王者  
 不皆樂道知神明不可欺莫不畏法律也乃  
 畏天神不敢為非惡臣忠子考出自然至心  
 王法無所畏皆形符格載其易信王有樂也  
 安平大樂如以之治甚大樂也與斯過客以  
 清與天交靈惟日月運到能臣假禮列貴之  
 谷過罪所登五星曜軌客運不暇疾之憂  
 都善心笑道出言淡无味道之所言及假絕  
 巧於信人中甚无味也无味之中有大生味  
 故聖人味无味之味視不足見聰不足聞用  
 不可既道樂質朴得美能視道言能道誠或  
 不足見聞可而難行能行能履福不可說  
 盡也猶欲會之必因張之善鬼同視禍福同  
 根其尤張者及必會將欲約之必因獲之先  
 獲法必精得欲廢之必因與之先與法必素  
 成時會之必因與之先得法必善也是謂假  
 明此四事即四德也無知之者微且明  
 知則則道也道人畏會前廢者故道行先自

(四十二) 卷殘注爾想經道子老



貪日歸曰。或曰。自其然。法乃得真者。及信人。或  
 言先甲張。獲刑之利。然道區凶矣。故法知止  
 足。令人世間。或曰。如使阻。施惠。獲財。除殊  
 不。教。少。亦。本。道。誠。者。可。長。遠。者。不。凶。不。能。凶  
 足。初。區。不。直。也。道。人。不。可。教。非。實。有。微。明。之  
 知。若。弱。勝。剛。獲。道。氣。微。弱。故。久。在。五。所。不。飲。水  
 法。道。若。弱。故。能。消。穿。崖。石。道。人。當。法。之。樂。不  
 可。勝。於。測。誠。為。測。道。猶。水。人。猶。車。失。測。主  
 水。則。死。人。不。行。法。守。道。去。則。死。國。有。利。強  
 不。可。以。視。人。實。精。勿。覺。令。行。德。也。又。一。說。曰  
 道。人。穿。施。人。勿。為。人。所。施。穿。施。人。勿。為。人。所  
 避。穿。施。人。為。善。勿。為。人。所。教。穿。施。人。所。教。勿  
 悟。人。不。均。穿。施。人。多。勿。為。人。所。獎。多。獎。區。此  
 者。昂。為。未。人。利。器。也。道。常。无。為。而。无。不。為。道  
 性。不。為。惡。事。故。能。神。无。所。不。作。道。人。當。法。之  
 玉。皇。若。能。守。王。者。耶。尊。相。常。異。道。奉。法。行。之  
 萬。物。將。自。化。王。者。法。道。為。政。矣。民。臣。降。子。悉  
 化。為。道。化。如。能。作。善。將。領。之。以。无。名。之。樞。失  
 正。靈。得。耶。故。得。正。今。王。者。法。道。民。志。從。正  
 蘇。正。而。不。可。得。靈。為。耶。矣。觀。其。時。靈。道  
 根。靈。制。之。於。以。无。名。之。樞。教。法。見。也。王。者。不

(五十二) 卷 殘 注 爾 想 經 道 子 老

當法道靈制之而不靈制者。世信惡靈為耶  
 矣。下古世是也。无名之樞。亦將不靈。道性於  
 信。聞。都。无。所。故。王。者。非。當。法。之。无。故。以。靜。天  
 地。自。心。道。常。无。欲。樂。清。靜。故。令。天。地。常。正。天  
 地。道。巨。也。王。有。法。道。行。誠。臣。下。志。皆。自。正。矣

老子道經上 想 爾

(六十二) 卷 殘 注 爾 想 經 道 子 老

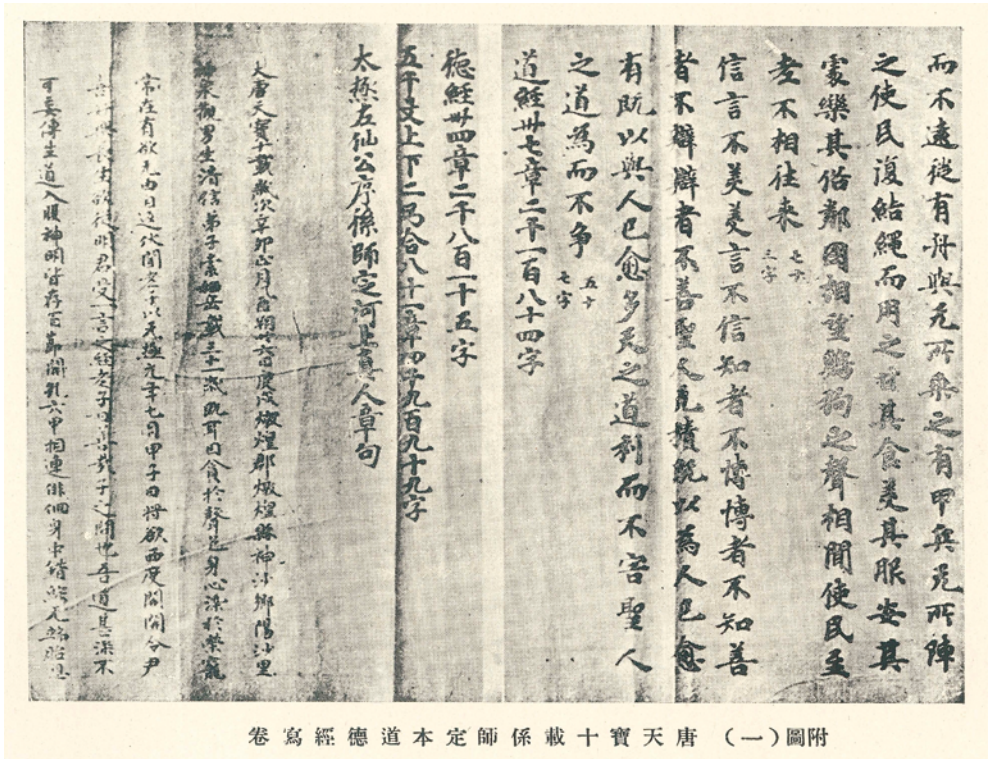
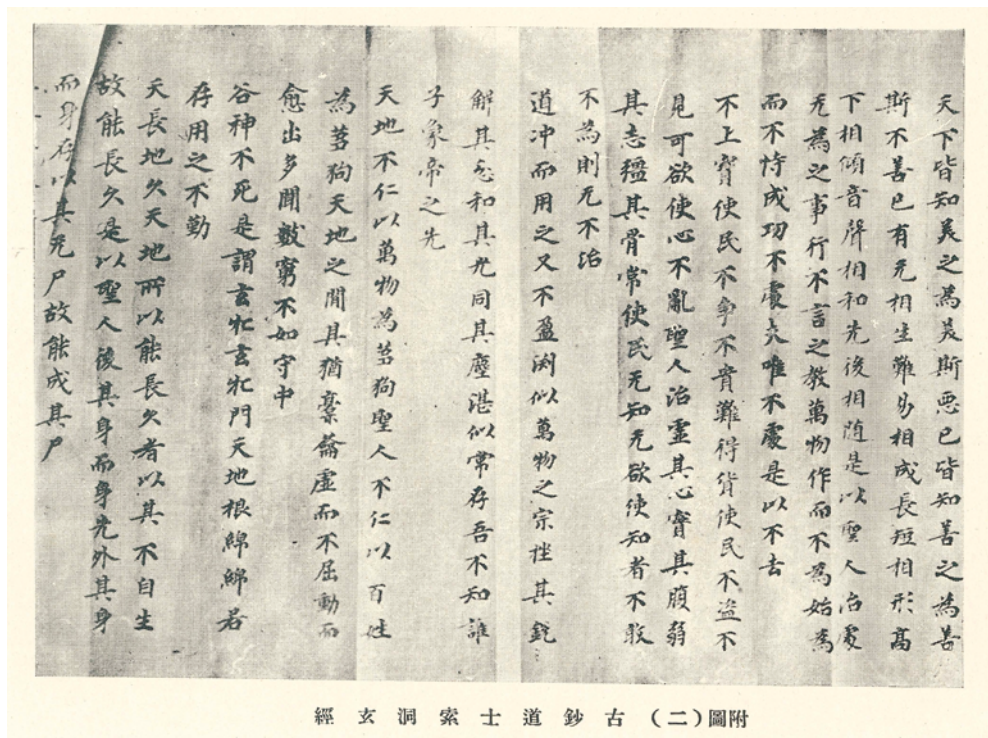


FIGURE 27 Master Xi edition of the *Daodejing* from the 10th year of the Tianbao reign period of the Tang Dynasty 唐天寶十載係師定本道德經寫卷



經玄洞索士道鈔古(二)圖附

FIGURE 28 Ancient edition of the *Daodejing* by the Daoist priest Suo Dongxuan 古鈔道士索洞玄經

天下皆知美之為美斯惡已皆知善之為善  
斯不善已有无相生難易相成長短相形高  
下相傾音聲相和先後相隨是以聖人治處  
无為之事行不言之教萬物作而不為始為  
而不恃成功不處夫唯不處是以不去

不上賢使民不爭不賢難得貸使民不盜不  
見可欲使心不亂聖人治靈其心齊其腹弱  
其志穰其骨常使民无知无欲使知者不敢  
不為則无不治

道冲而用之又不足淵似萬物之宗性其鏡

解其惑和其光同其塵湛似常存吾不知誰

子象帝之先

天地不仁以萬物為芻狗聖人不仁以百姓

為芻狗天地之間其猶橐籥虛而不屈動而

愈出多聞數窮不如守中

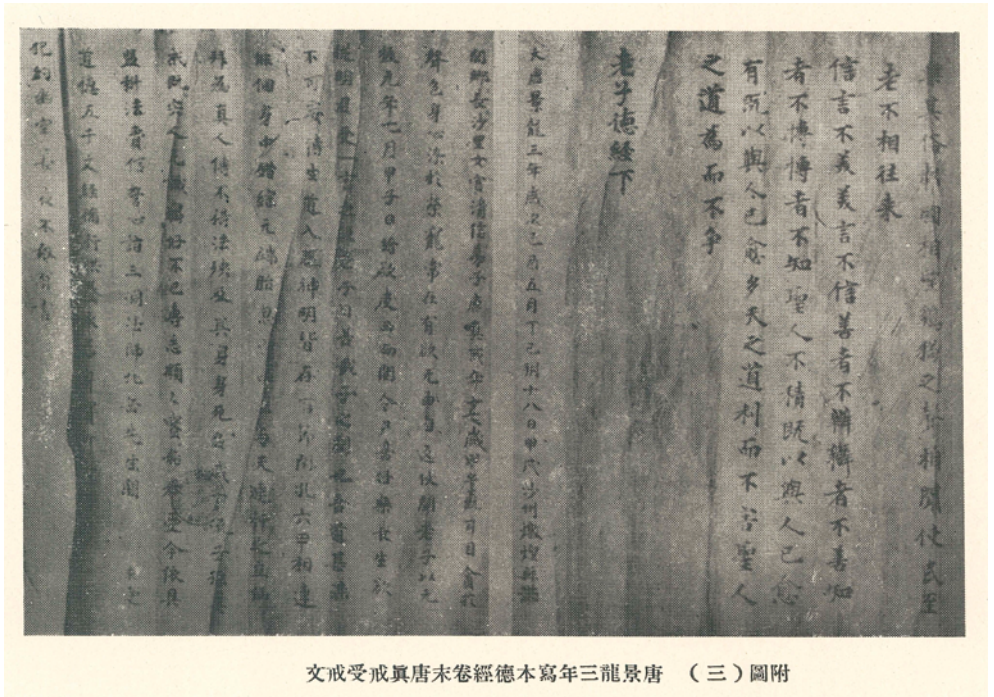
谷神不死是謂玄牝玄牝門天地根綿綿若

存用之不勤

天長地久天地所以能長久者以其不自生

故能長久是以聖人後其身而身先外其身

而身存以其先尸故能成其身



唐景龍三年寫本德經卷末唐真戒受戒文 (三) 圖附

FIGURE 29 Text of Tang Zhenjie's ordination ceremony at the end of the *Classic of De* scroll from the 3rd year of the Jinglong reign period of the Tang Dynasty 唐景龍三年寫本德經卷末唐真戒受戒文



「數文」四第題開子老英玄成本煌敦 (四) 圖附

FIGURE 30 Item four, *wenshu* 文數, in the Dunhuang edition of Cheng Xuanying's *Introduction to the Laozi* 敦煌本成玄英老子開題第四「數文」

## Explanatory Abstract

Among<sup>1</sup> the ancient manuscripts found in the Mogao Grottoes at Dunhuang and brought back to London for Professor Aurel Stein is the fragmentary scroll *Xiang'er Commentary to Laozi's Classic of Dao* (*Laozi Daojing Xiang'er zhu* 老子道經想爾注). Currently housed in the British Museum in London, it is listed as number 6825 in the Stein Catalogue. At the end of the scroll appears “Laozi's *Classic of Dao*, part 1” (*Laozi Daojing shang* 老子道經上), followed by two characters: Xiang'er 想爾. From the beginning of the scroll—“the people will not contend” (preceding text is missing)—until the end, the text is comprised of 580 lines. The commentary and original text are linked together, lack differentiation in font size, and there is no separation between sections to indicate where one ends and another begins. This is a very different style from other Tang Dynasty editions of the *Laozi*. Consulting Kong Yingda's 孔穎達 *Correct Meaning of the Book of Rites* (*Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義), we find: “When Ma Rong wrote his *Commentary to the Rites of Zhou* (*Zhouli zhu* 周禮注), he wished to save scholars the effort of a double reading, hence his commentary appears alongside the text.”<sup>2</sup> This trend of commenting on the Classics thus began in the Later Han Dynasty. Furthermore, that this commentary was written in conjunction with the original text demonstrates it employs the style of the late Eastern Han Dynasty.

There is no record of the *Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi* (*Laozi Xiang'er zhu* 老子想爾注) in either the “Bibliographic Record” (Jingji zhi 經籍志) in the *History of the Sui Dynasty* (*Sui shu* 隋書) or that of the Tang Dynasty. Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty wrote the *Annotations on the Outer Commentary to the True Classic of Dao and De* (*Daode zhenjing shu waizhuan* 道德真經疏外傳) which lists various historical commentaries to the *Laozi*. The first is the *Sectional Explanations* (*jiejie* 節解), in two parts, which states: “Explanations of Laozi by Yin Xi 尹喜.”<sup>3</sup> Next is the *Xiang'er*, in 2 scrolls, which states: “Commentary by the Master of Three Heavens (*santian fashi* 三天法師), Zhang Daoling 張道陵.”<sup>4</sup> Then there is the *Inner Explanations* (*neijie* 內

1 Trans. note: Archaic characters in Jao Tsung-i's original text have been replaced, wherever possible, with their modern equivalents.

2 *Zhouli zhengyi*, 1.8.

3 Tang Xuanzong, *Daode zhenjing shu waizhuan*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 11: 809.

4 Tang Xuanzong, *Daode zhenjing shu waizhuan*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 11: 809.

解), in two parts, which states: “Yin Xi took inner cultivation (*neixiu* 內修) as the aim of his explanatory commentary.”<sup>5</sup> After this is Heshang Gong’s 河上公 *Section and Verse* (*zhangju* 章句) commentary, which states: “During the time of Emperor Wen of the Han Dynasty 漢文帝, he relocated to the riverside in Shanzhou 陝州.”<sup>6</sup> Xuanzong’s *Outer Commentary* is found in volume 358 of the *Daoist Canon*, in the Jade Instructions class (*yujue lei* 玉訣類) of the Spirit Cavern section (*Dongshen bu* 洞神部). In the Five Dynasties, Du Guangting’s 杜光庭 *General Meaning of the True Classic of Dao and De* (*Daode zhenjing guangyi* 道德真經廣義) spoke of sixty-odd annotations and commentaries from previous dynasties, the first few of which are: the *Sectional Explanations* in two parts, the *Inner Explanations* in two parts, the *Xiang’er* in 2 scrolls, and Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse* commentary.<sup>7</sup> Regarding the *Xiang’er*, part 2 states: “Commentary by the Master of the Three Heavens, Zhang Daoling.” This is the same text mentioned in Xuanzong’s *Outer Commentary*. Regarding Du Guangting, Xie Shouhao’s 謝守灝 *True Record of Lord Lao* (*Laojun shilu* 老君實錄), Peng Si’s 彭耜 *Collected Commentaries and Miscellaneous Sayings on the True Classic of Dao and De* (*Daode zhenjing jizhu zashuo* 道德真經集注雜說), and Dong Sijing’s 董思靖 *Collected Explanations on the Daodejing* (*Daodejing jijie* 道德經集解), all cite him as saying: “Commentaries include Yin Xi’s *Inner Explanations*, Zhang Daoling’s *Xiang’er*, and Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse*.”<sup>8</sup>

The works of Daoism have been divided into seven categories, the so-called Three Caverns and Four Supplements (*sandong sifu* 三洞四輔). The first of the four supplements is the Great Mystery section (*Taixuan bu* 太玄部). The *Xiang’er Commentary* was originally included in this section. In volume 989 of the *Daoist Canon*, in the Orthodox Unity section (*Zhengyi bu* 正一部), the *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts* (*Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue* 傳授經戒儀注訣) speaks of the sequence by which the scriptures of Daoism should be taught and is found in the Great Mystery section. Of its 10 scrolls, the first few include:

Scroll 1: Laozi’s Great Character (*dazi* 大字) edition, *Classic of Dao*, part 1.

Scroll 2: Laozi’s Great Character edition, *Classic of De*, part 2.

Scroll 3: Laozi’s *Classic of Dao*, parts 1 and 2; Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse*.

5 Tang Xuanzong, *Daode zhenjing shu waizhuan*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 11: 809.

6 Tang Xuanzong, *Daode zhenjing shu waizhuan*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 11: 809.

7 Du Guangting, *Daode zhenjing guang shengyi*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 14: 309.

8 Dong Sijing, *Daode zhenjing jijie*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 12: 821. Peng Si, *Daode zhenjing jizhu zashuo*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 13: 255.

Scroll 4: Laozi's *Classic of De*, parts 1 and 2; Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*.

Scroll 5: Laozi's *Classic of Dao*, part 1; "Teachings of Xiang'er."

Scroll 6: Laozi's *Classic of De*, part 2; "Teachings of Xiang'er."

From scroll 7 onwards there are the following: *Illustrated Commentary and Instructions for Visualizing the Spirits* (*Sishen tu zhu jue* 思神圖注訣), *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts*, *Commentary and Instructions on Spontaneous Rites of the Court* (*Ziran chao yi zhu jue* 自然朝儀注訣), *Retreat of Spontaneity* (*Ziran zhai yi* 自然齋儀),<sup>9</sup> and so forth. The aforementioned 10 scrolls, on the day of their transmission, were delivered to the Daoist priest who was also the Master. The *Teachings of Xiang'er* (*Xiang'er xun* 想爾訓) and Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse* are must read classics of Daoist religion. The *Commentary and Instructions* also discusses the method of sequencing the scriptures, saying:

昔尹子初受大字三篇，《中經》在太清部中（按今《道藏》太清部有《太上老君中經》二卷），所以付上下兩卷。漢文精感，真人降跡，得此《章句》，所滯即通。登於金華，友諸天人。隱（按疑即鄭隱（子思遠），葛洪師之，敦煌本河上《注》、葛玄《序訣》後有鄭思遠語）注云：讀河上一章，則徹太上玉京，諸天仙人，叉手稱善。（中略）故次於大字。係師得道，化道西蜀，蜀風淺末，未曉深言，託邁想爾，以訓初迴。初迴之倫，多同蜀淺，辭說切近，因為賦道。三品要戒（按指上中下三品），濟眾大航，故次於河上。河上《想爾》，注解已自有殊；大字文體，意況亦復有異。皆緣時所須，轉訓成義，舛文同歸，隨分所及。值兼則兼通，值偏則偏解。（中略）究此十卷，自足兼通。（中略）必獲妙果，妙果有期，不假他尋；果期未至，且覽眾篇。至於首引《內解》，別次在後，餘力觀之，幸亦無妨。<sup>10</sup>

Master Yin originally received three sections of the Great Character edition and the *Scripture of the Middle* (*Zhong jing* 中經), which is found in the Great Purity section (*Taiqing bu* 太清部) of the *Daoist Canon*—the Great Purity section of the *Daoist Canon* contains the *Supreme Lord Lao's Book of the Center* (*Taishang Laojun zhong jing* 太上老君中經), in 2 scrolls—hence he was entrusted with both the upper and lower scrolls. The writing of the people in the Han Dynasty is so refined that the perfected person (*zhenren* 真人) descended from Heaven and revealed himself. Receiving Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*, I was able to penetrate those parts where I felt stuck. Ascending Mount Jinhua 金華山,

9 *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 170–71.

10 *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 170.



I befriended the celestial beings there. Yin's commentary—which most likely refers to Zheng Yin 鄭隱 (style name Siyuan 思遠), who was Ge Hong's 葛洪 teacher and whose words were appended to the end of the Dunhuang edition of Heshang Gong's commentary and Ge Xuan's 葛玄 *Preface to the Secret Instructions* (*xu jue* 序訣)—states: “After reading one section of Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*, I penetrated the Supreme Jade Capital (*taishang yu jing* 太上玉京) where the transcendent masters clasped their hands and praised me. (intermediary text omitted) Thus, it is inferior to the Great Character edition.” When Master Xi obtained the Dao, he wanted to transform the ways of Shu in the west but the customs of Shu were narrow and shallow, making it hard for them to comprehend language of a profound nature. He thus fabricated the *Xiang'er* and used it to teach new converts. Regulations for new converts had the same shallowness as the customs of Shu but the words of *Xiang'er* were near at hand and so Master Xi used them to transmit the Dao. The essential precepts of the three orders (*sanpin* 三品)—upper, middle, and lower—are a great tool to aid the masses but are inferior to the words of Heshang Gong. The annotations by Heshang Gong and *Xiang'er* are not the same; the style and content of the Great Character edition also has its inconsistencies. The reason is that they cater to the needs of different times, change exegeses into interpretative meaning, and explain different texts in the same manner. Their success is thus a matter of talent. If they hold a comprehensive view, their commentary will be fully connected; if they hold a narrow view, their commentary will be prejudiced. (intermediary text omitted) Examining the 10 scrolls, they appear self-contained and multi-faceted. (intermediary text omitted) If a person wants to achieve a profound result, it will occur in due course; there is no need to search for it elsewhere. If the result does not arrive as expected, one should read all of the sections. As for reciting the *Inner Explanations* before the other scriptures, based on my abilities and observations, there is no harm in doing so.

From this paragraph, we can roughly know which editions were employed by Celestial Masters Daoism (*Tianshi Dao* 天師道) and the order they were given whilst studying the *Laozi*. The first to be read was the Great Character edition compiled by Yin Xi, which is most likely the two-part *Sectional Explanations* mentioned in Xuanzong's *Annotations on the Outer Commentary to the True Classic of Dao and De*. The Celestial Masters then read Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse* and the *Xiang'er Commentary*, occasionally referring to the *Inner Explanations* which was thought to be a commentary by Yin Xi based

on theories of inner cultivation (*neixiu* 內修). The importance of the *Xiang'er Commentary* to the classics of Daoism is obvious. It should be noted that scroll 17 of Tao Hongjing's 陶弘景 *Declarations of the Perfected* (*Zhengao* 真誥), which records dreams, states: "See Master Xi's commentary to the *Inner Explanations of the Laozi* (*Laozi neijie* 老子內解) which proclaims I was born to examine the Dao. I fear this statement belongs to Master Xi's book."<sup>11</sup> If this is true then the *Inner Explanations* was also composed by Master Xi.

The *Commentary and Instructions* says the *Teachings of Xiang'er* reveals why Master Xi wanted to transform the ways of Shu in the west. Master Xi is in fact Zhang Lu. Scroll 4 of the *Declarations of the Perfected* records the matter of Zhang Lu liberating himself at night. The commentary reads: "Master Zhang Xi is the General of Pacifying the South (*zhennan jiangjun* 鎮南將軍) who died in the 21st year of the Jian'an reign period of Emperor Xian of the Han Dynasty 漢獻帝."<sup>12</sup> The "Biography of Liu Yan 劉焉" in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* (*Hou Han shu* 後漢書) states:

張魯，字公旗。初，祖父陵，順帝時，客於蜀，學道鶴鳴山中，造作《符書》以惑百姓。受其道者輒出米五斗，故謂之米賊。陵傳子衡，衡傳於魯，魯遂自號師君……魯在漢川垂三十年，建安二十年降曹操，拜鎮南將軍，封閬中侯。<sup>13</sup>

Zhang Lu, courtesy name Gongqi. At first it was his grandfather Zhang Daoling who, during the reign of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, sojourned in Shu and studied the Dao on Mount Heming. He created the *Book of Talismans* to delude the masses. The people who received this Dao from Zhang Daoling had to contribute five pecks of rice, so he was known as the rice bandit. Zhang Daoling transmitted the Dao to his son Zhang Heng who transmitted it to Zhang Lu, who thereupon gave himself the title of Master Jun ... Zhang Lu established himself along the Han River for almost thirty years and in the 20th year of the Jian'an reign period of Emperor Xian, he surrendered to Cao Cao and was appointed General of Pacifying the South and enfeoffed as Marquis of Langzhong.

The "Dao Shan Ce" 道山冊 chapter of Liu Dabin's 劉大彬 *Records of Mount Mao* (*Maoshan zhi* 茅山志) states: "In the *Secret Instructions for the Ascent to Perfection* (*Dengzhen yin jue* 登真隱訣), hermit Tao 陶隱居 [Tao Hongjing] says:

<sup>11</sup> *Zhengao*, 17.299.

<sup>12</sup> *Zhengao*, 4.75.

<sup>13</sup> *Hou Han shu*, 75.2435, 2437.

老子《道德經》，有玄師楊真人手書張鎮南古本。其所謂五千文者，有五千字也。數係師內經有四千九百九十九字，由來闕一，是作三十幅應作卅幅，蓋從省易文耳，非正體矣。宗門真蹟不存，今傳五千文為正本，上下二篇不分章。<sup>14</sup>

Regarding Laozi's *Daodejing*, there is a hand copied edition by Mysterious Master Yang the Perfected [also known as Yang Xi 楊羲] based on Zhang Lu's ancient edition. The so-called *5000-Character Classic* edition has 5,000 words. I counted the words of Master Xi's *Inner Explanations* and it has 4,999. The reason it is short one character is because "thirty spokes" was written in an abbreviated form, thus the genuine trace of our school has not been preserved. Today, the *5000-Character Classic* edition in circulation is the standard one and divided into two parts but without any sections.

This is the record—located in the *Daoist Canon*, volume 154, the Biographies class (Jichuan lei 紀傳類) of the Perfection Cavern section (*Dongzhen bu* 洞真部)—of Master Xi's *5000-Character Classic* edition and the information it provides is very detailed. Today, the fragmentary *Xiang'er* manuscript from Dunhuang does not use *sanshi* 三十 but *sa* 卅, is not divided into sections, and the auxiliary words have been deleted in order to match its description.<sup>15</sup> The end of the scroll states there is a first part, the *Daojing* 道經, which suggests the text was divided into two parts, matching the record contained in the *Commentary and Instructions*. Not only that, the first part ends with the section "the Dao constantly practices non-deliberate action," which is found in section 37. This accords with the record of the Dunhuang manuscript, dated to the 10th year of the Tianbao reign period of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty, which states: "The *Daojing* contains 37 sections," "the *5000-Character Classic* edition is in 2 scrolls," and "Master Xi amended it."<sup>16</sup> In conclusion, the *Xiang'er Commentary* is what we refer to as *Master Xi's 5000-Character Classic* edition, of this there is no doubt.

Examining the "Prefatory Record" (*xu lu* 序錄) of Lu Deming's 陸德明 *Textual Explanations of the Classics and Canons* (*Jingdian shiwen* 經典釋文), we come across the *Xiang Yu Commentary* (*Xiang Yu zhu* 想余注) to the *Laozi*, in 2 scrolls.

14 Liu Dabin, *Maoshan zhi*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 5: 591.

15 Regarding the issue of deleting auxiliary words in the *Daodejing*, see item four 4, *wenshu* 文數, in Cheng Xuanying's 成玄英 *Introduction to the Laozi* unearthed at Dunhuang.

16 The manuscript is dated to the 10th year of the Tianbao reign period of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty and was published in volume 2 of the revised edition of the *Remnant and Rare Texts from Dunhuang* (*Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian* 敦煌祕籍留真新編). See Figure 27 line 9, 11, 12.

Lu Deming writes: “There is no information about this person. One theory says the text was by Zhang Lu while another says it belongs to Liu Biao 劉表.”<sup>17</sup> This text was listed in Liu Yimin’s 劉遺民 *Catalogue of Profound Writings* (*Xuan pu* 玄譜), which Lu Deming apparently did not see. Lu Wencao 盧文弨 in his *Research on the Classics and Canons* (*Shiwen kaozheng* 釋文考證) does not even mention it; however, the “*Bibliography of Arts and Letters*” of the *History of the Later Han* (*Hou Han shu Yiwenzhi* 後漢書藝文志) by Yao Zhenzong 姚振宗, Hou Kang’s 侯康 *Supplement to the “Bibliography of Arts and Letters” of the History of the Later Han* (*Bu Hou Han shu Yiwenzhi* 補後漢書藝文志), and Zeng Pu’s 曾樸 *Supplemental Examination of the “Bibliography of Arts and Letters” of the History of the Later Han* (*Bu Hou Han shu Yiwenzhi bing kao* 補後漢書藝文志並考), refer to an account in the *Textual Explanations of the Classics and Canons* that there was a “*Xiang Yu Commentary*, in 2 scrolls.”<sup>18</sup> When compared to the Dunhuang manuscript, it is quite clear that the *Xiang'er Commentary* and *Commentary and Instructions* match one another. I suspect the character 爾 in the book’s title was written 尔 and subsequently mistaken for 余. As for the writer, according to Lu Deming, one theory says it is Zhang Lu, which matches the *Commentary and Instructions* attributed to Master Xi, but Emperor Xuanzong and Du Guangting 杜光庭 contend it belongs to Zhang Daoling as it was originally his idea and that Zhang Lu only recorded it. Another theory is that Zhang Lu composed it but borrowed Zhang Daoling’s name in order to incorporate the teachings of Celestial Masters Daoism. In the *Expanded Collection of Magnifying and Clarifying Buddhism* (*Guang Hongming ji* 廣弘明集), the Buddhist monk Shi Falin 釋法琳 of the Tang Dynasty writes in his “Discerning the Correct” (*Bianzheng lun* 辨正論): “In the first year of the Han’an 漢安 reign period of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty 漢順帝, the Daoist priest Zhang Daoling wished to distinguish the *Laozi* from the *Yellow Writ* and so he wrote a commentary in 5,000 words.”<sup>19</sup> It is obvious that Zhang Daoling wrote a commentary to the *Laozi* and if we follow Xuanzong’s theory, it indeed belongs to Zhang Daoling.

Yu Huan’s 魚豢 *Outline of Records* (*Dian lue* 典略) notes:

熹平中，張脩為太平道，張角為五斗米道。（中略）施淨室，使病人處其中思過。又使人為姦令祭酒，主以老子五千文，使都習。號姦令

17 Lu Deming, *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 1.27.

18 Yao Zhenzong, *Hou Han Yiwenzhi*, in *Ershiwu shi yiwen jingji zhi kaobu cuibian*, 7: 222. Zeng Pu, *Bu Hou Han shu Yiwenzhi bing kao*, in *Ershiwu shi yiwen jingji zhi kaobu cuibian*, 8: 32. Hou Kang, *Bu Hou Han shu Yiwenzhi*, in *Ershiwu shi yiwen jingji zhi kaobu cuibian*, 6: 562.

19 Shi Falin, “Bianzheng lun,” in *Guang Hongming ji*, 13.189.

為鬼吏，主為病者請禱之法。（中略）後角被誅，修亦亡。及魯自在漢中，因其人信行修業，遂增飾之。<sup>20</sup>

During the Xiping reign period of Emperor Ling of the Han Dynasty 漢靈帝, Zhang Xiu 張脩 created the Way of Great Peace (太平道 *Taiping Dao*) and Zhang Jiao 張角 created the Way of Five Pecks of Rice (五斗米道 *wudoumi Dao*). (intermediary text omitted) They provided quiet rooms for the sick to recover and contemplate their transgressions. They also ordered people to serve as illegitimate officials, or libationers, who were in charge of Laozi's *5000-Character Classic* and made their followers practice it together. These illegitimate officials were called demon clerks and they were in charge of praying on behalf of the sick. (intermediary text omitted) Later Zhang Jiao was executed and Zhang Xiu died too. When Zhang Lu was in Hanzhong, he noticed how much people believed in and practiced Zhang Xiu's system and thus augmented and embellished it.

The above is cited in Zhang Huai's 章懷 commentary to the "Biography of Liu Yan 劉焉" in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* and Pei Songzhi's 裴松之 commentary to the "Biography of Zhang Lu 張魯" in the *History of the Wei Dynasty* (*Wei shu* 魏書) section of the *Records of the Three Kingdoms Period* (*Sanguo zhi* 三國志). With regards to Zhang Xiu, Pei Song says he is actually Zhang Heng 張衡, Zhang Daoling's son. Celestial Masters Daoism thus established its teachings with the *5000-Character Classic* edition; it did not begin with Zhang Lu. Zhang Daoling initially wrote a commentary and transmitted it to Zhang Heng, who gave it to Zhang Lu, who then organized and amended it further. We thus have what came to be known as the "Master Xi edition." The *Commentary and Instructions* says: "Master Xi obtained the Dao and wanted to transform the ways of Shu in the west, so he relied on the *Xiang'er* to instruct new converts." Knowing this, the *Xiang'er Commentary* must have been popular in Shu since the time of Zhang Lu, however, the language of the *Xiang'er Commentary* is superficial, rough, and has many strange explanations that are contrary to the original meaning of the *Laozi*. This explains the decline in its presence from the Tang Dynasty. Not even the *Daoist Canon* has a record of it! It must have disappeared a long time ago.

Today, the fragmentary scroll hidden in the grottos at Dunhuang allow the text to reappear in the world. That the character *min* 民 appears in the text means it had yet to be considered taboo, thus the text is datable to the Six

<sup>20</sup> *Hou Han shu*, 75.2436 note 5. *Sanguo zhi*, 8.264 note 1.

Dynasties period.<sup>21</sup> Each time the book mentions auspicious talismans, it reflects the ideas of the *Scripture of Great Peace* (*Taiping jing* 太平經). It was not limited to students of Huang-Lao 黃老 in the Eastern Han or the School of Immortality; rather, we are given a glimpse into the original thought of Daoist religion, making this material an exceptionally important contribution to the historical study of Daoist religion and a veritable academic treasure.

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21 See page 36 of “Outline of the Dunhuang Archaeological Work Exhibition Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Peking University” (*Beijing Daxue wushi zhounian jinian Dunhuang kaogu gongzuo zhanlan gaiyao* 北京大學五十週年紀念敦煌考古工作展覽概要). According to the script used, we can determine it is a book belonging to the Northern Dynasty. For a full account, see the *Record of Variant Characters* (*Biezi ji* 別字記), i.e., *Liuchao biezi ji xinbian* 六朝別字記新編.

## Recorded Commentary of Xiang'er

The original text and its commentary are written together and differentiating them is not easy. In what follows, they are given separately and their sequence follows Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse* commentary for easier viewing. There are, however, numerous errors and omissions which makes reading the sentences particularly difficult. What is more, it contains incorrect characters, which I will point out; in the event of confusion, the Heshang Gong edition will be adhered to.<sup>1</sup>

(上缺) 則民不爭亦不盜。<sup>2</sup>

[preceding text missing] then the people will neither contend with nor steal from one another.

不見可欲，使心不亂。<sup>3</sup>

Keep the desirable from view, keep the heart-mind undisturbed.

……不欲視之，比如不見，勿令心動。若動，自誠；□□，道去復還。心亂遂之，道去之矣。<sup>4</sup>

... not wanting to look at something, which is akin to not seeing it, the heart-mind is unmoved. If it moves, be honest with oneself; ... the Dao has left but will return. To follow a disturbed heart-mind, the Dao will depart.

聖人治：靈其心，實其腹，<sup>5</sup>

The sage governs by spiritualizing his heart-mind, filling his stomach,

心者，規也，中有吉凶善惡。腹者，道袞囊，氣常欲實。心為凶惡，道去囊空；空者耶入，便煞人。虛去心中凶惡，道來歸之，腹則實矣。<sup>6</sup>

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1 Trans. note: The original *Daodejing* text is given first, in bold font, with the *Xiang'er Commentary* appearing below it and slightly indented.

2 See Figure 1 line 1.

3 See Figure 1 line 1.

4 See Figure 1 lines 2–3.

5 See Figure 1 lines 3–4.

6 See Figure 1 lines 3–6.

The heart-mind, a compass that contains the auspicious and inauspicious, good and evil. The stomach is the pouch of the Dao, constantly wanting to be filled with its breath. If the heart-mind does what is inauspicious or evil, the Dao will depart and the pouch will remain empty; when empty, pathogens will enter and halt life. Dispelling the inauspicious and evil from the heart-mind, the Dao will return and the stomach will become full.

弱其志，強其骨，<sup>7</sup>

weakening his will, strengthening his bones,

志隨心有善惡，骨隨腹仰氣。強志為惡，氣去骨枯；弱其惡志，氣歸髓滿。<sup>8</sup>

The will follows the heart-mind in having good and evil, while the bones follow the stomach in relying on breath. If one forces the will to do evil, breath will depart and the bones decay; if one weakens the evilness of the will, breath will return and the bones fill with marrow.

常使民無知無欲；<sup>9</sup>

and constantly ensures the people are without knowledge and desire;

道絕不行，耶文滋起，貨賂為生，民競貪學之，身隨危傾。當禁之，勿知耶文，勿貪寶貨，國則易治。上之化下，猶風之靡草。欲如此，上要當知信道。<sup>10</sup>

If the Dao is severed and unable to move, depraved writings will multiply, bribery will be born, the people will greedily compete to learn them, and their bodies will be thrown into peril. If these are forbidden, there will be no knowledge of depraved writings, no craving for precious objects, and the state will be easy to govern. Those in high positions transform those below like the wind blowing across tender grass. Wanting this, those in high positions must knowingly trust the Dao.

使知者不敢不為；<sup>11</sup>

he ensures those who know not dare refrain from acting;

7 See Figure 1 line 7.

8 See Figure 1 lines 7–8.

9 See Figure 1 lines 8–9.

10 See Figure 1 lines 9–12.

11 See Figure 1 line 12.



上信道不勑，多知之士，雖有耶心，猶誌是非，見上慙慙，亦不敢不為也。<sup>12</sup>

If superiors trust the Dao without tiring then erudite gentlemen, despite having a depraved heart-mind, will resemble the records of what is right and wrong in that when they see the sincerity of their superiors, they will not dare refrain from acting.

則無不治。<sup>13</sup>

hence nothing is not governed.

如此，國以治也。<sup>14</sup>

Such being the case, the state is governed.

*The above corresponds to section 3 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

道沖而用之又不足盈；<sup>15</sup>

Use the Dao when it pours forth without letting it overflow;

道貴中和，當中和行之；志意不可盈溢，違道誠。<sup>16</sup>

The Dao values equilibrium, thus people should move in equilibrium with things; people's will and intentions must not overflow as doing so will violate the tenets of the Dao.

淵似萬物之宗。<sup>17</sup>

be a gulf resembling the ancestor of the myriad things.

道也。人行道，不違誠，淵深似道。<sup>18</sup>

This is the Dao. If people move with the Dao and do not violate its tenets, they will resemble a deep gulf just like the Dao.

挫其銳，解其忿；<sup>19</sup>

Dull what is sharp, untangle what is exasperating;

12 See Figure 1 lines 12–14.

13 See Figure 1 line 14.

14 See Figure 1 line 14.

15 See Figure 1 line 15.

16 See Figure 1 lines 15–16.

17 See Figure 1 line 16.

18 See Figure 1 lines 16–17.

19 See Figure 1 lines 17.

銳者，心方欲圖惡；忿者，怒也，皆非道所喜。心欲為惡，挫還之；怒欲發，寬解之，勿使五藏忿怒也。自威以道誡，自勸以長生，於此致當。忿爭激，急弦聲，所以者過。積死遲怒，傷死以疾，五藏以傷，道不能治，故道誡之，重教之丁寧。五藏所以傷者，皆金木水火土氣不和也。和則相生，戰則相剋，隨怒事情，輒有所發。發一藏則故剋，所勝成病煞人。人遇陽者，發囚剋王，怒而無傷；雖尔，去死如髮耳。如人衰者，發王剋囚，禍成矣。<sup>20</sup>

The sharp is where the heart-mind charts evil; to be exasperated is to be angry. The Dao is not fond of either. If the heart-mind wishes to do evil, dull it so as to recover it; if anger wishes to issue forth, console it so as to untangle it. People must not let the five viscera know of exasperation or anger. Deter yourself using the tenets of the Dao, persuade yourself using longevity of life, and in this way reach your objective. The fierce arousal of exasperation is like the sound of rapidly plucked strings, hence it results in transgression. Be slow in amassing anger, otherwise there will be injury or death from illness. If the five viscera are injured, the Dao will be unable to govern hence the tenets of the Dao are taught with great seriousness. What injures the five viscera is the disharmonious breath of metal, wood, water, fire, and wood. When harmonious they mutually generate one another; when conflicting they mutually defeat one another. To submit to anger or serve one's feelings, one will always issue forth. If it issues forth from one viscera, it will overcome the others and this victory will turn into an illness that halts life. If a person encounters what is Yang and issues forth a breath that is confined to overcome what is prosperous, no injury will result from anger; however, death will be close at hand. If a person is in decline and issues forth a breath that is prosperous to overcome what is confined, the result will be disastrous.

和其光，同其塵。<sup>21</sup>

harmonize with the light, blend with the dust.

情性不動，喜怒不發，五藏皆和同相生，與道同光塵也。<sup>22</sup>

If one's emotions do not move, then joy and anger will not issue forth, the five viscera will harmonize and mutually generate one another, and one will be identical to the light and dust of the Dao.

20 See Figure 1 lines 17–24, Figure 2 lines 1–2.

21 See Figure 2 lines 2–3.

22 See Figure 2 lines 3–4.

湛似常存.<sup>23</sup>

Be profound as if constantly present.

如此湛然，常常在不亡。<sup>24</sup>

To be profound in this way is to be unceasingly present without perishing.

吾不知誰子？像帝之先。<sup>25</sup>

Do you not know whose child I am? It is as if I existed before the supreme ruler.

吾，道也。帝先者，亦道也。與無名萬物始同一耳。未知誰家子，能行此道；能行者，便像道也，似帝先矣。<sup>26</sup>

I, the Dao. What is before the supreme ruler is also the Dao. In its namelessness, the myriad things began with it. It was not yet known which family's children would move with this Dao; those who could bear a resemblance to the Dao, as if they existed before the supreme ruler.

*The above corresponds to section 4 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

天地不仁，以萬物為芻狗。<sup>27</sup>

Heaven and Earth are not humane, treating the myriad things as if they were straw dogs.

天地像道，仁於諸善，不仁於諸惡；故煞萬物，惡者不愛也，視之如芻草如芻畜耳。<sup>28</sup>

Heaven and Earth bear a resemblance to the Dao in being humane to the good and not humane to the evil. Thus, in halting the lives of the myriad things, it is the evil among them that is unacceptable and viewed as if they were straw dogs or livestock.

聖人不仁，以百姓為芻狗。<sup>29</sup>

The sage is not humane, treating the common people as he would straw dogs.

23 See Figure 2 lines 4.

24 See Figure 2 lines 4–5.

25 See Figure 2 line 5.

26 See Figure 2 lines 5–7.

27 See Figure 2 lines 7–8.

28 See Figure 2 lines 8–10.

29 See Figure 2 lines 10.

聖人法天地，仁於善人，不仁惡人，當王政煞惡，亦視之如芻狗也。是以人當積善功，其精神與天通，設欲侵害者，天即救之。庸庸之人皆是芻狗之徒耳，精神不能通天。所以者，譬如盜賊懷惡不敢見部史也，精氣自然與天不親，生死之際，天不知也。黃帝仁聖知後世意，故結芻草為狗，以置門戶上，欲言後世門戶皆芻狗之徒耳；人不解黃帝微意，空而效之，而惡心不改，可謂大惡也。<sup>30</sup>

The sage models himself after Heaven and Earth; he is humane when people are good and not humane when they are evil. If a kingly government is death-driven and evil, the sage views it as a straw dog. This is why the people amass good results, using their essence and spirit to penetrate Heaven, for in the event someone desires to attack and harm them, Heaven will save them. When it comes to the common people, they are all like straw dogs in that their essence and spirit cannot penetrate Heaven. Thus, in the case of a thief whose intentions are evil, he dares not run into a government official because his essence and breath are naturally distanced from Heaven; should he find himself in a life and death situation, Heaven will be unaware of it. The Yellow Emperor, being a humane sage, knew the intentions of future generations and thus created dogs out of woven straw which he then affixed above household gates hoping to inform future generations that these occupants were akin to straw dogs. The people, however, did not grasp the Yellow Emperor's profound meaning and emptily imitated him without changing their evil heart-mind. This can be called a great evil.

天地之間，其猶橐籥。<sup>31</sup>

What lies between Heaven and Earth resembles a bellows.

道氣在間，清微不見，含血之類，莫不欽仰。愚者不信，故猶橐者治工排橐：橐者，可吹竹，氣動有聲，不可見；故以為喻，以解愚心也。<sup>32</sup>

The breath of the Dao is amongst them, being clear, profound, and unseen, such that among all living creatures, none fail to respect and admire it. Only the foolish do not trust it hence this space resembles the pole a smelter uses to work the bellows. This pole is a hollow tube that produces sound when air is blown though it yet the air cannot be seen. This analogy explains the heart-mind of those who are foolish.

30 See Figure 2 lines 10–19.

31 See Figure 2 line 19.

32 See Figure 2 lines 19–22.

虛而不屈，動而愈出。<sup>33</sup>

It is empty but not depleted; the more it moves, the more it emits.

清氣不見，像如虛也。然呼吸不屈竭也，動之愈益出。<sup>34</sup>

Clear breath cannot be seen, so it resembles emptiness. Breathing does not make it destitute, thus the more it moves, the more it emits.

多聞數窮，不如守中。<sup>35</sup>

With much knowledge comes repeated destitution, hence it is better to guard the center.

多知浮華，不知守道全身，壽盡輒窮；數數，非一也。不如學生，守中和之道。<sup>36</sup>

To have much knowledge is to be superfluous and ornamental, while not knowing the Dao should be guarded to keep the body whole, for once longevity is exhausted, destitution follows. This happens repeatedly and is not a singular event. People are better-off studying life and guarding the equilibrium of the Dao.

*The above corresponds to section 5 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

谷神不死，是謂玄牝。<sup>37</sup>

The valley spirit does not die and is called the mysterious female.

谷者，欲也。精結為神，欲令神不死，當結精自守。牝者，地也，體性安，女像之，故不擊。男欲結精，心當像地似女，勿為事先。<sup>38</sup>

The valley is desire. Since essence is collected together as spirit, those who wish their spirit not die should collect together their essence and guard it. The female is Earth. Being peaceful in disposition, women resemble it, thus they are not discarded. If a man desires to collect together his essence, his heart-mind should resemble Earth and be like a woman. He must not work at putting himself first.

33 See Figure 2 lines 22–23.

34 See Figure 2 lines 23–24.

35 See Figure 2 line 24.

36 See Figure 2 line 24, Figure 3 lines 1–2.

37 See Figure 3 line 2.

38 See Figure 3 lines 2–5.

玄牝門，天地根。<sup>39</sup>

The gate of the mysterious female is the root of Heaven and Earth.

牝，地也，女像之。陰孔為門，死生之官也，最要，故名根。男茶亦名根。<sup>40</sup>

The female is Earth and so women resemble it. The aperture of Yin acts as a gate and the official of death and life; having this most essential of roles, it is named the root. A man's reed is also known as the root.

綿綿若存，<sup>41</sup>

Continuous is its existence,

陰陽之道，以若結精為生。年以知命，當名自止。年少之時，雖有，當閑省之。綿綿者微也，從其微少，若少年則長存矣。今此乃為大害，道造之何？道重繼祠，種類不絕，欲令合精產生，故教之。年少，微省，不絕，不教之勲力也。勲力之計出愚人之心耳，豈可怨道乎？上德之人，志搯堅強，能不戀結產生，少時便絕。又善神早成，言此者道精也；故令天地無祠，龍無子，仙人無妻，玉女無夫，其大信也。<sup>42</sup>

The Yin and Yang of the Dao are similar to collecting together the essence of life. When one is old enough to understand their fate, they should stop after fulfilling their namesake. Although one has this ability in their youth, they should remain idle in order to preserve their essence. The continuous is profound. If one follows the profound from their youth, they will have eternal life. Today, this is a source of great harm so why did the Dao create it? The Dao takes as important the maintenance of ancestral temples and not severing the lives of different species, wishing people merge their essence to produce life, hence its teachings. Those few in years should preserve the profound and not sever themselves from it because the Dao does not teach us to wear ourselves out. Since this strategy of labor comes from the foolish, how is the Dao at fault? People of superior virtue manage their will with uncompromising firmness to avoid intimate connections that can produce life and thus block their essence in their youth. To create a good spirit means the essence of the Dao hence Heaven and Earth have no ancestral temples, the dragon has

39 See Figure 3 line 5.

40 See Figure 3 lines 5–6.

41 See Figure 3 line 7.

42 See Figure 3 lines 7–15.

no sons, the transcendent person has no wife, and the jade maiden has no husband. This is their great trust in the Dao.

用之不動。<sup>43</sup>

it is used without being moved.

能用此道，應得仙壽，男女之事，不可不勤也。<sup>44</sup>

If one can use this Dao, they will acquire the longevity of the transcendent person. In matters between a man and a woman, one must be diligent.

*The above corresponds to section 6 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

天長地久。天地所以能長久者，以其不自主，故能長久。<sup>45</sup>

Heaven and Earth are enduring. That Heaven and Earth are everlasting is because they do not rule themselves, thus they are everlasting.

能法道，故能自生而長久也。<sup>46</sup>

They can model themselves after the Dao and so give birth to themselves and are everlasting.

是以聖人後其身而身先，<sup>47</sup>

This is why the sage puts himself behind others yet ends up in front of them,

求長生者，不勞精思求財以養身，不以無功劫君取祿以榮身，不食五味以恣，衣弊履穿，不與俗爭，即為後其身也；而目此得仙壽，獲福在俗人先，即為身先。<sup>48</sup>

The person seeking longevity of life does not labor their essence and thoughts in search of wealth to nourish their body, does not use idleness to coerce the ruler into giving them blessings to honor their body, and does not eat the five flavors without restraint. With worn-out clothes and tattered shoes, they do not contend with the vulgar. This is to put oneself behind others. As a result, they attain the longevity of the transcendent person and so have the good fortune of being in front of the vulgar person. This is to end up in front of others.

43 See Figure 3 line 15.

44 See Figure 3 lines 15–16.

45 See Figure 3 lines 16–17.

46 See Figure 3 lines 17–18.

47 See Figure 3 line 18.

48 See Figure 3 lines 19–22.

外其身而身存;<sup>49</sup>

putting his body outside himself and existing as such;

與上同義。<sup>50</sup>

The same meaning as above.

以其無尸，故能成其尸。<sup>51</sup>

he takes himself to be without a corpse, thus he can complete his corpse.

不知長生之道，身皆尸行耳，非道所行，悉尸行也。道人所以得仙壽者，不行尸行，與俗別異，故能成其尸，令為仙士也。<sup>52</sup>

Those who do not know the Dao of longevity of life move their bodies like corpses, and because they do not move with the Dao, their movements are those of corpses. The person of Dao acquires the longevity of the transcendent person by not moving as corpses do and distinguishing himself from the vulgar person, thus he can perfect his own corpse and join other transcendent gentlemen.

*The above corresponds to section 7 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

上善若水。水善利萬物，又不爭，<sup>53</sup>

Superior goodness is like water. Water brings favorable benefit to the myriad things and does not contend with them,

水善能柔弱，像道。去高就下，避實歸虛，常潤利萬物，終不爭，故欲令人法則之也。<sup>54</sup>

The superiority of water lies in its ability to yield and be weak, resembling the Dao. It descends from the high, shunning the solid to return to emptiness. Its moisture brings constant benefit to the myriad things, not contending with them to the end of their lives, thus people desire to model themselves after it.

處眾人之所惡，故幾於道。<sup>55</sup>

49 See Figure 3 line 22.

50 See Figure 3 line 22.

51 See Figure 4 line 1.

52 See Figure 4 lines 1-4.

53 See Figure 4 line 4.

54 See Figure 4 lines 4-6.

55 See Figure 4 lines 6-7.



dwelling in places the multitude of people find foul, thus it is akin to the Dao.

水能受垢辱不潔之物，幾像道也。<sup>56</sup>

As water can receive things that are filthy and tainted, it closely resembles the Dao.

居善地，心善淵，<sup>57</sup>

It prefers Earth for its residence, prefers a gulf for its heart-mind,

水善得窪空，便居止為淵。淵，深也。<sup>58</sup>

Water prefers low-lying crevices, so wherever it stops a gulf is made. A gulf is the deep.

與善仁，<sup>59</sup>

giving what is good and humane,

人當法水，心常樂善仁。<sup>60</sup>

If people model themselves after water, their heart-mind will constantly delight in what is good and humane.

言善信，<sup>61</sup>

speaking what is good and trustworthy,

人當常相教為善，有誠信。<sup>62</sup>

If people are constantly taught what is good, they will possess sincerity and trustworthiness.

政善治，<sup>63</sup>

governing with good rulership,

人君理國，常當法道為政，則致治。<sup>64</sup>

56 See Figure 4 lines 7–8.

57 See Figure 4 line 8.

58 See Figure 4 lines 8–9.

59 See Figure 4 line 9.

60 See Figure 4 line 9.

61 See Figure 4 lines 9–10.

62 See Figure 4 line 10.

63 See Figure 4 line 10.

64 See Figure 4 lines 10–11.

If a ruler wishes to order his kingdom, he should always rule using the model of the Dao, then order will be achieved.

事善能,<sup>65</sup>

serving those with good skills,

人等當欲事師，當求善能知真道者；不當事耶僞伎巧，耶知驕奢也。<sup>66</sup>  
People of rank should want to tend to the matters of their masters and search for those with good skills who can know the genuine Dao; they should not tend to matters that are depraved, false, or deceitful, for depraved knowledge is complacent and excessive.

動善時。<sup>67</sup>

and moving when the time is right.

人欲舉動勿違道誠，不可得傷王氣。<sup>68</sup>  
If people wish to act upon something and not violate the tenets of the Dao, they must not harm the kingly breath.

夫唯不爭，故無尤。<sup>69</sup>

It alone does not contend hence it is unexceptional.

唯，獨也；尤，大也。人獨能放水不爭，終不遇大害。<sup>70</sup>  
To be alone is to be solitary; to be exceptional is to be great. If a person is alone like water and does not contend with things, they will for the rest of their life not encounter great harm.

*The above corresponds to section 8 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

持而滿之，不若其已；揣而悅之，不可長寶。<sup>71</sup>

To grasp and make it full is not like letting it stop on its own; to carry and delight in it, it will not be treasured for long.

65 See Figure 4 line 11.

66 See Figure 4 lines 11–13.

67 See Figure 4 line 13.

68 See Figure 4 lines 13–14.

69 See Figure 4 line 14.

70 See Figure 4 lines 14–15.

71 See Figure 4 lines 15–16.

道教人結精成神，今世間僞伎詐稱道，託黃帝、玄女、龔子、容成之文相教，從女不施，思還精補腦，心神不一，失其所守，為揣悅不可長寶。若，如也；不如，直自然如也。<sup>72</sup>

The Dao teaches people to collect together their essence so as to complete their spirit. Today, the false arts of the world swindle others about the Dao by teaching them the writings of the Yellow Emperor, Mysterious Maiden, Gongzi, and Rong Cheng, that women should not be engaged with, and men should focus on returning their essence to replenish their brain. As their heart-mind and spirit are not united, they lose all they guard, and though they mask their delight, they cannot treasure it for long. As if, to resemble; not be like, to straighten the naturally-so.

金玉滿室，莫之能守；<sup>73</sup>

If gold and jade fill the room, no one can guard them;

人之精氣滿藏中，苦無愛守之者，不肯自然閉心而揣悅之，即大迷矣。<sup>74</sup>

A person's essence and breath fill their viscera, so if they are not loved and guarded, refusing to naturally close their heart-mind in order to mask their delight, the result will be great confusion.

富貴而驕，自遺咎。<sup>75</sup>

to be complacent with wealth and rank is to bring misfortune upon oneself.

精結成神，陽炁有餘，務當自愛，閉心絕念，不可驕欺陰也。驕欺，咎即成。又外說乘權富貴而驕世，即有咎也。<sup>76</sup>

If essence collected together to complete the spirit has an excess of Yang breath, one should care for oneself by closing the heart-mind and severing yearning, for Yin cannot be complacently deceived. In complacent deception, disaster finds success. An external account says those who use their power, wealth and rank, to complacently treat the world will end up in disaster.

名成功遂身退，天之道。<sup>77</sup>

72 See Figure 4 lines 16–20.

73 See Figure 4 line 20.

74 See Figure 4 lines 20–22.

75 See Figure 4 line 22.

76 See Figure 4 lines 22–24.

77 See Figure 5 line 1.

When names and accomplishments are satisfied and the body retreats, this is the Dao of Heaven.

名與功，身之仇，功名就，身即滅，故道誡之。范蠡乘舟去；道意謙信，不隱身形剝，是其效也。<sup>78</sup>

Names and accomplishments are enemies of the body and with their success, the body is extinguished, thus we have the tenets of the Dao. Fan Li departed by boat and viewed the Dao's intentions with modesty and trust. Thus, when concealing himself, his form was not stripped away. This is the work of the Dao.

*The above corresponds to section 9 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

載營魄抱一能無離，<sup>79</sup>

Support the soul, embrace the One, and they will not depart,

魄，白也，故精白，與元同色。身為精車，精落故當載營之。神成氣來，載營人身，欲全此功無離一。一者道也，今在人身何許？守之云何？一不在人身也，諸附身者悉世間常偽伎，非真道也；一在天地外，入在天地間，但往來人身中耳，都皮裡悉是，非獨一處。一散形為氣，聚形為太上老君，常治崑崙，或言虛無，或言自然，或言無名，皆同一耳。今布道誡教人，守誡不違，即為守一矣；不行其誡，即為失一也。世間常偽伎指五藏以名一。瞑目思想，欲從求福，非也；去生遂遠矣。<sup>80</sup>

The soul is white in color hence essence is white, the same color as primal breath. The body acts as a vehicle for essence but given essence falls out of it, people must support and manage it. When the spirit is complete, breath arrives to support and manage the body. If people wish to complete this work, they must not depart from the One. As the One is the Dao, where is it found in the body? How should it be guarded? The One is not found in the body and those who say the body possesses it are viewed by the world as practicing false arts of a non-genuine Dao. The One is found beyond Heaven and Earth yet it penetrates the space between them, entering and exiting the body. It exists everywhere in a person's skin, not merely in one place. The One scatters its form as breath and then assembles its form as the Supreme Lord Lao ruling from Mount

78 See Figure 5 lines 1–3.

79 See Figure 5 line 3.

80 See Figure 5 lines 3–14.

Kunlun. When we say empty nothingness, the naturally-so, and the nameless, these are identical to the One. With the tenets of the Dao distributed as teachings for the people, those who guard and do not violate them are guarding the One; if they do not follow its tenets, they will lose the One. People who constantly deceive the world point to the five viscera and name them the One. They shut their eyes in thought, longing to seek fortune, but this is wrong; they are in fact moving further away from life.

專氣致柔能嬰兒,<sup>81</sup>

to concentrate the breath and practice yielding is to be like an infant,

嬰兒無為故合道，但不知自制，知稍生，故致老；謂欲為柔致氣，法兒小時。<sup>82</sup>

The infant does not deliberately act and so merges with the Dao, yet in not knowing self-restraint, its knowledge grows step by step, thus it achieves old age. What is called desiring to yield and create breath is to model oneself after the infant.

滌除玄覽能無疵,<sup>83</sup>

to wash and cleanse the mysterious perception is to be without flaws,

人身像天地。覽，廣也，疵，惡也，非道所喜；當滌除一身，行必令無惡也。<sup>84</sup>

The body resembles Heaven and Earth. To perceive, to be extensive; to have flaws, to be evil. The Dao is not fond of these. Wash and cleanse your whole body and do no evil in your actions.

愛民治國而無知,<sup>85</sup>

be a caring ruler of the people and do so without knowledge,

人君欲愛民令壽考，治國令太平，當精心鑿道意，教民皆令知道真；無令知偽道耶知也。<sup>86</sup>

The ruler who wishes to care for the people and allows them to grow old, governs the kingdom by allowing a great peace to take hold. He should

81 See Figure 5 line 14.

82 See Figure 5 lines 14–16.

83 See Figure 5 line 16.

84 See Figure 5 lines 16–17.

85 See Figure 5 line 18.

86 See Figure 5 lines 18–20.

delve into the meaning of the Dao in order to teach the people all there is to know about the genuineness of the Dao. He should not allow the people to know a false Dao or depraved knowledge.

明白四達而無為,<sup>87</sup>

grasp what is all around you and take no deliberate action,

上士心通，自多所知，知惡而棄，知善能行，勿敢為惡事也。<sup>88</sup>

Superior scholars have a penetrating heart-mind that satisfies their knowledge. They reject knowledge of evil, move according to their knowledge of what is good, and dare not do evil.

天地開闔而為雌。<sup>89</sup>

and in the face of Heaven and Earth's opening and closing, do as the female does.

男女陰陽孔也，男當法地似女，前章已說矣。<sup>90</sup>

Men and women have Yin and Yang apertures, so men should model themselves after Earth so as to resemble women. The previous section already spoke of this.

生之畜之。生而不有，為而不恃，長而不宰，是謂玄德。<sup>91</sup>

What generates and preserves, generates but does not possess, acts but does not depend on, and prolongs but does not govern, this is called mysterious virtue.

玄，天也，常法道行如此，欲令人法也。<sup>92</sup>

The mysterious is Heaven. It constantly models itself after the Dao and moves as such, desiring the people model themselves after it too.

*The above corresponds to section 10 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

卅輻共一轂，當其無，有車之用；<sup>93</sup>

87 See Figure 5 line 20.

88 See Figure 5 lines 20–21.

89 See Figure 5 lines 21–22.

90 See Figure 5 lines 22–23.

91 See Figure 5 lines 23, Figure 6 line 1.

92 See Figure 6 lines 1–2.

93 See Figure 6 line 2.

Thirty spokes share one hub but it is the nothingness of the hub that gives the cart its use;

古未有車時，退然；道遣奚仲作之，愚者得車，貪利而已，不念行道，不覺道神，賢者見之，乃知道恩，默而自厲，重守道真也。<sup>94</sup>

In antiquity, when carts had yet to exist, people were modest. The Dao dispatched Xi Zhong to make them and when the foolish acquired these carts, they used them for profit and nothing else. They no longer thought about moving with the Dao or felt its spirit. When the worthy person saw them, he knew the kindness of the Dao and silently self-disciplined himself so as to unfailingly guard the genuineness of the Dao.

埴殖為器，當其無，有器之用；<sup>95</sup>

clay is molded to make a vessel but it is the nothingness of the vessel that gives it its use;

亦與車同說。<sup>96</sup>

The same explanation as was given for carts.

鑿戶牖以為室，當其無，有室之用。<sup>97</sup>

one carves out a door and window to make a room but it is the nothingness of the room that gives it its use.

道使黃帝為之，亦與車同說。<sup>98</sup>

The Dao sent the Yellow Emperor to make them. The same explanation as was given for carts.

有之以為利，無之以為用。<sup>99</sup>

Existence has its benefit while nothingness has its use.

此三物本難作，非道不成。俗人得之，但貪其利，不知其元；賢者見之，還守其用，用道為本；賢愚之心如南與北，万不同。此三之義指如是耳。今世間僞伎因緣真文設詐巧，言道有天轂人身有轂，專恣為

94 See Figure 6 lines 3–5.

95 See Figure 6 lines 5–6.

96 See Figure 6 line 6.

97 See Figure 6 lines 6–7.

98 See Figure 6 line 7.

99 See Figure 6 line 8.

柔，輻指形為鎔鑄；又培胎練形，當如土為瓦時；又言道有戶牖在人身中；皆耶僞不可用，用之者大迷矣。<sup>100</sup>

These three things were originally hard to make and would not have succeeded without the Dao. The vulgar person acquires them and greedily uses them for profit, not knowing where they came from; the worthy person sees them and returns to guarding what makes them useful, taking the Dao as his root. The heart-mind of the worthy and foolish person are like south and north and could not be any more different. The meaning of these three indicates as much. Today, the false arts of the world rely on this genuine text to construct their swindle, saying the Dao has a Heavenly hub similar to the body which it subsequently yields when the breath is concentrated, thus the spokes indicate the form of the wheel is its linchpin. They also claim cultivating the fetus and exercising one's form is like the process of turning soil into earthenware, and that the Dao has doors and windows within the human body. These are all depraved falsities and must not be used, for doing so will result in great confusion.

*The above corresponds to section 11 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

五色令人目盲，<sup>101</sup>

The five colors cause people to go blind,

目光散故盲。<sup>102</sup>

Their vision is dispersed hence they go blind.

五音令人耳聾，<sup>103</sup>

the five notes cause people to go deaf,

非雅音也，鄭衛之聲，抗諍傷人，聽過神去故聾。<sup>104</sup>

These are not elegant notes but the sounds of Zheng and Wei which are discordant and thus harmful to people. Excessive listening discards the spirit, producing deafness.

五味令人口爽，<sup>105</sup>

100 See Figure 6 lines 8–15.

101 See Figure 6 line 15.

102 See Figure 6 line 15.

103 See Figure 6 lines 15–16.

104 See Figure 6 lines 16–17.

105 See Figure 6 line 17.



the five flavors cause people to lose their sense of taste,

道不食之，口爽者，糜爛生瘡。<sup>106</sup>

The Dao does not taste these. To lose one's sense of taste is the corrosive effect of sores in the mouth.

馳騁田獵令人心發狂，<sup>107</sup>

galloping and hunting cause peoples' heart-mind to go crazy,

心不念正，但念煞無罪之獸，當得不得，故狂。<sup>108</sup>

The heart-mind does not think of correctness but of striking dead innocent animals and that it should acquire what it does not have, hence it goes crazy.

難得之貨令人行妨。<sup>109</sup>

goods that are difficult to acquire cause peoples' movements to be hampered.

道所不欲也。行道致生，不致貨；貨有為，乃致貨妨道矣。<sup>110</sup>

The Dao does not desire these. To move with the Dao is to incur life, not goods; goods have existence, so incurring them hampers the Dao.

是以聖人為腹，不為目。故去彼取此。<sup>111</sup>

This is why the sage acts for his stomach, not his eyes. Thus, he discards one to get the other.

腹與目前章以說矣。去彼惡行，取此道誠也。<sup>112</sup>

The stomach and eyes were spoken of in an earlier section. One must discard evil acts to secure this tenet of the Dao.

*The above corresponds to section 12 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

寵辱若驚，貴大患若身。<sup>113</sup>

106 See Figure 6 lines 17–18.

107 See Figure 6 line 18.

108 See Figure 6 lines 18–19.

109 See Figure 6 lines 19–20.

110 See Figure 6 lines 20–21.

111 See Figure 6 lines 21–22.

112 See Figure 6 lines 22–23.

113 See Figure 6 line 23.

Treat favor and humiliation as if they were a surprise, for valuing them is equal to a great hardship on the body.

道不喜強求尊貴，有寵輒有辱。若，如也，得之，當如驚，不喜也。若者，謂彼人也，必違道求榮，患歸若身矣。<sup>114</sup>

The Dao does not enjoy those who stubbornly seek reverence, for wherever there is favor, there is humiliation. As if, to resemble. To acquire it, one should appear as if surprised and joyful. Equal to, to speak of oneself as the other, one who leaves the Dao to seek glory yet the hardship of doing so returns to their body.

何謂寵辱為下？得之若驚，失之若驚，是謂寵辱若驚。<sup>115</sup>

What is meant by putting favor and humiliation beneath oneself? Be wary of acquiring them, be wary of losing them. This is the meaning of treating favor and humiliation as if they were a surprise.

為下者，貪寵之人，計之下者耳，非道所貴也。<sup>116</sup>

To put beneath oneself means people should not covet favor or scheme for things beneath them as they are not what the Dao values.

何謂貴大患若身？<sup>117</sup>

What is meant by valuing them is equal to a great hardship on the body?

如前說。<sup>118</sup>

See the previous explanation.

吾所以有大患，為我有身；<sup>119</sup>

I incur great hardship because I have a body;

吾，道也。我者，吾同。道至尊，常畏患不敢求榮，思欲損身；彼貪寵之人，身豈能勝道乎？為身而違誠，非也。<sup>120</sup>

I, the Dao. Myself, the same as I. The Dao is supremely revered, constantly dreading hardship and does not dare seek glory, hence any thought of

114 See Figure 6 line 23, Figure 7 line 1.

115 See Figure 7 lines 1-3.

116 See Figure 7 lines 3-4.

117 See Figure 7 line 4.

118 See Figure 7 line 4.

119 See Figure 7 lines 4-5.

120 See Figure 7 lines 5-7.

desiring these impairs the body. People covet favor but how is the body able to surpass the Dao? To part with the tenets of the Dao for one's body is wrong.

及我無身，吾有何患。<sup>121</sup>

if I were without a body, what hardship would I have?

吾、我，道也；志欲無身，但欲養神耳，欲令人自法，故云之。<sup>122</sup>

I, myself, the Dao. The will desires to be without a body but it also desires to nourish the spirit. Hoping people will adopt this model, it is stated as such.

故貴以身於天下 [若可託天下] ;<sup>123</sup>

Thus, to have one's body valued by the world (is similar to being entrusted with the world);

若者，謂彼有身貪寵之人，若以貪寵有身，不可託天下之號也。所以者，此人但知貪寵有身，必欲好衣其食，廣宮室，高臺榭，積珍寶，則有為；令百姓勞弊，故不可令為天子也。設如道意，有身不愛，不求榮好，不奢侈飲食，常弊薄羸行；有天下必無為，守樸素，合道意矣。人但當保身，不當愛身，何謂也？奉道誠，積善成功，積精成神，神成仙壽，以此為身寶矣。貪榮寵，勞精思以求財，美食以恣身，此為愛身者也，不合於道也。<sup>124</sup>

Equal to, to speak of people who use their body to covet favors, as if their body is the result of coveting favors, hence they cannot have the title of being entrusted with the world. Therefore, if this person only knows to covet favors with their body, they must also desire good clothes and food, a vast palace, high towers and pavilions, and amassing treasure before they act. The person who causes the common people to be over-worked and fatigued cannot serve as the Son of Heaven. If they follow the intentions of the Dao, they would not care for their body or seek glory and goodness, nor engage in extravagant drinking and eating, but constantly lose and conceal their identity. If the world had such a person they would take no deliberate action, guarding the simple and unadorned, and merge with the intentions of the Dao. What is meant by saying people

121 See Figure 7 lines 7–8.

122 See Figure 7 lines 8–9.

123 See Figure 7 line 9.

124 See Figure 7 lines 9–19.

should only protect and not care for the body? To uphold the tenets of the Dao, amass good accomplishments, accumulate essence to complete the spirit, and complete the spirit to attain the longevity of the transcendent person, this is treasuring the body. Coveting glory and favor, toiling one's essence and thoughts in search of wealth and beautiful food to indulge the body, this is caring for the body, not merging with the Dao.

愛以身為天下，若可寄天下。<sup>125</sup>

caring for your body as if it was the world is similar to being entrusted with the world.

與上同義。<sup>126</sup>

The meaning is the same as above.

*The above corresponds to section 13 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

視之不見名曰夷，聽之不聞名曰希，博之不得名曰微。<sup>127</sup>

To look but not see it, its name is level. To listen but not hear it, its name is silent. To be so broad it cannot be acquired, its name is profound;

夷者，平且廣；希者，大度形；微者，道炁清，此三事欲歎道之德美耳。<sup>128</sup>

The level is even and broad; the silent is what greatly surpasses form; the profound is the clear breath of the Dao. These three things are intended to convey admiration of the Dao's virtue and beauty.

此三者不可致詰，故混而為一；<sup>129</sup>

these three cannot be inquired into and studied, hence they mix together and become one;

此三者淳說道之美，道者天下萬事之本；詰之者所況多，竹素不能勝載也，故還歸一。多者何？傷樸散淳，簿更入耶，故不可詰也。<sup>130</sup>

These three plainly state the beauty of the Dao, for the Dao is the root of the myriad matters of the world; as there are so many matters to inquire

125 See Figure 7 line 19.

126 See Figure 7 line 19.

127 See Figure 7 lines 19–21.

128 See Figure 7 lines 21–22.

129 See Figure 7 lines 22–23.

130 See Figure 7 line 23, Figure 8 lines 1–3.

about, but not enough bamboo and silk to do so, we should thus return to inquire about the One. What about the many? This would injure the simplicity of the Dao and disperse its purity, while excessive filtering would allow the depraved to enter, hence it should not be probed.

其上不曠，其下不忽，<sup>131</sup>

its rising does not illuminate, its declining does not dim,

道炁常上下，經營天地內外，所以不見，清微故也；上則不曠，下則不忽，忽有聲也。<sup>132</sup>

The breath of the Dao constantly rises and falls, operating within and beyond Heaven and Earth, but because it is clear and profound, it cannot be seen. When rising it does not illuminate, when falling it does not dim, yet suddenly there is sound.

繩繩不可名，復歸於無物；<sup>133</sup>

continuously it cannot be named, returning to where there are no things;

道如是，不可見名，如無所有也。<sup>134</sup>

The Dao is like this, unable to be seen or named, as if it did not even exist.

是無狀之狀，無物之像；<sup>135</sup>

its form is formless, resembling no particular thing;

道至尊，微而隱，無狀貌形像也；但可從其誠，不可見知也。今世間僞伎指形名道，令有服色名字、狀貌、長短非也，悉耶僞耳。<sup>136</sup>

The Dao is supremely revered, profound and concealed, formless in appearance and physical form; only from its tenets can it be followed as it cannot be seen or known. Today, practitioners of the false arts point to its form and name it the Dao, allowing them to have colored clothes, names, appearances, and dimensions. These are wrong and wholly depraved deceptions.

131 See Figure 8 line 3.

132 See Figure 8 lines 3–5.

133 See Figure 8 lines 5–6.

134 See Figure 8 line 6.

135 See Figure 8 lines 6–7.

136 See Figure 8 lines 7–9.

是謂惚恍；迎不見其首，隨不見其後。<sup>137</sup>

this is called muddled confusion; welcoming it one cannot see its front, following it one cannot see its rear.

道明不可見知，無形像也。<sup>138</sup>

The illumination of the Dao cannot be seen or known because it is without form or appearance.

執古之道，以御今之有。<sup>139</sup>

Employ the Dao of antiquity to manage the existence of the present.

何以知此道今端有？觀古得仙壽者，悉行之以得，知今俗有不絕也。<sup>140</sup>

How do we know this Dao still exists? Observing the ancients who acquired the longevity of the transcendent gentleman, they all moved according to its virtue hence we know it has not been cut off from the vulgarity of today.

以故古始，是謂道紀。<sup>141</sup>

It is thus the beginning of antiquity and called the thread of the Dao.

能以古仙壽若喻，今自勉厲守道真，即得道經紀也。<sup>142</sup>

If one can use the longevity of the transcendent gentleman of antiquity as an example, one will be encouraged to diligently guard the genuineness of the Dao, thereby acquiring the thread of the Dao.

*The above corresponds to section 14 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

古之善為士者，微妙玄通，<sup>143</sup>

Those in antiquity who were good gentlemen were subtle, profound, and able to penetrate the mysterious,

玄，天也；古之仙士，能守信微妙，與天相通。<sup>144</sup>

137 See Figure 8 line 10.

138 See Figure 8 lines 10–11.

139 See Figure 8 line 11.

140 See Figure 8 lines 11–13.

141 See Figure 8 line 13.

142 See Figure 8 lines 13–15.

143 See Figure 8 line 15.

144 See Figure 8 lines 15–16.

The mysterious is Heaven; the transcendent gentleman in antiquity guarded their trust in the subtle and profound, and were interconnected with Heaven.

深不可識.<sup>145</sup>

and were so deep as to be unfathomable.

人行道奉誠，微氣歸之，為氣淵淵深也，故不可識也。<sup>146</sup>

People who move with the Dao and uphold its tenets will have its profound breath return to them, a breath of gulf-like depth, thus they are unfathomable.

夫唯不可識，故強為之容。<sup>147</sup>

As they alone were unfathomable, they were forcibly given an appearance.

唯，獨也；容，形狀也。獨行道，德備淵深，不知當名之云何，強名之善為士者，道美大之也。<sup>148</sup>

To be alone is to be solitary; to have appearance refers to having a form. In solitude they move with the Dao, their virtue resembling a deep gulf. Not knowing what they should be called the name good gentlemen was forced upon them, but what makes them beautiful and great is the Dao.

豫若冬涉川；猶若畏四鄰；<sup>149</sup>

They were cautious as if crossing a river in winter; hesitant as if dreading their neighbors;

冬涉川者，恐懼也。畏四鄰，不敢為非，恐鄰里知也。尊道奉誠之人，猶豫行止之間，常當畏敬如此。<sup>150</sup>

To cross a river in winter is to be full of fear. To dread one's neighbors is to avoid doing any wrong out of fear they will find out. Those who revere the Dao and uphold its tenets are similar to people cautiously stopping in the middle of doing something. People should always remain in a state of dread and awe like this.

145 See Figure 8 line 16.

146 See Figure 8 lines 16–17.

147 See Figure 8 line 18.

148 See Figure 8 lines 18–20.

149 See Figure 8 line 20.

150 See Figure 8 lines 21–23.

儼若客;<sup>151</sup>

dignified as if a guest;

謙不敢犯惡，若客坐主人堂也。<sup>152</sup>

To be modest and not dare show one's disdain is to resemble a guest sitting in the ruler's hall.

散若冰將洶;<sup>153</sup>

dispersant as if ice about to melt;

情慾思慮怒熹惡事，道所不欲，心欲規之，便即制止解散，令如冰見日散洶。<sup>154</sup>

Lust, worry, anger, delight, and evil, are things the Dao does not desire. The heart-mind desires to regulate them but they must not be allowed to disperse otherwise they will be like ice facing the sun and melting away.

混若樸；曠若谷；<sup>155</sup>

chaotic as if simplicity; extensive as if a valley;

勉信道真，棄耶知守本樸。無他思慮，心中曠曠但信道，如谷冰之志，東流欲歸海也。<sup>156</sup>

Endeavor to trust the genuineness of the Dao, reject depraved knowledge, and guard one's root in simplicity. If a person has no other worries than making sure their heart-mind contains widespread trust of the Dao, they will be like ice in a valley desiring to flow east and return to the sea.

肫若濁。濁以靜之徐清，<sup>157</sup>

pure simplicity as if turbid. In stillness the turbid slowly turns clear,

求生之人，與不謝，奪不恨，不隨俗轉移，真思志道，學知清靜，意當時如癡濁也。以能癡濁，樸且欲就矣。然後清靜能睹眾微，內自清明，不欲於俗。清靜大要，道微所樂，天地湛然，則雲超露吐，萬物滋潤。迅雷風趣，則漢燥物疼，道氣隱藏，常不周處。人法天地，

151 See Figure 8 line 23.

152 See Figure 8 line 23.

153 See Figure 9 line 1.

154 See Figure 9 lines 1–2.

155 See Figure 9 lines 2–3.

156 See Figure 9 lines 3–5.

157 See Figure 9 line 5.



故不得燥處；常清靜為務，晨暮露上下，人身氣亦布至，師設晨暮清靜為大要，故雖天地有失，為人為誠，輒能自反，還歸道素，人德不及，若其有失，遂去不顧，致當自約持也。<sup>158</sup>

For those people seeking life, give it to them and they will not decline; snatch it away and they will not be resentful. Thus, they do not follow the turns and shifts of the vulgar but keep their genuine thoughts devoted to the Dao in order to study and know the clear and still but whose meaning at the time seemed foolish and turbid. In this foolishness and turbidity, simplicity allowed them to reach what they desire. Having attained the clear and still they can see all that is profound, and being inwardly clear and luminous, they do not desire the vulgar. The essentials of the clear and still are what the profound Dao delights in, calming Heaven and Earth, which results in the ascension of clouds and emergence of dew, moistening the myriad things. With claps of thunder and gusts of wind, extreme dryness brings pain to things and the breath of the Dao is concealed, not staying put for long. People who model themselves after Heaven and Earth will thus avoid such a dry situation; constantly pursuing the clear and quiet, the morning and evening dew rises and falls, and the breath of the human body is evenly distributed. The master has constructed the essentials of the clear and still for morning and evening, and although Heaven and Earth make mistakes, these are tenets for the people who can revert themselves and return to the simplicity of the Dao. Human virtue is not like this, for when they make mistakes, they leave without looking back, hence people must persist with self-restraint.

安以動之徐生，<sup>159</sup>

moving calmly so as to bring things to life,

人欲舉事，先考之道誠，安思其義不犯道，乃徐施之，生道不去。<sup>160</sup>

People who desire to do something should first inspect it against the tenets of the Dao and calmly think of its meaning to avoid violating the Dao. If they slowly apply it, the Dao of life will not depart.

保此道者不欲盈。<sup>161</sup>

in protecting this Dao, they do not desire fullness.

158 See Figure 9 lines 5–14.

159 See Figure 9 lines 14–15.

160 See Figure 9 lines 15–16.

161 See Figure 9 line 16.

不欲志意盈溢，思念惡事也。<sup>162</sup>

They do not desire their aspirations overflow or contemplate evil matters.

夫唯不盈，能弊復成。<sup>163</sup>

As they alone were not full, they can be worn out yet remain complete.

尸死為弊，尸生為成，獨能守道不盈溢，故能攻弊為成耳。<sup>164</sup>

The corpse that dies is worn out while the corpse that lives is complete; however, the person who alone guards the Dao and does not let it overflow can work at turning the worn out into the complete.

*The above corresponds to section 15 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

致虛極，守靜篤。<sup>165</sup>

To reach the very extreme of emptiness, earnestly guard stillness.

道真自有常度，人不能明之，必復企慕，世間常偽伎，因出教授，指形名道，令處所，服色長短有分數，而思想之，苦極無福報，此虛詐耳。強欲令虛詐為真，甚極，不如守靜自篤也。<sup>166</sup>

The genuineness of the Dao is its own constant measure which people cannot understand but still try to admire. Those who constantly deceive the world rely on teaching, pointing to the forms of things, and naming them the Dao. They give them a dwelling, colored clothes, and particular dimensions from which they can think about them, but such extreme hardship has no reward. This is their empty deception. Such people stubbornly desire to make this empty deception genuine, but doing so is not as good as guarding stillness and one's self-devotion.

萬物並作，吾以觀其復。夫物云云，各歸其根。<sup>167</sup>

As the myriad things emerge together, I observe their return. When things are in a state of fullness, each will return to its root.

162 See Figure 9 line 17.

163 See Figure 9 lines 17–18.

164 See Figure 9 lines 18–19.

165 See Figure 9 line 19.

166 See Figure 9 lines 19–23.

167 See Figure 9 line 23, Figure 10 line 1.

萬物含道精，並作，初生超時也。吾，道也。觀其精復時，皆歸其根，故令人寶慎根也。<sup>168</sup>

The myriad things contain the essence of the Dao. Emerging together is the time when life starts. I, the Dao. Observing the return of its essence is to say all things return to their root, thus people should treasure and take care of their own root.

歸根曰靜，<sup>169</sup>

To return to the root is known as stillness,

道氣歸根，愈當清淨矣。<sup>170</sup>

When the breath of the Dao returns to its root, one should be even more clear and still.

靜曰復命。復命曰常。<sup>171</sup>

stillness is known as returning to fate. Returning to fate is known as constancy.

知寶根清靜，復命之常法也。<sup>172</sup>

Knowing to treasure the root in the clear and still is to return fate to its model of constancy.

知常明，<sup>173</sup>

To know the constant is to be luminous;

知此常法，乃為明耳。<sup>174</sup>

Knowing this model of constancy is to be luminous.

不知常，妄作凶。<sup>175</sup>

not knowing constancy, recklessness produces disaster.

世常偽伎，不知常意，妄有指書，故悉凶。<sup>176</sup>

168 See Figure 10 lines 1–3.

169 See Figure 10 line 3.

170 See Figure 10 lines 3–4.

171 See Figure 10 line 4.

172 See Figure 10 lines 4–5.

173 See Figure 10 line 5.

174 See Figure 10 lines 5–6.

175 See Figure 10 line 6.

176 See Figure 10 lines 6–7.

Those who constantly deceive the world do not know what constancy intends. Recklessly pointing to their texts, all they do is disastrous.

知常容;<sup>177</sup>

Who knows constancy is all-embracing;

知常法意，常保形容。<sup>178</sup>

Knowing what the model of constancy intends, they constantly protect their form and appearance.

容能公,<sup>179</sup>

who is all-embracing can be impartial,

以道保形容，為天地上容，處天地間不畏死，故公也。<sup>180</sup>

With the Dao protecting their form and appearance, they submit their appearance to Heaven and Earth while dwelling between them without fear of dying, thus they are impartial.

公能生,<sup>181</sup>

being impartial they can live,

能行道公政，故常生也。<sup>182</sup>

They can move with the Dao and govern impartially, thus they are long-lived.

生能天,<sup>183</sup>

living they can be Heavenly,

能致長生，則副天也。<sup>184</sup>

If they can incur longevity of life, they will assist Heaven.

177 See Figure 10 line 7.

178 See Figure 10 line 7.

179 See Figure 10 line 8.

180 See Figure 10 lines 8–9.

181 See Figure 10 line 9.

182 See Figure 10 line 9.

183 See Figure 10 line 10.

184 See Figure 10 line 10.

天能道,<sup>185</sup>

being Heavenly they can be with the Dao,

天能久生，法道故也。<sup>186</sup>

That Heaven can prolong life is because it models itself after the Dao.

道能久;<sup>187</sup>

and being with the Dao they endure;

人法道意，便能長久也。<sup>188</sup>

If people model themselves after the intentions of the Dao, they can be everlasting.

沒身不殆。<sup>189</sup>

they eliminate their body but do not perish.

太陰道積，練形之宮也。世有不可處，賢者避去，託死過太陰中；而復一邊生像，沒而不殆也。俗人不能積善行，死便真死，屬地官去也。<sup>190</sup>

Great Yin is an amassing of the Dao, a palace that people visit to cultivate and refine their form. When there is nowhere in the world they can dwell, the worthy person goes into hiding and relies on death to pass through Great Yin. When their resemblance is born again on the other side, it is as if they died without perishing. The vulgar person cannot amass good acts and so when they die, they are genuinely dead and sent off to serve the Officials of Earth.

*The above corresponds to section 16 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

太上下知有之;<sup>191</sup>

In high antiquity, people knew of its existence;

185 See Figure 10 line 10.

186 See Figure 10 lines 10–11.

187 See Figure 10 line 11.

188 See Figure 10 line 11.

189 See Figure 10 line 12.

190 See Figure 10 lines 12–15.

191 See Figure 10 line 15.

知道，上知也，知也。惡事，下知也。雖有上知，當具識惡事，改之不敢為也。<sup>192</sup>

To know the Dao is to have superior knowledge, the knowledge of the Dao. Evil matters belong to inferior knowledge. Although the people in antiquity had superior knowledge, they were also aware of evil matters and changed them so that no one dared act upon them.

其次，親之譽之；<sup>193</sup>

in the next period, people were drawn close and praised it;

見求善之人曉道意，可親也。見學善之人懃懃者，可就譽也。復教勸之，勉力助道宣教。<sup>194</sup>

To see people searching for goodness in order to understand the intentions of the Dao, draw them close. To see people studying goodness and work diligently to get it, draw them close and praise them. To continuously teach and advise them, they can assist the Dao by announcing its teachings.

其次畏之；<sup>195</sup>

in the next period, they feared it;

見惡人，誠為說善，其人聞義則服，可教改也，就申道誠示之，畏以天威，令自改也。<sup>196</sup>

To see an evil person, warn them of their actions and speak with them about goodness. When others hear your intentions, they can be convinced to learn about changing their ways. In showing them the application of the Dao's tenets and frightening them with the force of Heaven, they will change of their own accord.

侮之。<sup>197</sup>

in the next period, they insulted it.

192 See Figure 10 lines 15–17.

193 See Figure 10 line 17.

194 See Figure 10 lines 17–19.

195 See Figure 10 line 19.

196 See Figure 10 lines 19–21.

197 See Figure 10 line 21.

為惡人說善，不化而甫笑之者，此即芻狗之徒耳，非人也，可欺侮之，勿與語也。<sup>198</sup>

In speaking of goodness to a person who is evil, they will not be transformed and simply laugh at you. They follow straw dogs not people, and since they bully others, do not speak to them.

信不足，有不信。<sup>199</sup>

If trust is insufficient, there will be no trust.

芻狗之徒，內信不足，故不信善人之言也。<sup>200</sup>

Followers of straw dogs have an inner trust that is insufficient, thus they do not trust the words of the good person.

猶其貴言，成功事遂。<sup>201</sup>

This resembles how when words are valued, accomplished matters follow.

道之所言，無一可棄者，得仙之士，但貴道言，故輒成功事遂也。<sup>202</sup>

Of all the words of the Dao, not one can be rejected. The gentleman who attains transcendence does so by valuing the words of the Dao, hence accomplished matters always follow him.

百姓謂我自然。<sup>203</sup>

The common people refer to me as being natural.

我，仙士也，百姓不學我，有貴信道言以致此功，而意我自然，當示不肯企及效我也。<sup>204</sup>

The word I refers to the transcendent gentleman. The common people do not study me but value the trust they have in the words of the Dao to reach this success; taking my intentions to be natural, those unwilling to imitate me should be instructed.

*The above corresponds to section 17 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

198 See Figure 10 lines 21–22, Figure 11 line 1.

199 See Figure 11 line 1.

200 See Figure 11 lines 1–2.

201 See Figure 11 line 2.

202 See Figure 11 lines 3–4.

203 See Figure 11 line 4.

204 See Figure 11 lines 4–6.

大道廢，有仁義;<sup>205</sup>

When the great Dao is discarded, there is humaneness and right conduct;

上古道用時，以人為名，皆行仁義，同相像類，仁義不別。今道不用，人悉弊薄，時有一人行義，便共表別之，故言有也。<sup>206</sup>

When the Dao was used in antiquity, the people who gave it a name all moved with humaneness and right conduct, and because they belong to the same class, humaneness and right conduct were not separated. Today, the Dao is not used and the people are all lost. Should there appear one person who moves with right conduct, they will be shown respect others are not, thus we have these words.

智慧出，有大偽;<sup>207</sup>

when wisdom and intelligence appear, there is great deception;

真道藏，耶文出，世間常偽伎稱道教，皆為大偽不可用。何謂耶文？其五經半入耶，其五經以外，眾書傳記、尸人所作，悉耶耳。<sup>208</sup>

When the genuine Dao is concealed, depraved writings appear, and the use of these false arts of the world is called Daoist religion. They belong to a great deception and must not be used. What is meant by depraved writings? There are five scriptures of which one-half are depraved, while of those beyond the five scriptures, many are biographies and records written by corpse people, hence they are depraved.

六親不和，有孝慈;<sup>209</sup>

when the six relationships lack harmony, there is piety and kindness;

道用時，家家慈孝，皆同相類，慈孝不別。今道不用，人不慈孝，六親不和；時有一人行慈孝，便共表別之，故言有也。<sup>210</sup>

When the Dao was used, each family had kindness and piety and being of the same class, kindness and piety were not separated. Today, the Dao is not used and the people lack kindness and piety, hence the six relationships lack harmony. Should there appear one person who moves with

205 See Figure 11 line 6.

206 See Figure 11 lines 7–9.

207 See Figure 11 line 9.

208 See Figure 11 lines 9–12.

209 See Figure 11 line 12.

210 See Figure 11 lines 12–15.



kindness and piety, they will be shown respect others are not, thus we have these words.

國家昏亂，有忠臣。<sup>211</sup>

when the kingdom is in disarray, there are loyal ministers.

道用時，帝王躬奉行之，練明其意，以臣庶於此，吏民莫有不法效者。知道意賤死貴仙，競行忠孝質樸，□端以臣為名，皆忠相類不別。今道不用，臣皆學耶文習權詐隨心情，面言善內懷惡；時有一人行忠誠，便共表別之，故言有也。道用時，臣忠子孝，國則易治，時臣子不畏君父也，乃畏天神。孝其行不得仙壽，故自至誠，既為忠孝，不欲令君父知，自嘿而行，欲蒙天報。設君父知之，必賞以高官，報以意氣，如此功盡，天福不至。是故嘿而行之，不欲見功。今之臣子雖忠孝，皆欲以買君父求功名，過時不顯異之，便屏怒之，言無所知。此類外是內非，無至誠感天之行，故令國難治。今欲復此，疾要在帝王當專心信道誠也。<sup>212</sup>

When the Dao was used, the monarch personally upheld it and worked at illuminating its intentions. He made himself its subject and none of his officials or the common people dared not imitate him. In order to know the intentions of the Dao, the monarch abased death and valued transcendence, vying for loyalty and piety in simplicity, [...] was upright in selecting his ministers, all of whom were loyal and belonged to the same class. Today, the Dao is not used and ministers study writings that are depraved and practice trickery to follow the intentions of the king. While their faces and words appear good, their breasts contain evil. Should there appear one person who moves with loyalty and sincerity, they will be shown respect others are not, thus we have these words. When the Dao was used, ministers were loyal and sons were filial, making the state easy to govern. Although these ministers and sons were not afraid of their ruler and fathers, they feared the spirits of Heaven. Neither moving with piety nor acquiring the worthy person's longevity, they attained ultimate sincerity; moving with loyalty and piety, they hid from their ruler and fathers and moved in silence, hoping to elicit a response from Heaven. If their ruler and fathers knew of this, they would be compelled to bestow upon them positions of high office and treat them with bias. Such being the case, their accomplishments will be exhausted and the good fortune of Heaven will not reach them. This is why they moved in silence and

<sup>211</sup> See Figure 11 line 15.

<sup>212</sup> See Figure 11 lines 15–22, Figure 12 lines 1–6.

desired not to make their accomplishments visible. The officials and sons of today have loyalty and piety, but all of them wish to bribe their ruler and fathers for success and fame. However, if time passes and there is no noticeable change in response from their ruler or fathers, they will shield their anger and say no one knows it. This type of person is externally right but inwardly wrong, not acting with the ultimate sincerity needed to affect Heaven, hence the state is hard to govern. Wanting to return to a time when the Dao is used, it is essential that the monarch wholeheartedly believes in the tenets of the Dao.

*The above corresponds to section 18 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

絕聖棄知，民利百倍，<sup>213</sup>

Cut off the sage and reject knowledge, and the common people will benefit a hundredfold;

謂詐聖知耶文者，夫聖人天所挺生，必有表，河雒著名。然常宣真，不至受有誤耶道，不信明聖人之言，故令千百歲大聖演真，滌除耶文。今人無狀，裁通經藝，未貫道真，便自稱聖，不因本，而章篇自揆，不能得道言；先為身，不勸民真道可得仙壽，脩善自慙。反言仙自有骨錄，非行所臻，云無生道，道書欺人。此乃罪盈三千，為大惡人，至令後學者不復信道，元元不旋，子不念供養，民不念田，但逐耶學，傾側師門，盡氣誦病，到於窮年，會不能忠孝至誠感天，民治身不能仙壽，佐君不能致太平；民用此不息，倍城邑虛空，是故絕詐聖邪知，不絕真聖道知也。<sup>214</sup>

This speaks to deceptive sages and their knowledge of depraved writings. As the sage is given an exceptional life by Heaven, there must be an expression of it, hence the Yellow and Luo rivers declare his name. The sage constantly pronounces the genuine and does not receive erroneous or depraved ways, or people not trusting his illuminating words, thus for centuries and millennia the great sage has acted out the genuine so as to clear away depraved writings. Today, people lack merit and cut through the Classics and arts without having encountered the genuineness of the Dao, referring to themselves as sages without following the root of the Dao, taking the writings of the Classics as their standard and failing to acquire the words of the Dao. Putting their bodies first, they do not persuade the common people that with the genuine Dao they can acquire

<sup>213</sup> See Figure 12 lines 6–7.

<sup>214</sup> See Figure 12 lines 7–18.

the longevity of the transcendent gentleman, repair their goodness, and become self-diligent. Instead, they say the transcendent gentleman's fate is recorded in their bones and cannot be deliberately achieved. They also say that there is no Dao of life and that Daoist writings deceive people. This is a crime whose penalty amounts to a full three thousand tallies which brings great harm to people, especially those who later wish to study the Dao despite not trusting it. In this way, the original circularity of things is lost, with sons no longer thinking of the needs of their fathers, and the common people no longer thinking of their fields; they only follow depraved learning and crowd around the master's gate to try and get it. They exhaust their breath reciting these diseased teachings until the end of their lives, discovering they cannot sincerely affect Heaven through loyalty and piety, that governing their bodies cannot produce the longevity of the transcendent gentleman, and that assisting their ruler cannot result in a lasting peace. The people use these without rest such that the capital and other cities are abandoned and is why we should cut off deceptive sages and their perverse knowledge while keeping the genuine sage and his knowledge of the Dao.

絕仁棄義，民復孝慈；<sup>215</sup>

cut off humanness and reject right conduct, and the people will return to piety and kindness.

治國法道，聽任天下仁義之人，勿得強賞也。所以者，尊大其化，廣開道心，人為仁義，自當至誠，天自賞之，不至誠者，天自罰之；天察必審於人，皆知尊道畏天，仁義便至誠矣。今王政強賞之，民不復歸天，見人可欺，便詐為仁義，欲求祿賞。旁人雖知其邪，交見得官祿，便復慕之，詐為仁義，終不相及也。世人察之不審，故絕之勿賞，民悉自復慈孝矣。此義平忤俗夫心，久久自解，與道合矣，人君深當明之也。<sup>216</sup>

If one governs the state by modelling it after the Dao, the people of the world using humaneness and right conduct will not require force or reward. Thus, when people greatly revere the transformation and broadening of their heart-mind by the Dao, they will act with humaneness and right conduct, reach sincerity on their own, and so be rewarded by Heaven. For those people not reaching sincerity on their own, Heaven will penalize them. Heaven examines things in greater detail than humanity

<sup>215</sup> See Figure 12 lines 18–19.

<sup>216</sup> See Figure 12 lines 19–23, Figure 13 lines 1–4.

and knows who reveres the Dao and who fears Heaven, thus all instances of humaneness and right conduct are sincere. Today, the king rules with force and rewards while the people abandon Heaven; seeing a chance for deception, they falsely use humaneness and right conduct to secure blessings and rewards. Although those nearby know this is perverse, they see how such acts result in official titles and praise but still deceive others with humaneness and right conduct such that the cycle is endless. The people of the world examining this do not investigate it deeply enough; if they are never rewarded, they will all return to kindness and piety. This intention is wrong even for the vulgar person who, after a great deal of time has passed, resolves things themselves and merges with the Dao. The ruler must truly understand this.

絕巧棄利，盜賊無有。<sup>217</sup>

cut off skill and reject profit, and robbers and thieves will cease to be.

耶巧也，利、所得財寶也，世不用之，盜賊亦不利也。<sup>218</sup>

This refers to skills that are depraved; profit refers to the treasures acquired from such skills. If the world no longer uses them, robbers and thieves will not benefit from them either.

此三言為文未足，故令有所屬，見素抱樸，<sup>219</sup>

These three sayings are not sufficient to serve a person's writings, so here is something they can use: observe the plain and embrace simplicity,

三事、天下大亂之源，欲演散之、億文復不足，竹素不勝受矣。故令屬此道文，不在外書也。揲說其大略，可知之為亂原。<sup>220</sup>

These three matters are the source of great disarray in the world and if a person wishes to prolong their dispersal, an innumerable number of texts will still be insufficient as there is not enough bamboo and silk on hand to write them. Thus, there is a class of writings on the Dao which cannot be found anywhere else. Accumulating these sayings to form a great summary, we know they are the origin of disarray.

217 See Figure 13 lines 4–5.

218 See Figure 13 lines 5–6.

219 See Figure 13 line 6.

220 See Figure 13 lines 7–9.

少私寡欲。<sup>221</sup>

reduce self-interest and have few desires.

道之所說無私，少欲於世俗耳。<sup>222</sup>

When the Dao says no self-interest, it means making few one's desires for the vulgarity of the world.

*The above corresponds to section 19 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

絕學無憂。唯之與何，相去幾何？<sup>223</sup>

Cut off learning and there will be no worry. Between yea and yes, what is the difference?

未知者復怪問之，絕耶學，道與之何？耶與道相去近遠？絕耶學，獨守道，道必與之；耶道與耶學甚遠，道生耶死，死屬地，生屬天，故極遠。<sup>224</sup>

Those not yet having knowledge still ask: If a person cuts off depraved learning, what will the Dao give them in return? How large is the difference between the depraved and the Dao? To cut off depraved learning and singularly guard the Dao, the Dao must be with them. The difference between the Dao and depraved learning is immense. The Dao is life while the depraved is death. Death belongs to Earth while life belongs to Heaven, thus their separation is immeasurable.

美之與惡，相去何若？<sup>225</sup>

The beautiful and the grotesque, what is the difference?

未知者復怪問之，欲知美其惡相去近遠，何如道與耶學近遠也？今等耳。美，善也。生故屬天，惡死亦屬地也。<sup>226</sup>

Those not yet having knowledge still ask: If one desires to know the difference between the beautiful and grotesque, how does it compare to the difference between the Dao and depraved learning? It is the same. The beautiful, what is good. Life thus belongs to Heaven while the grotesque is death and so belongs to Earth.

221 See Figure 13 line 9.

222 See Figure 13 lines 9–10.

223 See Figure 13 line 10.

224 See Figure 13 lines 11–13.

225 See Figure 13 lines 13–14.

226 See Figure 13 lines 14–16.

人之所畏，不可不畏。莽其未央!<sup>227</sup>

What all people fear cannot be avoided. The majority have yet to reach the center!

道設生以賞善，設死以威惡。死是人之所畏也，仙王士與俗人同知畏死樂生，但所行異耳。俗人莽莽，未央脫死也，俗人雖畏死，端不信道，好為惡事，奈何未央脫死乎。仙士畏死，信道守誠，故與生合也。<sup>228</sup>

The Dao constructs life to reward goodness and death to dominate evil. Death is what all people fear. The transcendent king and gentleman, along with vulgar people, all know to fear death and enjoy life but their paths differ. Vulgar people are numerous but they have yet to reach the center and escape death. Although vulgar people fear death, to the end of their years they will not trust the Dao but instead find pleasure in matters that are evil. How is it they are not yet centered to escape death? The transcendent gentleman fears death, trusts the Dao and guards its tenets, thus he merges with life.

眾人熙熙，若亨大牢，若春登臺;<sup>229</sup>

The multitude of people are at ease, as if partaking in a grand banquet or ascending a lookout in spring;

眾俗之人，不信道，樂為惡事，若飲食之，春登高臺也。<sup>230</sup>

The multitude of vulgar people do not trust the Dao but enjoy evil matters such as indulging in drink and food, or ascending a lookout in spring.

我魄未兆，若嬰兒未孩；軀無所歸。<sup>231</sup>

my soul has yet to indicate its presence, like an infant who has yet to become a child; the ladle has nowhere to return to.

我、仙士也。但樂信道守誠，不樂惡事，至惡事之間，無心意如嬰兒未生時也。<sup>232</sup>

I, the transcendent gentleman. Enjoying their trust of the Dao and guarding its tenets, they do not take joy in evil matters. Being in the middle of

227 See Figure 13 lines 16–17.

228 See Figure 13 lines 17–21.

229 See Figure 13 line 21.

230 See Figure 13 lines 22–23.

231 See Figure 13 line 23.

232 See Figure 13 line 23, Figure 14 lines 1–2.

evil matters, their heart-mind has no intentions, like an infant not yet born.

眾人皆有餘，我獨若遺。<sup>233</sup>

The multitude of people have a surplus, I alone appear destitute.

眾俗人懷惡，常有餘意計念思慮；仙士意中都遺忘之，無所有也。<sup>234</sup>

The multitude of vulgar people have evil in their breasts, a constant surplus of intentions, schemes, and considerations; the intentions of the transcendent gentleman have all been forgotten, hence nothing exists for him.

我愚人之心純純！<sup>235</sup>

I and the foolish person have a heart-mind of pure simplicity!

仙士味道，不知俗事，純純若癡也。<sup>236</sup>

The transcendent gentleman has a taste for the Dao but not knowing vulgar matters, he is pure and simple like a fool.

俗人照照，<sup>237</sup>

The vulgar person shines forth brightly,

俗人不信道，但見耶惡利得，照照甚明也。<sup>238</sup>

The vulgar person does not trust the Dao, yet seeing the depraved, evil, and profit to be had, he shines forth brightly and is illuminated.

我獨若昏；<sup>239</sup>

I alone appear as if confused;

仙士閉心，不思慮耶惡利得，若昏昏冥也。<sup>240</sup>

233 See Figure 14 lines 2–3.

234 See Figure 14 lines 3–4.

235 See Figure 14 line 4.

236 See Figure 14 lines 4–5.

237 See Figure 14 line 5.

238 See Figure 14 lines 5–6.

239 See Figure 14 line 6.

240 See Figure 14 lines 6–7.

The transcendent gentleman has a closed heart-mind and does not consider the depraved, evil, and profit to be had, as if he were confused and obscure.

俗人察察,<sup>241</sup>

the vulgar person is clear and obvious,

知俗事審明也。<sup>242</sup>

Their knowledge of vulgar matters is most obvious.

我獨悶悶。<sup>243</sup>

I alone am dark and gloomy.

不知俗事也。<sup>244</sup>

I do not know vulgar matters.

忽若晦，寂無所止。<sup>245</sup>

Undifferentiated as if dark, a singularity that is endless.

仙士意志道如晦，思臥安床，不復雜俗事也。精思止於道，不止於俗事也。<sup>246</sup>

The will of the transcendent gentleman is directed at the Dao, like darkness. Thinking peacefully while lying in bed, he does not get mixed up with vulgar matters. His careful thinking stops with the Dao and not vulgar matters.

眾人皆有已，我獨頑以鄙。<sup>247</sup>

The multitude of people have reasons for stopping, I alone am stubborn and rustic.

俗人於世間，自有財寶功名；仙士於俗，如頑鄙也。<sup>248</sup>

241 See Figure 14 line 7.

242 See Figure 14 lines 7–8.

243 See Figure 14 line 8.

244 See Figure 14 line 8.

245 See Figure 14 line 8.

246 See Figure 14 lines 9–10.

247 See Figure 14 lines 10–11.

248 See Figure 14 lines 11–12.



The vulgar people of the world have their valuable goods and achievements; the transcendent gentleman regards such vulgarity as stupid and obtuse.

我欲異於人，而貴食母。<sup>249</sup>

I desire to be different from others, to value the food of the mother.

仙士與俗人異，不貴榮祿財寶，但貴食母者，身也，於內為胃，主五藏氣。俗人食穀，穀絕便死；仙士有穀食之，無則食氣，氣歸胃，即腸重囊也。腹之為實，前章已說之矣。<sup>250</sup>

The transcendent gentleman is different from the vulgar person in not valuing glory, titles, and precious goods but the food of the mother and his body, within which is the stomach that rules the breath of the five viscera. The vulgar person consumes grain but if it is cut off, they will die; the transcendent gentleman consumes grain when he can but if he cannot, he will consume breath, as breath returns to the stomach which is the layered pouch of the intestines. As for the fullness of the stomach, it was discussed in a previous section.

*The above corresponds to section 20 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

孔德之容，唯道是從。<sup>251</sup>

The form of great virtue only comes from following the Dao.

道甚大，教孔丘為知；後世不信道文，但上孔書，以為無上；道故明之，告後賢。<sup>252</sup>

The Dao is vast and taught Confucius what to know. Later generations did not trust writings about the Dao but upheld the books of Confucius, believing nothing surpassed them. The Dao thus illuminates things on behalf of worthy persons in the future.

道之為物，唯恍唯惚。<sup>253</sup>

Taking the Dao as a thing, it alone is indistinct and confused.

249 See Figure 14 line 12.

250 See Figure 14 lines 12–16.

251 See Figure 14 line 16.

252 See Figure 14 lines 16–18.

253 See Figure 14 line 18.

道微，獨能恍惚不可見也。<sup>254</sup>

The Dao is profound although we cannot see it, it alone is indistinct and confused.

恍惚中有物；惚恍中有像。<sup>255</sup>

It is indistinct and confused but contains things; it is confused and indistinct yet contains images.

不可以道不見故輕也，中有大神氣，故喻囊蓄。<sup>256</sup>

Do not make light of the Dao because it cannot be seen, for it contains a great spiritual breath, thus it is akin to a smelter's pole and pouch.

窈冥中有精。<sup>257</sup>

Obscure and profound, it has essence.

大除中也，有道精，分之與萬物，萬物精共一本。<sup>258</sup>

Within its great districts, the essence of the Dao is divided amongst the myriad things, hence the essence of the myriad things shares one root.

其精甚真，<sup>259</sup>

Its essence is deeply genuine,

生死之官也，精其真，當寶之也。<sup>260</sup>

The officials of life and death have essences that are genuine, hence they should be treasured.

其中有信。<sup>261</sup>

and within it there is trust.

古仙士寶精以生，今人失精以死，大信也。今但結精便可得生乎？不也，要諸行當備。所以精者，道之別氣也，入人身中為根本，持其半，乃先言之。夫欲寶精，百行當脩，萬善當著，調和五

254 See Figure 14 lines 18–19.

255 See Figure 14 line 19.

256 See Figure 14 lines 19–20.

257 See Figure 14 line 20.

258 See Figure 14 lines 20–21.

259 See Figure 14 lines 21–22.

260 See Figure 14 line 22.

261 See Figure 14 line 22.

行，意怒悉去，天曹左契，算有餘數，精乃守之。惡人竇精，唐自若終不居，必自泄漏也。心應規，制萬事，故號明堂三道，布陽耶陰害，以中正度道氣。精並喻像池水，身為池堤封，善行為水源，若斯三備，池乃全堅。心不專善，無堤封，水必去。行善不積，源不通，水必燥乾。決水溉野渠如溪江，雖堤在，源汩泄必亦空，岩燥斫裂，百病並生。斯三不慎，池為空坑也。<sup>262</sup>

The transcendent gentleman of antiquity treasured his essence and lived, while people today lose their essence and die. This is a great truth. Can people simply collect together their essence and acquire life? No. They must first prepare all necessary movements. This being so, essence is a different breath of the Dao, one that enters people's bodies as their source and root. On the effects of holding just half of it, this was discussed earlier. As for the person wishing to treasure their essence, they should cultivate it through the hundred kinds of movement, manifest it through the myriad kinds of goodness, harmonize it with the five elements, and discard delight and anger such that when the Officers of Heaven count the tallies on the left, if the life-count has a remainder, their essence will be guarded. The evil person wishing to treasure their essence strives without end yet their essence fails to reside within them because it leaks out. This is why the heart-mind responds like a compass, controlling a myriad of matters, thus it is called the Three Dao's of Illumination Hall. It spreads depraved Yang and harmful Yin, using the center as the correct measure of the breath of the Dao. Essence can be likened to a pool of water, with the body serving as the pool's embankment and good actions serving as the water's source. When these three are complete, the pool will be supremely strong. Should the heart-mind not focus on what is good, there will be no embankment and the water will depart. When good actions are not amassed, the pool's source will not be connected and the water will dry up. Should one decide to irrigate the fields using a trench as if it were a stream or river, although the embankment exists, the flow of water from the source will become depleted, its rocks will burn and crack, and the hundred diseases will appear. In not treating these three things with care, the pool will turn into an empty ditch.

自古及今，其名不去，<sup>263</sup>

From antiquity until the present, its name has not been discarded,

<sup>262</sup> See Figure 14 line 23, Figure 15 lines 1–10.

<sup>263</sup> See Figure 15 line 11.

古今常共此一道，不去離人也。<sup>264</sup>

Antiquity and the present share this singular Dao which has yet to abandon people.

以閱終甫。<sup>265</sup>

and is how it views ending and beginning.

道有以來，更閱終始非一也。甫者、始也。<sup>266</sup>

From the time of Dao's arising, it has observed the disparity between ending and beginning. Beginning is to start.

吾何以知終甫之然？以此。<sup>267</sup>

How do I know ending and beginning are such? Because of this.

吾、道也，所以知古今終始共此一道，其事如此也。<sup>268</sup>

I, the Dao, therefore we know antiquity and the present, ending and beginning, share this one Dao. This is how it is.

*The above corresponds to section 21 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

曲則全，<sup>269</sup>

The bent becomes complete,

謙也，月謙，先曲後全明；學道反俗，當時如曲不足也，後亦全明。<sup>270</sup>

Modesty is like the declining moon, which at first is bent but becomes completely illuminated. To study the Dao is the opposite of studying the vulgar in that one is at first bent and insufficient but becomes completely illuminated.

枉則正，<sup>271</sup>

the crooked becomes straight,

264 See Figure 15 lines 11–12.

265 See Figure 15 line 12.

266 See Figure 15 lines 12–13.

267 See Figure 15 line 13.

268 See Figure 15 lines 13–14.

269 See Figure 15 line 14.

270 See Figure 15 lines 15–16.

271 See Figure 15 line 16.

枉亦曲也，曲變則正；學道反俗，獨自懃苦，當時如相侵枉也，後致正。<sup>272</sup>

To be crooked is to be bent, and the bent transforms by becoming straight. To study the Dao is the opposite of studying the vulgar. Alone in enduring toilsome hardship, one is at first intrusive and crooked but becomes straight.

窅則盈，<sup>273</sup>

the hollow becomes full,

謙虛意也。行無惡，其處空；道喻水，喜歸空，居惡處便為善，炁歸滿，故盈。<sup>274</sup>

Hollow means open-minded. If one moves without doing evil, emptiness will replace it; the Dao is akin to water in that it enjoys returning to emptiness. If one dwells where there is evil and does good, the breath of the Dao will return full, thus there is fullness.

弊則新，<sup>275</sup>

the worn out becomes new,

物弊變更新，學道羸弊，後更致新福也。<sup>276</sup>

Things worn out are newly transformed. Those who study the Dao will become exhausted and worn out but later receive a new form of good fortune.

少則得，多則或。<sup>277</sup>

the few becomes obtainable, the many leads to bewilderment.

陳力殖穀，裁令自足，天與之。無基考可得福，多望不止則或；或，耶歸之也。<sup>278</sup>

If a person contributes to the planting of grain, the harvest will make them self-sufficient; the reason is Heaven gave it to them. When there is no base to verify if someone will acquire good fortune, having endless

272 See Figure 15 lines 16–17.

273 See Figure 15 lines 17–18.

274 See Figure 15 lines 18–19.

275 See Figure 15 line 19.

276 See Figure 15 lines 19–20.

277 See Figure 15 line 20.

278 See Figure 15 lines 21–22.

hope will result in bewilderment. To be bewildered is to return to the depraved.

是以聖人抱一為天下式。<sup>279</sup>

This is why the sage embraces the One and is a model for the world.

一，道也。設誠，聖人之為抱一也，常教天下為法式也。<sup>280</sup>

The One, the Dao. With its tenets established, the sage moves by embracing the One, constantly teaching the world and serving as its model.

不自是，故章；<sup>281</sup>

Not self-conceited, he is remarkable;

明者樂之，就誠教之。不樂者，墨以不言，我是若非，勿與之爭也。<sup>282</sup>

For those who are illuminated, happily teach them the tenets of the Dao. For those who are unhappy, remain silent and do not say I am right and they are wrong. They are not to be contended with.

不自見，故明；<sup>283</sup>

not revealing himself, he is illuminated;

聖人法道，有功不多，不見德能也。<sup>284</sup>

The sage models himself after the Dao and does not take credit for his accomplishments, thus his virtue and abilities are unseen.

不自伐，故有功；<sup>285</sup>

not boastful, he has accomplishments;

惡者，伐身之斧也，聖人法道不為惡，故不伐身，常全其功也。<sup>286</sup>

Evil is the axe that cuts down the body. The sage models himself after the Dao and does not act on behalf of evil, thus he does not cut down his body and so completes his accomplishments.

279 See Figure 15 lines 22–23.

280 See Figure 15 line 23, Figure 16, line 1.

281 See Figure 16, line 1.

282 See Figure 16, line 1–2.

283 See Figure 16, line 2.

284 See Figure 16, line 3.

285 See Figure 16, line 3.

286 See Figure 16, lines 4–5.

不自矜，故長。<sup>287</sup>

not self-pitying, he is long lived.

聖人法道，但念積行，令身長生生之行；垢辱貧羸，不矜傷身，以好衣美其食與之也。<sup>288</sup>

The sage models himself after the Dao but thinks of amassing movements to grant his body longevity of life and give life to his movements. Shamed and destitute, he does not pity his injured body nor dress it in good clothing or give it fine food.

夫唯不爭，故莫能與爭。<sup>289</sup>

As he alone does not contend, none contend with him.

聖人不與俗人爭，有爭，避之高逝，俗人如何能與之共爭乎？<sup>290</sup>

The sage does not contend with vulgar people. Those wanting to contend with him are shunned by his fleeing on high. Such being the case, how can vulgar people contend with him?

古之所謂曲則全，豈虛語？故成全而歸之。<sup>291</sup>

When the ancients spoke of making the crooked complete, how are these empty words? Thus, one has only to achieve this completeness and return to it.

謙曲後全明，非虛語也；恐人不解，故重申示之也。<sup>292</sup>

A person must first modestly bend in order to be completely illuminated; this is not an empty saying. Fearing people will not grasp this, it is repeated here to show them.

*The above corresponds to section 22 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

希言自然。<sup>293</sup>

To speak seldomly is natural.

287 See Figure 16, line 5.

288 See Figure 16, lines 5–7.

289 See Figure 16, line 7.

290 See Figure 16, lines 7–8.

291 See Figure 16, line 9.

292 See Figure 16, lines 9–10.

293 See Figure 16, line 11.

自然、道也，樂清靜。希言，入清靜。合自然，可久也。<sup>294</sup>

The natural, the Dao. Enjoy what is clear and still. Speak seldomly to enter the clear and still. Merging with the natural, one can endure.

飄風不終朝，趁雨不終日。<sup>295</sup>

A whirlwind does not exceed one morning, a downpour does not exceed one day.

不合清靜自然，故不久竟日也。<sup>296</sup>

Not merging with the clear, still, and natural, they do not exceed one day.

孰為此？天地。<sup>297</sup>

Who does this? Heaven and Earth.

孰、誰也。天地為飄風趁雨，為人為誠不合道，故令不久也。<sup>298</sup>

Who, whom. Heaven and Earth make windstorms and downpours for people to serve as warnings for not merging with the Dao, thus they do not endure.

天地尚不能久，而況於人。<sup>299</sup>

Even Heaven and Earth are unable to endure, let alone people.

天地尚不能久，人欲為煩躁之事，思慮耶計，安能得久乎？<sup>300</sup>

As even Heaven and Earth cannot endure, people wish to engage in troubled and impetuous matters and ponder depraved schemes. From where can they acquire endurance?

故從事而道得之，<sup>301</sup>

Thus, follow its affairs and the Dao will be acquired,

294 See Figure 16, lines 11–12.

295 See Figure 16, line 12.

296 See Figure 16, lines 12–13.

297 See Figure 16, line 13.

298 See Figure 16, lines 13–14.

299 See Figure 16, line 15.

300 See Figure 16, lines 15–16.

301 See Figure 16, lines 16–17.



而、如也，人舉事令如道，道善欲得之曰自然也。<sup>302</sup>

And, as if. If people handle their affairs as if they were the Dao, the goodness of the Dao will want to be acquired by them and this is called natural.

同於德者德得之，<sup>303</sup>

be identical with its virtue and its virtue will be acquired,

人舉事與德合，德欲得之也。<sup>304</sup>

If people handle their affairs as if they were merging with virtue, virtue will desire to be acquired by them.

同於失者道失之。<sup>305</sup>

be identical with its loss and the Dao will be lost.

人舉事不懼畏道誠，失道意，道即去之，自然如此。<sup>306</sup>

If people handle their affairs without fearing the tenets of the Dao, they will lose the intentions of the Dao and the Dao will depart. The natural is like this.

信不足，有不信。<sup>307</sup>

If trust is insufficient, there will be no trust.

前章已說之也。<sup>308</sup>

This was discussed in an earlier section.

*The above corresponds to section 23 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

喘者不久，<sup>309</sup>

To gasp is to not endure,

302 See Figure 16, lines 17–18.

303 See Figure 16, line 18.

304 See Figure 16, lines 18–19.

305 See Figure 16, line 19.

306 See Figure 16, lines 19–20.

307 See Figure 16, lines 20–21.

308 See Figure 16, line 21.

309 See Figure 16, line 21.

用氣喘息，不合清靜，不可久也。<sup>310</sup>

A person using their breath while gasping and panting is not merging with the clear and still, hence they will not endure.

跨者不行。<sup>311</sup>

to stride is not to walk.

欲行千里，一步而始，積之以漸；今大跨而立，非能行者也，不可久也。<sup>312</sup>

A person wishing to walk one thousand *li* begins with one step and gradually adds more. The person who takes a great stride and then stands still is an inept walker, hence they cannot endure.

自見不明，自是不彰，自饒無功，自矜不長。<sup>313</sup>

The self-revealing is not illuminated, the self-conceited is not conspicuous, the self-abundant is not successful, and the self-pitying is not long lived.

復解前章之意耳。<sup>314</sup>

This again explains the meaning of an earlier section.

其在道。<sup>315</sup>

These exist in the Dao.

欲求仙壽天福要在信道，守誠守信，不為貳過；罪成結在天曹，右契無到而窮，不復在餘也。<sup>316</sup>

The quest for the transcendent gentleman's longevity and good fortune from Heaven comes from trusting the Dao, guarding its tenets and trusting them, and not committing offences. Any faults will be counted by the Officials of Heaven, and when the tallies on the right become depleted, there will be nothing left to sustain life.

310 See Figure 16, lines 21–22.

311 See Figure 16, line 22.

312 See Figure 16, lines 22–23, Figure 17 line 1.

313 See Figure 17 line 1.

314 See Figure 17 line 2.

315 See Figure 17 line 2.

316 See Figure 17 lines 2–4.

曰餘食餼行，物有惡之；<sup>317</sup>

It is said the use of leftover food as a tribute is something all things detest;

行道者生，失道者死；天之正法，不在祭餼禱祠也。道故禁祭餼禱祠，與之重罰。祭餼與耶通同，故有餘食器物，道人終不欲食用之也。<sup>318</sup>

Moving with the Dao is to live, losing the Dao is to die; the laws of Heaven are not found in sacrificial tributes or prayers to ancestral shrines. The Dao thus forbids sacrificial tributes or prayers to ancestral shrines, severely punishing those who perform them. Sacrificial tributes are identical to the depraved, thus if there is leftover food in the ritual vessels, the person of Dao will not desire to eat or use them.

故有道不處。<sup>319</sup>

such is why the person of the Dao does not dwell there.

有道者不處祭餼禱祠之間也。<sup>320</sup>

The person of the Dao does not dwell where there are sacrificial tributes or prayers to ancestral shrines.

*The above corresponds to section 24 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

有物混成，先天地生，寂漠獨立不改，周行不殆，可以為天下母。<sup>321</sup>

There is a thing chaotic yet complete which precedes Heaven and Earth, is indifferent, stands alone, and does not change. Everywhere it moves it does not encounter danger, hence it can act as the mother of the world.

歎無名大道之巍巍也，真天下之母也。<sup>322</sup>

This is to praise the great majesty of the nameless Dao, the genuine mother of the world.

吾不知其名，字之曰道，<sup>323</sup>

I do not know its name and so call it the Dao,

<sup>317</sup> See Figure 17 lines 4–5.

<sup>318</sup> See Figure 17 lines 5–7.

<sup>319</sup> See Figure 17 lines 7–8.

<sup>320</sup> See Figure 17 line 8.

<sup>321</sup> See Figure 17 lines 9–10.

<sup>322</sup> See Figure 17 lines 10–11.

<sup>323</sup> See Figure 17 line 11.

吾、道也，還歎道美，難可名字，故曰道也。<sup>324</sup>

I, the Dao. This is also praising the beauty of the Dao. Given the difficulty of naming it, it is called the Dao.

吾強為之名曰大。<sup>325</sup>

if I were forced to name it, it would be great.

言道甚大。言強者，恐不復，不能副其德也。<sup>326</sup>

This is to say the Dao is extremely large. To say one is forced, this is to fear it will not return, or that its virtue will no longer be of assistance.

大曰逝，<sup>327</sup>

The great is known as passing on,

逝、去也，大神無能制者，便立能去之也。<sup>328</sup>

Passing on, to depart. When the great spirits are beyond control, they are immediately sent away.

逝曰遠，<sup>329</sup>

passing on is called distant,

翕然便能遠去也。<sup>330</sup>

Suddenly things are sent afar.

遠曰反。<sup>331</sup>

and the distant is called return.

翕然便能還反也。<sup>332</sup>

Suddenly things return.

324 See Figure 17 lines 11–12.

325 See Figure 17 lines 12–13.

326 See Figure 17 lines 13–14.

327 See Figure 17 line 14.

328 See Figure 17 lines 14–15.

329 See Figure 17 line 15.

330 See Figure 17 line 15.

331 See Figure 17 line 15.

332 See Figure 17 lines 15–16.

道大，天大，地大，生大。<sup>333</sup>

The Dao is great, Heaven is great, Earth is great, and life is great.

四大之中，何者最大乎？道最大也。<sup>334</sup>

Among these four greats, which is the greatest? The Dao is the greatest.

域中有四大，而生處一。<sup>335</sup>

There are four greats in the world and life is one of them.

四大之中，所以令生處一者；生，道之別體也。<sup>336</sup>

Among these four greats, life is one of them; life is an alternate body of the Dao.

人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然。<sup>337</sup>

People model themselves after Earth, Earth models itself after Heaven, Heaven models itself after the Dao, and the Dao model itself after the natural.

自然者，與道同號異體，令更相法，皆共法道也。天地廣大，常法道以生；況人可不敬道乎！<sup>338</sup>

The natural have the same designation as the Dao but differ in their bodies. Mutually modelling themselves, they are all modelled after the Dao. Heaven and Earth are vast, constantly modelling themselves after the Dao for their life. How can people not respect the Dao!

*The above corresponds to section 25 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

重為輕根，靜為躁君。<sup>339</sup>

The heavy is the source of the light, the still is the ruler of the restless.

道人當自重精神，清靜為本。<sup>340</sup>

The person of Dao should treat with dignity their essence and spirit, taking the clear and still as their root.

333 See Figure 17 line 16.

334 See Figure 17 lines 16–17.

335 See Figure 17 lines 17–18.

336 See Figure 17 lines 18–19.

337 See Figure 17 line 19.

338 See Figure 17 lines 19–21.

339 See Figure 17 lines 21–22.

340 See Figure 17 line 22.

是以君子終日行，不離輜重。<sup>341</sup>

This is why the gentleman who walks all day is not separated from his baggage.

重精神清淨，君子輜重也，終日行之不可離也。<sup>342</sup>

Uphold essence and spirit in the clear and still for they are the baggage of the gentleman. Walking for an entire day, he will not be separated from them.

雖有榮觀，燕處超然。<sup>343</sup>

Although there are glorious things to look at, he stays relaxed and pays them no heed.

天子王公也。雖有榮觀為人所尊，務當重清靜，奉行道誠也。<sup>344</sup>

This is referring to kings and nobles. Although they are glorious to look at and are revered by the people, they should still uphold the clear and still and respectfully practice the tenets of the Dao.

如何萬乘之主以身輕天下？<sup>345</sup>

How can the ruler of ten thousand chariots treat his body more lightly than the world?

天子乘人之權，尤當畏天尊道。設誤意自謂尊貴，不復懼天道，即為自輕其身於天下也。<sup>346</sup>

If the king uses his authority in a roughshod manner, he should be especially fearful of Heaven and revere the Dao. If he erroneously expects to be called honorable and no longer dreads the Heavenly Dao, he treats his body more lightly than the world.

輕則失本，躁則失君。<sup>347</sup>

Treating it lightly he will lose his root, acting rashly he will lose his reign.

341 See Figure 17 line 23.

342 See Figure 17 lines 23–24.

343 See Figure 17 line 24, Figure 18 line 1.

344 See Figure 18 lines 1–2.

345 See Figure 18 lines 2–3.

346 See Figure 18 lines 3–5.

347 See Figure 18 line 5.

輕躁多違道度，則受罰辱，失其本身，亡其尊推矣。<sup>348</sup>

To make light of things and act rashly is to infringe upon the measure of the Dao. Such people will incur punishment and humiliation, lose their personhood, and destroy what extends it reverence.

*The above corresponds to section 26 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

善行無徹跡，<sup>349</sup>

Good actions have no pervading trace,

信道行善，無惡跡也。<sup>350</sup>

Trust the Dao and do good, and there will be no trace of evil.

善言無瑕適，<sup>351</sup>

good words are without defect or blame,

人非道言惡，天輒奪算。今信道言善，教授不耶，則無適也。<sup>352</sup>

People who deny the Dao by saying evil things will always be robbed by Heaven of their tallies of life. If a person trusts the Dao, says good things, and teaches what is not depraved, they will be without blame.

善計不用籌算，<sup>353</sup>

good schemes do not use counting chips,

明計者心解，可不須用算；至心信道者，發自至誠，不須旁人自勸。<sup>354</sup>

To understand a scheme is to use the heart-mind to explain it, hence counting chips are not required. To trust the Dao with a perfected heart-mind is to do so with perfect sincerity, hence the advice and encouragement of others is not required.

善閉無關鍵不可開，<sup>355</sup>

the securely closed does not use locks and bolts yet it cannot be opened,

348 See Figure 18 lines 5–6.

349 See Figure 18 line 6.

350 See Figure 18 line 7.

351 See Figure 18 line 7.

352 See Figure 18 lines 7–9.

353 See Figure 18 line 9.

354 See Figure 18 lines 9–10.

355 See Figure 18 lines 10–11.

心三川，陽耶陰害，悉當閉之勿用，中道為正。至誠能閉耶志者，雖無關捷永不可開；不至誠者，雖有關捷猶可開也。<sup>356</sup>

The heart-mind has three rivers, of which depraved Yang and injurious Yin should be closed and left unused; the central river is the correct one. The person of perfect sincerity can close their depraved will and although they do not use locks and bolts, it cannot be opened; those without perfect sincerity use locks and bolts yet their depraved will can still be opened.

善結無繩約不可解。<sup>357</sup>

the well knotted does not use ropes and cords yet it cannot be unraveled.

結志求生，務從道誠。至誠者為之，雖無繩約，永不可解。不至誠者，雖有繩約，猶可解也。<sup>358</sup>

The person who knots their will to the quest for life is devoted to the tenets of the Dao. The person who moves with perfect sincerity does not use ropes and cords and so cannot be unraveled. The person without perfect sincerity uses ropes and cords and so can be unraveled.

是以聖人常善救人，而無棄人。<sup>359</sup>

This is why the sage is constantly good at saving people without abandoning them,

常為善，見惡人不棄也；就往教之，示道誠，儻其人不化，不可如何也。<sup>360</sup>

Since he constantly does good, upon seeing an evil person he does not abandon them; on the contrary, he approaches them in order to teach them the tenets of the Dao. If this person still does not change, little else can be done.

常善救物而無棄物。<sup>361</sup>

and is constantly good at saving things without abandoning them.

356 See Figure 18 lines 11–13.

357 See Figure 18 lines 13–14.

358 See Figure 18 lines 14–16.

359 See Figure 18 line 16.

360 See Figure 18 lines 16–18.

361 See Figure 18 line 18.



與上同義也。<sup>362</sup>

This has the same meaning as above.

是謂襲明。<sup>363</sup>

This is known as inheriting illumination.

襲常明也，能知此意明明也。<sup>364</sup>

The person who inherits constant illumination and knows what it means will be brilliant.

善人不善人師，<sup>365</sup>

The person who is good is a master to those who are not good,

不善人從善人學善，故為師，終無善人從不善人學善也。<sup>366</sup>

The person who is not good studies goodness from someone who is good, taking them as their master. Never has a person who is not good studied goodness from someone who is themselves not good.

不善人善人之資。<sup>367</sup>

the person who is not good is a resource for those who are good.

善人無惡，乃以惡人為資，若不善人見人其惡不可，善人益自勤勸。<sup>368</sup>

As the person who is good lacks evil, he takes the person who is evil as a resource. As the evil of the person who is not good is unacceptable, the person who is good increases their effort to reform them.

不貴其師，不愛其資；雖知大迷，<sup>369</sup>

Do not value one's master or care for one's resources, although people know this, there is still great confusion,

362 See Figure 18 line 18.

363 See Figure 18 line 19.

364 See Figure 18 line 19.

365 See Figure 18 lines 19–20.

366 See Figure 18 lines 20–21.

367 See Figure 18 line 21.

368 See Figure 18 line 21–23.

369 See Figure 18 line 23–24.

不善人不貴善人，善人不以惡人自改，皆為大迷也。<sup>370</sup>

If people who are not good do not value people who are good, and people who are good do not use people who are evil as an opportunity for self-reform, everyone will be greatly confused.

此謂要妙。<sup>371</sup>

and this is known as the essential of wonderment.

明知此甚要妙也。<sup>372</sup>

To understand this is to grasp the essential of wonderment.

*The above corresponds to section 27 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

知其雄，守其雌為天下奚。<sup>373</sup>

Know the male but guard the female and be a servant to the world.

欲令雄如雌。奚，何也，亦近要也，知要安精神，即得天下之要。<sup>374</sup>

This is wanting to make the male be like the female. How to be a servant also approaches the essential. Knowing the essential, one can calm their essence and spirit and acquire what is essential to the world.

常德不離，復歸於嬰兒。<sup>375</sup>

Constant virtue does not leave but returns to the infant.

專精無為，道德常不離之，更反為嬰兒。<sup>376</sup>

For the person who focuses their essence and takes no deliberate action, the virtue of the Dao will never leave them and they will return to being an infant.

知白守其黑，為天下式。<sup>377</sup>

To know the white yet guard the black is to be a model for the world.

370 See Figure 18 line 24, Figure 19 line 1.

371 See Figure 19 line 1.

372 See Figure 19 line 1.

373 See Figure 19 lines 1–2.

374 See Figure 19 lines 2–3.

375 See Figure 19 lines 3–4.

376 See Figure 19 lines 4–5.

377 See Figure 19 line 5.

精白與元炁同色，黑，太陰中也，於人在腎，精藏之。安如不用為守黑，天下常法式也。<sup>378</sup>

Essence is white, the same color as primal breath; black is the color of Great Yin and exists in humans as the kidney, the storehouse of essence. Calm as if unused, it guards the black and is thus a constant model for the world.

常德不貸，復歸於無極。<sup>379</sup>

Constant virtue cannot be borrowed, it returns to the limitless.

知守黑者，道德常在，不從人貸，必當償之，不如自有也。行《玄女經》、龔子、容成之法，悉欲貸，何人主當貸若者乎？故令不得也。唯有自守，絕心閑念者，大無極也。<sup>380</sup>

For the person who knows to guard the black, the virtue of the Dao will be constantly present within them and they will not need to borrow it from others, hence repaying something is not as good as having it oneself. People who follow the models of the *Classic of the Mysterious Maiden*, or Gongzi and Rong Cheng, will all desire to borrow the virtue of the Dao, but what person can serve as their principal lender? Thus, they do not acquire anything. People have only to guard themselves, cut off their heart-mind, close their thoughts, and they will attain great limitlessness.

知其榮，守其辱，為天下谷。<sup>381</sup>

To know glory yet guard humiliation is to be the valley of the world.

有榮必有辱，道人畏辱，故不貪榮，但歸志於道，唯願長生，如天下谷水之欲東流歸於海也。<sup>382</sup>

When there is glory there must also be humiliation, and as the person of Dao fears humiliation, they do not covet glory but return their will to the Dao in hopes of longevity of life, much like water in the valleys of the world desire to flow east and return to the sea.

378 See Figure 19 lines 5–7.

379 See Figure 19 lines 7–8.

380 See Figure 19 lines 8–11.

381 See Figure 19 lines 11–12.

382 See Figure 19 lines 12–14.

為天下谷，常德乃足，復歸於樸。<sup>383</sup>

To be the valley of the world, having constant virtue is enough, then one can return to simplicity.

志道當如谷水之志欲歸海，道德常足。樸、道本氣也，人行道歸樸，與道合。<sup>384</sup>

If the will for the Dao is like the water in a valley desiring to return to the sea, the virtue of the Dao will be constantly sufficient. Simplicity is the original breath of the Dao, hence people that move with the Dao return to simplicity and merge with the Dao.

樸散為器，聖人用為官長。<sup>385</sup>

Simplicity is dispersed to create vessels, yet the sage uses it to select his officials.

為器，以離道矣，不當令樸散也。聖人能不散之，故官長治人，能致太平。<sup>386</sup>

To create a vessel is to depart from the Dao; one should not let simplicity disperse. The sage can remain undispersed, thus when his officials govern the people, they can deliver a great peace.

是以大制無割。<sup>387</sup>

This is why great control does not carve.

道人同知俗事高官重祿好衣美食珍寶之味耳，皆不能致長生。長生為大福，為道人欲制大，故自忍不以俗事割心情也。<sup>388</sup>

The person of Dao also knows the taste for vulgar matters such as high office, generous salary, good clothes, fine food, and precious gems, cannot deliver longevity of life. To have longevity of life is to have a tremendously good fortune, and the person of Dao desires to control the great, thus they do not tolerate vulgar matters that carve up their heart-mind and emotions.

*The above corresponds to section 28 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

383 See Figure 19 lines 14.

384 See Figure 19 lines 14–16.

385 See Figure 19 lines 16.

386 See Figure 19 lines 17–18.

387 See Figure 19 line 18.

388 See Figure 19 lines 18–21.

將欲取天下而為之，<sup>389</sup>

The person who desires to take control of the world,

狂或之人，圖欲篡弑，天必煞之，不可為也。<sup>390</sup>

If a wild and bewildered person pursues their desire to kill the king and occupy the throne, Heaven must strike them dead so that they cannot do so.

吾見，<sup>391</sup>

as I see it,

吾、道也，同見天下之尊，非當所為，不敢為之。愚人寧能勝道乎？為之，故有害也。<sup>392</sup>

I, the Dao. The Dao simultaneously sees those who are revered in the world, and that of the things they should not do, none dare do so. How can the foolish person surpass the Dao? If they do, there will be injury.

其不得已。<sup>393</sup>

they will do so without reprieve.

國不可一日無君，五帝精生，河雒著名，七宿精見，五緯合同，明受天任而令為之，其不得已耳，非天下所任，不可妄庶幾也。<sup>394</sup>

The state cannot be without a ruler for a single day. When the essence of the five kings was born, the Yellow and Luo rivers declared their names, the essence of the seven celestial mansions appeared, and the five planets aligned. Having clearly received their appointment from Heaven and commanded to rule, they will do so without reprieve. Those not appointed to rule the world cannot feign such talent.

天下神器不可為；為者敗之，執者失之。<sup>395</sup>

The world is a spiritual vessel that cannot be made; trying to make it results in failure while trying to employ it results in its loss.

389 See Figure 19 lines 21–22.

390 See Figure 19 line 1, Figure 20 line 1.

391 See Figure 20 line 1.

392 See Figure 20 lines 1–2.

393 See Figure 20 lines 2–3.

394 See Figure 20 lines 3–5.

395 See Figure 20 lines 5–6.

非天所任，往必敗失之矣。<sup>396</sup>

People not appointed by Heaven will always fail or lose.

夫物或行或隨，<sup>397</sup>

Regarding things, if one moves others will follow,

自然相感也。行善，道隨之；行惡，害隨之也。<sup>398</sup>

This is a natural and mutual response. When moving with goodness, the Dao follows; when moving with evil, injury follows.

或噓或吹，<sup>399</sup>

some exhale while others blow,

噓溫吹寒，善惡同規，禍福同根。雖得噓溫，慎復吹寒；得福，慎禍來。<sup>400</sup>

To exhale the warm and blow the cold abides by the same model as good and evil and the same root as misfortune and good fortune. Although what is exhaled is warm, be wary of returning to blow what is cold; although there is good fortune, be wary of misfortune's arrival.

或強或羸，<sup>401</sup>

some are strong while others are weak,

強後必更羸，羸復反更強，先處強者後必有羸，道人發先，處羸後更強。<sup>402</sup>

After strength there must be weakness but weakness reverts to strength. If a person is first in a position of strength, weakness will surely follow. When the person of Dao begins, they first take a position of weakness knowing one of strength will follow.

或接或隨。<sup>403</sup>

and some assist while others submit.

396 See Figure 20 lines 6–7.

397 See Figure 20 line 7.

398 See Figure 20 lines 7–8.

399 See Figure 20 line 8.

400 See Figure 20 lines 8–10.

401 See Figure 20 line 10.

402 See Figure 20 lines 10–12.

403 See Figure 20 line 12.

身常當自生，安精神為本，不可恃人自扶接也。夫危國之君，忠臣接之，不則亡。夫病人，醫至救之，不制則死。<sup>404</sup>

The body constantly gives birth to itself by taking calm essence and spirit as its root; to do so, do not rely on others but support oneself. When it comes to the ruler of a state in peril, loyal ministers must assist him otherwise he will die. When it comes to people that are ill, doctors must come to their rescue otherwise they will die.

是以聖人去甚，去奢，去泰。<sup>405</sup>

This is why the sage discards the extreme, discards the excessive, and discards the exalted.

去甚惡及奢太也。<sup>406</sup>

He discards the extremely evil and extravagant.

*The above corresponds to section 29 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

以道佐人主者，不以兵強天下。<sup>407</sup>

The ruler who is assisted by the Dao does not use weapons to force the world.

治國之君務脩道德，忠臣輔佐務在行道，道普德溢，太平至矣。吏民懷慕，則易治矣。悉如信道，皆仙壽矣。不可久兵強也。兵者非吉器也，道之設形，以威不化，不可專心甘樂也。道故斥庫樓，遠狼狐，將軍騎官房外居，鋒星脩柔去極疎。但當信道，於武略耳。<sup>408</sup>

If a ruler governs the state by devotedly cultivating the virtue of the Dao, loyal ministers will assist him in moving with the Dao, for when the widespread virtue of the Dao overflows, great peace will result. If officials and the common people carry in their breast admiration for the ruler, it will be easy to govern them. When everyone similarly trusts the Dao, they can enjoy the longevity of the transcendent gentleman. Thus, one should not be tempted by weapons or force. Weapons are not auspicious instruments and while the Dao established their form in order to terrify those who do not change, one must not focus on or derive pleasure from them.

404 See Figure 20 lines 12–14.

405 See Figure 20 lines 14–15.

406 See Figure 20 line 15.

407 See Figure 20 lines 15–16.

408 See Figure 20 lines 16–22.

The Dao thus denounced the Arsenal and Tower stars, distanced itself from the Wolf and Fox stars, had the General and Cavalry Officials reside outside the Chamber, and made the Spearhead star cultivate suppleness in order to depart from the Celestial Pole star. In trusting the Dao, the military can be put aside.

其事好還。<sup>409</sup>

Such matters will certainly return.

以兵定事，傷煞不應度，其殃禍反還人身及子孫。<sup>410</sup>

To take weapons as a means of determining matters, the resultant injury and death will fall outside what is acceptable, and such misfortune and disaster will return to a person's body and that of their descendants.

師之所處荆棘生。<sup>411</sup>

Where troops are positioned, thistles and thorns are born.

天子之軍稱師，兵不合道，所在淳見煞氣，不見人民，但見荆棘生。<sup>412</sup>

The king's army are called troops and as weapons do not suit the Dao, their existence is paired with the breath of death, hence what is seen is not the common people but the birth of thistles and thorns.

故善者果而已，不以取強。<sup>413</sup>

Thus, when the good get results they stop and do not resort to force.

果、誠也，為善至誠而已，不得依兵圖惡以自強。<sup>414</sup>

Result, to be sincere. To move with goodness using perfect sincerity and then stop is to not depend on weapons or pursue evil to increase one's strength.

果而勿驕，<sup>415</sup>

They get results without being complacent,

409 See Figure 20 line 22.

410 See Figure 20 lines 22–23.

411 See Figure 20 line 23.

412 See Figure 21 lines 1–2.

413 See Figure 21 lines 2–3.

414 See Figure 21 lines 3–4.

415 See Figure 21 line 4.



至誠守善，勿驕上人。<sup>416</sup>

Perfect sincerity guards what is good without being complacent or putting oneself above others.

果而勿矜，<sup>417</sup>

they get results without being self-conceited,

至誠守善勿矜身。<sup>418</sup>

Perfect sincerity guards what is good without being pretentious.

果而勿伐。<sup>419</sup>

and they get results without bragging.

至誠守善勿伐身也。<sup>420</sup>

Perfect sincerity guards what is good without being boastful.

果而不得已，是果而勿強。<sup>421</sup>

They get results when there is no other choice, but this result is not forced.

至誠守善，勿貪兵威，設當時佐帝王圖兵，當不得已而有，勿甘樂也，勿以常為強也。風后佐黃帝伐蚩尤，呂望佐武王伐紂，皆不得已而為之耳。<sup>422</sup>

When perfect sincerity guards what is good, do not covet military power but establish a time to assist the monarch by pursuing weapons when there is no other choice. Do not derive pleasure from them and do not make the use of force a constant. Feng Hou assisted the Yellow Emperor in his attack on Chi You, and Lü Wang assisted king Wu in his attack on Zhou, and they did so because there was no other choice.

物壯則老，謂之非道；非道早已。<sup>423</sup>

Things that lose their vigor and become old are known as being without the Dao; being without the Dao, they will soon die.

416 See Figure 21 line 4.

417 See Figure 21 line 4–5.

418 See Figure 21 line 5.

419 See Figure 21 line 5.

420 See Figure 21 lines 5–6.

421 See Figure 21 line 6.

422 See Figure 21 lines 6–9.

423 See Figure 21 line 10.

聞道不能行，故老，老不止，早已矣。<sup>424</sup>

To hear of the Dao but not move with it is to become old; when one does not stop becoming old, one will soon die.

*The above corresponds to section 30 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

夫佳兵者不祥之器，物或惡之，故有道不處。<sup>425</sup>

As for fine weapons not being auspicious instruments, beings are disgusted by them while the person of Dao does not stay with them.

兵者非道所喜，有道者不處之。<sup>426</sup>

Weapons are not what the Dao delights in, hence the person of Dao does not stay with them.

君子居則貴左，用兵則貴右。<sup>427</sup>

The gentleman remains at home and values the left, the person who uses weapons values the right.

左右，契也。<sup>428</sup>

Left and right are the tallies of life.

兵者不祥器，非君子之器。<sup>429</sup>

As weapons are not auspicious instruments, they are not the instruments of the gentleman.

重明其凶事也。<sup>430</sup>

This again illuminates what is an inauspicious affair.

不得已而用之。<sup>431</sup>

He uses them only when he has no other choice.

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424 See Figure 21 line 10–11.

425 See Figure 21 line 11–12.

426 See Figure 21 line 12–13.

427 See Figure 21 line 13.

428 See Figure 21 line 13–14.

429 See Figure 21 line 14.

430 See Figure 21 line 14.

431 See Figure 21 line 15.

前章已說之也。<sup>432</sup>

This was discussed in an earlier section.

恬憒為上，故不美。<sup>433</sup>

Taking quietude and indifference as superior, the gentleman does not praise weapons.

道人恬憒，不美兵也。<sup>434</sup>

As the person of Dao is quiet and indifferent, he does not praise weapons.

若美，必樂之，是煞人。夫樂煞者，不可得意於天下。<sup>435</sup>

To praise them is to delight in them, yet this is murder. Delighting in murder is an idea that must not be allowed in the world.

明樂兵樂煞不可也。<sup>436</sup>

This is to understand the impermissibility of enjoying weapons or murder.

故吉事尚左，喪事尚右。<sup>437</sup>

Thus, auspicious matters esteem the left while matters of mourning esteem the right.

左右，契也。<sup>438</sup>

Left and right are the tallies of life.

是以偏將軍居左，上將軍居右。<sup>439</sup>

This is why the general resides on the left while the marshal resides on the right.

偏將軍不專煞生之權，像左；上將軍專煞，像右。<sup>440</sup>

The general does not focus his power on ending life and so resembles the left; the marshal focuses his power on killing and so resembles the right.

432 See Figure 21 line 15.

433 See Figure 21 lines 15–16.

434 See Figure 21 line 16.

435 See Figure 21 lines 16–17.

436 See Figure 21 lines 17–18.

437 See Figure 21 line 18.

438 See Figure 21 line 18.

439 See Figure 21 lines 18–19.

440 See Figure 21 lines 19–20.

言以喪禮處之。煞人眾多，以悲哀泣之。戰勝，以喪禮處之。<sup>441</sup>

This means their positions are akin to those in a mourning ceremony. When numerous people are murdered, they should be wept for and mourned. The victor in battle should take the position of one attending a mourning ceremony.

不得已而有者，輒三申五令，示以道誠，願受其降。不從者當閔傷悲泣之，如家有喪，勿喜快也。<sup>442</sup>

When there is no other choice, always declare three times the five commands, showing the tenets of the Dao and your desire to accept your opponent's surrender. If they do not surrender, show them pity and grieve the dead as if your own family had been lost. Do not celebrate.

*The above corresponds to section 31 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

道常無名，<sup>443</sup>

The Dao is constantly nameless,

不名大，託微小也。<sup>444</sup>

When not named great, it relies on the extremely small.

樸雖小，天下不敢臣。<sup>445</sup>

simple yet small, the world dares not make it their subject.

道雖微小，為天下母，故不可得臣。<sup>446</sup>

Although the Dao is extremely small, it is the mother of the world and cannot be treated as a subject.

王侯若能守，萬物將自賓。<sup>447</sup>

If the nobility can guard it, the myriad things will be their guests.

441 See Figure 21 lines 20–21.

442 See Figure 21 lines 22–23, Figure 22 line 1.

443 See Figure 22 line 1.

444 See Figure 22 line 1.

445 See Figure 22 lines 1–2.

446 See Figure 22 line 2.

447 See Figure 22 line 3.

人不可以貴輕道，當之，萬物皆自賓伏。<sup>448</sup>

People must not value making light of the Dao; if they can do this, the myriad things will become their guests.

天地相合以降甘露，<sup>449</sup>

Heaven and Earth come together and drop sweet dew,

王者行道，天地熹，滋澤生。<sup>450</sup>

When the king moves with the Dao, Heaven and Earth are delighted and give birth to the liquid of life.

民莫之令而自均。<sup>451</sup>

and the common people equalize themselves.

王者尊道，吏民企效。不畏法律，乃畏天神。不敢為非惡，皆欲全身。不須令敕而自平均。<sup>452</sup>

If the king reveres the Dao, then officers and the common people will admire and imitate him. Not fearing the law, they only fear the spirits of Heaven. Not daring to commit evil, all they desire is to keep their bodies whole. Thus, without imperial decree they equalize themselves.

始制有名，<sup>453</sup>

As soon as it is established it has a name,

道人求生，不貪榮名，今王侯承先人之後有榮名，不強求也，道聽之，但欲令務尊道行誠，勿驕溢也。<sup>454</sup>

The person of Dao seeks life and does not covet glory or names. The nobility inherits the glory and names of their predecessors, which is why they do not forcefully seek them. The Dao knows this but wishes they work at revering and practicing its tenets without being complacent or overflowing.

448 See Figure 22 lines 3–4.

449 See Figure 22 line 4.

450 See Figure 22 lines 4–5.

451 See Figure 22 line 5.

452 See Figure 22 lines 5–7.

453 See Figure 22 lines 7–8.

454 See Figure 22 lines 8–10.

名亦既有，夫亦將知止。<sup>455</sup>

and having this name, the people know to stop.

王侯承先人之後既有名，當知止足，不得復思高尊強求也。<sup>456</sup>

The nobility inherits the names of their predecessors and should know to stop once sufficiency is reached. They should not think of how to acquire even more reverence and strength.

知止不殆。<sup>457</sup>

Knowing when to stop is to be without peril.

諸知止足，終不危殆。<sup>458</sup>

The person who knows to stop once sufficiency is reached will never face grave danger.

譬道在天下，猶川谷與江海。<sup>459</sup>

The existence of the Dao in the world is comparable to a river valley, estuary, and the sea.

道在天下，譬如江海，人一心志道，當如谷水之欲歸海也。<sup>460</sup>

The existence of the Dao in the world is comparable to a river and the sea. People who are of a singular mind and will for the Dao should be like water in a valley longing to return to the sea.

*The above corresponds to section 32 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

知人者智，<sup>461</sup>

To know others is wisdom,

455 See Figure 22 line 10.

456 See Figure 22 lines 10–12.

457 See Figure 22 line 12.

458 See Figure 22 line 12.

459 See Figure 22 lines 12–13.

460 See Figure 22 lines 13–14.

461 See Figure 22 lines 14–15.

知平他人善惡，雖知不合道德，道人但當自省其身，令不陷於死地，勿平他人也。<sup>462</sup>

One who only knows to evaluate the goodness and evil of others, despite their knowledge, will fail to merge with the virtue of the Dao. The person of Dao should only examine their own body so as to not plunge into the land of the dead. This is why they do not evaluate others.

自知者明。<sup>463</sup>

to know oneself is illumination.

如此甚明矣。<sup>464</sup>

Such being the case, they are extremely bright.

勝人有力，<sup>465</sup>

To surpass others is power,

好勝人者，但名有力耳。<sup>466</sup>

To enjoy surpassing others is to be powerful in name only.

自勝者強。<sup>467</sup>

to surpass oneself is strength.

自脩身，行善勝惡，此乃強也。<sup>468</sup>

To cultivate one's body by moving with the good and surpassing evil, this is strength.

知足者富，<sup>469</sup>

To know sufficiency is wealth,

道與謙也。<sup>470</sup>

The Dao grants them modesty.

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462 See Figure 22 lines 15–16.

463 See Figure 22 lines 16–17.

464 See Figure 22 line 17.

465 See Figure 22 line 17.

466 See Figure 22 lines 17–18.

467 See Figure 22 line 18.

468 See Figure 22 lines 18–19.

469 See Figure 22 line 19.

470 See Figure 22 line 19.

強行有志。<sup>471</sup>

to move with strength is to have intentions.

道誠甚難，仙士得之，但志耳，非有伎巧也。<sup>472</sup>

The tenets of the Dao are extremely difficult yet the transcendent gentleman achieves them, doing so through sheer will and without resorting to deceit.

不失其所者久，<sup>473</sup>

To not lose all one has is to endure,

富貴貧賤，各自守道為務，至誠者道與之，貧賤者無自鄙，強欲求富貴也。不強求者為不失其所，故久也。又一說曰：喜怒五行戰傷者，人病死，不復待罪滿也。今當和五行，令各安其位勿相犯，亦久也。<sup>474</sup>

Whether having wealth and rank, or being poor and abased, each person should make guarding the Dao their primary concern and, in this way, have the perfect sincerity of the Dao. The poor and abased should not despise themselves or feel forced to seek wealth and rank. Not being forced to seek them, they will not lose what they have and will endure. Another account says: When delight and anger lead to conflict and injury among the five elements, people will die of illness before fully realizing their faults. If people harmonize the five elements and cause each of them to calmly remain in place without infracting upon the others, they will endure.

死而不亡者壽。<sup>475</sup>

to die but not perish is longevity.

道人行備，道神歸之，避世託死過太陰中，復生去為不亡，故壽也。俗人無善功，死者屬地官，便為亡矣。<sup>476</sup>

The person of Dao whose movements are perfected will have their spirit return to the Dao. Retiring from the world by relying on death to pass through Great Yin, they are reborn without having perished, hence their

471 See Figure 22 line 19.

472 See Figure 22 lines 19–20.

473 See Figure 22 lines 20–21.

474 See Figure 22 lines 21–22, Figure 23 lines 1–3.

475 See Figure 23 line 3.

476 See Figure 23 lines 3–6.



longevity. The vulgar person has no good accomplishments and so upon their death belongs to the Officials of Earth, hence they perish.

*The above corresponds to section 33 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

大道汜，其可左右；<sup>477</sup>

When the great Dao floods, it can go either left or right;

汜、廣也，道甚廣大，處柔弱不與俗人爭，教人以誠慎者宜左契，不誠慎者置左契。<sup>478</sup>

Flood, to be broad. The Dao is extremely broad and great, and favors the position of yielding weakness so as not to contend with vulgar people. It teaches people weary of its tenets that they are suitable for tallies on the left, while those not weary will have their tallies on the left discarded.

萬物恃以生而不辭，<sup>479</sup>

the myriad things rely on it for life and do not dismiss it,

不辭謝恩，道不責也。<sup>480</sup>

Not declining its kindness, the Dao is beyond reproach.

成功不名有；衣被萬物不為主，可名於小；<sup>481</sup>

it is successful without having a name; it dresses the myriad things without ruling them, hence it can be named small;

道不名功，常稱小也。<sup>482</sup>

As the Dao does not need a name to be successful, it is constantly known as small.

萬物歸之不為主，可名於大。<sup>483</sup>

the myriad things return to it without it ruling them, hence it can be named great.

477 See Figure 23 line 6.

478 See Figure 23 lines 6–8.

479 See Figure 23 line 8.

480 See Figure 23 lines 8–9.

481 See Figure 23 lines 9–10.

482 See Figure 23 line 10.

483 See Figure 23 lines 10–11.

歸、仰也，以為生既不責恩，復不名主，道乃能常大耳。<sup>484</sup>

Return, to admire. Creating life but not requiring any gratitude, the Dao does not take the name of ruler and is thus able to be constantly great.

是以聖人終不為大，故能成其大。<sup>485</sup>

This is why the sage, in never being great, can accomplish what is great.

法道常先稱小，後必乃能大，大者長生，與道等壽。<sup>486</sup>

Modelling himself after the Dao, he is first referred to as small, after which he can achieve what is great. To be great is to have a longevity of life equal to the longevity of the Dao.

*The above corresponds to section 34 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

執大象，天下往；<sup>487</sup>

Employ the great image and the world will come;

王者執正法像大道，天下歸往，曠塞重驛，向風而至。道之為化，自高而降，指謂王者，故貴一人，制無二君，是以帝王常當行道，然後乃及吏民，非獨道士可行，王者棄捐也。上聖之君，師道至行，以教化天下，如治太平符瑞，皆感人功所積，致之者，道君也。中賢之君，志信不純，政復扶接，能任賢良，臣弼之以道，雖存國，會不蕩蕩，勞精躬勤。良輔朝去，暮國傾危，制不在上，故在彼去臣，所以者化逆也。猶水不汜西，雖有良臣，常難致治。況群耶雜政，制君諱道，非賤真文，以為人世可久隨之王者，道可久棄捐。道尊且神，終不聽人，故放精耶，變異紛紛，將以誠誨，道隱卻觀。亂極必理，道意必宣，是以帝王大臣不可不用心愍懃審察之焉。<sup>488</sup>

If the king employs the correct model and resembles the great Dao, the world will return to his side and an expansive frontier with multiple relay stations will, as if carried on the wind, appear before him. Transformations made by the Dao begin with the high and move downwards. By indicating the king, it values this one person and will not allow governance by two rulers. This is why the monarch should constantly move with the Dao so that his officials and the common people can do the same. If Daoist

484 See Figure 23 lines 11–12.

485 See Figure 23 lines 12–13.

486 See Figure 23 lines 13–14.

487 See Figure 23 line 14.

488 See Figure 23 lines 15–23, Figure 24 lines 1–6.

practitioners were the only ones following the Dao, the king would be abandoned. The ruler of supreme sagacity takes the Dao as his teacher to perfect his movements and uses its teachings to transform the world; governing in this way, he bears the auspicious talismans of a great peace and everyone is moved by their accumulated success. To achieve this is to be a ruler with the Dao. The ruler who is of middle worthiness, being of impure will and trust yet having support for his rule, is able to use worthy and virtuous officials to assist him with the Dao. Although his state is preserved and does not encounter disturbances, he toils his essence and exhausts his body. Should his virtuous attendants depart one morning, by nightfall the state will be overflowing with danger. With control absent from above, it lies with those departing officials, thus the transformations brought about by the Dao are defied. This is akin to water's inability to flow west; although there may be virtuous officials, it is difficult to attain constant governance. This is all the more so when depravity infiltrates the government and the ruler shuns the Dao and abases its genuine writings believing the people of the world will continue following a king who thinks he can carry on discarding the Dao. The Dao is both revered and spiritual, never listening to people, thus it releases essence of a depraved nature and spreads various mutations to caution and guide them. The Dao thereupon conceals itself and observes. Once the chaos has peaked and there is order, the intentions of the Dao are again pronounced. This is why the monarch and great officials cannot but use their heart-mind to carefully and industriously examine it.

往而不害,<sup>489</sup>

it comes but there is no injury,

王者行道，道來歸往，王者亦皆樂道，知神明不可欺負，不畏法律也，乃畏天神，不敢為非惡，臣忠子孝，出自然至心，王法無所復害，形罰格藏，故易治，王者樂也。<sup>490</sup>

When the king moves with the Dao, the Dao returns to his side. When the king delights in the Dao, he will know the spiritually illuminated cannot be bullied and, not fearing the law but the spirits of Heaven, dares not commit evil. When officials are virtuous and sons filial, what emerges is the natural and perfected heart-mind. In this way, the laws of the land no

489 See Figure 24 line 6.

490 See Figure 24 lines 6–9.

longer cause injury, the system of physical penalties can be stored away, and governing will become easy, much to the king's delight.

安平大樂.<sup>491</sup>

hence there is peace and great joy.

如此之治，甚大樂也。<sup>492</sup>

Governing in this way, there will be profound joy.

與珥，過客止。<sup>493</sup>

Halos and transgressing visitors will thereupon stop.

諸與天災變恠，日月運珥，倍臣縱橫，刺貫之咎，過罪所致。五星順軌，客逆不曜，疾疫之氣，都悉止矣。<sup>494</sup>

Among all natural disasters and abnormalities, such as halos of the sun and moon, trespassing celestial officials, and interlinking disasters, the cause lies with the excessive faults of people. When the five planets accord with their tracks and rebellious guest stars do not shine, the breath of infectious diseases will stop.

道出言，淡無味；<sup>495</sup>

Words uttered by the Dao are plain and flavorless;

道之所言，反俗絕巧，於俗人中甚無味也。無味之中有大生味，故聖人味無味之味。<sup>496</sup>

All that is said by the Dao returns to the vulgar by cutting off the clever. The vulgar person takes such words to be profoundly flavorless. In this lack of flavor lies the flavor of a great life, hence the sage savors the flavor of what is flavorless.

視不足見，聽不足聞，用不可既。<sup>497</sup>

to look for it is insufficient to see it, to listen for it is insufficient to hear it, and putting it to use cannot exhaust it.

491 See Figure 24 line 10.

492 See Figure 24 line 10.

493 See Figure 24 line 10.

494 See Figure 24 line 11–13.

495 See Figure 24 line 13.

496 See Figure 24 lines 13–15.

497 See Figure 24 lines 15–16.

道樂質樸，辭無餘。視道言，聽道誠，或不足見聞耳，而難行；能行能用，慶福不可既盡也。<sup>498</sup>

The Dao delights in what is simple, hence its speech has no leftovers. Looking at the words of the Dao or listening to the tenets of the Dao, some feel they are insufficient to comprehend and difficult to practice. Those who can practice and use them will receive a good fortune that cannot be exhausted.

*The above corresponds to section 35 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

將欲翕之，必固張之；<sup>499</sup>

If a person desires to contract something it must first be extended;

善惡同規，禍福同根，其先張者，後必翕。<sup>500</sup>

Good and evil have the same regulations, and misfortune and good fortune have the same root. They must first be extended after which they can be contracted.

將欲弱之，必固強之；<sup>501</sup>

if a person desires to weaken something it must first be strengthened;

先強後必弱。<sup>502</sup>

It must first be strengthened after which it can be weakened.

將欲廢之，必固興之；<sup>503</sup>

if a person desires to discard something, it must first flourish;

先興後必衰廢。<sup>504</sup>

It must first flourish after which it can wane and be discarded.

將奪之，必固與之；<sup>505</sup>

if a person desires to take something it must first be abundant;

498 See Figure 24 lines 16–18.

499 See Figure 24 line 18.

500 See Figure 24 lines 18–19.

501 See Figure 24 line 19.

502 See Figure 24 lines 19–20.

503 See Figure 24 line 20.

504 See Figure 24 lines 20–21.

505 See Figure 24 line 21.

先得後必奪也。<sup>506</sup>

It must first be made abundant after which it can be taken.

是謂微明。<sup>507</sup>

this is known as profound understanding.

此四事即四怨四賊也，能知之者微且明，知則副道也。道人畏翕弱癡奪，故造行先自翕自弱自癡自奪，然後乃得其吉。及俗人癡言，先取張強興之利，然後反凶矣。故誠知知足，令人於世間裁自如，便思施惠散財除殃，不敢多求。奉道誠者可長處吉不凶，不能知足相返不虛也。道人不可敢非，實有微明之知。<sup>508</sup>

These four matters are the four resentments and four robbers, and those who know them are profound and illuminated, thus to know them is to assist the Dao. The person of Dao is afraid of the contracted and weak, the discarded and lost, thus in formulating their movements, they first contract, weaken, discard, and lose themselves in order to acquire what is auspicious. When it comes to the invalidating words of the vulgar person, they first aim for the benefits to be had in extending, strengthening, and flourishing before returning to the inauspicious. Thus, the tenets of the Dao are about knowing to stop once sufficiency is reached and ordering the people of the world to decrease themselves by working at being charitable, dispersing their wealth, and eliminating misfortune such that they dare not seek more. The person who upholds the tenets of the Dao will long enjoy an auspicious position while the person who is unable to stop once sufficiency is reached will be the opposite. The person of Dao does not dare violate this because their knowledge is profoundly illuminated.

柔弱勝剛強。<sup>509</sup>

What yields and is weak surpasses what is rigid and strong.

道氣微弱，故久在無所不伏。水法道柔弱，故能消穿崖石。道人當法之。<sup>510</sup>

The breath of the Dao is profound and weak, thus it endures in what does not submit. Water models itself after the Dao in its yielding and

506 See Figure 24 line 21.

507 See Figure 24 lines 21–22.

508 See Figure 24 lines 22–23, Figure 25 lines 1–6.

509 See Figure 25 line 6.

510 See Figure 25 lines 6–7.

weakness, thus it can dissolve or penetrate cliffs and rocks. The person of Dao should adopt this model.

魚不可勝於淵,<sup>511</sup>

Fish cannot surpass a gulf,

誠為淵，道猶水，人猶魚。魚失淵去水則死，人不行誠守道，道去則死。<sup>512</sup>

The tenets of the Dao are like a gulf, the Dao is like water, and people are like fish. If fish lose their gulf and leave the water, they will die. If people do not practice and guard the tenets of the Dao, the Dao will leave them and they will die.

國有利器，不可以視人。<sup>513</sup>

when the state has sharp instruments the people must not see them.

寶精勿費，令行缺也。又一說曰：道人寧施人，勿為人所施；寧避人，勿為人所避；寧教人為善，勿為人所教；寧為人所怒，勿怒人；分均，寧與人多，勿為人所與多。其返此者，即為示人利器也。<sup>514</sup>

A person must treasure their essence and not expend it, for allowing it to move will result in incompleteness. Another account says: The person of Dao would rather use people than be used by others, would rather shun people than be shunned by others, would rather teach people goodness than be taught by others, would rather be angry at people than be a source of anger for others, and would rather be generous to people than receive the generosity of others. The person who is counter to this merely shows people sharp instruments.

*The above corresponds to section 36 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

道常無為而無不為。<sup>515</sup>

The Dao constantly takes no deliberate action yet nothing remains undone.

511 See Figure 25 lines 7–8.

512 See Figure 25 lines 8–9.

513 See Figure 25 lines 9–10.

514 See Figure 25 lines 10–14.

515 See Figure 25 line 14.

道性不為惡事，故能神，無所不作，道人當法之。<sup>516</sup>

It is the nature of the Dao to avoid evil matters, thus it can be spiritual and the creator of all things. The person of Dao should adopt such a model.

王侯若能守，<sup>517</sup>

If the nobility can guard it,

王者雖尊，猶常畏道，奉誠行之。<sup>518</sup>

Although the king is revered, he should constantly fear the Dao and practice its tenets.

萬物將自化，<sup>519</sup>

the myriad things will transform themselves.

王者法道為政，吏民庶孽子悉化為道。<sup>520</sup>

When the king models his government after the Dao, his officers, subjects, and illegitimate sons will all transform for the Dao.

化如欲作，吾將鎮之以無名之樸。<sup>521</sup>

Should the desire for transformation arise, I will suppress it using nameless simplicity.

失正變得耶，耶改得正。今王者法道，民悉從正，齋正而止，不可復變，變為耶矣。觀其將變，道便鎮制之，檢以無名之樸，教誠見也。王者亦當法道鎮制之，而不能制者，世俗悉變為耶矣，下古世是也。<sup>522</sup>  
To lose and change what is correct is to acquire the depraved, but to change what is depraved is to acquire the correct. If the king models himself after the Dao, the people will follow what is correct. A person need only reside in the correct and stop there, not allowing any further changes since change results in the depraved. Observing a change will occur, the Dao suppresses and controls it, examining it in the nameless simplicity seen in the teaching of its tenets. The king should model himself after the

516 See Figure 25 lines 14–15.

517 See Figure 25 line 16.

518 See Figure 25 line 16.

519 See Figure 25 line 17.

520 See Figure 25 lines 17–18.

521 See Figure 25 line 18.

522 See Figure 25 lines 18–21, Figure 26 lines 1–2.



Dao in suppressing and controlling change, for if he cannot control it, the vulgar world will become depraved. Such was the case in ancient times.

無名之樸，亦將不欲。<sup>523</sup>

Nameless simplicity is to also be without desire.

道性於俗間都無所欲，王者亦當法之。<sup>524</sup>

The nature of the Dao in the vulgar world is to be without desire. The king should adopt this model.

無欲以靜，天地自正。<sup>525</sup>

Being without desire is stillness, hence Heaven and Earth correct themselves.

道常無欲，樂清靜，故令天地常正。天地，道臣也，王者法道行誠，臣下悉皆自正矣。<sup>526</sup>

The Dao is constantly without desire, taking delight in the clear and still, thus Heaven and Earth are constantly proper. Heaven and Earth are the ministers of the Dao, so when the king models himself after the Dao and practices its tenets, from his ministers down, everyone will correct themselves.

*The above corresponds to section 37 of the Heshang Gong edition.*

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523 See Figure 26 line 2.

524 See Figure 26 lines 2–3.

525 See Figure 26 lines 3–4.

526 See Figure 26 lines 4–5.

## Annotative Discussion

The *5000-Character Classic* which has been transmitted by the *Xiang'er Commentary* is an abridged version of Master Xi's edition. All known editions of the *Daodejing* can be said to belong to one family, including:

The manuscript by the Daoist priest Suo Dongxuan 索洞玄 that was discovered at Dunhuang and given the number 2584 in the Pelliot Catalogue. Kanda Kiichiro 神田喜一郎 discusses it the second volume of his *Remnants and Rare Texts from Dunhuang* (*Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian* 敦煌祕籍留真新編). There are six small characters appearing at the end of the manuscript: "Scripture by the Daoist priest Suo Dongxuan" (*Daoshi Suo Dongxuan jing* 道士索洞玄經).<sup>1</sup> In the discussion below, I will abbreviate the text's name to Xuan edition 玄本.<sup>2</sup>

Luo Zhenyu's 羅振玉 *Study of Textual Differences in the Daodejing* (*Daodejing kaoyi* 道德經考異) and *Supplement to the Study of Textual Differences in the Daodejing* (*Daodejing kaoyi buyi* 道德經考異補遺). These belong to a number of manuscripts written in the middle of the Tang Dynasty and are in fact the Dunhuang B, C, and D editions in Jiang Xichang's 蔣錫昌 *Annotated Explanations to the Laozi* (*Laozi xiaogu* 老子校詁).<sup>3</sup> In the discussion below, the abbreviated names used by Jiang Xichang will be followed.

The fragments of a Tang Dynasty manuscript housed in the Beijing National Library. This is in fact the Library edition 館本 mentioned in Jiang Xichang's *Annotated Explanations*. In the discussion below, the designation Library edition will be followed.

The Longxing stele (*Longxing bei* 龍興碑) of Sui prefecture 遂州. Although the stele is now lost, its content was quoted by Jiao Hong 焦竑 in his *Study of Textual Differences in the Laozi* (*Laozi kaoyi* 老子考異) which was derived from the *Secondary Explanations to the Daodejing* (*Daodejing ci jie* 道德經次解). The content of the stele differs from other Tang Dynasty stone inscriptions found in

1 Kanda Kiichiro, *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 2: 12.

2 See Figure 28.

3 Jiang Xichang, *Laozi jiaogu*.

Yi prefecture 易州, Xing prefecture 邢州, Guangming 廣明, and Jingfu 景福. In the discussion below, I will abbreviate its name to Sui stele 遂碑.

It would appear that Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*, an edition known for not preserving auxiliary words, shares aspects of its thought with the *Xiang'er* edition. It was also a commonly used edition in Daoist religion, hence this chapter will be based on the aforementioned editions. The text of the *Laozi* uses the *Xiang'er Commentary* as its base while the sequence of sections follows the Heshang Gong edition. I am relying on a photocopy of a Song Dynasty edition belonging to Master Yu. In the discussion below, the name will be abbreviated to He edition 河本.<sup>4</sup>

**Section 3** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: "Spiritualizing his heart-mind" (*ling qi xin* 靈其心)

In other editions, the character *ling* 靈 is written *xu* 虛.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, the sentence containing "Keep the heart-mind undisturbed," has been cited in the "Dao Ying" chapter of the *Huainanzi*, the "Biography of Qinbi 秦宓" in the *Annals of Shu* (*Shu zhi* 蜀志), Kong Yingda's 孔穎達 annotations to the hexagram *gen* 艮 in the *Classic of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經), the "Biography of Wu Yinzhi 吳隱之" in the *History of the Jin Dynasty* (*Jin shu* 晉書), and the commentary to the "Rhapsody on the Eastern Capital" (Dongjing fu 東京賦) in the *Selections of Refined Literature* (*Wenxuan* 文選), yet none of these texts include the character *min* 民.<sup>6</sup> Liu Shipai 劉師培 in his *Collated Amendments to the Laozi* (*Laozi jiaobu* 老子斟補) postulates the character *min* was removed due to political taboo in the early Tang Dynasty,<sup>7</sup> however, this Six Dynasties period manuscript does not include the character *min*, hence Liu Shipai's theory is incorrect. What is more, in the sentence "He ensures those who know not dare refrain from acting; hence nothing is not governed," the *Xiang'er* edition adds the character *bu* 不 after *gan* 敢 but it does not add the characters *wei wuwei* 為無為 after the character *wei* 為. Only the Xuan edition and Sui stele follow this.<sup>8</sup>

4 *Laozi Daodejing Heshang Gong zhangju*.

5 Jiang Xichang, *Laozi jiaogu*, 3.23.

6 *Huainanzi jishi*, 12.857. *Sanguo zhi*, 38.974. *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 5.250. *Jin shu*, 90.2341. *Wenxuan*, 3.127.

7 *Laozi jiaobu*, 2b-3a.

8 *Laozi jiaogu*, 3.25-26. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 5.

**Section 7** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “They can be everlasting” (*gu neng changjiu* 故能長久)

The character *jiu* 久 matches the Xuan edition and Sui stele but other editions use *sheng* 生.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, for the sentence “He takes himself to be without a corpse, thus he can complete his corpse,” both the Xuan edition and Sui stele have two *shi* 尸 characters while other editions use *si* 私.<sup>10</sup>

**Section 10** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Support the soul, embrace the One” (*zai yingpo baoyi* 載營魄抱一)

Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty changed the character *zai* 載 to *zai* 哉 which should be read in conjunction with the preceding character.<sup>11</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary*, Xuan edition, and Sui stele all write “Support the soul, embrace the One.”<sup>12</sup> The “Yuanyou” 遠遊 poem in the *Songs of Chu* (*Chuci* 楚辭) states: “Support the soul and ascend the rosy clouds,” which Wang Yi’s 王逸 commentary explains as: “Embrace my soul and rise upwards.”<sup>13</sup> This is the traditional way of reading and understanding the text in the Han Dynasty. The “Dao Ying” chapter of the *Huainanzi* also uses “embrace the soul” (*zaiying po* 載營魄)<sup>14</sup> which means Xuanzong’s revision is incorrect. Additionally, the character *di* 地 in “Heaven and Earth’s opening and closing,” only matches the Dunhuang C edition; others, including the Xuan edition and Sui stele, use *men* 門.<sup>15</sup>

**Section 11** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Thirty spokes” (*sa fu* 卅輻)

The character *sa* 卅 only matches the Xuan edition while other editions use *sanshi* 三十.<sup>16</sup> The Dunhuang edition of Cheng Xuanying’s *Introduction to the Laozi* states:

古者三十分為二文，今時卅總為一字，有此離合，故少一文也。<sup>17</sup>

In antiquity “thirty” was written using two characters but now it is written using just one character. Herein lies the difference and is why the text is missing one character.

9 *Laozi jiaogu*, 7.42. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 5.

10 *Laozi jiaogu*, 7.43. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 5.

11 *Laozi jiaogu*, 10.55.

12 *Laozi jiaogu*, 10.54–56. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 6.

13 *Chuci buzhu*, 5.168.

14 *Huainanzi jishi*, 12.878.

15 *Laozi jiaogu*, 10.58. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 6.

16 *Laozi jiaogu*, 11.63. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 6.

17 See Figure 30 lines 18–19.

The editions by Master Xi and Ge Xuan are 4,999 characters in length instead of 5,000 and the reason is due to the character *sa*.

**Section 14** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Its declining does not dim” (*qi xia bu hu* 其下不忽)

The character *hu* 忽 matches the Xuan edition and Sui stele but other editions use *mei* 昧.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, the character *gu* 故 in “It is thus the beginning of antiquity,” has been changed to *zhi* 知.<sup>19</sup>

**Section 15** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Dispersant as if ice about to melt” (*huan ruo bing jiang zhao* 散若冰將洶)

The character *zhao* 洶 matches the Xuan edition and Sui stele but other editions have changed it to *shi* 釋.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, the character *bi* 弊 in “They can be worn out yet remain complete,” matches the Xuan edition and Sui stele, not to mention the stele of Yi county 易縣, but other editions have changed it to *bi* 蔽.<sup>21</sup>

**Section 16** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Recklessness produces disaster” (*wang zuo xiong* 妄作凶)

The character *wang* 妄 matches other editions while the Xuan edition changes it to *wang* 忘.<sup>22</sup> I suspect this is an error. Additionally, in the sentence “Being impartial they can live, living they can be Heavenly,” there are two *sheng* 生 characters which matches the Xuan edition and Sui stele, however, other editions use *wang* 王.<sup>23</sup>

**Section 17** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “In the next period, they insulted it” (*qici wu zhi* (其次) 侮之)

The two characters *qici* 其次 do not appear in either the Xuan edition or the Sui stele but other editions use them.<sup>24</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary* divides the text into: “People were drawn close and praised it,” “feared it,” and “insulted it.” We thus know the original text read *wei* 畏 and *wu* 侮 separately. It is obvious that the two characters *qici* 其次 appearing before *wu* 侮 should be deleted.

18 *Laozi jiaogu*, 14.78–79. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7.

19 *Laozi jiaogu*, 14.85.

20 *Laozi jiaogu*, 15.91. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7.

21 *Laozi jiaogu*, 15.97. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7.

22 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7. *Laozi jiaogu*, 16.104.

23 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7. *Laozi jiaogu*, 16.105.

24 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7. *Laozi jiaogu*, 17.109.

**Section 19** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “These three sayings” (*ci sanyan* 此三言)  
The character *yan* 言 matches the Xuan edition and Sui stele. Other editions write it *zhe* 者;<sup>25</sup> however, the *Xiang'er Commentary* and Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse* use *san shi* 三事. Details will be discussed below.

**Section 20** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Between yea and yes” (*wei zhi yu he* 唯之與何)

The character *he* 何 is written in other editions as *a* 阿.<sup>26</sup> Only manuscript number 2329 in the Pelliot Catalogue uses *he* 何, according to Tang Wenbo 唐文播 in his *Collated Notes on Dunhuang Manuscript Scrolls by Laozi Housed in Paris* (“Bali suo zang Dunhuang Laozi xiejuan jiaoji” 巴黎所藏敦煌老子寫卷掇記).<sup>27</sup> Additionally, the characters *mei* 美 and *he ruo* 何若在 “The beautiful and the grotesque, what is the difference?” match the Xuan edition and Sui stele while other editions change *mei* 美 to *shan* 善, and *he ruo* 何若 to *ruo he* 若何.<sup>28</sup> In section 2 of the *Laozi*, the sentence “When everyone in the world knows the beauty of the beautiful, this is ugliness,”<sup>29</sup> contains the character *mei* 美 which stands in opposition to *e* 惡. What is more, *ruo* 若 is rhymed with *e* 惡, hence the *Xiang'er Commentary* has preserved the ancient meaning. Next, the character *heng* 亨 in “Partaking in a grand banquet,” matches the Xuan edition.<sup>30</sup> Lu Deming’s *Textual Explanations of Classics and Canons* also writes it *heng* 亨.<sup>31</sup> The Sui stele and other editions use *xiang* 享.<sup>32</sup> The character *po* 魄 in “My soul has yet to indicate its presence,” matches the Xuan edition and Sui stele but other editions either use *pa* 怕, *bo* 泊, or *kuo* 廓.<sup>33</sup> The character *qi* 魁 is a variant of *kui* 魁 [i.e., ladle of the Big Dipper]. Other editions have changed it to *kui* 魁,<sup>34</sup> the details of which will be given in a later section below. The characters *zhaozhao* 照照 in “The vulgar person shines forth brightly,” matches the Xuan edition while others use *zhaozhao* 昭昭.<sup>35</sup> Lu Deming’s text states: “*Zhao* 昭 was alternatively written *zhao* 照.”<sup>36</sup>

25 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8. *Laozi jiaogu*, 10.120.

26 *Laozi jiaogu*, 20.123.

27 Tang Wenbo, “Bali suo cang Dunhuang Laozi xiejuan jiaoji,” 83–84.

28 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8. *Laozi jiaogu*, 20.123.

29 *Laozi jiaogu*, 2.12.

30 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8.

31 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 25.721.

32 *Laozi jiaogu*, 20.126.

33 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8. *Laozi jiaogu*, 20.129.

34 *Laozi jiaogu*, 20.131.

35 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8. *Laozi jiaogu*, 20.134.

36 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 25.721.

**Section 21** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “And is how it views ending and beginning. How do I know the ending and beginning are such?” (*yi yue zhong fu, wu heyi zhi zhong fu zhi ran* 以閱終甫，吾何以知終甫之然)

The two characters *zhong* 終 and *ran* 然 match the Xuan edition, the Sui stele, and the Library edition,<sup>37</sup> but other editions write *zhong* 終 as *zhong* 眾.<sup>38</sup> Lu Deming’s text states:

河上一本直云：吾何狀也。<sup>39</sup>

The Heshang Gong edition frankly states: “How do I know the state of things?”

My photocopy of the Heshang Gong edition from the Song Dynasty uses the character *ran* 然 instead of *zhuang* 狀。<sup>40</sup>

**Section 23** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Thus, follow its affairs and the Dao will be acquired” (*gu congshi er Dao de zhi* 故從事而道得之)

In the four sentences that follow this one, minor differences exist in the Xuan edition and Sui stele. Other editions have additional sentences,<sup>41</sup> making this the most obvious case of textual redaction in the Master Xi edition.

**Section 24** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “To gasp is not to endure, to stride is not to walk” (*chuanzhe bujiu, kuazhe buxing* 喘者不久，跨者不行)

These two sentences completely match those in the Xuan edition, Library edition, and Sui stele.<sup>42</sup> Only the Guangming stele 廣明碑 inserts “to anticipate is not to stand” between them.<sup>43</sup> Other editions match the sentence “To stride is not to walk,” but change “To gasp is not to endure” to “To stand on one’s tiptoes is not to stand.”<sup>44</sup> Cheng Xuanying’s *Introduction to the Laozi* states:

以愚為娛，以企為喘，若斯之文，愚所未喻。<sup>45</sup>

To take *xian* 企 as *chuan* 喘 and *yu* 愚 as *yu* 娛, this manner of writing is inexplicably foolish.

37 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8.

38 *Laozi jiaogu*, 21.149.

39 *Jingdian shōwen huijiao*, 25.721.

40 *Laozi Daodejing Heshang Gong zhangju*, 2.87.

41 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9. *Laozi jiaogu*, 23.158.

42 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9. *Laozi jiaogu*, 24.161–62.

43 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 24.97.

44 *Laozi jiaogu*, 24.161.

45 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 61.

The words “Stretching my head and neck, I fly close behind,” in Yang Xiong’s 揚雄 memorial “Denigrating Qin and Praising Xin” (ju Qin mei Xin 劇秦美新) in the Dunhuang edition of the *Selections of Refined Literature*, also takes *xian* 企 as *qi* 企.<sup>46</sup> Only the Guangming stele has:

喘者不久，企者不立，跨者不行。<sup>47</sup>

To gasp is not to endure, to stand on one's tiptoes is not to stand, to stride is not to walk.

Regarding these three lines, some editions omit the first line while others omit the second line. There are also some editions where the first and second lines were combined into: “To anticipate is not to endure 企者不久.”<sup>48</sup> An example of this is the stele found in Yi prefecture dated to the second year of the Jinglong 景龍 reign period of Emperor Zhongzong of the Tang Dynasty 唐中宗. Cheng Xuanying mistook “To gasp is not endure” for “To anticipate is not to endure,” believing they were the same sentence, causing him to say *xian* 企 is *chuan* 喘. What he did not know is that texts of this kind combine two sentences together, hence the first character is not a copyist error. Additionally, the character *rao* 饒 in “The self-abundant is not successful,” matches the Xuan edition, Library edition, and Sui stele, but other editions use *fa* 伐.<sup>49</sup> The term *zifa* 自伐 frequently appears in the *Laozi* and while other lines containing *zifa*—to inflict harm on oneself—appear in the *Xiang'er Commentary*, the text retains its original meaning. Here, the meaning is different, thus the text uses *zi rao* 自饒. Moreover, the character *chuo* 餼 in “It is said the use of leftover food as a tribute,” matches the Xuan edition, Library edition, and Sui stele, but other editions use *zhui* 贅.<sup>50</sup>

**Section 25** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “The Dao is great, Heaven is great, Earth is great, and life is great” (*Dao da, Tian da, Di da, Sheng da* 道大，天大，地大，生大) and “Life is one of them” (*er sheng chuyi* 而生處一) The two characters *sheng* 生 in other editions are written *wang* 王 while Fuyi 傅奕 has changed them to *ren* 人.<sup>51</sup> According to this, the *Xiang'er Commentary* is a special case, details of which will be discussed below.

46 *Dunhuang Tulufan ben Wenxuan jijiao*, 130, 134.

47 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 24.97.

48 *Laozi jiaogu*, 24.161.

49 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9. *Laozi jiaogu*, 24.162–63.

50 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9. *Laozi jiaogu*, 24.163.

51 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 25.102.



**Section 27** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Good actions have no pervading trace” (*shanxing wu cheji* 善行無徹跡)

The character *che* 徹 matches the Xuan edition and Library edition, while other editions have changed it to one containing the *che* 車 radical [i.e., 輒].<sup>52</sup> Lu Deming’s text states:

徹，梁（按似指梁武）云：應車邊，今作彳邊者，古字少也。<sup>53</sup>

On the character *che* 徹, in the Liang Dynasty [Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty 梁武帝] it was said: “The character with the cart radical should be used, yet the character with the *chi* 彳 radical in use today is rarely found amongst ancient ones.”

This is also evidence that it is an ancient edition.

**Section 28** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Be a servant to the world” (*wei tianxia xi* 為天下奚)

The character *xi* 奚 matches the Xuan edition and Dunhuang D edition, while the Sui stele uses *xi* 蹊 and other editions have *xi* 谿.<sup>54</sup> Additionally, the character *dai* 貸 in “*chang de bu dai* 常德不貸” matches the Xuan edition, Dunhuang D edition, and Sui stele, but other editions use *te* 忒.<sup>55</sup>

**Section 30** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “After the army comes, there must be a disastrous year” (*dajun zhi hou, biyou xiongnian* 大軍之後，必有凶年)

The *Xiang'er Commentary* does not contain this sentence, nor is it found in the Xuan edition or Sui stele.<sup>56</sup>

**Section 32** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “If the nobility can guard it” (*wanghou ruo neng shou* 王侯若能守)

The two characters *wanghou* 王侯 match the Xuan edition, Dunhuang D edition, and Sui stele, but other editions use *houwang* 侯王.<sup>57</sup> Lu Deming states: “Liang Wu 梁武 [Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty] is written *wanghou*.”<sup>58</sup> This demonstrates that the *Xiang'er Commentary* matches the ancient edition (section 37 is the same).

52 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9. *Laozi jiaogu*, 27.178–79.

53 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 25.722.

54 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 10. *Laozi jiaogu*, 28.187.

55 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 10. *Laozi jiaogu*, 28.188.

56 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 10. *Laozi jiaogu*, 30.199–200.

57 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 11. *Laozi jiaogu*, 32.215.

58 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 25.722.

**Section 34** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “It can be named small” (*ke ming yu xiao* 可名於小)

The *Xiang'er Commentary*, Xuan edition, Dunhuang D edition, and Sui stele are all missing the three characters “*chang wuyu* 常無欲.”<sup>59</sup>

**Section 35** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “There is peace and great joy” (*anping dale* 安平大樂) and “Halos and transgressing visitors will thereupon stop” (*yu er guoke zhi* 與珥過客止)

The character *da* 大 in all other editions is written as either *tai* 太 or *tai* 泰 with the punctuation mark placed at the end.<sup>60</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary* is alone in using the character *da* 大 and linking it with *le* 樂, giving it a special meaning; further details will be given below.

**Section 36** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Fish cannot surpass a gulf” (*yu buke sheng yu yuan* 魚不可勝於淵)

The character *sheng* 勝 in all other editions is written *tuo* 脫 but I suspect this is an error based on the physical similarity of the characters.<sup>61</sup>

**Section 37** of the *Xiang'er*, the line: “Heaven and Earth correct themselves” (*tiandi zizheng* 天地自正)

The character *di* 地 only matches the Xuan edition, with the Sui stele and all other editions using *xia* 下.<sup>62</sup>

Based on these annotations, the *Xiang'er Commentary*, Suo Dongxuan edition, Longxing stele, and others, should all belong to the same tradition in that they are consistent in their section division and removal of auxiliary words. Since the Eastern Han Dynasty, the different editions of the *Daodejing* can be assigned to one of two traditions: one saw the removal of auxiliary words and talismans of practitioners of religious Daoism to conform to the 5000-Character Classic; the other saw the preservation of auxiliary words for the purpose of recitation and study. Ge Xuan's collated edition of Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*, which became known as the “Ge edition,” was popular in the Tang Dynasty. It was also entitled the Master Xi edition,<sup>63</sup> which is actually the redacted edition. In the Tang Dynasty, it was common to engrave scriptures on stone pillars and write texts for prayers to be used in the making

59 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 11. *Laozi jiaogu*, 34.227.

60 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 11. *Laozi jiaogu*, 35.231–32.

61 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 11. *Laozi jiaogu*, 36.238.

62 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 12. *Laozi jiaogu*, 37.242.

63 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 32.

of covenants in Daoist temples. If this is one tradition, the text represents a scripture of Daoist religion, while the *Xiang'er Commentary* is the origin of the edition by Zhang Lu, the so-called General of Pacifying the South. These two texts come from the same religious tradition of Daoism and apart from slight semantic variances, the order of their sections is largely the same. Thus, we can see that the present *Laozi* book, when compared to the editions in circulation since the Eastern Han Dynasty, does not contain any substantial differences.

## Annotative Notes

The language of the *Xiang'er Commentary* is extremely rough, hard to comprehend, and contains many strange words and profound themes requiring further treatment and exploration. Based on what I have seen, the following is an outline of my annotative notes:

### 1 The Origin of the Name “Daoist Religion”

The “Treatise on Buddhism and Daoism” (*Shi Lao zhi* 釋老志) in the *History of the Wei Dynasty* has:

寇謙之清整道教，除去三張偽法……專以禮度為首，而加之以服食閉鍊。<sup>1</sup>

Kou Qianzhi purified and corrected Daoist religion by removing the false methods of the three Zhang’s [i.e., Zhang Daoling, Zhang Heng, Zhang Lu] ... rituals were the main area of focus and were supplemented by the taking of elixirs and secluded meditation.

Here we already see the two characters *Daojiao* 道教 and these remind us what section 17 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* said:

When the genuine Dao is concealed, depraved writings appear, and the use of these false arts of the world is called Daoist religion. They belong to a great deception and must not be used.

It is in Zhang Daoling’s commentary to the *Laozi* that the name “Daoist religion” appears and this is also the first time the name “Daoist religion” was used in a written text. The method of the three Zhang’s, otherwise known as “Celestial Masters Daoism,”<sup>2</sup> was ridiculed by people who called it the Way of Five Pecks of Rice or the Way of Ghosts (*gui Dao* 鬼道).<sup>3</sup> When the world speaks of the history of Daoist religion, everyone believes Zhang Daoling was its founder,

<sup>1</sup> *Wei shu*, 114.3051.

<sup>2</sup> *Taiping jing hejiao*, 40.82.

<sup>3</sup> *Hou Han shu*, 75.2436 note 5. *Jin shu*, 120.3022.

however, what people fail to notice is that the name “Daoist religion” also comes from him. If we consult the entry on “Daoist religion” in *Master Feng’s Records of Things Heard and Seen* (*Fengshi wenjian ji* 封氏聞見記), Hsu Ti Shan 許地山 and Fu Qinjia’s 傅勤家 *History of Daoist Religion* (*Daojiao shi* 道教史), and the entry on “Daoism and Daoist religion” in the appendix to Chen Guofu’s 陳國符 *Research on the Origin and Transmission of the Daoist Canon* (*Daozang yuanliu kao* 道藏源流考), we notice that none of them raised this issue.<sup>4</sup> Based on the *Xiang’er Commentary*, we can add this important piece of information to the study of the history of Daoist religion, which is also known as the “teachings of Laozi,” as chapter 69 of the *Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden* (*Fayuan Zhulin* 法苑珠林) states: “Daoist priests had the title of “teachers of Laozi” because the words of Heshang Gong had yet to exist.”<sup>5</sup> These priests were known for their “teachings of Laozi” because they used Laozi’s *5000-Character Classic* as the foundation for their pedagogy.

## 2 The Genuine Dao, Genuineness of the Dao, and the Genuine Text

The Buddhist monk Dao’an [also known as Shi Dao’an 釋道安] in chapter 9 (“Fufa Feilao” 服法非老) of his *Treatise on the Two Teachings* (*Erjiao lun* 二教論) says: “Zhang Daoling falsely claimed to have the genuine Dao” 張陵妄稱真道.<sup>6</sup> Looking at the *Xiang’er Commentary* today, we find evidence for this in section 8: “Who can know the genuine Dao; they should not tend to matters that are depraved, false, or deceitful,” 知真道者；不當事耶（邪）僞伎巧。<sup>7</sup> Section 10 states: “Those who say the body possesses it are viewed by the world as practicing false arts of a non-genuine Dao.” 諸附身者悉世間常僞伎，非真道也。<sup>8</sup> Section 17 writes: “When the genuine Dao is concealed, depraved writings appear” 真道藏，耶文出。<sup>9</sup> These prove the claims of Dao’an. In the *Xiang’er Commentary*, the “genuine Dao” (*zhen Dao* 真道) is also called the “genuineness of the Dao” (*Dao zhen* 道真). The name “genuine Dao” is frequently seen in the *Scripture of Great Peace*. Chapter 17, section 6, of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* (*Taiping jing chao* 太平經鈔) says: “Follow and practice the genuine Dao, working to remove the perverse and false arts” 按行真道，共卻

4 *Fengshi wenjian ji jiaozhu*, 1.1–3. Hsu Ti Shan, *Daojiao shi*. Fu Qinjia, *Zhongguo Daojiao shi*. Chen Guofu, *Daozang yuanliu kao*, 259.

5 *Fayuan zhulin jiaozhu*, 55.1662.

6 *Guang Hongming ji*, 8.146.

7 See Figure 4 line 12.

8 See Figure 5 line 7.

9 See Figure 11 lines 9–10.

邪偽。<sup>10</sup> Additionally, section 6 of chapter 23 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* says:

天地安，帝王生，天地所愛者，乃當愛真道真德也。夫天者，乃道之真，道之綱，道之信，道之因而行也；地者，乃德之長，德之紀，德之所因緣而止也。<sup>11</sup>

When Heaven and Earth are peaceful, the monarch is born. What Heaven and Earth are fond of are the genuine essentials of the Dao, and the genuine essentials of virtue. As for Heaven, it is the genuineness of the Dao, the guiding thread of the Dao, the trustworthiness of the Dao, and that which follows and moves with the Dao. As for Earth, it is the bearer of virtue, the standard of virtue, and that which follows and stops with virtue.

The *Scripture of Great Peace*, in part 3 of scroll 90, writes:

凡人乃不宜聞非真要道，非真要德。勅教之，反以浮華偽文巧述示教。<sup>12</sup>

The common people are not suited to hearing about the inauthentic essentials of the Dao or the inauthentic essentials of virtue. Those imposing such teachings resort to excessively ornamental and false writings in order to narrate their doctrines.

Furthermore, part 2 of the same scroll states: “The four seasons and five elements are the essential genuineness of the Dao of Heaven and Earth” 四時五行，乃天地之真要道也。<sup>13</sup> Within the *Scripture of Great Peace*, every instance of “genuine Dao” and “perverse and false” can be found in the *Xiang'er Commentary*. For example, scroll 71 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* has “*Zhen Dao jiushou de shi wen jue*” 真道九首得失文訣; scroll 49 has “*Ji xue zhen fa*” 急學真法; scroll 51 has “*Jiaowen xie zheng fa*” 校文邪正法; scroll 42 has “*Yan Dao zhen wei jue*” 驗道真偽訣, and so on. From this we can see that in the *Xiang'er Commentary*, the meaning of “genuine Dao” was derived from the *Scripture of Great Peace*. When Daoism speaks of the genuine it resembles what Laozi said in his book about the body of the Dao: “Its essence is profoundly genuine” 其

10 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 346.

11 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 348.

12 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 97.431.

13 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 97.430.

精甚真.<sup>14</sup> Thus, while the term “genuine” comes from Laozi, it has a different meaning here.

Tao Hongjing's *Declarations of the Perfected* uses the character *zhen* 真 in its name. Many of its discussions on the “genuine” are quite precise. For example, the “Zhen Ming Shou” 甄命授 chapter states:

道者混然，是生元氣。元氣成然後有太極，太極則天地之父母，道之奧也。故道有大歸，是為素真。故非道無以成真，非真無以成道。道不成，其素安可見乎？是以為大歸也。見而謂之妙，成而謂之道，用而謂之性，性與道之體，體好至道，道使之然也。（注云：此說人體自然，與道炁合。所以天命謂性，率性謂道，修道謂教；今以道教，使性成真，則同於道矣）。<sup>15</sup>

The Dao, in a chaotic state, gave birth to primal breath. After the formation of primal breath there was the Great Ultimate, and the Great Ultimate served as the parents of Heaven and Earth and the mysteriousness of the Dao. Thus, the Dao has a great return to what is plain and genuine. What is not the Dao is unable to become genuine and what is not genuine is unable to become the Dao. If the Dao does not come into being, how can its plainness be seen? This is why it has a great return. What is seen is called the profound, what is formed is called the Dao, and what is used is called nature. Nature and the Dao result in the body, the body is fond of the perfect Dao, and the Dao makes it so (The commentary states: “This is to say the body is natural, merging with the Dao and breath. Thus, Heavenly fate is called nature and following one’s nature is called the Dao, hence cultivating the Dao is known as teaching. To teach the Dao and make one’s nature genuine, such a person will be the same as the Dao”).

This discusses the ontology of the “genuine” and elucidates the meaning of mutual dependency between “the Dao” and the “genuine” that is most exquisite. In Lian Xi's 濂溪 *Illustrated Explanations of the Great Ultimate* (*Taiji tushuo* 太極圖說), the “non-ultimate” (*wuji* 無極) is the primordial breath mentioned here.<sup>16</sup> The *Declarations of the Perfected* also has:

14 Laozi *jiaoshi*, 21.89.

15 Zhengao, 5.78.

16 Zhou Dunyi, *Taiji tushuo*, 6.

志道存真者，雖寒熱飢渴猶不護，此一往之至也。<sup>17</sup>

Aspiring to the Dao and preserving the genuine, not being partial to cold or heat, hunger or thirst, this is to move with the perfect.

Talk of aspiring for the Dao and treasuring sincerity can also be found in the *Xiang'er Commentary*. The *Declarations of the Perfected* goes on to say:

夫真者，都無情慾之感，男女之想也。若丹白存於胸中，則真感不應……所以真道不可對求，要言不可偶聽，有匹則不真。外併則真假，真假之跡，斷可見也。<sup>18</sup>

As for the genuine person, they are unaffected by the passions or desirous thoughts between men and women. If cinnabar and the white exist in a person's breast, the genuine will not resonate ... hence the genuine Dao cannot be attained through sacrifice and prayer, essential words cannot be accidentally heard, and those with a partner are not genuine. When the external merges the genuine becomes false, and traces of the genuine and false can most definitely be seen.

This talk of the genuine having an absolute nature destroys the method of “facing and seeking” (*duiqiu* 對求). It is to view Zhang Daoling with esteem. On the whole, Tao Hongjing disagrees with Zhang Daoling's “The Dao of Yellow and Red” (*huang chi zhi Dao* 黃赤之道) and “Method of Mixing Breath” (*hunqi zhi fa* 混氣之法),<sup>19</sup> saying they are not the superior Dao. The meaning of “the genuineness of the Dao” stretching from the *Scripture of Great Peace* to Zhang Daoling to Tao Hongjing evolves differently, thus they engage in parallel discussion. Later, Chunyang the Perfected (*Chunyang zhenren* 純陽真人), in the “Gui Zhen” 歸真 chapter of the *Scripture of Gold and Jade* (*Jinyu jing* 金玉經), proclaims:

真其歸乎！假所以悟，假其歸乎！真自以出。<sup>20</sup>

The genuine has returned! The false is realized, the false has returned!  
The genuine is self-emerging.

17 Zhengao, 6.106.

18 Zhengao, 6.106.

19 Zhengao, 2.20. See the entry on *The Yellow Writ* (*Huangshu* 黃書) in chapter 10: “Examining Zhang Daoling's Writings.”

20 *Jinyu baojing*, 6.35b.



Also, speaking of the “genuine and false” as opposites is akin to Buddhism’s distinguishing of truth and falsehood (paramārtha and saṃvṛti).

The *Xiang'er Commentary* also contains the term “genuine text” (*zhenwen* 真文), such as:

今世間偽技，因緣真文設詐巧。<sup>21</sup>

Today, the false arts of the world rely on this genuine text to construct their swindle.

What is more, “genuine text” appears in the *Scripture of Great Peace*, such as part 4 of scroll 41:

真人付文道德之君，以示諸賢明，卻並拘校，合天下之文人口訣辭，以上下相足，去其複重，置其要言要文訣事，記之以為經書，如是乃後天地真文正字善辭，悉得出也，邪偽畢去。<sup>22</sup>

The perfected person was entrusted with the scripture of *Dao* and *De* and showed it to those who were worthy and illuminated, removing its limitations and opposition by merging it with the oral instructions of the cultured people of the world. To make the upper and lower divisions complementary, they discarded repetitive text, arranged the essential words, writings, and instructional matters, and recorded them in the form of a written scripture. In doing so, Heaven and Earth and the correct words and good expressions of the “genuine text” emerged, while the perverse and false was completely removed.

In other words, the term “genuine text” in the *Xiang'er Commentary* equals that in the *Scripture of Great Peace*, which is why in section 7 of part 3 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* we read: “When genuine texts appear, perverse and false writings are expelled” 悉出真文而絕去邪偽文也。<sup>23</sup>

### 3 Tenets of the Dao

The *Xiang'er Commentary* frequently refers to “tenets of the Dao” (*Daojie* 道誡) and amongst its more than 30 sections, roughly 20 of them discuss “spreading the tenets of the Dao,” “observing the tenets of the Dao,” “guarding the tenets

<sup>21</sup> See Figure 6 lines 11–12.

<sup>22</sup> *Taiping jing hejiao*, 41.86.

<sup>23</sup> Lüqiu Fanguyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 351.

of the Dao,” and so forth. In the *Scripture of Great Peace*, such as scrolls 71 (*Zhi shan chu xie lingren shou Dao jie wen* 致善除邪令人受道戒文) and 110 (*Dagong yinian shu chu suiyue jie* 大功益年書出歲月戒), there is frequent mention of “the great spirit is a weighty tenet” (*da shen zhong jie* 大神重戒). In addition, there is scroll 112 (*Qishier se sishi jie* 七十二色死尸戒 and *Bu wang jie chang de fu jue* 不忘誠長得福訣), scroll 114 (*Bu xiao buke jiusheng jie* 不孝不可久生誠, *Jian jie bu chu e jue* 見誠不觸惡訣, *Dashou jie* 大壽誠, and *Bu chengtian shu yan bing dang jie zhe jie* 不承天書言病當解謫誠), and so forth. Scroll 114 says:

天有誠書，具道善惡之事；不信其言，何從乎？<sup>24</sup>

Heaven has a book of tenets that talks about matters of good and evil; if a person does not trust these words, what should they follow?

The characters *jie* 誠 and *jie* 戒 are the same and seen numerous times in the *Xiang'er Commentary*. The phrase “tenets of the Dao” is in fact what the *Scripture of Great Peace* calls the *Book of Tenets* (*Jie shu* 誠書).<sup>25</sup> In the *Scripture of Great Peace*, the character *xiao* 孝 is given priority and the same is true in the *Xiang'er Commentary*. A tenet is a word of command, which aligns with the system used in the Han Dynasty. When the Emperor issued an edict of warning to the prefectures and counties, it was called a “tenet order” (*jiechi* 誠敕) or a “tenet document.” The commentary to the “Annals of Emperor Guangwu” 光武紀 in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* contains an early example of this;<sup>26</sup> Daoist religion simply imitated it. The “Weizhi” 微旨 chapter of Ge Hong’s 葛洪 *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* (*Baopuzi* 抱朴子) also speaks of “tenets of the Dao,” noting:

覽諸道戒，無不云欲求長生者，必欲積善立功，慈心於物，恕己及人，仁逮昆蟲，樂人之吉，愍人之苦，賙人之急，救人之窮，手不傷生，口不勸禍，見人之得如己之得，見人之失如己之失，不自貴，不自譽，不嫉妒勝己，不佞諂陰賊。如此乃為有德，受福於天，所作必成，求仙可冀也。<sup>27</sup>

Inspecting the tenets of the Dao, they all state those desiring longevity of life must amass goodness and establish their achievements, have a compassionate heart-mind for things, forgive others as they forgive oneself, treat insects and bugs with humaneness, celebrate the good fortune of

24 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 114.604.

25 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 114.604.

26 *Hou Han shu*, 1A.24 note 1.

27 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 6.126.

others, pity the hardship of others, be charitable to those in distress, assist those in poverty, do not harm living things, do not utter excessive encouragements, see the success of others as one's own, see the loss of others as one's own, do not be proud, do not be arrogant, do not be jealous of those who excel, and do not praise those who are malicious. In this way, one will have virtue, receive good fortune from Heaven, achieve all they set out to do, and so can look forward to their wish for transcendence.

The main thought of the *Xiang'er Commentary* is: "To uphold the tenets of the Dao, amass good accomplishments, accumulate essence to complete the spirit" 奉道誠，積善成功，積精成神.<sup>28</sup> It thus states:

夫欲寶精，百行當修，萬善當著。<sup>29</sup>

The person hoping to treasure their essence should cultivate it through the hundred kinds of movement, and manifest it through the myriad kinds of goodness.

This meaning was in fact explained by Ge Hong.

Daoist religion has tenets to expound the principles of its teaching and established precepts for followers to obey, allowing it to become a religion similar to Buddhism, which also has precepts and regulations. The *Sutra in Forty-Two Chapters* (*Sishier zhang jing* 四十二章經) and Muzi's 牟子 *Settling Doubts* (*Lihuo lun* 理惑論) speak of monks having 250 tenets.<sup>30</sup> In the Han Dynasty, Buddhist precepts (*jie* 戒) and regulations (*lü* 律) had already spread to China. Yu Ji 于吉 and Zhang Daoling, who established the teachings of Daoism, learned it from Buddhism. Shi Falin wrote in section 6 of his "Discerning the Correct:"

于室以疾病致感老君，授百八十戒，並《太平經》一百七十篇。<sup>31</sup>

When Gan Shi [i.e., Yu Ji] was sick he was spiritually recruited by Lord Lao who transmitted to him the 180 tenets and 170 chapters of the *Scripture of Great Peace*.

Daoism has 180 tenets and these are similar to the 250 tenets of Buddhism. Connecting a number to the tenets is known as "numbered matters" (*shi shu*

<sup>28</sup> See Figure 7 line 16.

<sup>29</sup> See Figure 15 line 3.

<sup>30</sup> *Sishier zhang jing*, 1.8. *Mouzi Lihuo lun*, 33.

<sup>31</sup> *Guang Hongming ji*, 13.183.

事數)<sup>32</sup> which also adopts one element from the Western region's "correlating categories" (*geyi* 格義). Yu Ji and Xiangkai's 襄楷 writings each used stories from the *Sutra in Forty-Two Chapters* while the *Scripture of Great Peace* utilized theories from Buddhism that has only recently been established.<sup>33</sup> As for the Way of Five Pecks of Rice establishment of charity lodges, burning incense, prostration, and other matters, they are related to Buddhism's food offerings and other mannerisms, which Fukui Kōjun 福井康順 discusses in his *The Origins of Daoist Religion and Buddhism* (*Yuanshi Daojiao yu Fojiao* 原始道教與佛教).<sup>34</sup> The method of establishing tenets in Daoist religion was borrowed from Buddhism, of this there is no doubt, however, there are also so-called "regulations of the Dao" (*Dao lü* 道律). In the "Daoshi heqi fa" 道士合氣法 of Zhen Luan's 甄鸞 *Laughing at the Dao* (*Xiao Dao lun* 笑道論), both the "Regulations of the Genuine for Proper Homage in the Inner Chamber" (*Zhenren nei zhao lü* 真人內朝律) and "Regulations of the Dao" (*Dao lü* 道律) mention the matter of "practices of breath have their order."<sup>35</sup>

#### 4 Person of Dao, Daoist Priest, and Transcendent Person

Section 7 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* states: "The person of Dao acquires the longevity of the transcendent person" 道人所以得仙壽者.<sup>36</sup> The "Biography of Jing Fang 京房" in the *History of the Han Dynasty* says:

法曰（指占候之法）道人始去，寒湧水為災。<sup>37</sup>

The method [of meteoromancy] says: When the Daoist is about to depart, cold emerges and there is a disastrous flood.

Yan Shigu's 顏師古 commentary adds: "A Daoist is someone who has the techniques of Dao" 道人，有道術之人也。<sup>38</sup> The "Records of Empress Lingsi He" 靈思何皇后 in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* reads: "The Empress gave birth to prince Bian who was raised by the Shi family of Daoists" 生皇

32 *Shishuo xinyu jianshu*, 4.284.

33 Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang Jin Nan Bei chao fojiao shi*, 106.

34 Fukui Kōjun, "Genshi dōkyō to bukkyō" 原始道教と仏教, in *Dōkyō no kiso-teki kenkyū* 道教の基礎的研究, 96–134, collected in *Fukui Kōjun chosakushū* 福井康順著作集, volume 1.

35 *Guang Hongming ji*, 9.157.

36 See Figure 4 lines 2–3.

37 *Han shu*, 75.3164.

38 *Han shu*, 75.3165.

子辯，養於史道人家。<sup>39</sup> The commentary cites the *Chronicles of Emperor Xian* (*Xiandi Chunqiu* 獻帝春秋) as saying: “The prince was raised by the Shi family of Daoists).<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the “Biography of Lang Yi 郎顛” in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* cites the *Yi zhuan* 易傳 [*Apocrypha of the Yijing: Consultation Charts* (*Yi weiji lantu* 易緯稽覽圖)] which also speaks of a “person of Dao.”<sup>41</sup>

The *Scripture of Great Peace*, in section 8 of scroll 71, states:

人生各自有命：一為神人，二為真人，三為仙人，四為道人，五為聖人，六為賢人，此皆助天治者也。神人主天，真人主地，仙人主風雨，道人主教化吉凶，聖人主治百姓，賢人輔助聖人，理萬民錄也。<sup>42</sup>  
The life of each person has its fate: First is the spiritual person, second is the perfected person, third is the transcendent person, fourth is the person of Dao, fifth is the sage, and sixth is the immortal person. All of these people assist Heaven’s governance. The spiritual person rules Heaven, the perfected person rules Earth, the transcendent person rules wind and rain, the person of Dao rules the teaching and transformation of auspicious and inauspicious fortune, the sage rules the hundred families, and the immortal person assists the sage in ordering the registers of the general population.

The scriptures separate people into six categories, with the person of Dao rule the teaching and transformation of fortune, but his position is lower than the transcendent person. It should be noted that the name “person of Dao” (*Dao ren* 道人) first appeared in the “Jiebi” 解蔽 chapter of the *Xunzi* 荀子:

則必合於不道人，而不知合於道人。<sup>43</sup>

One will then be forced to merge with people without Dao and not know they should unite with people of Dao.

This is a general way of speaking about masters of the techniques of Dao. What is more, during the Jin and Six Dynasties era, Buddhist monks were also referred to as “persons of Dao,” however, this title would carry a different meaning.<sup>44</sup>

39 *Hou Han shu*, 10B.449.

40 *Hou Han shu*, 10B.449.

41 *Hou Han shu*, 30B.1059.

42 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 71.289.

43 *Xunzi jiaoshi*, 15.846.

44 Qian Daxin, *Shijiazhai yangxin lu*, 19.531.

Section 35 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* says: “If Daoist practitioners were the only ones following the Dao, the king would be abandoned” 非獨道士可行，王者棄捐也。<sup>45</sup> The Daoist priest (*Daoshi* 道士) is in fact a person of Dao. The “Biography of Wang Mang 王莽” in the *History of the Han Dynasty* notes there was a Daoist priest named Ximen Junhui 西門君惠<sup>46</sup> while Huan Tan’s 桓譚 *New Discussions* (*Xinlun* 新論) refers to the Daoist priest as a “master of methods” (*fangshi* 方士).<sup>47</sup> The “Ziran” 自然 chapter of Wang Chong’s 王充 *Balanced Discourses* (*Lunheng* 論衡) writes: “Daoist priests used magical arts to create Lady Wang’s form” 道士以方術作夫人形。<sup>48</sup> The “Biography of Xu Man 許曼” in the “Biographies of Magicians and Immortals” (*Fangshu Liezhuan* 方術列傳) chapter of the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* says: “[...] met Zhang Jujun 張巨君 who transmitted to him the magical arts” 行遇道士張巨君，授以方術。<sup>49</sup> Thus, the name “Daoist priest” has been used since the Western Han Dynasty. In the preface to *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, Ge Hong notes: “The Daoist priest who is broad in learning and knowledge is rare” 道士弘博洽聞者寡，<sup>50</sup> which is to say he also uses the two characters *Daoshi* 道士. Chapter 69 of the *Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden* has:

始乎漢魏，終暨符姚，皆號眾僧以為道士。至魏太武二年，有寇謙之。始竊道士之名，私易祭酒之號。<sup>51</sup>

Starting in the Han and Wei dynasties and ending in the time of Fu and Yao, all Buddhist monks had the title of Daoist priest. By the second year of Emperor Taiwu of the Wei Dynasty there was Kou Qianzhi who secretly used the name Daoist priest in order to privately change the designation of libationers.

The name Daoist priest did not start with Kou Qianzhi, thus this theory is inaccurate.

The “Biography of Liu Xiang” in the *History of the Han Dynasty* states the region of Huainan 淮南 contains the *Secret Book of the Pillow of Hongbao* (*Zhenzhong Hongbao mishu* 枕中鴻寶祕書) which speaks of the technique of using immortals to turn demonic things into gold.<sup>52</sup> The “Biography of Wang Mang”

45 See Figure 23 line 18.

46 *Han shu*, 99C.4184.

47 Huan Tan, *Xinlun*, C.53.

48 *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 18.780.

49 *Hou Han shu*, 82B.2731.

50 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 367.

51 *Fayuan zhulin jiaozhu*, 55.1662.

52 *Han shu*, 36.1928.

cites the *Charts and Texts of the Purple Palace* (*Zige tuwen* 紫閣圖文) as saying: “The Ultimate One and the Yellow Emperor both became immortal after receiving an auspicious omen” 太一、黃帝惛得瑞以僊.<sup>53</sup> The “Treatise on Sacrifices” (*Jiaosi zhi* 郊祀志) in the *History of the Han Dynasty* reads:

王莽種五梁禾……謂為黃帝穀僊之術。<sup>54</sup>

Wang Mang grew five kinds of grain ... which was referred to as the Yellow Emperor's technique of immortality by way of grain.

Yang Xiong, in the “Junzi” 君子 chapter of his *Exemplary Figures* (*Fayan* 法言), discusses the reality of those who are transcendent<sup>55</sup> while Huan Tan does so in his “Rhapsody on Immortals” (*Xian fu* 仙賦).<sup>56</sup> The legend of the Dao of transcendence is one with a long history. The “Dao Xu” 道虛 chapter of Wang Chong's *Balanced Discourses* notes: “Those who are fond of the Dao learn the way of transcendence” 好道學仙之人.<sup>57</sup> Sections 7, 14, 20, and 33 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* all mention “the transcendent person,” (*xianshi* 仙士) especially section 20, which is the most cumbersome. Section 19 of scroll 112 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* also talks about the transcendent person, an example of which is: “Above is the transcendent person whose longevity can be extended in years” 上及仙士，壽可長年.<sup>58</sup> From this we know the name “transcendent person” comes from the *Scripture of Great Peace*.

## 5 Guarding the One

The *Laozi* speaks of “embracing the One” (*baoyi* 抱一) as well as “obtaining the One” (*deyi* 得一). This resembles the phrase “guarding the One” (*shouyi* 守一) seen in the “Zaiyou” 在宥 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* whereby Guang Chengzi 廣成子 says to the Yellow Emperor:

天地有官，陰陽有藏，慎守女身，物將自壯。我守其一，以處其和，故我修身千二百歲矣，吾形未嘗衰。<sup>59</sup>

Heaven and Earth have their Officials and Yin and Yang have their storehouses; carefully guard your body and things will grow strong of

53 *Han shu*, 99C.4160.

54 *Han shu*, 25B.1270.

55 *Fayan yishu*, 18.518.

56 Huan Tan, *Xinlun*, C.52.

57 *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 7.318.

58 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 112.580–81.

59 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 4C.381.

themselves. I guard this oneness and dwell in its harmony hence I have cultivated my body for 1,200 years, which is why my form has not decayed.

In the Han Dynasty, the Way of Great Peace (*Taiping Dao* 太平道) and Celestial Masters Daoism both discussed the method of “guarding the One” and their theories are based on these examples. Following “Support the soul, embrace the One,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

今布道誠，教人守誠不違，即為守一；不行其誠，即為失一也。<sup>60</sup>

With the tenets of the Dao distributed as teachings for the people, those who guard and do not violate them are guarding the One; if they do not follow its tenets, they will lose the One.

This is to use “guarding the One” to explain “embracing the One.” In the *Imperial Overview from the Taiping Reign* (*Taiping Yulan* 太平御覽), chapter 668 refers to the *Scripture of Great Peace*, which says:

一者，數之始也，生之道也，元氣所起也……故守而思一也。子欲養老，守一最壽，平起徐臥，與一相守，氣若泉源，其身何咎，是謂真寶，老衰自去。<sup>61</sup>

One, the beginning of all numbers, the Dao of life, the source of primal breath ... thus one should guard and think of the One. If you wish to live to old age, guarding the One is the best for longevity. Calmly awake and slowly lie down, then you and the One can mutually guard each other. If your breath is like a wellspring, your body will be without fault. This is known as the genuine treasure which causes old age and decay to depart.

Scroll 49 of *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* (*Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤) cites the *Scripture of Great Peace* as saying:

何以為初 思守一也？一者，數之始也，一者，道之生也，元氣之所起也，天地之綱紀也。<sup>62</sup>

Why should one's initial thoughts be of guarding the One? One, the beginning of all numbers. One, the Dao of life, the source of primal breath, the law and regulator of Heaven and Earth.

60 See Figure 5 lines 11–12.

61 *Taiping Yulan*, 668.2979.

62 *Yunji qiqian*, 3: 1087.



The *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged*, sections 2 and 7 of part 2, and sections 3 and 15 of part 3, all speak of guarding the One. Section 19 of part 10 observes:

人知守一，名為無極之道。人有一身，與精神常合並也。形者，乃主死，精神者，乃主生；常合即吉，去則凶，無精神則死，有精神則生。常合即為一，可以長存也。常患精神離散，不聚於身中，反令使隨人念而遊行也。故聖人教其守一，言當守一身也，念而不休，精神自來，莫不相應，百病自除，此即長生久視之符也。陽者守一，陰者守二，故名殺也。<sup>63</sup>

People know to guard the One, its name is the ultimate of the Dao. A person has a single body that combines with essence and spirit. Form is the ruler of death; essence and spirit are the rulers of life. Their constant unification is auspicious but their departure is inauspicious. To lack essence and spirit is to die, whereas having essence and spirit is to live. When constantly united they become one and have eternal life. To constantly worry of the departure and scattering of essence and spirit, that they will no longer collect in the body, is to return to making people follow their thoughts and wander aimlessly. Thus, the sage taught people to guard the One, which is to say they should guard their single body and think without resting, then essence and spirit will arrive of themselves and none will fail to respond. In this way, the hundred diseases are naturally eliminated. This is the talisman of longevity of life and enduring vision. Yang guards the One, Yin guards the Two, thus the latter's name is "killer."

To separate Yang as "guarding the One" and Yin as "guarding the Two" is to distinguish them from the principle that Yang gives birth and Yin kills, thus "losing the One" is in fact to kill. When it comes to "following its tenets," the *Scripture of Great Peace*, scroll 96, contains the *Shouyi rushi zhishen jie* 守一入室知神戒, however, I will not discuss it here. Furthermore, the *Taiping shengjun mizhi* 太平聖君祕旨 advocates the method of "guarding the One" in great detail. Scroll 6 of the *Zhenxian ti Dao tongjian* 真仙體道通鑑, which appears in volume 755 of the *Daoist Canon*, speaks of its transmission to the Lord Azure Lad (*Qingtong jun* 青童君), also known as the Prince of the East (*dong Wanggong* 東王公), who rules from Mount Fangzhu 方諸山 in the Eastern Sea.<sup>64</sup> Additionally, the *Taishang neidan shouyi zhending jing* 太上內丹守一真定經 contains other, later writings on this topic. The "Dui Su" 對俗 chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* cites the *Scripture of Immortality* (*Xian jing* 仙經) as saying:

63 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 377.

64 Zhao Daoyi, *Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 5: 139.

服丹守一，與天相畢，還精胎息，延壽無極。<sup>65</sup>

Ingesting cinnabar and guarding the One is to live as long as Heaven, returning essence and embryonic breathing will extend longevity indefinitely.

Chapter 13 of *Declarations of the Perfected* discusses the Dao of guarding the black and white, writing: “This Dao resembles guarding the One” 此道與守一相似。<sup>66</sup> Here, “guarding the One” is the main idea of the *Scripture of Great Peace* and the *Xiang'er Commentary* also uses it. Let us now examine the source of this theory. In the Buddhist sutras translated during the Han and Wei epoch, “guarding the One” was a frequently used expression. For example, the *Dharmapada Sutra* (*Faju jing* 法句經) says: “Guarding the One is to correct the body” 守一以正身。<sup>67</sup> “Guarding the One” was a common Daoist expression in the Eastern Han and was used to interpret Buddhist meditation. Tang Xiyu 湯錫予 suspects “guarding the One” in the *Scripture of Great Peace* was derived from the Indian term for contemplation.<sup>68</sup>

## 6 On Joy and Anger, Auspicious and Inauspicious Fortune

In scroll 113 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, the *Le nu ji xiong jue* 樂怒吉凶訣 says:

樂：小具小得其意者，以樂人；中具中得其意者，以樂治；上具上得其意者，以樂天地。得樂人法者，人為其悅喜；得樂治法者，治為其平安；得樂天地法者，天地為其和。天地和則凡物為之無病，群神為之常喜，無有怒時也，是正太平氣至，具樂之悅喜也。<sup>69</sup>

Joy: With small completions one acquires small intentions, this is the “joy of people;” with medium completions one acquires medium intentions, this is the “joy of governance;” with superior completions one acquires superior intentions, this is the “joy of Heaven and Earth.” One who acquires the “method of joyful people” delights them; one who acquires the “method of joyful governance” governs peacefully; one who acquires the “method of joyful Heaven and Earth” harmonizes with Heaven and

65 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 3.47.

66 *Zhengao*, 13.237.

67 *Faju jing*, C.191.

68 Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang Jin Nan Bei chao fojiao shi*, 111.

69 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 113.586.

Earth. If Heaven and Earth are harmonious then all things will be without illness and the collectivity of spirits will be constantly happy, never knowing anger. This is the arrival of the correct breath of great peace, the delight of complete joy.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* cites the expression “peace and great joy” in the *Daodejing*, to which it comments: “Governing in this way, there will be profound joy.” This sentence has always been read differently and the meaning is not easy to explain. If we collate the *Scripture of Great Peace*, we can know the source of this sentence. “Peace” (*anping* 安平) is what the *Scripture of Great Peace* means by “the method of joyful governance is to govern peacefully.” Thus, the *Xiang'er Commentary* says “governing in this way.” “Great joy” is what the *Scripture of Great Peace* means by “the method of joyful Heaven and Earth,” hence it states “profound joy” which is also referred to as the “breath of great peace.”

The *Scripture of Great Peace* also says:

凡樂者，所以止怒也，凡怒者所以止樂也；此兩者相伐，是故樂則怒止，怒則樂止。是故怒者，乃生刑罰，鬪之根也；喜樂者，乃道德之門也，故當從之，使生道德之根，勿止之也；止之反且生刑禍之門也。此者吉凶之所出，安危之所發也。<sup>70</sup>

All forms of joy can stop anger and all forms of anger can stop joy; these two mutually defeat one another, which is why joy can stop anger and anger can stop joy. This is why anger is the penalty and punishment of life and the root of conflict; happiness is the gateway to morality and should be followed and made the root of morality without stopping. Should it stop, the gateway to penalty and punishment will appear. This is where the auspicious and inauspicious emerge and safety and danger issue forth.

It furthermore states:

樂則天地道德悉出也，怒則天地惡悉出也；故天地樂者，善應出也，天地不樂者，惡應出也。<sup>71</sup>

If a person is joyful, the morality of Heaven and Earth will fully appear; if a person is angry, the evil of Heaven and Earth will fully appear. Thus,

<sup>70</sup> *Taiping jing hejiao*, 113.588.

<sup>71</sup> *Taiping jing hejiao*, 113.590.

when Heaven and Earth are joyful, goodness will appear; when Heaven and Earth are not joyful, evil will appear.

If good and evil are born in joy and anger, then anger is the root of conflict and joy is the source of morality. Thus, anger must be restricted so that it does not issue forth; this is the tenet of the Dao. We can observe the explanation given by the *Xiang'er Commentary* to “Dull what is sharp, untangle what exasperates,” thusly:

銳者，心方欲圖惡；忿者，怒也、皆非道所喜。心欲為惡，挫還之；怒欲發，寬解之，勿使五藏忿怒也。自威以道誡，自勸以長生。<sup>72</sup>  
The sharp is where the heart-mind charts evil; to be exasperated is to be angry. The Dao is not fond of either. If the heart-mind desires to act in an evil manner, make it dull so as to recover it; if anger wishes to issue forth, console it so as to untangle it. People must not let the five viscera know exasperation or anger. Deter yourself using the tenets of the Dao, persuade yourself using longevity of life, and in this way reach your objective.

This meaning is adopted. Anger is inauspicious while joy is auspicious. With constant joy longevity of life can be reached, thus in the commentary to part 2 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* we find: “Persuade yourself using longevity of life.”<sup>73</sup> In the Western Han Dynasty, Yi Feng’s 翼奉 *Qi School of the Book of Poetry* (*Qi shi* 齊詩) speaks of the six emotions, taking joy to be adulterous and perverse and anger to be malicious and insidious, both of which belong to the realm of Yin. However, the *Scripture of Great Peace* extracts joy and anger in order to construct a theory of duality between joy and anger, doing so as a way to explain the psychological origin of good and evil.

## 7 The Sound of Rapidly Plucked Strings in Equilibrium

Following “Use the Dao when it pours forth without letting it overflow” 道沖而用之, the *Xiang'er Commentary* reads: “The Dao values equilibrium, thus people should move in equilibrium with things” 道貴中和，當中和行之。<sup>74</sup> What is more, when it comes to “Dull what is sharp, untangle what exasperating” 挫其銳解其忿, the *Xiang'er Commentary* states: “The fierce arousal of

72 See Figure 1 lines 17–20.

73 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 315.

74 See Figure 1 line 15.

exasperation is like the sound of rapidly plucked strings, hence it results in transgression” 忿爭激，急弦聲，所以者過。<sup>75</sup> “The sound of rapidly plucked strings” is a wonderful metaphor of Daoism. The “Zhen Ming Shou” chapter of the *Declarations of the Perfected* records all of the teachings and precepts spoken by spirits, stating:

南極夫人曰：人從愛生憂，憂生則有畏，無愛即無憂，無憂則無畏。昔有一人，夜誦經甚悲，悲至意感，忽有懷歸之哀。太上真人忽作凡人，徑往問之：子嘗彈琴耶？答曰：在家時，嘗彈之。真人曰：絃緩何如？答曰：不鳴不悲。又問：絃急何如？答曰：聲絕而傷悲。又問：緩急得中如何？答曰：眾音者和合，八音妙奏矣。真人曰：學道亦然，執心調適，亦如彈琴，道可得矣。<sup>76</sup>

The Lady of the South Celestial Pole said: “Human worry is born from fondness and when worry is born, there is fear. To lack fondness is to be without worry; to lack worry is to be without fear.” There was once a man who recited Daoist scriptures at night and whose voice was so filled with sorrow and strain that he felt ashamed and wanted to return home. The Supreme Perfected One turned into a mortal and visited him, asking: “Do you regularly play the zither?” The man said: “I regularly play at home.” The Perfected One asked: “What happens if the strings are too limp?” The man said: “There is no sound and no sorrow.” The Perfected One asked: “What happens if the strings are too taut?” The man said: “The sound will be severed and sorrowful.” The Perfected One asked: “What happens if the strings are between these two?” The man said: “All of the notes will be harmonious and the eight tones will be profoundly pleasing.” The Perfected One said: “Studying the Dao is like this. Make your heart-mind fit the situation as if you were playing the zither, then you can obtain the Dao.”

Regarding the above, the *Xiang'er Commentary* says: “The Dao treasures equilibrium.”<sup>77</sup> It is indeed like this, which is why the text also says: “The sound of rapidly plucked strings, hence it results in transgression.”<sup>78</sup> To transgress is to have a great transgression because it does not follow the equilibrium of the Dao. This also applies to the *Madhyama Pratipad* (*zhong Dao* 中道) of Buddhism and the “middle way” (*zhong yong* 中庸) of Confucianism, whose

75 See Figure 1 lines 20–21.

76 *Zhengao*, 6.101–2.

77 See Figure 1 line 15.

78 See Figure 1 lines 20–21.

meanings are widely known. Taking the plucking of strings as a metaphor for the Dao is especially ingenious. Following “It is better to guard the center,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* states: “People are better-off studying life and guarding the equilibrium of the Dao” 不如學生，守中和之道。<sup>79</sup> Equilibrium plays an essential role in the *Scripture of Great Peace*. Chapter 29 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* reads:

學以仁得之，道之始也；以德得之，道之中和也；以道得之，上也。<sup>80</sup>  
Learning that is acquired through humaneness is the beginning of the Dao; learning that is acquired through virtue is the equilibrium of the Dao; learning that is acquired through the Dao is superior to them all.

This also belongs to the virtue of “equilibrium” seen in the “Biography of Xiang Kai 襄楷” in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty*, wherein Zhang Huai’s commentary cites the “Diwang” 帝王 chapter of the *Classic of Great Peace (Taiping jing dian 太平經典)*:

但順天地之道，不失銖分，則立致太平。元氣有三：名為太陽、太陰、中和。<sup>81</sup>

If one adheres to the Dao of Heaven and Earth without losing a *zhu* or *fen*, then great peace will be established. There are three kinds of primal breath: they are called Great Yang, Great Yin, and Equilibrium.

This expression is based on Laozi’s notion that “[the myriad things] carry the Yin and embrace the Yang, conjoining their breath in order to harmonize.” The *Xiang'er Commentary* follows in the same vein the scriptural meaning of the *Taiping Qingling shu 太平清領書*. Part 2 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* notes:

元氣有三名：太陽太陰中和；形體有三名：天地人；天有三名：日月星。北極為中也。地有三名：為山川平土；人有三名：父母子；治有三名：君臣民，欲太平也。<sup>82</sup>

Primal breath has three names: Great Yang, Great Yin, and Equilibrium. Bodily form has three names: Heaven, Earth, and humanity. Heaven has three names: sun, moon, and stars. The Celestial Pole star is the center.

79 See Figure 3 lines 1–2.

80 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 350.

81 *Hou Han shu*, 30B.1081.

82 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 316.

Earth has three names: mountains, rivers, and plains. A person has three names: father, mother, and sons. Government has three names: ruler, minister, and the common people, all of whom desire a great peace.

This is a new discourse on the three talents (*sancai* 三才). The text goes on to say:

民者，主為中和；譚中和者，主調和萬物者也。<sup>83</sup>

The common people are responsible for equilibrium; when talking about equilibrium, the main point is that it harmonizes the myriad things.

This follows the cosmological and political meaning of equilibrium but extends it further. These are established based on the discussion that primal breath has three names. Heshang Gong's commentary, following "The gate to all that is profound," states:

除情去欲，守中和，是謂知道要之門戶也。<sup>84</sup>

He who casts aside emotions and discards desires will guard equilibrium. This is called knowing the gateway to what is essential for the Dao.

This meaning is the same as that of the *Xiang'er Commentary*.

## 8 On Life and Studying Life

The *Xiang'er Commentary* modifies Laozi's phrase "the king is great" in the expression "within the realm are four greats," and replaces the character "king" (*wang* 王) in "impartiality is kingly" with "life" (*sheng* 生). This is why the text says: "Life is an alternate body of the Dao." We can thus see how important the concept of "life" is to the *Xiang'er Commentary*. The "Qin Qiu" 勤求 chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* says:

天地之大德曰生。生好物者也，是以道家之所至祕而重者，莫過乎長生之方也。故血盟乃傳，傳非其人，戒在天罰，先師不敢以輕行授人。<sup>85</sup>

83 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 316.

84 *Laozi Daodejing Heshang Gong zhangju*, 1.3.

85 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 14.252.

The great virtue of Heaven and Earth is called life. As life is a good thing, of all that is revered in utmost secrecy by Daoism, none is more important than the method of achieving longevity of life. This method is only transmitted after making an oath sealed with blood and transmitting it to the wrong person is a crime punishable by Heaven. Thus, the former masters did not dare transmit them to those who would take them lightly.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* following “It is better to guard the center,” reads: “People are better-off studying life and guarding the equilibrium of the Dao.”<sup>86</sup> “Studying life” (*xue sheng* 學生) is known as studying the longevity of life. The two characters *xue sheng* 學生 are frequently seen in the books of Daoism. For example, part 2 of the “Xie Changqi” 協昌期 chapter of the *Declarations of the Perfected* reads:

學生之法，不可泣淚，及多唾泄，此皆為損液漏津。<sup>87</sup>

In the method of studying life, one cannot shed tears or release excessive saliva, as doing so results in the loss of bodily fluid.

This is but one example.

## 9 Auspicious Talismans of Great Peace

Following the line “Employ the great image and the world will come,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* says:

上聖之君，師道至行，以教化天下，如治太平，符瑞皆感人功所積致之者。<sup>88</sup>

The ruler of supreme sagacity takes the Dao as his teacher to perfect his movements and uses its teachings to transform the world; governing in this way, he bears the auspicious talismans of a great peace and everyone is moved by their accumulated success.

These talismans have been discussed since the Western Han Dynasty and the *Scripture of Great Peace* has elucidated this issue exceptionally well. In scroll 108 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, the *Ruiyi xun jue* 瑞議訓訣 states:

86 See Figure 3 lines 1–2.

87 *Zhengao*, 10.184.

88 See Figure 23 lines 19–20.



瑞者，清也，靜也，端也，正也，專也，一也。心與天地同，不犯時令也……夫天地之性，自古到今，善者致善，惡者致惡，正者致正，邪者致邪，此自然之術，無可怪也。故人心端正清靜至誠感天，無有惡意，瑞應善物為其出……古者大聖賢皆用心清靜專一，故能致瑞應也；諸邪用心佞僞，皆無善應，此天地之大明徵也。<sup>89</sup>

The auspicious is pure, tranquil, proper, correct, concentrated, and One. If the heart-mind conjoins with Heaven and Earth, it will not violate the laws of the seasons ... Regarding the nature of Heaven and Earth, from antiquity to the present the good incurs goodness, the bad incurs evil, the correct incurs correctness, and the perverse incurs depravity; these are the techniques of the natural and there is nothing strange about them. Thus, if the human heart-mind is proper, correct, pure, and tranquil, its perfect sincerity will affect Heaven and lacking bad intentions, auspicious signs and good things will appear as a result ... In antiquity, the great sages and worthies all used a heart-mind that was pure, tranquil, concentrated, and One, hence they could incur an auspicious response. Those who perversely use their heart-mind for flattery or falsity will lack even a good response, such is the brilliant symbol of Heaven and Earth.

Additionally, in scroll 86 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, the *Lai shan ji san dao wenshu jue* 來善集三道文書訣 also discusses disastrous, peculiar, and auspicious responses, noting:

天地不妄欺也，見善瑞應則喜，見惡不祥則怒，不當使天地恨怒，即立致太平之術。<sup>90</sup>

Heaven and Earth do not recklessly deceive people. They are joyful when seeing a response that is good and auspicious, angry when seeing a response that is bad and ominous, and indignant when seeing the improper. This is the technique of establishing and incurring great peace.

To use human joy and anger to affect the heart-mind of Heaven is to display them and then take them as being auspicious or peculiar. The *Xiang'er Commentary* also uses the discussion of the *Scripture of Great Peace* to explain Laozi's phrase "grasp the great image."

89 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 108.512–13. Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 351.

90 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 86.323–24.

## 10 The Natural

Following the expression in section 25 of the *Daodejing*, “The Dao models itself after what is natural,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* says:

自然者，與道同號異體。今更相法，皆共法道也。天地廣大，常法道以生；況人，可不敬道乎！<sup>91</sup>

The natural have the same designation as the Dao but differ in their bodies. Mutually modelling themselves, they are all modelled after the Dao. Heaven and Earth are vast, constantly modelling themselves after the Dao for their life. How can people not respect the Dao!

In scroll 103 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, the *Dao bi cheng jie* 道畢成誠 states:

自然之法。乃與道連，守之則吉，失之有患。<sup>92</sup>

The model of being natural is connected to the Dao, thus to guard it is auspicious but to lose it is disastrous.

The text also says:

天地之性，獨貴自然，各順其事，毋敢逆焉。<sup>93</sup>

The nature of Heaven and Earth alone values what is natural, thus each thing accords with their own affairs and does not dare disobey them.

The “natural” (*ziran* 自然) means to accord with one’s affairs and not disobey Heaven. The “natural” is connected to the Dao and we find references to it in the *Xiang'er Commentary*. The *Scripture of Great Peace* also frequently speaks of the principle of “great accord” and the two characters *daxun* 大順 come from this sentence in the *Daodejing*: “Reach a great accord.”<sup>94</sup> Sima Tan 司馬談 argues that “Daoism relies on the great accord of Yin and Yang”<sup>95</sup> which supports and confirms the meaning of the *Scripture of Great Peace*. Reaching the Song Dynasty, Zhang Zai 張載 in his *Western Inscription* (*Xi ming* 西銘) says:

91 See Figure 17 lines 19–21.

92 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 103.472. Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 351.

93 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 103.472. Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 351.

94 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 65.266.

95 *Shiji*, 130.3289.

“In existing, I accord with my affairs” 存，吾順事。<sup>96</sup> This saying is also derived from Daoism. The “great accord” is hence the ultimate state of the natural.

## 11 Harmonizing the Five Elements

Following “Dull what is sharp,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* says:

五藏所以傷者，皆金木水火土氣不和也；和則相生，戰則相剋。<sup>97</sup>

What injures the five viscera is the disharmonious breath of metal, wood, water, fire, and wood. When harmonious they mutually generate one another; when conflicting they mutually defeat one another.

Also, following “To not lose all one has is to endure,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* says:

今當和五行，令各安其位，勿相犯。<sup>98</sup>

If people harmonize the five elements and cause each of them to calmly remain in its place without infracting upon the others, they will endure.

Section 5 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* says:

道有九度：其五為大道神，與四時五行相類，青赤黃黑俱同臟神，出入五行，神吏為人，使可降邪。<sup>99</sup>

The Dao has nine measures. The fifth is the spirit of the great Dao, which is a similar category to the four seasons and five elements. The colors green, red, yellow, and black are the spirits of the five viscera, emerging and entering as the five elements. The spirit officials became human in order to tame the perverse.

If the five viscera (*wuzang* 五藏) harmonize with the five elements (*wuxing* 五行), there will be no disease. Section 8 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* adds the following:

96 *Zhangzi Zhengmeng zhu*, 9:270.

97 See Figure 1 lines 22–24.

98 See Figure 23 lines 2–3.

99 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 336.

自來五行和，四時氣時良，其為政法，起於本。本者，天地之間。<sup>100</sup>

Originally the five elements were harmonious, the breath of the four seasons was good, and this model of governance arose from the root. The root exists between Heaven and Earth.

Everything “harmonizes with the five elements,” and this is the essential of governance. The *Xiang'er Commentary* also adopts this meaning. Yi Feng's *Qi School of the Book of Poetry* also pairs the five natures (*wuxing* 五性) with the five elements and five viscera, and we know such words were regularly used by people in the Western Han Dynasty and were followed by the *Scripture of Great Peace* and the *Xiang'er Commentary*.

## 12 Issuing Forth Prosperity to Overcome Confinement

Following “Untangle what exasperating,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

隨怒事情，輒有所發。發一藏則故剋，所勝成病，煞人。人遇陽者，發囚剋王，怒而無傷，雖爾，去死如髮耳。如人衰者，發王剋囚，禍成矣。<sup>101</sup>

To submit to anger or serve one's feelings, one will always issue forth. If it issues forth from one viscera, it will overcome the others and this victory will turn into an illness that halts life. If a person encounters what is Yang and issues forth a breath that is confined to overcome what is prosperous, no injury will result from anger; however, death will be close at hand. If a person is in decline and issues forth a breath that is prosperous to overcome what is confined, the result will be disastrous.

It repeats that “anger” injures life, resulting in great disaster. In scroll 65 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, the *Xingshuai you ren jue* 興衰由人訣 states:

今天迺自有四時之氣，地自有五行之位，其王、相、休、囚、廢，自有時；今但人興用之也。安能乃使其生氣，而王、相更相剋賊乎。咄咄噫！六子雖日學無益也，反更大愚，略類無知之人。何哉？夫天地之為法，萬物興衰反隨人故。凡人所共與事，所貴用，

100 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 366.

101 See Figure 1 line 24, Figure 2 lines 1–2.

其物悉王生氣；人所休廢，悉衰而囚……是故天下人所興用者，王自生氣，不必當須四時五行氣也。<sup>102</sup>

Heaven has the breath of the four seasons, Earth has the positions of the five elements, and the prosperous, reciprocal, resting, confined, and discarded have their times. Nowadays, however, people simply use them. How can they cause them to have the breath of life or the “prosperous” and “reciprocal” to mutually overcome thieves? Tsk tsk! Although they daily study the six masters, there is no benefit; on the contrary, they become even more foolish and approximate the ignorant. Why? Heaven and Earth have their laws but the flourishing and decline, and returning and following of the myriad things, is caused by people. The thing that all people share and whose use is valued is what enriches the breath of life; what people let rest and discard is what decreases and confines the breath of life ... The reason the people of the world allow them to flourish and use them is because they enrich their own breath of life, not because they must adhere to the breath of the four seasons or the five elements.

What the *Scripture of Great Peace* means when it speaks of the principle of the four seasons and the five elements is that they accord with the natural. People’s flourishing and decline are determined by people themselves whereas the flourishing and discarding of things is the result of people’s use, hence the *Scripture of Great Peace* opposes the views of the Five Elements School. The *Xiang'er Commentary* agrees that the Five Elements School was viewed as belonging to the false arts and the *Xiang'er Commentary* repeatedly indicates this. However, talk of the resting and prosperity of the five elements pervaded the minds of people in the Han Dynasty, hence the commentary to this section continues to invoke it. Investigating the meaning of the resting and prosperity of the five elements, the “Dixing” 地形 chapter of the *Huainanzi* states:

木壯、水老、火生，金囚、土死，火壯、木老、土生、水囚、金死，  
土壯、火老、金生、木囚、水死，金壯、土老、水生、火囚、木死，  
水壯、金老、木生、土囚、火死。<sup>103</sup>

When wood is robust, water is old, fire is born, metal is confined, and Earth is dead. When fire is robust, wood is old, Earth is born, water is confined, and metal is dead. When Earth is robust, fire is old, metal is born, wood is confined, and water is dead. When metal is robust, Earth is old,

<sup>102</sup> *Taiping jing hejiao*, 65,232.

<sup>103</sup> *Huainanzi jishi*, 4,354–55.

water is born, fire is confined, and wood is dead. When water is robust, metal is old, wood is born, Earth is confined, and fire is dead.

We already see in this text a record of this formula. The “Nansui” 難歲 chapter of Wang Chong’s *Balanced Discourses* has:

立春：艮王，震相，巽胎，離沒，坤死，兌囚，乾廢，坎休。王之衝死，相之衝囚，王相衝位，有死囚之氣。<sup>104</sup>

At the start of spring, the mountain is the king, thunder is the minister, wind is the embryo, fire is destruction, Earth is death, the valley is confinement, air is discarding, and water is resting. When the king charges ahead he dies, when the minister charges ahead he is confined, when the king and minister charge ahead into each another, their breath dies from confinement.

What are called *wang* 王, *xiang* 相, *qiu* 囚, *si* 死, *tai* 胎, *mei* 沒, *xiu* 休, and *fei* 廢 are the eight trigrams of breath seen in the *Six Statutes of the Tang Dynasty* (*Tang liu dian* 唐六典).<sup>105</sup> We also read about the “resting and prosperity of the eight trigrams” (*bagua xiu wang* 八卦休王) in part 2 of the *Great Meaning of the Five Elements* (*Wuxing dayi* 五行大義).<sup>106</sup> What the *Scripture of Great Peace* calls *wang* 王, *xiang* 相, *qiu* 囚, and *fei* 廢<sup>107</sup> are the “resting and prosperity of the five elements” while chapter 25 of the *Imperial Overview from the Taiping Reign* cites the *Treatise on the Resting and Prosperity of the Five Elements* (*Wuxing xiu wang lun* 五行休王論).<sup>108</sup> Additionally, there is the *Descriptions of the Resting and Prosperity of the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches* (*Ganzhi xiu wang shuo* 干支休王說), which at times takes the five colors and combines them with the four seasons to judge prosperity, reciprocity, confinement, and death and uses them in debates over the appearance of things. Additional discussion is seen in the appended commentary to the “Chaxiang 察相” chapter of the *Classic of Political Advantages and Disadvantages* (*Changduan jing* 長短經).<sup>109</sup> The views of the Five Elements School is based on the principle of birth and overcoming. In the *Xiang'er Commentary*, “Issue forth what is confined to

104 *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 24.124.

105 *Tang liu dian*, 14.412–13.

106 *Wuxing dayi*, 2.56.

107 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 65.232.

108 *Taiping Yulan*, 13.

109 *Changduan jing*, 1.44–45.

overcome the prosperous” 發囚剋王<sup>110</sup> and “Issue forth what is prosperous to overcome the confined” 發王剋囚,<sup>111</sup> point to this category.

### 13 Halos of the Sun and Moon, and the Guest Who Defiantly Does Not Shine

The character *yun* 運 in *yun er* 運珥 is read *yun* 暈 and these two characters are interchangeable. For example, the character *zhen* 鳩 is defined by the *Shuowen Dictionary* (*Shuowen Jiezi* 說文解字) as “moving sun” (*yun ri* 運日),<sup>112</sup> while the Buddhist monk Daoqian 道騫 in the *Pronunciation of the Chuci* (*Chuci yin* 楚辭音) says it is “halo” (*yun* 運).<sup>113</sup> This is the proof. The *Jade Book* (*Yu bian* 玉篇) writes: “A halo is the breath around the sun and moon” 暈，日月旁氣也。<sup>114</sup> The “Ming Li” 明理 chapter of *Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals* says: “The sun has halos,” to which Gao You's 高誘 commentary reads:

氣圍繞日，周匝有似軍營相圍守，故曰暈也。<sup>115</sup>

*Yun* is the breath surrounding the sun, encircling it as if it were a protective military encampment, hence it is called a halo.

In the *Records of the Grand Historian* (*Shiji* 史記), the “Treatise on Celestial Officials” (*Tianguan shu* 天官書) records:

兩軍相當日暈。<sup>116</sup>

Two armies confronting one another are like halos of the sun.

The collected explanations (*jijie* 集解) commentary to the *Records of the Grand Historian* cites Ru Chun 如淳 who said: “*Yun* 暈 is read *yun* 運.”<sup>117</sup> The *Records of the Grand Historian* itself states:

110 See Figure 2 line 1.

111 See Figure 2 line 2.

112 *Shuowen jiezi*, 4A.82.

113 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 123.

114 *Yupian jiaoshi*, 20:3976.

115 *Lüshi chuqiu zhushu*, 6.666.

116 *Shiji*, 27.1331.

117 *Shiji*, 27.1331.

平城之圍月暈參。<sup>118</sup>

The battle of Changping resembles the halo of the moon and the Three Stars Mansion (*yun can* 暈參).

The “Astronomical Records” (*Tianwen zhi* 天文志) in the *History of the Han Dynasty* states: “Embrace the halos of a rainbow” 抱珥虹蜺,<sup>119</sup> to which Yan Shigu’s commentary adds:

凡氣在日旁直對為珥。<sup>120</sup>

If the breath around the sun occupies two positions directly opposite one another, there will be a halo.

Other texts have the character *er* 餌 but the *Xiang'er Commentary* is alone in writing it *er* 珥, which follows the theory of natural disasters and Heavenly changes.

Concerning the sentence “Rebellious guest stars do not shine,” the “Treatise on Celestial Officials” in the *Records of the Grand Historian* notes:

夫常星之變希見，而三光之占亟用。日月暈適，雲風，此天之客氣，其發見亦有大運。<sup>121</sup>

Changes in the constant stars are seldom seen, yet divination using the Three Luminaries (*sanguang* 三光) is repeatedly done. The sun and moon have halos and other variant phenomena, clouds and wind, and these are the guest breaths of Heaven whose issuance and appearance also have their great movements.

The collected explanations to the *Records of the Grand Historian* cites Li Fei 李斐 who writes:

適，見災於天。劉向以為日月蝕及星逆行，非太平之常：自周衰以來，人事多亂，故天文應之，遂變耳。<sup>122</sup>

Variant phenomena, the appearance of disasters in Heaven. Liu Xiang believed solar and lunar eclipses and the reverse movement of stars were not the constancies of great peace. Since the decline of the Zhou Dynasty,

118 *Shiji*, 27.1348.

119 *Han shu*, 26.1273.

120 *Han shu*, 26.1274.

121 *Shiji*, 27.1351.

122 *Shiji*, 27.1351.



the affairs of humanity have become ever more chaotic, thus the celestial patterns respond and change accordingly.

What the *Xiang'er Commentary* refers to as “rebellious guest stars” (*ke ni* 客逆) is in fact pointing to the “guest breath” (*keqi* 客氣) of Heaven and the reverse movement of stars. Zhang Daoling deeply studied the Celestial Officials hence he wrote the *Statutes of Celestial Officials* (*Tianguan zhangben* 天官章本) which uses *tianguan* 天官 in its name.

#### 14 The Arsenal and Tower, Wolf and Fox, General and Cavalry Officials, Chamber and Spearhead Stars

Section 30 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

道故斥庫樓，遠狼狐，將軍騎官房外居，鋒星脩柔去極疏。<sup>123</sup>

The Dao thus denounced the Arsenal and Tower stars, distanced itself from the Wolf and Fox stars, had the General and Cavalry Officials reside outside the Chamber, and made the Spearhead star cultivate suppleness in order to depart from the Celestial Pole star.

This discusses the Star Officials that controverted the Dao. Below is a summary interpretation:

#### **Arsenal** (*ku* 庫) and **Tower** (*lou* 樓)

The “Treatise on Celestial Officials” in the *Records of the Grand Historian* writes:

軫南眾星曰天庫樓；庫有五車。<sup>124</sup>

The group of stars south of Chariot Platform (*zhen* 軫) are called Celestial Arsenal and Tower (*tian ku lou* 天庫樓) and they contain five Chariots (*che* 車).

The “Astronomical Records” in the *History of the Han Dynasty* drops the character *lou* 樓.<sup>125</sup> In the first of the Treatise (*zhi* 志) chapters in the *History of the Jin Dynasty*, we read:

<sup>123</sup> See Figure 20 lines 20–21.

<sup>124</sup> *Shiji*, 27.1304.

<sup>125</sup> *Han shu*, 26.1278.

庫樓十星，其六大星為庫，南四星為樓，兵車之府也。<sup>126</sup>

Arsenal and Tower have ten stars, of which the six large ones comprise Arsenal and the four in the south comprise Tower, creating a storehouse of chariots.

**Wolf** (*lang* 狼) and **Fox** (*hu* 狐)

These are the names of two stars residing in the Western Palace (*xi gong* 西宮). The “Treatise on Celestial Officials” states:

其東有大星曰狼。狼角变色，多盜賊。下有四星曰狐，直狼。<sup>127</sup>

To their east is a large star called Wolf. When Wolf’s horns change color, many thieves appear. Below Wolf are four stars called Fox, all of which point towards Wolf.

In the *Book of History and Justice* (*Zhengyi shu* 正義書) we are told:

狼一星，參東南，狼為野將，主侵掠。占非其處，則人相食。色黃白而明，吉。赤角，兵起。<sup>128</sup>

Wolf is a single star to the southeast of Shen 參. Wolf is a wild General overseeing invasion and looting. Seizing what does not belong to it, the people will eat one another. Wolf’s yellow-white color and brightness make it auspicious; should it turn red, war will arise.

The text also says:

弧九星，在狼東南，天之弓也……弧矢向狼動移，多盜……引滿，則天盡兵也。<sup>129</sup>

Bow has nine stars to the southeast of Wolf known as the Bow of Heaven (*tian zhi gong* 天之弓) ... When Bow and Arrow (*shi* 矢) move in the direction of Wolf ... there will be many thieves; fully drawing its bow, Heaven ends the war.

In the *Songs of Chu*, the “Dong jun” 東君 poem from the *Nine Songs* (*Jiu ge* 九歌) collection has:

<sup>126</sup> *Jin shu*, 11.304.

<sup>127</sup> *Shiji*, 27.1306.

<sup>128</sup> *Shiji*, 27.1307 note 11.

<sup>129</sup> *Shiji*, 27.1308 note 12.

舉長矢兮射天狼，操余弧兮反淪降。<sup>130</sup>

Aiming my long arrow, I shoot down the Celestial Wolf; grasping my bow,  
I descend.

Since antiquity, Wolf and Bow were the two stars that oversaw war. Bow in the *Xiang'er Commentary* is written Fox (*hu* 狐), making it different from the “Treatise on Celestial Officials.”

**General** (*jiangjun* 將軍), **Cavalry Officials** (*qiguan* 騎官), and **Chamber** (*fang* 房)

The “Treatise on Celestial Officials” observes:

房南眾星曰騎官。左角，李；右角，將。<sup>131</sup>

The many stars to the south of the Chamber are Cavalry Officials. The left horn is the Judge (*li* 李), the right horn is the General.

The *Suoyin* 索隱 commentary to the *Records of the Grand Historian* cites the *Germ of the Primordial Mandate* (*Yuanming bao* 元命包), which says:

左角理物以起，右角將帥而動。<sup>132</sup>

The left horn orders things as they arise, the right horn is the General that acts.

The *Classic of the Stars* (*Xing jing* 星經) states:

騎官二十七星，在氐南。<sup>133</sup>

The Cavalry Officials are 27 stars located to the south of *Di* 氐.

Wang Yuanqi 王元啟 describes these stars as follows:

騎官二十七星，三三相連，在陣車南。天子宿衛之騎士，即虎賁也。<sup>134</sup>

The Cavalry Officials are 27 stars divided into groups of three interconnected stars, located south of War Chariot (*zhenche* 陣車). The royal knights of the Son of Heaven are as brave as a tiger.

130 *Chuci buzhu*, 2.75.

131 *Shiji*, 27.1296–97.

132 *Shiji*, 27.1297.

133 *Xing jing*, A.35.

134 *Shiji huizhu kaozheng*, 27.1491 note 12.

The Cavalry Officials are comprised of many stars located approximately 45 degrees south of the Celestial Equator, whereas the General is the General star of the right horn located to the right of the Horn Mansion (*Jiaosu* 角宿). The “Treatise on Celestial Officials” says: “The Chamber is the Celestial Mansion (*Tianfu* 天府).”<sup>135</sup> The Chamber points to the Chamber Mansion (*fangxing* 房星), while the General and Cavalry Officials are stars overseeing war, being located in the outer edge of the Chamber Mansion.

### Spearhead (*feng* 鋒)

The Spearhead star is in fact the Celestial Spearhead (*tianfeng* 天鋒). In the “Treatise on Celestial Officials” we read:

杓端有兩星：一內為矛，招搖；一外為盾，天鋒。<sup>136</sup>

The end of the Ladle (*biao* 杓) has two stars: The inner one is the Spear (*mao* 矛) or Twinkling Beckoner (*zhao yao* 招搖), the outer one is the Shield (*dun* 盾) or Celestial Spearhead.

The “Astronomical Records” in the *History of the Han Dynasty* writes the character *feng* 鋒 as *feng* 讎.<sup>137</sup> The commentary then cites the words of Jin Zhuo 晉灼: “*Feng* is also known as the Mysterious Dagger (*xuan ge* 玄戈).”<sup>138</sup> The *Classic of the Stars* states:

梗河星為戟劍之星，若星不見，或進退不定，鋒鏑亂起，將為邊境之患也。<sup>139</sup>

The *Genghe* 梗河 constellation contains either the Spear or Shield. If the stars cannot be seen or are uncertain in their advancing or retreat, the chaos of war will arise and there will be danger at the borders.

This *feng* 鋒 also oversees war. Regarding the *Xiang'er Commentary's* phrase “Depart from the Celestial Pole star,” the character *ji* 極 is, I suspect, pointing to the middle Official of the Celestial Pole star (*zhongguan tianji xing* 中官天極星), which is the North Star (*beichen* 北辰). Thus, Laozi believes “Weapons are inauspicious instruments and the sage only uses them when forced to” 兵為凶器，聖人不得已而用。<sup>140</sup> The remarks here about “Arsenal and Tower,”

135 *Shiji*, 27.1295, 1296 note 5.

136 *Shiji*, 27.1294.

137 *Han shu*, 26.1275.

138 *Shiji*, 27.1295.

139 *Shiji*, 27.1295.

140 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 31.125.

“Wolf,” “Fox,” and others, are all about stars overseeing war, hence the *Xiang'er Commentary* states the Dao denounced and distanced itself from them. To try and flourish via war, one will not incur great peace.

## 15 The Dragon Is without Sons, False Arts

The Dragon points to Jupiter (*Taisui* 太歲). The “Nansui” chapter of Wang Chong’s *Balanced Discourses* says:

太歲，天別神也，與青龍無異。<sup>141</sup>

Jupiter is another spirit of Heaven and is the same as the Green Dragon (*qing long* 青龍).

In antiquity, the Green Dragon was taken to be Jupiter. This fact was noted in the “Taiyin Kao” 太陰考 chapter of Sun Xingyan’s 孫星衍 *Collected Writings of the Hall of Questioning Characters* (*Wenzi tang ji* 問字堂集),<sup>142</sup> in Wang Yinzhì’s 王引之 *An Investigation of Taisui* (*Taisui kao* 太歲考),<sup>143</sup> and in Qian Tang’s 錢塘 commentary to the “Tianwen” 天文 chapter of the *Huainanzi*.<sup>144</sup> Jupiter lies in the position of North (*zi* 子) and to its south is *Wu* 午. All that collides with Jupiter will cause its destruction, hence migration is forbidden. To migrate north or south is to receive a shock from such migration, thus it is inauspicious. The “Nansui” chapter of the *Balanced Discourses* cites the *Laws of Migration* (*Yixi fa* 移徙法) as evidence.<sup>145</sup> The *Book on Harmonizing Times and Distinguishing Directions* (*Xieji bianfang shu* 協紀辨方書) states:

歲破，叢辰名。太歲所衝之辰也。<sup>146</sup>

Jupiter’s destruction is the name of a collection of celestial bodies. They are celestial bodies that collide with Jupiter.

These are the words of the School of Astrology which the *Xiang'er Commentary* classifies as one of the false arts. The *Xiang'er Commentary* says: “The dragon is without sons.”<sup>147</sup> This is most likely saying such taboo views were abandoned,

141 *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 24.1019.

142 *Wenzi tang ji*, 1.20.

143 *Jingyi shuwen*, 29.1754.

144 *Huainan tianwen xun buzhu*, B.51b.

145 *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 24.1021.

146 *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 24.1016. *Qinding xieji bianfang shu*, in *Siku quanshu*, 811: 206.

147 See Figure 3 line 14.

in which case the Dragon without sons is also an empty discourse. This is the bare meaning of Wang Chong's "Nansui" chapter.

## 16 Jade Maiden

Section 6 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* has: "The transcendent person has no wife, and the jade maiden has no husband."<sup>148</sup> The *Scripture of Great Peace*, in section 7 of scroll 71, the *Zhi shan chu xie lingren shou Dao jie wen* 致善除邪令人受道戒文 speaks of celestial deities testing people with the "jade maiden" (*yu nü* 玉女).<sup>149</sup> The "jade maiden has no husband" most likely means everyone who acquires the Dao will not be repeatedly seduced by the jade maiden, which is the name of a spirit. In part 1 of scroll 113 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, there is discussion of how when the breath of great peace arrives, everyone will be joyful and happy because the jade maiden of the eastern and southern peaks, in her green and red clothing, bestows upon the people her rare recipes.<sup>150</sup> From the *Xiang'er Commentary* onwards, the name jade maiden has become commonly used in Daoist religion. The "Treatise on Buddhism and Daoism" in the *History of the Wei Dynasty* notes that Kou Qianzhi took the ingesting of elixirs and breath exercises to employ the jade maiden and the twelve transcendent gentlemen of Mount Jiuyi 九疑山 in order to transmit to him their oral instructions on guiding and pulling.<sup>151</sup> The "Xialan" 遐覽 chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* mentions the *Concealed Subtlety of Jade Maidens* (*Yu nü yinwei* 玉女隱微), in 1 scroll,<sup>152</sup> but it is no longer extant. Earlier, in the "Zaying" 雜應 chapter of the text, we read:

或召六陰玉女，其法六十日而成。<sup>153</sup>

Others summon the six Yin jade maidens and this method requires sixty days to complete.

What is called the six Yin 六陰 points to the six *ding* 六丁 and six *jia* 六甲 jade maiden spirits. The six *ding* jade maidens all have names, as seen in Liang Qiuzi's 梁丘子 commentary to the "Chang Nian" 常念 chapter of the *Scripture*

148 See Figure 3 lines 14–15.

149 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 71.288.

150 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 113.587.

151 *Wei shu*, 114.3051.

152 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 19.337.

153 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 15.273.

on the *Internal View of the Yellow Court* (*Huangting neijing jing* 黃庭內景經),<sup>154</sup> but this is a much later theory.

## 17 Writings of the Yellow Emperor, Mysterious Maiden, and Rong Cheng

Section 9 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* states: “The writings of the Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi* 黃帝), Mysterious Maiden (*Xuan nü* 玄女), Gongzi 龔子, and Rong Cheng 容成.”<sup>155</sup> In the “*Ji Yan*” 極言 chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, we read:

黃帝論道養，則資玄素二女。<sup>156</sup>

The Yellow Emperor wanted to discuss nourishment by the Dao and was helped by the Xuan and Su maidens.

In his commentary to the *Huainanzi*, Gao You writes:

素女，黃帝時方術之女也。<sup>157</sup>

The Su maiden was a woman of the magical arts from the time of the Yellow Emperor.

The Medical Methods (*Yifang jia* 醫方家) section of the “Bibliographic Record” of the *History of the Sui Dynasty* contains a reference to the *Scripture of the Secret Way of Sunü* (*Sunü mi Dao jing* 素女祕道經) and the *Scripture of the Mysterious Maiden* (*Xuan nü jing* 玄女經), each in 1 scroll,<sup>158</sup> but these were likely later attributions. Regarding Rong Cheng, of all the Daoist books mentioned in the “*Xialan*” chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, there is the *Scripture of Rong Cheng* (*Rong Cheng jing* 容成經), in 1 scroll.<sup>159</sup> Furthermore, the “*Shizhi*” 釋滯 chapter says:

房中之法十餘家，玄、素、子都、容成公、彭祖之屬，皆載其籠事，終不以至要者著於紙上者也。<sup>160</sup>

154 *Huangting neijing yujing zhu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 531.

155 See Figure 4 lines 17–18.

156 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 13.241.

157 *Wenxuan*, 15.673.

158 *Sui shu*, 34.1050.

159 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 19.333.

160 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 8.150.

On the methods of sexual practice, there are more than ten schools of thought. The Xuan and Su maidens, Rong Cheng, and Pengzu were all roughly familiar with this theory [of too much or little intercourse], yet ultimately did not record the essentials on paper.

The “Bibliography of Arts and Letters” in the *History of the Han Dynasty* notes that among the specialists of sexual practice, there is *Rong Cheng’s Dao of Yin* 容成陰道, in 26 scrolls.<sup>161</sup> The “Zeyang” 則陽 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* writes:

容成氏曰：除日無歲，無內無外。<sup>162</sup>

Rong Cheng said: “Get rid of days and there will be no more years, neither inner nor outer.”

Lu Deming’s *Textual Explanations of Classics and Canons* says he is “Laozi’s teacher,”<sup>163</sup> as does Yu Yue 俞樾 in his *Investigating the Names of People in the Zhuangzi* (*Zhuangzi renming kao* 莊子人名考).<sup>164</sup> Reading Liu Xiang’s *Biographies of Immortals* (*Liexian zhuan* 列仙傳) we find:

容成自稱黃帝師，見於周穆王，能善補導之事。取精於玄牝，其要谷神不死，守生養氣者也。<sup>165</sup>

Rong Cheng referred to himself as the Yellow Emperor’s teacher, met King Mu of the Zhou Dynasty, and was skilled in matters of absorbing and guiding vitality and essence. He obtained the essence of the mysterious female so that his valley-like spirit would be immortal, and thereby guarded his life and nourished his breath.

The “Biographies of Magicians and Immortals” chapter in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* states:

甘始、東郭延年、封君達三人，皆方士也。率能行容成御婦人術，或飲小便，或自倒懸，愛畜精氣，不極視大言。<sup>166</sup>

Gan Shi, Dongguo Yannian, and Feng Junda were all masters of methods and could employ Rong Cheng’s art of handling women. At times they drank urine, at others they hung themselves from their feet. They

161 *Han shu*, 30.1778.

162 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 8C.885.

163 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 28.808.

164 *Yulou zazuan*, 29.443.

165 *Liexian zhuan jiaojian*, A.14.

166 *Hou Han shu*, 82B.2750.



cherished and did not defile their essence and breath, and frowned upon bragging.

The commentary says:

御婦人之術，謂握固不瀉，還精補腦也。<sup>167</sup>

The art of handling women, what is called gripping without leakage, returns the essence to restore the brain.

As for Leng Shouguang 冷壽光, he was able to follow Rong Cheng's method of handling women. Ge Hong's *Biographies of Immortals* (*Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳) says:

甘始依容成、玄、素之法，更演益之為十卷。<sup>168</sup>

Gan Shi relied on the methods of Rong Cheng, the Xuan and Su maidens, and developed them into a text of 10 scrolls.

All of these examples discuss the matter of Rong Cheng. The *Xiang'er Commentary* refers to him as Gongzi 龔子<sup>169</sup> but this is impossible to prove.

## 18 Enriching the Marrow and Cherishing the Essence

Section 9 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* speaks of “Enriching the marrow and cherishing the essence.” Returning the essence to restore the brain is the Dao of longevity of life and enduring vision, a point the *Xiang'er Commentary* frequently speaks of. In the Tang Dynasty, Shi Falin wrote in his “Discerning the Correct:”

實髓愛精，仙家之奧旨。<sup>170</sup>

Enriching the marrow and cherishing the essence is the mysterious meaning of those pursuing transcendence.

The “Pi Chang” 脾長 chapter of the *Scripture on the Internal View of the Yellow Court* writes:

<sup>167</sup> *Hou Han shu*, 72B.2741.

<sup>168</sup> *Shenxian zhuan jiaoshi*, 10.363.

<sup>169</sup> See Figure 4 line 17.

<sup>170</sup> Shi Falin, “Bianzheng lun,” in *Guang Hongmingji*, 13.190.

閉塞三關握固停。<sup>171</sup>

Block the three passages, hold them firmly, and stop.

三神還精老方壯。<sup>172</sup>

The three spirits return the essence and the old emulates the young.

and,

結精育包化生身，留胎止精可長生。<sup>173</sup>

One connects the essence to produce an embryo that will change into a living body, however, if one keeps the embryo and stops the essence [from leaking out], longevity of life will result.

Discussions of this sort are too numerous to list here. Heshang Gong's commentary variously says:

固守其精，使無漏泄。<sup>174</sup>

Firmly guard the essence and do not let it leak [section 59].

愛精重施，髓滿骨堅。<sup>175</sup>

Cherish the essence and enrich it, then the marrow will be full and the bones strong [section 3].

and,

治身者卻陽精以糞其身。<sup>176</sup>

Those who govern the body withdraw the Yang essence to fertilize the body [section 46].

These sayings match those in the *Xiang'er Commentary*. In *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, the “Weizhi” 微旨 chapter, we also find:

171 *Huangting neijing yujing zhu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6:525.

172 *Huangting neijing yujing zhu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6:526.

173 *Huangting neijing yujing zhu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6:529.

174 *Laozi Daodejing Heshang Gong zhangju*, 3:231–32.

175 *Laozi Daodejing Heshang Gong zhangju*, 1.11.

176 *Laozi Daodejing Heshang Gong zhangju*, 3:181.

善其術者，則能卻走馬以補腦。<sup>177</sup>

If one is good at the magical arts, they can withdraw the running horse in order to restore the brain.

By running horse is meant discharging the essence, and withdrawing the running horse is known as firmly guarding the essence so that it does not leak out. In this way, the muscles stay strong and the bone marrow plentiful. In desiring to attain longevity of life and avoid death, one must devote particular attention to cherishing the essence. These are the words of the School of Immortality and are the essentials of Celestial Masters Daoism, and the theories of the Yellow Court, all of which come from the same source.

### 19 The Dao Prohibits Sacrificial Tributes to the Dead

Following “It is said the use of leftover food as a tribute,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* says:

天之正法，不在祭餼禱祠也。道故禁祭醮禱祠，與之重罰。<sup>178</sup>

The laws of Heaven are not found in sacrificial tributes or prayers to ancestral shrines. The Dao thus forbids sacrificial tributes or prayers to ancestral shrines, severely punishing those who perform them.

In other editions, *chuo* 餼 is written *zhui* 贅. The *Xiang'er Commentary* in some cases writes it *chuo* 餼 and in others *zhui* 醮. Both characters are interchangeable. The *Shuowen Dictionary* notes: “*Chuo*, to sprinkle the ground with wine” 餼，祭酌也。<sup>179</sup> Shi You’s *史游 Guide to Chinese Characters (Jijiu pian 急就篇)* states: “To weep and offer a sacrifice at a tomb or grave” 哭泣祭醮墳墓家。<sup>180</sup> Yan Shigu’s commentary says: “*Zhui* is known as continuous sacrifices” 醮謂連續之祭也。<sup>181</sup> The “Annals of the Xiaowu Emperor” (*Xiaowu benji 孝武本紀*) in the *Records of the Grand Historian* writes:

其下四方地為醮食。<sup>182</sup>

Sacrifices were placed on the ground at the four corners of the alter.

177 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 6.129.

178 See Figure 17 lines 5–6.

179 *Shuowen jiezi*, 5B.108.

180 *Jijiu pian*, 4.288.

181 *Jijiu pian*, 4.288.

182 *Shiji*, 28.1394. *Shiji*, 12.469.

Liu Bozhuang 劉伯莊 in his *Book of History and Justice* writes:

謂繞壇，設諸神座相連綴也。<sup>183</sup>

What is called encircling the altar is to arrange the seats of spirits so that they connect with one another.

In the “Jindan” 金丹 chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* we find:

長生之道，不在祭祀事鬼神也，不在道引與屈伸也，昇仙之要，在神丹也。<sup>184</sup>

The Dao of longevity of life does not lie in matters of sacrifice to ghosts and spirits, breath management, or flexing and stretching; rather, the essential of ascending to transcendence is found in elixirs.

Ge Hong placed great importance on the refinement of cinnabar and indicated that people should not engage in matters pertaining to sacrifice. This reflects the *Xiang'er Commentary* which did not place great importance on prayers to ancestral shrines, and is also the view of the *Scripture of Great Peace*. Section 3 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* states:

中古盛於祭祀，而鬼神益盛，民多疾病疫，鬼物為祟，不可止。下古更熾祀他鬼，而興陰事，鬼神而害生……此皆興陰過陽，天道所惡。<sup>185</sup>

In middle antiquity, sacrifices flourished, ghosts and spirits were widespread, and the people endured so many forms of sickness and disease that ghosts were seen as cursed and unstoppable. In near antiquity, even more illustrious sacrifices were made to ghosts, matters related to Yin thrived, ghosts and spirits harmed the living ... and this thriving Yin transgressed upon Yang, which the Heavenly Dao disliked.

This notion is also seen in part 9 or scroll 36 of the *Excerpts from the Scripture of Great Peace* which says:

興其祭祀即時致邪；不知何鬼神物，來共食其祭，因留止祟人，故人小小多病也。<sup>186</sup>

183 *Shiji*, 12.470.

184 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 4.77.

185 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 326.

186 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 36.52.

When sacrifices thrive, this is when the perverse is incurred, unknown ghosts and spirits appear and take the sacrificial food, and since they do not depart, people become cursed, frail, and burdened with disease.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* says “sacrificial tributes are identical to the depraved”<sup>187</sup> because sacrifices can incur the perverse. This accords with the view of the *Scripture of Great Peace*. Broadly speaking, “sacrifices” belong to Yin and when “sacrificial tributes” abound, Yin flourishes and harms Yang. This is the theory upon which the School of Yin and Yang established their arguments. Regarding food that is left over, the “Quli” 曲禮 chapter of the *Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記) states:

餽餘不祭。<sup>188</sup>

Leftover food must not be used in sacrifices.

Zheng Xuan's 鄭玄 commentary reads:

食人之餘曰餽。<sup>189</sup>

To eat a person's leftover food is called *jun* 餽.

Kong Yingda, in his *Correct Meaning of the Book of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記正義), states:

餽者，食餘之名。<sup>190</sup>

*Jun*, the name of leftover food.

## 20 Disaster Returns to One's Descendants

Following “Such matters will certainly return,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

傷煞不應度，其殃禍還人身，及子孫。<sup>191</sup>

The resultant injury and death will fall outside what is acceptable, and such misfortune and disaster will return to a person's body and that of their descendants.

187 See Figure 17 line 6.

188 *Liji zhengyi*, 2.75.

189 *Liji zhengyi*, 2.75.

190 *Liji zhengyi*, 2.75.

191 See Figure 20 lines 22–23.

This is the principle of retribution, as is the expression “bearing the burden” in the *Scripture of Great Peace*. This means:

若父母失道德，有過於鄉里，後子孫反為鄉里所害，是即明承負之驗。<sup>192</sup>

If parents lose the virtue of the Dao and transgress their neighbors, or their descendants are as a result of this harmed by their neighbors, this is clear proof of inherited burden.

## 21 Great Yin

Section 16 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* states: “Great Yin ... [people] to refine their form.”<sup>193</sup> In the “Dizhen” 地真 chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* we read:

堪輿星歷，而不避太歲、太陰、將軍、月建、煞耗之神，年命之忌，終不復值殃咎也。先賢歷試有驗之道也。<sup>194</sup>

[Those who do not] rely on the geomancer's celestial calendar or avoid Jupiter, the Great Yin, the General, the crescent moon, and demonic spirits, the taboo of their birth year will never be a source of disaster. This is the Dao our worthy predecessors have verified through experience.

Scroll 4 of the *Declarations of the Perfected* has:

若其人斃死，適太陰，權過三官（按即天、地、水三官）者，肉既灰爛，血沉脈散者，而猶五藏自生，白骨如玉，七魄營侍，三魂守宅，三元權息（按正月十五為上元，即天官檢勾；七月十五為中元，即地官檢勾；十月十五為下元，即水官檢勾。三元管眾生命籍），太神內問。或三十年二十年……隨意而出，當生之時，即更收血育肉，生津成液，復質成形，乃勝於昔未死之容也。真人鍊形於太陰，易貌於三官者，此之謂也。<sup>195</sup>

If a person suddenly dies, they will go to Great Yin and quickly pass by the Three Officials, and although their flesh has rotted, their blood has sunk, and their veins have scattered, it is as if their five viscera gave birth

192 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 320.

193 See Figure 10 line 12.

194 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 18.325.

195 *Zhengao*, 4.76–77.

to themselves. With bones white like jade, the seven spirits tended to and waited upon, the three souls guarding the residence, and the Three Primes tentatively resting, the great spirit is internally idle. After twenty or thirty years ... the person emerges of their own volition and when the time comes for them to be born, they gather together blood and generate flesh, create saliva and form bodily fluid, restoring their substance and completing their form, hence their appearance surpasses that when they were still alive. This is known as the genuine person refining their form in Great Yin and changing their looks in the Three Officials.

## 22 Officials of Earth

Following the sentence “They eliminate their body but do not perish,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* writes:

死便真死，屬地官去也。<sup>196</sup>

They are genuinely dead and sent off to serve the Officials of Earth.

The “Officials of Earth” belong to one of three celestial offices: Heaven (*tian-guan* 天官), Earth (*di-guan* 地官), and Water (*shui-guan* 水官). The Three Officials are also known as the Three Primes. Day fifteen of the first month is the Upper Prime (*shang-yuan* 上元), a time when the Officials of Heaven investigate; day fifteen of the seventh month is the Middle Prime (*zhong-yuan* 中元), a time when the Officials of Earth investigate; and day fifteen of the tenth month is the Lower Prime (*xiayuan* 下元), a time when the Officials of Water investigate. The Three Primes manage the records of all living things. The “Zaiyou” chapter of the *Zhuangzi* cites these words of Guang Chengzi: “Heaven and Earth have their Officials.”<sup>197</sup> It would appear this is the source of the Three Officials theory but it only speaks of Heaven and Earth. What is more, the *Scripture of Great Peace* argues that everything has three names, hence Daoist religion merely increased the [two Officials of the *Zhuangzi*] by one to reach the number three. See the “Equilibrium” section above. As for taking water as an Official and pairing it with those of Heaven and Earth, the reason is that Daoism views water as the root of the universe. Even the *Guanzi* 管子 contains a chapter entitled “Shui Di” 水地. In the preface to his *Commentary to the Classic of Water* (*Shuijing zhu* 水經注), Li Daoyuan 酈道元 says:

196 See Figure 10 lines 14–15.

197 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 4C.381.

《易》稱天以一生水，故氣微於北方而為物之先也。《玄中記》曰：天下之多者水也。<sup>198</sup>

What the *Classic of Changes* calls “Heaven using the One to give birth to water,” is the subtle breath of the North but it acts as the ancestor of things. [Guo Pu’s 郭璞] *Records from Within the Mysterious* says: “What is most common in the world is water.”

Yang Quan 楊泉 in his *Essay on the Principle of Things* (*Wuli lun* 物理論) writes:

所以立天地者水也；成天地者，氣也。<sup>199</sup>

What establishes Heaven and Earth is water; what completes Heaven and Earth is breath.

It can be seen that the cosmology of Daoist religion takes “water is one of the Three Officials” as the foundation of its theory.

### 23 Officers of Heaven and the Life-Count

Section 21 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* states: “The Officers of Heaven count the tallies on the left.”<sup>200</sup> The “Prefatory Record of Daoist Classics” (*Dao jing xulu* 道經序錄) in the *History of the Sui Dynasty* writes:

奏上天曹請為除厄，謂之上章。<sup>201</sup>

To present a report to the Officers of Heaven asking for the removal of one’s misfortune is known as “making a petition.”

Zhen Luan’s *Laughing at the Dao* cites the *Classifying the Three Primes* (*Sanyuan pin* 三元品), also known as the *Sutra of the Upasaka Precepts* (*You Posai jie jing* 優婆塞戒經), which says:

天地水三官、九府、九宮、一百二十曹。<sup>202</sup>

There are the Three Officials of Heaven, Earth, and Water, Nine Bureaus, Nine Palaces, and 120 Officers.

198 *Shujing zhushu*, 1.

199 *Wuli lun*, 92.

200 See Figure 15 line 4.

201 *Sui shu*, 35.1092.

202 *Guang Hongming ji*, 9.152.



The *Taishang dongxuan Lingbao sanyuan yujing xuandu daxian jing xu* 太上洞玄靈寶三元玉京玄都大獻經序 has:

一切眾生，生死命籍善惡簿錄，普皆係在三元九府天地水三官，考校功過，毫分無失。<sup>203</sup>

For all living things, the fate of their life and death, good and evil, is catalogued and bound to the Three Primes, Nine Bureaus, and Three Officials of Heaven, Earth, and Water, which investigate and check their accomplishments and transgressions so that nothing is lost.

Of all the Daoist books listed in the “Xialan” chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, there is one entitled *The Tally on the Left and Right* (*Zuoyou qi* 左右契),<sup>204</sup> whose “Dengshe” 登涉 chapter speaks of a Daoist priest whose belt has “Laozi’s tallies on the left,” hence ghosts dare not get close to him.<sup>205</sup>

The *Xiang'er Commentary* also says: “The life-count has a remainder.”<sup>206</sup> In the “Weizhi” chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* we find:

按《易內戒》、《赤松子經》及《河圖記命符》皆云：天地有司過之神，隨人所犯輕重，以奪其筭，筭減則人貧耗，疾病屢逢憂患；筭盡，則人死。諸應奪筭者，有數百事，不可具論。<sup>207</sup>

The *Inner Precepts of the Yijing* (*Yi neijie* 易內戒), *Scripture of Master Chisong* (*Chisongzi jing* 赤松子經), and the *River Chart of Fate Talismans* (*Hetu ji mingfu* 河圖記命符) say: Heaven and Earth contain the divinities of the Supervisor of Transgressions, and depending on whether the transgressions are light or heavy, the Supervisor will reduce their life-count; when all of them are subtracted, the people become poor, depleted, sick, and subjected to constant worry. When their life-count is exhausted, they die. The reasons to deduct a person’s life-count can come from hundreds of matters which cannot be listed here.

The text also says:

身中有三尸，三尸之為物，雖無形，而實魄靈、鬼神之屬也。欲使人早死，此尸當得作鬼，自放縱遊行，饗人祭酹。是以每到

203 *Taishang dongxuan Lingbao sanyuan yujing xuandu daxian jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 266.

204 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 19:333.

205 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 17:308.

206 See Figure 15 line 4.

207 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 6:125.

庚申之日，輒上天白司命，道人所為過失。又月晦之夜，竈神亦上天，白人罪狀。大者奪紀，紀者三百日也，小者奪筭，筭者三日也。<sup>208</sup>  
 The body contains three corpses which are taken to be a thing, and though formless, they actually belong to the realm of souls and spirits. If a person desires another to die early, the three corpses can be used as ghosts and given free rein to roam and feast upon the tributary offerings of other people. This is why whenever we reach the days of *Geng* and *Shen*, the three corpses ascend to Heaven to meet the Supervisor of Fate and speak of people's transgressions and losses. Also, on the final night of every month, the Kitchen God ascends to Heaven and speaks about people's crimes. Great ones are reduced by one life-period, which equals three hundred days; small ones are reduced by one life-count, which equals three days.

The “Dui Su” 對俗 chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* also contains:

行惡事，大者司命奪紀，小過奪筭，隨所輕重……凡人之受命，得壽自有本數，數本多者則紀筭難盡而遲死，若所稟本少，而所犯者多，則紀筭速盡而早死。<sup>209</sup>

To engage in evil matters, great ones may be reduced by the Supervisor of Fate by one life-period while small ones may be reduced by one life-count, depending on whether they are light or heavy. Everyone receives their fate but their longevity depends on their self-endowment ... If their self-endowment is large, their life-period and life-count will be difficult to exhaust and their death will be delayed; if it is small but they commit many infractions, their life-period and life-count will be rapidly exhausted and they will die early.

In the *Comprehensive Discussions in White Tiger Hall* (*Baihu tong* 白虎通), the “Shouming” 壽命 chapter has “the Supervisor of Fate discusses transgressions” 司命舉過<sup>210</sup> while the *Classic of Astrology of the Kaiyuan Period* (*Kaiyuan zhan jing* 開元占經) cites the *Prognostications of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi zhan* 黃帝占) as saying:

<sup>208</sup> *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 6.125.

<sup>209</sup> *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 3.53.

<sup>210</sup> *Baihu tong shuzheng*, 8.392.

文昌六星，其第四星為司命，主賞功進賢；第五星為司中，主司過詰咎。<sup>211</sup>

Of the six stars of Wenchang, the fourth is the Supervisor of Fate which oversees rewarding the successful and advancing the worthy; its fifth star serves as the Supervisor of the Centre which oversees transgressions and the examination of faults.

This is what is collectively called the Divinities of the Supervisor of Transgressions (*siguo zhi shen* 司過之神). Scroll 110 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* writes:

過無大小，天皆知之。簿疏善惡之籍歲，日月拘校，前後除筭減年。<sup>212</sup>  
No matter if a transgression is large or small, Heaven will know it. The register records a list of good and evil acts and these are checked on a yearly, monthly, and daily basis so that together, the life-count and years are correctly deducted.

Deducting a person's life-count is also found in the *Scripture of Great Peace*. Of all the Daoist books listed in the "Xialan" chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, there is the "Daoshi duosuan lü" 道士奪筭律, in 3 scrolls,<sup>213</sup> which appears to be a specialized work dealing with people's years and life-counts.

## 24 The Corpse and Corpse People

Daoism originally had three grades: The first was Laozi's doctrine of non-deliberate action, the second was taking elixirs to attain immortality, and the third was using talismans and registers to prohibit what was detested. Dao'an, in chapter 9 of his *Treatise on the Two Teachings*, states:

就其章式，大有精粗。粗者厭人殺鬼，精者練屍延壽。<sup>214</sup>

As for content and style, there are the refined and unrefined. The unrefined includes what is detestable to people and the killing of ghosts whereas the refined allows people to refine their corpse and extend their longevity.

<sup>211</sup> *Tang Kaiyuan zhanjing*, 807: 658–59.

<sup>212</sup> *Taiping jing hejiao*, 110.526.

<sup>213</sup> *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 19.335.

<sup>214</sup> *Guang Hongming ji*, 8.146.

Looking at the *Xiang'er Commentary*, the notions of “corpse refining” (*lian shi* 練屍) and “extending longevity” (*yanshou* 延壽) are addressed on multiple occasions. Section 7 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* says:

能法道，故能自生而長久也。<sup>215</sup>

They can model themselves after the Dao and so give birth to themselves and are everlasting.

Furthermore, the lines “Is this not because he [the sage] is without self-interest? Thus, he can achieve his self-interests,”<sup>216</sup> are the same in the Heshang Gong and Wang Bi editions; the *Xiang'er Commentary* alone replaces the character *si* 私 with *shi* 尸, saying:

不知長生之道，身皆尸行耳；非道所行，悉尸行也。道人所以得仙壽者，不行尸行與俗別異，故能成其尸令為仙士也。<sup>217</sup>

Those who do not know the Dao of longevity of life move their bodies like corpses, and because they do not move with the Dao, their movements are those of corpses. The person of Dao acquires the longevity of the transcendent person by not moving as corpses do and distinguishing himself from the vulgar person, thus he can perfect his own corpse and join other transcendent gentlemen.

Also, the sentence “As they alone were not full, they can be worn out yet remain complete,”<sup>218</sup> is explained as follows by the *Xiang'er Commentary*:

尸死為弊，尸生為成。<sup>219</sup>

The corpse that dies is worn out while the corpse that lives is complete.

This is the theory of “corpse refining” and “extending longevity.” Scroll 114 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* proclaims:

尸解之人，百萬之人乃出一人耳。<sup>220</sup>

Of those who can be delivered from their corpse, only one in one million will succeed.

215 See Figure 3 lines 17–18.

216 See Figure 4 line 1.

217 See Figure 4 lines 1–4.

218 See Figure 9 lines 17–18.

219 See Figure 9 line 18.

220 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 114.596.

Thus, deliverance from the corpse is also not easy to achieve. On deliverance from the corpse, the “Lun Xian” 論仙 chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*,<sup>221</sup> and the “Yun Xiang” 運象 chapter of the *Declarations of the Perfected* have plenty to say.<sup>222</sup> All who move like a corpse and cannot attain deliverance from their corpse are called “corpse people” (*shiren* 尸人), which the *Xiang'er Commentary* refers to as “biographies and records written by corpse people.”<sup>223</sup> As they are unable to obtain the genuineness of the Dao, these are thus taken to be perverse writings. “Corpse people” has the opposite meaning to people of the Dao.

## 25 The Compass

Section 3 of the *Xiang'er Commentary* notes that “the heart-mind is a compass.”<sup>224</sup> When Daoism refers to a “mirror” (*jing* 鏡) acting as a “compass” (*gui* 規), the “Wu Jian” 五鑑 chapter of the *Guan Yinzi* 關尹子 had already discussed it. Part 10 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* writes:

正心意得無藏匿，善者出惡者伏，即知吉凶之法，如照鏡之式也。<sup>225</sup>

When the heart-mind is corrected and one's meaning is acquired, nothing is concealed; when goodness emerges, evil will subside. This is the method of knowing the auspicious and inauspicious and is similar to looking at a mirror.

In *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, the “Zaying” chapter, we read:

明鏡或用四，謂之四規。四規者，照之時前後左右各施一也。<sup>226</sup>

Sometimes a single bright mirror is used ... Sometimes four mirrors are used, which are called the four compasses. The four compasses indicate the directions of front, rear, left, and right depending on when a person looks at them.

Elsewhere, in the “Dengshe” 登涉 chapter, we find:

221 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 2.20.

222 *Zhengao*, 4.76.

223 See Figure 11 lines 11–12.

224 See Figure 1 line 4.

225 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 378.

226 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 15.273.

萬物之老者，其精悉能假託人形，以眩惑人目，而常試人；唯不能於鏡中易其真形耳。是以古之入山道士，皆以明鏡徑九寸以上懸於背後。<sup>227</sup>

When the myriad things are old, their essence can take on the form of a person in order to confuse people's eyes and frequently test them; it is with the mirror alone that they are unable to alter their genuine form. This is why in antiquity the Daoist priest entering a mountain had a bright mirror of 9-inches in diameter hanging on his back.

In the "Bibliographic Record" chapter of the *History of the Sui Dynasty*, in the section on the Five Elements School, there is a text entitled *Scripture of Four Compass Mirrors* (*Si guijing jing* 四規鏡經), in 1 scroll.<sup>228</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary* uses "compass mirror" (*guijing* 規鏡) to interpret the heart-mind and to explain the sentence containing "spiritualize his heart-mind." Within the *Daoist Canon* there is the *Commentary to the Mysterious Pearl and Mirror of the Mind* (*Xuanzhu xinjing zhu* 玄珠心鏡注) by the Master of Perfection on Mount Heng (*Hengyue Zhenzi* 衡嶽真子), Zhangsun Zi 長孫滋,<sup>229</sup> of the Tang Dynasty, should be understood in this way. Furthermore, chapter 5 of the *Declarations of the Perfected* says:

熟視其規中珠子。<sup>230</sup>

Carefully observe the pearl within the compass.

Here again we see that *yan* 眼 is taken as *gui* 規.

## 26 The Bright Hall

Following the sentence "Within it there is trust," the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

心應規制萬事，故雖明堂三道，布陽耶陰害，以中正，度道氣。<sup>231</sup>

This is why the heart-mind responds like a compass, controlling a myriad of matters, thus it is called the Three Dao's of Illumination Hall. It spreads

<sup>227</sup> *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 17.300.

<sup>228</sup> *Sui shu*, 34.1038.

<sup>229</sup> Hengyue Zhenzi, *Xuanzhu xinjing zhu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 10: 680–83; Zhangsun Zi, Wang Sunzhi, *Xuanzhu xinjing zhu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 10: 683–95.

<sup>230</sup> *Zhengao*, 5.90.

<sup>231</sup> See Figure 15 lines 5–6.

depraved Yang and harmful Yin, using the center as the correct measure of the breath of the Dao.

Following the sentence “The securely closed does not use locks and bolts,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

心三川，陽邪陰害，悉當閉之勿用，中道為正。<sup>232</sup>

The heart-mind has three rivers, of which depraved Yang and injurious Yin should be closed and left unused; the central river is the correct one.

Using this as mutual corroboration, we know the “Three Dao’s of Illumination Hall” (*mingtang san Dao* 明堂三道) are in fact the heart-mind. This is also the meaning in scroll 114 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* where the *Jiujun taishang qin jue* 九君太上親訣 says:

天重生，愛其情，尤志堅念生，要三明。三明者，心也，主正明堂，通日月之光，名三明成道。心志自不顧，亦有錄策，不可強求。<sup>233</sup> Heaven gives great importance to life, cares for its emotions, and is particularly firm-willed when it considers life, hence it requested the Three Illuminations. The Three Illuminations are the heart-mind which oversees Illumination Hall, connecting the light of the sun and moon, and so is named the “Three Illuminations fulfilling the Dao.” To not look after the heart-mind and will, although one may possess the register, one cannot forcefully seek the Dao.

Thus, the heart-mind is also called the “Three Illuminations.”

## 27 Straw Dogs

The phrase “straw dogs” (*chu gou* 藁苟) is in fact “straw dogs” (*chu gou* 芻狗). They occur in the “Tianyun” 天運 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* and the “Qisun” 齊俗 chapter of the *Huainanzi*.<sup>234</sup> The *Textual Explanations of Classics and Canons* cites Li Yi’s 李頤 commentary:

<sup>232</sup> See Figure 18 lines 11–12.

<sup>233</sup> *Taiping jing hejiao*, 114.596.

<sup>234</sup> *Zhuangzi jishi*, 5C.511. *Huainanzi jishi*, 11.792.

結芻為狗，巫祝用之。<sup>235</sup>

Knot straw together to create a dog, which is then used by a shaman.

Cheng Xuanying's commentary reads:

謂結草為狗，以解除也。<sup>236</sup>

What is called knotting straw together to create a dog is to release the unwanted.

In his commentary to the *Huainanzi*, Gao You states:

束芻為狗，以謝過求福。<sup>237</sup>

To bind straw together to create a dog is to seek forgiveness for transgressions and look forward to good fortune.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* also speaks of “followers of straw dogs.”<sup>238</sup> The “Lun Xian” chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity* states:

況彼神仙，何為汲汲，使芻狗之倫，知有之何所索乎。<sup>239</sup>

Furthermore, why would an immortal be anxious about straw dogs knowing all they possess?

We can thus see the phrase “followers of straw dogs” is frequently used in Daoism.

## 28 Xi Zhong Made Carts, the Yellow Emperor Made Rooms

Following the line “Gives the cart its use,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* says: “The Dao dispatched Xi Zhong 奚仲 to make them.”<sup>240</sup> Guo Pu's 郭璞 commentary to the *Classic of Mountains and Seas (Shanhaijing 山海經)* cites the “Zuo” 作 chapter of the *Book of Origins (Shiben 世本)*, which says: “Xi Zhong was the first person to make carts.”<sup>241</sup> The “Shenfen Lan” 審分覽 chapter of *Master Lü's*

<sup>235</sup> *Zhuangzi jishi*, 14.512.

<sup>236</sup> *Zhuangzi jishi*, 14.512.

<sup>237</sup> *Huainanzi jishi*, 11.792.

<sup>238</sup> See Figure 2 line 14.

<sup>239</sup> *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 2.15.

<sup>240</sup> See Figure 6 line 3.

<sup>241</sup> *Shanhaijing jianshu*, 18.319.



*Spring and Autumn Annals* writes: “Xi Zhong made carts.”<sup>242</sup> Following the sentence “One carves out a door and window to make a palace,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* says: “The Dao sent the Yellow Emperor to make them.”<sup>243</sup> Lu Jia’s 陸賈 *New Discourses* (*Xin Yu* 新語) and the *Comprehensive Discussions in White Tiger Hall* both speak of the Yellow Emperor making a palace,<sup>244</sup> and this matches the sayings found in the *Xiang'er Commentary*. The “Zuo” chapter of the *Book of Origins* states: “Yao had Yu made a palace,”<sup>245</sup> but this is not the same. In this way, the Dao transforms for each person, hence the invention of manufacturing vessels is an achievement bestowed to the Dao.

## 29 Great Virtue

Section 21 of the *Daodejing* says:

孔德之容，唯道是從。<sup>246</sup>

The form of great virtue only comes from following the Dao.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* notes:

道甚大，教孔丘為知。後世不信道文，但上孔書，道故明之。<sup>247</sup>

The Dao is vast and taught Confucius what to know. Later generations did not trust writings about the Dao but upheld the books of Confucius, believing nothing surpassed them. The Dao thus illuminates things on behalf of worthy persons in the future.

Elsewhere, in section 18 of the *Daodejing*, following the sentence “There is great deception,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

何謂耶文？其五經半入耶；其五經以外，眾書傳記，尸人所作，悉耶耳。<sup>248</sup>

What is meant by depraved writings? There are five scriptures of which one-half are depraved, while of those beyond the five scriptures, many

<sup>242</sup> *Lüshi chuqiu zhushu*, 17.1972.

<sup>243</sup> See Figure 6 line 7.

<sup>244</sup> *Xinyu jiaozhu*, A.13, *Baihu tong shuzheng*, 12.594.

<sup>245</sup> *Shiben bazhong*, 361.

<sup>246</sup> *Laozi jiaoshi*, 21.87.

<sup>247</sup> See Figure 14 lines 16–17.

<sup>248</sup> See Figure 11 lines 11–12.

are biographies and records written by corpse people, hence they are depraved.

The topic “great virtue” means the Dao of great virtue. When it comes to the five scriptures, of which half were depraved writings, in scroll 51 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, the *Jiaowen xiezheng fa* 校文邪正法 states:

正文者，乃本天地心，守理元氣。古者聖書時出，考元正字，道轉相因，微言解皆元氣要也。再轉者，密解也，三轉成章句也；四轉成浮華；五轉者，分刀別異意，各司其忤；六轉者，成相欺文。章句者尚小儀其本也，過此下者，大病也。<sup>249</sup>

Correct texts have a root that lies in the heart-mind of Heaven and Earth and guards the principle of primal breath. In antiquity, when sagely writings emerged, they investigated the primal with correct characters and the Dao was transmitted within, hence subtle words explain the essential of primal breath. When it was transmitted again, it became the secret explanations. When it was transmitted a third time, it became Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*. When it was transmitted a fourth time, it became superfluous and ornamental. When it was transmitted a fifth time, it separated its different meanings and addressed its errors. When it was transmitted a sixth time, it became a work in conflict with itself. The *Section and Verse* pays attention to the narrow meaning of the text and from this point forward, great flaws arise.

This discussion shows the text had six transmissions and each of them involved changes. Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse* pays attention to the narrow meaning of the text, thus half of it contains insertions that are deviant. What is known as the “essential of primal breath” (*yuanqi yao* 元氣要) is the original principle of the Supreme Ultimate (*zhigao* 至高). When used in politics, it meant “ruling by primal breath” (*yuanqi zhi* 元氣治). Scroll 67 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* explains:

助帝王治，大凡有十法：一為元氣治，二為自然治，三為道治，四為德治，五為仁治，六為義治，七為禮治，八為文治，九為法治，十為武治……天使元氣治，使風氣養物；地以自然治，故順善得善，順惡得惡也。人者順承天地中和，以道治主動。道凡事通而往來，此三事應天地人之識。<sup>250</sup>

<sup>249</sup> *Taiping jing hejiao*, 51.190.

<sup>250</sup> *Taiping jing hejiao*, 67.254.

To assist the monarch rule, there are roughly ten methods: The first is rule by primal breath, the second is rule by naturalness, the third is rule by the Dao, the fourth is rule by virtue, the fifth is rule by humaneness, the sixth is rule by righteousness, the seventh is rule by ritual, the eighth is rule by civility, the ninth is rule by law, and the tenth is rule by the martial ... Heaven employs primal breath to rule and the breath of wind to nourish things whereas Earth rules by way of naturalism. To accord with the good is to acquire what is good, and to accord with the bad is to acquire what is bad. Those who accord with and inherit the equilibrium of Heaven and Earth take the rulership of the Dao as their initiative. When the Dao penetrates all matters and comes and goes, these three matters will respond to the omens of Heaven, Earth, and humanity.

To take primal breath as belonging to Heaven, naturalism as belonging to Earth, and the Dao as belonging to people, the Celestial Master can move with Heaven's "rule by primal breath." This is the essential of the *Scripture of Great Peace* and many of these theories are used by the *Xiang'er Commentary*. People believe the works of Confucius speak of humaneness and righteousness and are thus not Daoist writings. This meaning is clear and helps us understand the theories espoused later on in the *Xiang'er Commentary*.

### 30 The Character *Zhuo* 洳

Section 15 of the *Laozi* writes "Spread like melting ice" 渙若冰將釋<sup>251</sup> but the Master Xi edition says "Disperse like the pouring of ice" 散若冰將釋. The *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

令如冰見日散洳。<sup>252</sup>

It will be like ice facing the sun and melting away.

It has been explained that *zhuo* 洳 has the same meaning as *shi* 釋. The *Shuowen Dictionary* says: "*Zhuo*, the sound of surging water" 洳, 激水聲也。<sup>253</sup> The "Shi Xingtǐ" 釋形體 chapter of *Explaining Terms (Shi míng 釋名)* writes: "*Zhuo* is moisture" 洳, 澤也。<sup>254</sup> If the sound of *zhuo* explains the meaning of

<sup>251</sup> *Laozi jiaoshi*, 15.60.

<sup>252</sup> See Figure 9 line 2.

<sup>253</sup> *Shuowen jiezi*, 11A.230.

<sup>254</sup> *Shi míng huijiao*, 2.95.

ze 澤, then it is also identical to *shi* 釋. Chapter 5 of the *Declarations of the Perfected* states:

青鳥公服金鈞而升太極。<sup>255</sup>

The Lord Azure Bird drank liquid gold and ascended to the Great Ultimate.

From this, *zhuo* can be read as *zhuo* 酌, to drink or pour out, which gives it a very different meaning.

### 31 The Ladle

Section 20 of the *Laozi* says “The ladle has nowhere to return” 魁無所歸,<sup>256</sup> yet Suo Dongxuan’s edition writes *qi* 魁 as *kui* 魁.<sup>257</sup> The “Nine Laments” (Jiu tan 九歎) in the *Songs of Chu* says: “Question the nine star-birds and six spirits” 訊九魁與六神.<sup>258</sup> Wang Yi’s 王逸 commentary adds: “The nine *kui* are known as the nine stars of the Big Dipper” 九魁，謂北斗九星也。<sup>259</sup> Qian Daxin 錢大昕, in section 17 of the *Record of Cultivating the New*, says:

魁當為魁之譌。古書斗為斤，因誤魁……北斗九星，魁居其首，故有九魁之稱。<sup>260</sup>

At the time, *qi* 魁 was mistaken for *kui* 魁. Ancient texts took *dou* 斗 as *jin* 斤, which is the reason it was mistaken for 魁. Of the nine stars of the Big Dipper, the *kui* star resides at the head, thus it is called the nine *kui*.

However, to use this commentary as evidence, *qi* 魁 should be a variant character of *kui* 魁, not an erroneous one. In the Han Dynasty text *Ode to Shimen* 石門頌, *kui* 魁 is also written *qi* 魁.<sup>261</sup>

255 Zhengao, 5.83.

256 See *Laozi jiaoshi*, 20.81. Figure 13 line 23.

257 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8.

258 *Chuci buzhu*, 16.292.

259 *Chuci buzhu*, 16.292.

260 Qian Daxin, *Shijiazhai yangxin lu*, 17.467.

261 *Han Shimen song*, 126.

### 32 Rhymed Words in the *Xiang'er Commentary*

When people in the Eastern Han Dynasty wrote commentaries to books, each couplet used rhymes. One such example is the “Chou si” 抽思 poem in Wang Yi’s 王逸 *Commentary on the Section and Verse of the Songs of Chu* (*Chuci zhangju* 楚辭章句). The *Synopsis of the Complete Library of the Four Treasuries* (*Siku Quanshu tiyao* 四庫全書提要) reveals this.<sup>262</sup> Even the *Xiang'er Commentary* employs rhymes. For example, in section 32 of the *Laozi*, the commentary to the sentence “The common people equalize themselves,”<sup>263</sup> rhymes the character *dao* 道 with *xiao* 效; furthermore, the characters *shen* 神 and *shen* 身 are rhymed with *jun* 均. In section 30 of the *Laozi*, the commentary to the sentence “Does not use weapons to force the world,”<sup>264</sup> rhymes the characters *hu* 狐, *ju* 居, and *shu* 疎. These are but a few examples. The writing style of the *Xiang'er Commentary* is quite similar to the *Scripture of Great Peace* and by using rhyme as a point of discussion, we can establish it to be a product of the Eastern Han Dynasty.

### 33 The Title of Laozi’s Book

Our final topic involves “Laozi’s *Classic of Dao*, part 1.” Examining the “Bibliography of Arts and Letters” in the *History of the Han Dynasty*, it contains the following: *Laozi Scripture with Commentary by Master Lin* (*Laozi Linshi jing zhuan* 老子鄰氏經傳), *Laozi Scripture with Descriptions by Master Fu* (*Laozi Fushi jing shuo* 老子傅氏經說), *Laozi Scripture with Descriptions by Master Xu* (*Laozi Xushi jing shuo* 老子徐氏經說), and Liu Xiang’s various editions of *Descriptions of the Laozi* (*Shuo Laozi* 說老子), all of which use “Laozi” in their title and conform to the *Xiang'er Commentary*.<sup>265</sup> Wu Yi 武億 of the Qing Dynasty writes: “Taking reference from the ‘Bibliography of Arts and Letters’ in the *History of the Han Dynasty*, the original title ‘Laozi’ should be restored” 折諸《漢志》，為還舊題曰《老子》。<sup>266</sup> This is correct. Chao Yidao 晁以道 of the Song Dynasty writes:

262 *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, 29:3.

263 See Figure 22 line 5.

264 See Figure 20 lines 15–16.

265 *Han shu*, 30.1729.

266 Wu Yi, “Laozi Daodejing shuhou,” in *Shoutang wenchao*, 2.28.

王輔嗣《老子》曰《道德經》，不析道德而上下之，猶近於古。<sup>267</sup>

Wang Fusi's *Laozi* is known as the *Daodejing*, which does not divide the text into *Dao* and *De* sections but simply two parts, meaning its style is close to that of antiquity.

Lu You 陸游 in his *Topical Postscripts by Fang Weng* (*Fang Weng tiba* 放翁題跋) follows Chao Yidao's account,<sup>268</sup> however, the *Xiang'er Commentary* states "Laozi's *Classic of Dao*, part 1," thus splitting *Dao* and *De* into two parts, a fact known since the Eastern Han Dynasty. Wu Yi 武億, in his *Transcribed Notes by Shoutang* (*Shoutang wenchao* 授堂文鈔), references the *History of the Han Dynasty* in which Yan Shigu's commentary cites Laozi's *Classic of Dao* and *Classic of De* as evidence of these two parts serving as titles, a trend already seen in the early Tang Dynasty, thus it must have been inherited from the older editions belonging to the Jin and Song dynasties.<sup>269</sup> Looking at the titles in the *Xiang'er Commentary* today, they could not have been in use during the Jin and Song dynasties. Hatano Tarō 波多野太郎 argues this in his *Corrections to Wang Bi's Commentary to the Laozi* (*Laozi Wang zhu jiaozheng* 老子王注校正) and suspects this error was due to a person with superficial knowledge in the Jin or Song dynasties being confused by the Grand Historian's words and took the *Dao* and *De* sections to be two separate scriptures, which was then applied to Wang Bi's work.<sup>270</sup> Unfortunately, Hatano Tarō did not see the *Xiang'er Commentary* and so his theory is incorrect.

267 Wu Yi, "Laozi *Daodejing* shuhou," in *Shoutang wenchao*, 2.27. Lu You, "Ba Wang Fusi *Laozi*," in *Weinan wenji*, 3: 230, in *Lu You quanji jiaozhu*, vol. 15.

268 Lu You, "Ba Wang Fusi *Laozi*," in *Weinan wenji*, 3: 230, in *Lu You quanji jiaozhu*, vol. 15.

269 Wu Yi, "Laozi *Daodejing* shuhou," in *Shoutang wenchao*, 2.27.

270 Hatano Tarō, "Daodejing mingcheng kao," in *Laozi Daodejing yanjiu*, 6-7.

## Different Explanations of the *Xiang'er Commentary*

The *Xiang'er Commentary* contains a wide variety of writings and different interpretations and if we compare it to the Heshang Gong edition, it appears to change characters in order to establish new meanings. Although the *Xiang'er Commentary* does not completely accord with the aims of the *Daodejing*, and Zhang Daoling used ulterior motives to establish his teachings, the *Xiang'er Commentary* preserves a sufficient amount of the text's ancient theories. I will only mention those having the greatest difference and take the Heshang Gong edition as my base text.

[1]. Due to the changing of words, the text's meaning is incomplete. For example:  
[A]. Changing *e* 阿 to *he* 何.

Chapter 20 of the *Daodejing* says: "Between yea and yes" 唯之與阿.<sup>1</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary* changes *e* 阿 to *he* 何 and says:

絕耶學，道與之何。<sup>2</sup>

If a person cuts off depraved learning, what will the Dao give them in return?

This does not resonate with the meaning of the original text.

[B]. Taking *xi* 谿 as *xi* 奚.

Chapter 28 of the *Daodejing* says: "Be a servant to the world" 為天下谿.<sup>3</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary* changes *xi* 谿 to *xi* 奚 and says:

奚，何也，亦近要也。知要，安精神，即得天下之要。<sup>4</sup>

Be a servant, how, this also approaches the essential. Knowing the essential, one can calm their essence and spirit and acquire what is essential to the world.

1 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 20.77.

2 See Figure 13 line 11.

3 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 28.112.

4 See Figure 19 lines 2–3.

If this is the case, then the meaning of *he ye* 何也 for the *Xiang'er Commentary* lacks a definable source.

[2]. Changing characters to create a particular viewpoint. For example:

[A]. Taking *si* 私 to be *shi* 尸.

Chapter 7 of the *Daodejing* says:

非以其無私邪？故能成其私。<sup>5</sup>

Is this not because he [the sage] is without self-interest? Thus, he can achieve his self-interests.

However, the *Xiang'er Commentary* writes:

以其無尸，故能成其尸。<sup>6</sup>

He takes himself to be without a corpse, thus he can complete his corpse.

It goes on to say:

道人所以得仙壽者，不行尸行，與俗別異，故能成其尸，令為仙士也。<sup>7</sup>

The person of Dao acquires the longevity of the transcendent person by not moving as corpses do and distinguishing himself from the vulgar person, thus he can perfect his own corpse and join other transcendent gentlemen.

Furthermore, in chapter 15 of the *Daodejing* we read: “They can be worn out yet remain complete” 能弊復成,<sup>8</sup> to which the *Xiang'er Commentary* writes:

尸死為弊，尸生為成。<sup>9</sup>

The corpse that dies is worn out while the corpse that lives is complete.

The annotative evidence for the theory of “completing the corpse” (*chengshi* 成尸) was given elsewhere. As for “moving as corpses do” (*xing shi xing* 行尸行), the “Biography of Wang Mang” in the *History of the Han Dynasty* says:

<sup>5</sup> *Laozi jiaoshi*, 7.30.

<sup>6</sup> See Figure 4 line 1.

<sup>7</sup> See Figure 4 lines 2–4.

<sup>8</sup> *Laozi jiaoshi*, 15.62.

<sup>9</sup> See Figure 9 line 18.



莽召問群臣禽賊方略，皆曰：此天囚行尸，命在漏刻。<sup>10</sup>

Wang Mang summoned a group of officials to ask about the plans for capturing the enemy, to which they said: “They are prisoners of Heaven and move as corpses do; their fate will expire shortly.”

The two characters *shi xing* 尸行 were thus already in common use by the time of the Western Han Dynasty.

[B]. Taking *te* 忒 to be *dai* 貸.

Chapter 28 of the *Daodejing* contains the following expression: “Constant virtue will not err” 常德不忒.<sup>11</sup> The *Xiang'er* is alone in changing it to “Constant virtue cannot be borrowed,” to which it adds:

知守黑者……不從人貸……容成法，悉欲貸……唯有自守，絕心閉念者。<sup>12</sup>

For the person who knows to guard the black [...] they will not need to borrow it from others [...] follow the models of ... Rong Cheng, will all desire to borrow the virtue of the Dao [...] People have only to guard themselves, cut off their heart-mind.

This altered text is a winding way of criticizing the false arts. The methods of Rong Cheng refers to his methods of sexual practice.

[C]. Changing *wang* 王 to *sheng* 生.

Chapter 25 of the *Daodejing* contains the following:

故道大天大地大王亦大，域中有四大，而王居其一焉。<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the Dao is great, Heaven is great, Earth is great, and the king is also great. Within the world are four greats and the king occupies one of them.

The *Xiang'er* is alone in changing the word “king” (*wang* 王) to “life” (*sheng* 生), writing: “Life is an alternate body of the Dao” 生，道之別體也。<sup>14</sup> In chapter 16 of the *Daodejing* we read: “To be impartial is kingly, to be a king is Heavenly” 公乃王，王乃大。<sup>15</sup> Here the *Xiang'er* also changes the word “king” to “life,” saying:

10 *Han shu*, 99C.4170.

11 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 28.113.

12 See Figure 19 lines 8–11.

13 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 25.102–3.

14 See Figure 17 lines 18–19.

15 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 16.66.

能行道公政，故常生。<sup>16</sup>

They can move with the Dao and govern impartially, thus they are long-lived.

This altered text is a winding way of describing the theory of longevity.

[D]. Taking *tianmen* 天門 to be *tiandi* 天地.

Chapter 10 of the *Daodejing* says:

天門開闔能為雌乎。<sup>17</sup>

When the gate of Heaven opens and closes, can you do as the female does?

Suo Dongxuan's edition is the same as other editions in writing "gate of Heaven" (*tianmen* 天門).<sup>18</sup> The *Xiang'er* edition is alone in writing "Heaven and Earth" (*tiandi* 天地),<sup>19</sup> stating:

男當法地似女。<sup>20</sup>

Men should model themselves after Earth so as to resemble women.

This altered text is a winding way of describing the theory of "cherishing the essence" (*aijing* 愛精).

[3]. Changing the reading of "There is safety and peace in abundance; joy and fine food [...]" to "Great joy" (*dale* 大樂) while taking "fine food" (*er* 餌) as "halo" (*er* 珥).

Chapter 35 of the *Daodejing* says:

往而不害，安平太；樂與餌，過客止。<sup>21</sup>

Coming to you unharmed, there is safety and peace in abundance; joy and fine food cause the passing visitor to stop.

In the *Xiang'er*, the character for "great" (*tai* 太) is written *da* 大, and takes "peace and great joy" (*anping dale* 安平大樂) as comprising a sentence. The *Xiang'er Commentary* writes:

16 See Figure 10 line 9.

17 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 10.40–41.

18 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 6.

19 See Figure 5 lines 21–22.

20 See Figure 5 lines 22–23.

21 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 35.140–41.

如此之治，甚大樂也。<sup>22</sup>

Governing in this way, there will be profound joy.

This is to use the “method of joyful governance” 樂治法 from the *Scripture of Great Peace*.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, *er* 餌 is written *er* 珥, hence the *Xiang'er Commentary* is establishing its meaning according to celestial patterns, disasters, and changes and this is discussed in the annotative notes section above.

[4]. Explaining “non-deliberate action” as “avoiding evil matters.”

Chapter 37 of the *Daodejing* says:

道常無為，而無不為。<sup>24</sup>

The Dao constantly practices non-deliberate action, yet nothing is not done.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

道性不為惡事。<sup>25</sup>

It is the nature of the Dao to avoid evil matters.

Furthermore, in chapter 3, the Heshang Gong edition states:

使夫知者不敢為也，為無為，則無不治。<sup>26</sup>

Ensure those who know do not dare act, acting via non-deliberate action, then nothing will not be governed.

In the *Xiang'er* edition, the word “not” (*bu* 不) was inserted after “dare” (*gan* 敢) and the three words “nothing is not done” (*wu bu wei* 無不為) were deleted. To praise the good and deny the bad is the main idea of the *Scripture of Great Peace*. The *Xiang'er Commentary* used this theory and attached itself to it, which is why when we look at the deletion of these three characters today, it contributed to the text’s winding explanation. We thus know the text paid attention to matching the meaning of the *Scripture of Great Peace* and not the original philosophy of the *Daodejing*.

22 See Figure 24 line 10.

23 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 113.586.

24 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 37.146.

25 See Figure 25 lines 14–15.

26 *Laozi Daodejing Heshang Gong zhangju*, 1.11–12.

## The *Xiang'er Commentary* and Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*

### 1 Part 1

The “Bibliography of Arts and Letters” in the *History of the Han Dynasty* lists the commentaries to Laozi’s book but the explanatory commentary by Heshang Gong was unbeknownst to it. In the Tang Dynasty, Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 had already claimed it was a forgery and Liu Su’s 劉肅 *New Accounts from the Great Tang Dynasty* (*Da Tang xinyu* 大唐新語) and Wang Pu’s 王溥 *Institutional History of the Tang Dynasty* (*Tang huiyao* 唐會要) support this.<sup>1</sup> Buddhism also deeply criticized the work, with chapter 69 of *Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden* saying:

道士之號老教，先無河上之言，儒宗未辨。<sup>2</sup>

Daoist priests had the title of “teachers of Laozi” and the words of Heshang Gong did not exist before this, a fact the Confucians failed to identify.

Huang Zhen 黃震 in his *Daily Notes of Mr. Huang* (*Huangshi richao* 黃氏日抄) says:

河上公坐虛空授漢文帝，<sup>3</sup> 其事發於晉裴楷……而《史》稱河上丈人為安期生師。<sup>4</sup> ……豈當漢文之世，其說不經，類市井小說。<sup>5</sup>

Heshang Gong was sitting in the void when the teachings of Emperor Wen of the Han Dynasty were transmitted to him, but this matter began with Pei Kai 裴楷 of the Jin Dynasty ... However, the *Records of the Grand Historian* refers to Elder Heshang as the teacher of Anqi Sheng ... How, in the era of Emperor Wen, was this theory not transmitted? It seems to be little more than marketplace gossip.<sup>6</sup>

1 *Tang huiyao*, 77.1409.

2 *Fayuan zhulin jiaozhu*, 55.1662.

3 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 25.719.

4 *Shiji*, 80.2436.

5 *Huangshi richao*, 55.111.

6 The Song Dynasty edition of Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse* commences with a preface attributed to Ge Xuan, the second paragraph of which records the matter of Heshang Gong

The *Synopsis of the Complete Library of the Four Treasuries* also says:

詳其詞旨，不類漢人，殆道流之所依託。<sup>7</sup>

Detailing his words and purpose, he does not resemble someone from the Han Dynasty, hence his text was most likely attributed to him by Daoist priests.

Scholars in the modern era, based on the false attribution of a commentary to Heshang Gong, have offered detailed analyses. Yoshio Takeuchi 武内義雄, in his *On the Original Beginning of the Laozi* (*Laozi yuanshi* 老子原始), argues Heshang Gong's commentary to the *Laozi* was in reality an emended and revised version of Ge Xuan's *Sectional Explanations of the Laozi* (*Laozi jiejie* 老子節解) and Ge Hong's *Scripture of the Mysterious Cavern* (*Xuandong jing* 玄洞經), thus Heshang Gong's commentary incorporates the learning of Ge Hong and his lineage.<sup>8</sup> Takeuchi's theory is in reality just a hypothesis. At the time he wrote his book he had yet to see the Dunhuang edition of Cheng Xuanying's *Introduction to the Laozi* or the postscript to the Heshang Gong manuscript from the 10th year of the Tianbao era, thus there are mistakes which I have

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and notes that during the time of Emperor Xiaowen of the Northern Wei Dynasty 魏孝文帝, the Emperor would listen to Assistant Minister (*shilang* 侍郎) Pei Kai read Heshang Gong's commentary to the *Daodejing*. See *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 4. Huang Zhen's discussion also indicates this. Furthermore, the Dunhuang edition of Ge Xuan's preface, which is manuscript number 2584 in the Pelliot Catalogue, does not contain the two words "Pei Kai." See *Dunhuang baozang*, 122: 251. The "Biography of Pei Kei" in the *History of the Jin Dynasty* says: "Kai was especially refined when it came to the *Daodejing* and *Yijing*." Reaching the era of Emperor Wu of the Jin Dynasty 晉武帝, Pei Kai was given the post of Cavalier Regular Attendant (*san qi shilang* 散騎侍郎). See *Jin shu*, 335.1047–48. The paragraph goes on to say: "By way of imperial edict, all princes, officials, regional governors, and court attendants having a stipend of 2,000 bushels of grain are ordered to read aloud the *Daodejing*." See *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 4. Examining the establishment of the Regional Governor (*zhou mu* 州牧) system in the Han Dynasty, it already existed in Wang Mang's day. For example, the "Biography of Wang Mang" observes there was a Regional Governor of Jing 荊 prefecture named Fei Xing 費興. See *Han shu*, 69C.4151. The post of Prefectural Governor (*ci shi* 刺史) was re-established in the 18th year of the reign of Emperor Guangwu of the Han Dynasty 漢光武皇帝. See *Hou Han shu*, 4.198. When we arrive at the Eastern Han Dynasty, Liu Yan 劉焉 reconsidered the establishment of Regional Governors. See *Hou Han shu*, 75.2431. This paragraph, therefore, should have been written after the time of Liu Yan. It also speaks of Pei Kai which implies it was written in the early Jin Dynasty but after Ge Xuan's death. Furthermore, this paragraph records the matter of Heshang Gong and could not have been written by Ge Xuan but was most likely inflated by Ge Xuan's followers. We now know such an account is baseless.

<sup>7</sup> *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao*, 28: 39.

<sup>8</sup> Takeuchi Yoshio, *Rōshi Genshi*, 48.

already identified in my paper “Textual Research on the Suo Dan Manuscript of the *Daodejing* 索統寫本道德經殘卷考證” (published in the *Journal of Oriental Studies* in 1955).<sup>9</sup> However, when did Heshang Gong’s commentary appear in its completed form? If the *Xiang'er Commentary* was written by Zhang Daoling, did it truly appear before Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse* or was it withheld until later? These questions require further investigation. Having briefly compared the language of the two commentaries, we now know the foundational meaning of the *Xiang'er Commentary* is similar to Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse*, however, there are many differences when it comes to their exegesis. Their differences also occur in the same places and from this we can deduce the *Xiang'er Commentary* surpasses Heshang Gong’s, hence the former would have appeared after the latter. The evidence for this is the following:

[1]. Chapter 19 of the *Daodejing* says: “These three, being mere adornments, are insufficient.”<sup>10</sup> Heshang Gong’s commentary, specifically the Song Dynasty edition from Master Yu, states:

謂上三事，所棄絕也。

Referring to the above three matters, they should be discarded and abandoned.

以為文不足者，文不足以教民。<sup>11</sup>

On being adornments that are insufficient, these adornments are insufficient to teach the common people.

The *Xiang'er* edition writes “these three” (*san zhe* 三者) as “three theories” (*san yan* 三言), saying:

三事，天下大亂之源，欲消散之。億文復不足，竹素不勝矣。<sup>12</sup>

These three matters are the source of great disarray in the world and if a person wishes to prolong their dispersal, an innumerable number of texts will still be insufficient as there is not enough bamboo and silk on hand to write them.

9 Jao Tsung-i, “Suo Dan xieben *Daodejing* canjuan kaozheng,” *Journal of Oriental Studies* 2.1 (1955): 1–71.

10 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 19.30.

11 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 19.30.

12 See Figure 13 lines 7–8.

It would appear this deliberate changing of the original text to include the character *yan* 言 was an effort to match the meaning of “innumerable number of texts will still be insufficient” (*yi wen buzu* 億文不足) in the sentence that follows it. However, the *Xiang'er Commentary* opens with the two words “three matters” (*san shi* 三事), which were originally from the Heshang Gong edition. Supposing this was the original meaning of the *Xiang'er Commentary*, it would be better to say: “These three matters are the source of great disarray.” Today, we still refer to them as the “three matters,” hence the inherited traces of Heshang Gong are quite evident.

[2]. Chapter 28 of the *Daodejing* contains the expression “Be the valley of the world,”<sup>13</sup> to which Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse* states:

天下歸之，如水流入深谷也。<sup>14</sup>

The world will return to you, like water flowing into a deep valley.

However, the *Xiang'er Commentary* writes:

如天下谷水之欲東流歸於海也。<sup>15</sup>

Like water in the valleys of the world desire to flow east and return to the sea.

The meaning of the *Daodejing* pertains to receptivity, thus Heshang Gong’s explanation: “Like water flowing into a deep valley.” The *Xiang'er Commentary* inherits the meaning of flowing water but says the water of the valley flows into the sea. The role of the valley is thus inverted, becoming a thing of receptivity. This again shows inheritance of the text but has traces of forgetting the original meaning.

[3]. Chapter 34 of the *Daodejing* says: “The myriad things rely on it for life and do not dismiss it.”<sup>16</sup> Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse* states:

道不辭謝而逆止也。<sup>17</sup>

The Dao does not decline things but meets them and stops.

13 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 28.39.

14 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 28.40.

15 See Figure 19 lines 13–14.

16 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 34.46.

17 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 34.46.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* then writes:

不辭謝恩，道不責也。<sup>18</sup>

Not declining its kindness, the Dao is beyond reproach.

This also shows inheritance of the text but has traces of forgetting the original meaning.

[4]. Chapter 6 of the *Daodejing* says: “This is called the mysterious female.” Heshang Gong’s *Section and Verse* writes:

玄天也，於人為鼻；牝地也，於人為口。<sup>19</sup>

The mysterious is Heaven, and in people it acts as the nose; the female is Earth, and in people it acts as the mouth.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* also uses “Heaven” and “Earth” to explain “the mysterious” and “the female,” but this sentence only says: “The female is Earth.” The meaning of “the mysterious is Heaven” is scattered across many sections. In his “Discerning the Correct,” Shi Falin cites Zhang Daoling’s *5000-Character Classic*, stating:

玄之又玄者，謂鼻與口也。<sup>20</sup>

The mysterious that is again mysterious is called the nose and mouth.

It also adopts the expression of Heshang Gong but modifies it to cover traces of its inheritance. The “Yi Benming” 易本命 chapter of *Elder Dai’s Records of Ritual* (*Da Dai Liji* 大戴禮記) says:

丘陵為牡，谿谷為牝。<sup>21</sup>

Hills are male, valleys are female.

This is an old expression yet both the Heshang Gong and *Xiang'er* commentaries view Earth as female.

18 See Figure 23 lines 8–9.

19 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 6.18.

20 *Guang Hongming ji*, 13.189.

21 *Da Dai Liji jiegou*, 13.258.



## 2 Part 2

To the extent the meaning of the *Xiang'er Commentary* is roughly the same as Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*:

[1]. Chapter 8 of the *Daodejing* says:

水善利萬物而不爭，處眾人之所惡，故幾於道。居善地，心善淵。<sup>22</sup>

Water is good at benefiting the myriad things and does not compete with them, residing in places everyone dislikes, thus it is close to the Dao. The excellence of a residence comes from the land, the excellence of a heart-mind comes its depth.

Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse* states:

眾人惡卑濕垢濁，水獨靜流居之也。

Everyone dislikes places that are low, damp, and filthy. Water alone quietly flows and resides there.

水性幾與道同。

The nature of water is similar to that of the Dao.

水性善，喜於地草木之上，即流而下，有似於牝，動而下人也。

The excellence of water's nature is its joy of the Earth, with grasses and trees appearing above it as it flows beneath them, being similar to how a female places herself beneath a male.

水深空虛，淵深清明。<sup>23</sup>

Water that is deep is empty, an abyss that is pure and clear.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* writes:

水能受垢辱不潔之物，幾像道。<sup>24</sup>

As water can receive things that are filthy and tainted, it closely resembles the Dao.

<sup>22</sup> Songkan Laozi *Daodejing*, 8.19.

<sup>23</sup> Songkan Laozi *Daodejing*, 8.19.

<sup>24</sup> See Figure 4 lines 7–8.

It also says:

水善得窪空，使居止為淵。淵，深也。<sup>25</sup>

Water prefers low-lying crevices, so wherever it stops a gulf is made. A gulf is the deep.

The two commentaries are identical. Only “filthy” (*gou zhuo* 垢濁) is slightly different from “tainted” (*gou ru* 垢辱).

[2]. Chapter 15 of the *Daodejing* says:

與兮若冬涉川，猶兮若畏四鄰，儼兮其若客。<sup>26</sup>

Cautious as if crossing a river in winter, hesitant as if dreading their neighbors, dignified as if a guest.

The *Xiang'er* edition does not contain the three *xi* 兮 characters and *yu* 與 is written *yu* 豫. Heshang Gong's commentary states:

舉事輒加重慎，與與兮若冬涉川，心猶難之也。

When doing things always be extra prudent, cautious as if crossing a river in winter, mindful of difficulties.

其進退猶猶如拘制，若人犯法，畏四鄰知之也。

In their advancing and retreating they would appear as if clinging to a system, resembling a criminal afraid of being discovered by the neighbors.

如客畏主人，儼然無所造作也。<sup>27</sup>

As if a guest fearing the host, being respectful without doing anything.

The *Xiang'er Commentary's* explanations of “crossing a river” (*she chuan* 涉川), “fear of neighbors” (*wei lin* 畏鄰), and “like a guest” (*ruo ke* 若客) are the same as the Heshang Gong edition, with only the claim of respecting the Dao and following its precepts being slightly different.

From the above it can be seen that parts of the *Xiang'er Commentary* were derived from Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*. The *Xiang'er Commentary* was written by Zhang Daoling (or Zhang Lu) thus he must have seen the Heshang

25 See Figure 4 lines 8–9.

26 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 15.26.

27 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 15.26.

Gong edition of the *Daodejing*. Such being the case, Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse* appeared before Zhang Daoling established his teachings,<sup>28</sup> not during the time of Ge Hong, which removes the doubts held by Yoshio Takeuchi.

28 Ji Kang 嵇康, in his *Biographies of Sages and Eminent Officials* (*Shengxian Gaoshi zhuan* 聖賢高士傳), writes:

安丘望之，京兆長陵人，號曰安丘丈人。成帝聞欲見之，望之辭不肯見，為巫醫於人間也。

Anqiu Wangzhi 安丘望之 was a native of Changling 長陵 county in Jingzhao 京兆 prefecture and had the pseudonym Anqiu the Elder (*Anqiu zhangren* 安丘丈人). Emperor Cheng of the Han Dynasty 漢成帝 wished to meet him but Wangzhi refused to see him. Wangzhi was known as the [greatest] shaman-doctor in the world.

See *Quan Jin wen*, 117.4b–5a, in *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 2128–29. This account is similar to that in Huangfu Mi's 皇甫謐 *Biographies of Eminent Officials* (*Gaoshi zhuan* 高士傳). See Huangfu Mi, *Gaoshi zhuan*, B.75. The text again says: 著《老子章句》，故《老子》有安邱之學。扶風耿況、王汲皆師事之。終身不仕，道家宗焉。

Anqiu authored the *Laozi Section and Verse* (*Laozi zhangju* 老子章句), thus the *Laozi* incorporates the learning of Anqiu. In Fufeng 扶風 county, Geng Kuang 耿況 and Wang Ji 王汲 both took Anqiu as their teacher. Anqiu did not join the ranks of officialdom during his life, subscribing to Daoism instead.

See Huangfu Mi, *Gaoshi zhuan*, B.75. Lu Deming, in the preface (*xulu* 敘錄) to his *Textual Explanations of Classics and Canons* says:

（老子）毋丘望之《章句》二卷，字仲都，京兆人，漢長陵三老。

(*Laozi*) *Section and Verse* by Wuqiu Wangzhi 毋丘望之, in 2 scrolls. Wangzhi, style-name Zhongdu 仲都, was a native of Jingzhao 京兆 and one of the Three Elders of Changling 長陵 of the Han Dynasty.

See *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 1.27. The "Bibliographic Record" in the *History of the Sui Dynasty* writes:

梁有漢長陵三老毋丘望之注《老子》二卷，亡。

In the Liang Dynasty, among the Three Elders of Changling of the Han Dynasty, there was Wuqiu Wangzhi who wrote a commentary to the *Laozi*, in 2 scrolls, which is no longer extant.

See *Sui shu*, 34.1000. This being so, then "Anqiu" is also "Wuqiu." Anqiu the Elder's *Laozi Section and Verse* was already lost by the Sui Dynasty. The matter of Heshang Gong cannot be examined in detail due to the divergences among official biographies and their dating. The matter of Anqiu is similar to that of Heshang Gong, with Anqiu known as "Anqiu the Elder" and Heshang Gong called "Heshang the Elder." Heshang Gong has a legend related to Emperor Wen of the Han Dynasty and Anqiu has a legend related to Emperor Cheng of the Han Dynasty. Heshang Gong wrote a book called *Section and Verse*, in 2 scrolls, and Anqiu also wrote a book called *Section and Verse*, in 2 scrolls, and they are strikingly similar. Ji Kang, in his *Biographies of Sages and Eminent Officials*, writes:

河上公不知何許人，謂之丈人，隱德無言，無德而稱焉。安邱先生等從之，脩黃老業。

I am not aware of Heshang Gong, also known as Heshang the Elder, who conceals his virtue and does not speak, who is without virtue yet calls himself virtuous. Anqiu and those who followed Heshang Gong studied the teachings of the Yellow Emperor and Laozi.

The evidence is found in the manuscript from the 10th year of the Tianbao era, which says:

太極左仙公序，係師定河上真人《章句》。<sup>29</sup>

The preface was written by the Left Transcendent Lord of the Great Ultimate while Master Xi finalized the content of Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*.

It is known that Heshang Gong's commentary was in circulation since the Eastern Han Dynasty, but it was only when we reach Master Xi and Celestial Masters Daoism that the text was edited and finalized. The *Xiang'er Commentary* stands apart from Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse* in establishing a new doctrinal reading of the *Daodejing*, which is why it only occasionally adopts the theories of Heshang Gong. Furthermore, it can be argued the *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts* appeared after the *Teachings of Xiang'er* and Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*. From the *Xiang'er Commentary* we can verify the historical period of Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*, a point that was unknown to my predecessors. This is why new material is so valuable! The *Xiang'er Commentary* and Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse* both focus on theories of alchemy and self-cultivation, however, Heshang

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See *Taiping Yulan*, 510.2321. If so, then Heshang Gong took Anqiu as his teacher. The "Biography of Yue Yi" in the *Records of the Grand Historian* writes: "Heshang the Elder taught Anqi Sheng 安期生." See *Shiji*, 80.2436. Yao Zhenzong 姚振宗 in his *Textual Research on the Catalogue of the Sui Dynasty (Suizhi kaozheng 隋志考證)* thus says Anqiu the Elder was in fact Anqi Sheng. See Yao Zhenzong, *Sui shu jingji zhi kaozheng*, 25.1105. I suspect Anqiu, Anqi, and Anqiu the Elder are all style names for the same person. During the Han and Wei dynasties, there was a theory that Anqiu was Heshang Gong's teacher, hence the stories of Anqiu and Heshang Gong also became mixed together. Many Daoist records falsely attribute these sayings to the spirits. For example, Yu Ji 于吉 was known as the teacher of Gong Chong 宮崇, who lived during the time of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, however, Yu Ji is also falsely said to have lived in the era of King Nan of the Zhou Dynasty 周赧王. Anqiu the Elder was, therefore, falsely taken for Heshang the Elder and Emperor Cheng was falsely taken for Emperor Wen; these are also comparable to the matter of Yu Ji. The "Bibliographic Record" of the *History of the Sui Dynasty* states that Heshang Gong authored a commentary in 2 scrolls and that during the Warring States period there was a commentary by Heshang the Elder in 2 scrolls, and a commentary by Wuqiu in 2 scrolls. See *Sui shu*, 34.1000. Whether the same book was divided into three parts, or it was given different titles, the book by Anqiu is already lost. I have yet to investigate this and simply express my doubts here. Anqiu the Elder, as a shaman-doctor who wrote a commentary to the *Daodejing*, clearly shows that "ghost religion" (*guijiao* 鬼教) had become intermixed with Laozi's book and was actually an early guide for Zhang Daoling.

29 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 32.

Gong still took into account the philosophical principles and textual coherence of the *Daodejing*. The *Xiang'er Commentary* sought to establish its own Daoist precepts and express its own genuineness of the Dao, which is why it nearly abandoned and hardly mentions the *Daodejing*'s philosophical principles. In fact, its textual exegesis contains many misinterpretations. Thus, the two commentaries completely match one another, which is rarely seen. When the *Commentary and Instructions for Rites of Textual Transmission* says: "The commentarial explanations of Heshang Gong and the *Xiang'er* already have their own specialness" 河上、《想爾》，注解已自有殊，<sup>30</sup> this is true indeed.

As to the exegetical differences between the two commentaries, when Heshang Gong glosses the word "valley" (*gu* 谷) in the phrase "valley spirit" (*gushen* 谷神) as "nourish" (*yang* 養),<sup>31</sup> the *Xiang'er Commentary* explains it to mean "desire" (*yu* 欲).<sup>32</sup> When Heshang Gong glosses the word "lose" (*shuang* 爽) in the phrase "lose one's sense of taste" (*koushuang* 口爽) as "perish" (*wang* 亡),<sup>33</sup> the *Xiang'er Commentary* says:

口爽為糜爛生瘡。<sup>34</sup>

To lose one's sense of taste is the corrosive effect of sores in the mouth.

Heshang Gong glosses "food of the mother" (*shi mu* 食母) as "food is the use" (*shi wei yong* 食為用),<sup>35</sup> which is the same as Yu Fan's 虞翻 commentary to the *Classic of Changes*,<sup>36</sup> the phrase "the mother is the Dao" (*mu wei Dao* 母為道) is also found in the "Jie Lao" 解老 chapter of the *Hanfeizi*.<sup>37</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

食母者，身也。於內為胃主五藏氣。<sup>38</sup>

The food of the mother, the body, within which is the stomach that rules the breath of the five viscera.

However, the theory that "The transcendent gentleman consumes grain when he can but if he cannot, he will consume breath, as breath returns to

30 *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 170.

31 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 6.18.

32 See Figure 3 line 2.

33 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 12.23.

34 See Figure 6 lines 17–18.

35 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 20.32.

36 *Zhouyi jijie zuanshu*, 6.432.

37 *Hanfeizi jijie*, 6.150.

38 See Figure 14 lines 13–14.

the stomach ... As for the fullness of the stomach ..." 仙士有穀食之，無則食氣，氣歸胃……腹之為實。<sup>39</sup> was adopted from the *Scripture of Great Peace*. Chapter 145 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* states:

問曰：上中下得道度世，何食之乎？答曰：上第一者，食風氣；第二者食藥味；第三者，少食裁通其腸胃。<sup>40</sup>

The inquirer said: People who obtain the Dao and transcend the world can be divided into ranks of upper, middle, and lower. What did they eat? The responder said: Those of the upper rank ate the breath of the wind, those of the middle rank ate food and medicine, and those of the lower rank ate very little which unblocked their intestines and stomachs."

These are variant readings of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, the rest of which will not be listed here.

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39 See Figure 14 lines 14–15.

40 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 145.717.

## Comparison between the *Xiang'er Commentary* and Suo Dongxuan Edition

The *Xiang'er* edition deleted auxiliary words and altered the original text, making it very different on the surface to the Heshang Gong edition. The edition that is closest to the *Xiang'er*, being nearly identical to it, is that by Suo Dongxuan. These editions are all related to the Master Xi edition.

Suo Dongxuan's edition has the manuscript number 2584 in the Pelliot Catalogue and was published in volume 2 of the revised edition of *Remnants and Rare Texts from Dunhuang*. The opening scroll of Suo Dongxuan's edition has been lost and the text begins with the second half of the preface by Ge the Transcendent Lord (*Ge Xiangong* 葛仙公). It is followed by a paragraph that records Heshang Gong transmitting the scripture, which opens with the words: "The Left Transcendent Ge Xuan said." It is followed by another paragraph with the words: "The Daoist priest Zheng Siyuan 鄭思遠 said." After this, there is the *Taiji yin jue* 太極隱訣 which is followed by Laozi's *Classic of Dao*, part 1. While every section opens with a new paragraph, there are no titles delineating them. The text ends with the sentence "Heaven and Earth correct themselves," the last line of which says "Laozi's *Classic of Dao*, part 1." On a separate line is written the following six characters: "Scripture by the Daoist priest Suo Dongxuan."<sup>1</sup> The present work will give it the abbreviated title "Xuan edition" and my annotative notes above cover most aspects of it. What follows is a more detailed comparison, showing the similarities and differences with the Master Xi edition and the scriptures written by Daoist priests in the Tang Dynasty.

[1]. Textual alterations in the *Xiang'er* edition that were followed in the Suo Dongxuan edition.

In chapter 7, there is the sentence:

以其無尸，故能成其尸。<sup>2</sup>

He takes himself to be without a corpse, thus he can complete his corpse.

<sup>1</sup> *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 1–12.

<sup>2</sup> See Figure 4 line 1.

The two instances of the character *shi* 尸 are the same in the Xuan edition but other editions use *si* 私.<sup>3</sup>

In chapter 14, the character *hu* 忽 in “Its declining does not dim” 其下不忽,<sup>4</sup> is the same in the Xuan edition but other editions use *mei* 昧.<sup>5</sup>

Chapter 16 says:

公能生，生能天。<sup>6</sup>

Being impartial they can live, living they can be Heavenly.

In other editions, the two *neng* 能 characters are written *nai* 乃 while the two *sheng* 生 characters are written *wang* 王.<sup>7</sup> Only the Xuan edition is the same as the *Xiang'er* edition.<sup>8</sup>

In chapter 19, the character *yan* 言 in “these three sayings” 此三言 is the same in the Xuan edition whereas other editions use *zhe* 者.<sup>9</sup>

In two phrases from chapter 21—“How it views ending and beginning” 以閱終甫, and “How do I know the ending and beginning are such” 吾何以知終甫之然<sup>10</sup>—the two characters *zhong* 終 are the same in the Xuan edition but other editions use *zhong* 眾.<sup>11</sup>

Chapter 24 has the sentence:

曰餘食餼行。<sup>12</sup>

It is said the use of leftover food as a tribute.

The character *zhui* 餼 is the same in the Xuan edition while other editions use *zhui* 贅.<sup>13</sup>

In chapter 28, the phrase “Be a servant to the world” 為天下奚,<sup>14</sup> contains the character *xi* 奚 which is the same in the Xuan edition, however, other editions use *xi* 谿.<sup>15</sup>

3 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 5 last line. *Laozi jiaogu*, 7.43. *Laozi jiaoshi*, 7:30.

4 See Figure 8 line 3.

5 See *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7 line 4. *Laozi jiaogu*, 14.78. *Laozi jiaoshi*, 14.53.

6 See Figure 10 line 9–10.

7 *Laozi jiaogu*, 16.105.

8 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7 lines 15–16.

9 See Figure 13 line 6. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8 line 3. *Laozi jiaogu*, 19.120.

10 See Figure 15 lines 12–13.

11 See *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8 lines 14–15. *Laozi jiaogu*, 19.148–49.

12 See Figure 17 lines 4–5.

13 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9 line 6. *Laozi jiaogu*, 24.163.

14 See Figure 19 line 2.

15 See *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 10 line 2. *Laozi jiaogu*, 28.187.



Furthermore, the character *dai* 貸 in the expression “Constant virtue cannot be borrowed” 常德不貸,<sup>16</sup> is the same in the Xuan edition but other editions use *te* 忒.<sup>17</sup>

Chapter 37 says: “Heaven and Earth correct themselves” 天地自正.<sup>18</sup> The character *di* 地 is the same in the Xuan edition but other editions use *xia* 下.<sup>19</sup>

Chapter 3 has the sentence:

使知者不敢不為，則無不治。<sup>20</sup>

He ensures those who know not dare refrain from acting, hence nothing is not governed.

This is identical to the Xuan edition. Other editions do not contain the character *bu* 不 before *wei* 為, however, after the character *wei* 為 they insert the characters *wei wuwei* 為無為.<sup>21</sup>

The above list contains the most unique examples outlining the changes from the Master Xi edition. Within Laozi’s *Classic of Dao*, part 1, many such examples can be found but I will not give a full account here.

[2]. Textual alterations in the *Xiang'er* edition that were not followed by Suo Dongxuan.

In chapter 10, the expression “Heaven and Earth’s opening and closing” 天地開闢,<sup>22</sup> contains the character *di* 地 but the Xuan edition and other editions use *men* 門.<sup>23</sup>

Chapter 20 contains the phrase “Between yea and yes” 唯之與何,<sup>24</sup> but the character *he* 何 in the Xuan edition and other editions use *e* 阿.<sup>25</sup>

Chapter 25 says: “Earth is great, life is great” 地大生大,<sup>26</sup> and “Life is one of them” 而生處一.<sup>27</sup> The two *sheng* 生 characters are written in the Xuan edition and other editions as *wang* 王.<sup>28</sup> The Longxing stele of Sui prefecture also

16 See Figure 19 line 7.

17 See *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 10 line 3. *Laozi jiaogu*, 28.188.

18 See Figure 26 lines 3–4.

19 See *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 12 line 3. *Laozi jiaogu*, 37.242.

20 See Figure 1 line 14.

21 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 5 lines 8–9. *Laozi jiaogu*, 3.25–26.

22 See Figure 5 lines 21–22.

23 See *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 6 line 9. *Laozi jiaogu*, 10.58.

24 See Figure 13 line 10.

25 See *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8 line 5. *Laozi jiaogu*, 20.123.

26 See Figure 17 line 16.

27 See Figure 17 lines 17–18.

28 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9 line 11. *Laozi jiaogu*, 25.170, 172.

writes it *wang* 王.<sup>29</sup> The Heshang Gong edition says: “The king resides in their oneness.”<sup>30</sup> The Xuan edition follows the *Xiang'er* edition in deleting the auxiliary word without altering any of the other characters.<sup>31</sup>

In chapter 35, the character *le* 樂 in the phrase “peace and great joy” 安平大樂 is read by the *Xiang'er* edition as belonging to the previous sentence.<sup>32</sup> In the Xuan edition, the character *da* 大 was written *tai* 太, marking the end of the sentence, while the character *le* 樂 was read together with the sentence after it.<sup>33</sup>

[3]. Words deleted in the *Xiang'er* edition that were also deleted in the Suo Dongxuan edition.

Chapter 3 says: “The sage governs” 聖人治.<sup>34</sup> Other editions add the characters *shiyi* 是以 and *zhi* 之 to create: “This is how the sage governs” 是以聖人之治.<sup>35</sup> The Xuan edition does not add these three characters.<sup>36</sup>

Chapter 4 contains two expressions:

淵似萬物之宗.<sup>37</sup>

Be a gulf resembling the ancestor of the myriad things.

And,

湛似常存.<sup>38</sup>

Be profound as if constantly present.

Other editions add the character *xi* 兮 after *yuan* 淵 and *zhan* 湛 respectively,<sup>39</sup> but the Xuan edition does not do so.<sup>40</sup>

In chapter 11, regarding the characters *sa fu* 卅輻,<sup>41</sup> the Xuan edition also uses *sa* 卅 but other editions write it *sanshi* 三十.

29 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 25.102, 103.

30 *Songkan Laozi Daodejing*, 25.37.

31 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9 line 11. *Laozi jiaogu*, 25.170, 172.

32 See Figure 24 line 10.

33 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 11 line 13.

34 See Figure 1 lines 3–4.

35 *Laozi jiaogu*, 3.23.

36 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 5 line 7.

37 See Figure 1 line 16.

38 See Figure 2 lines 4.

39 *Laozi jiaogu*, 4.30.

40 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 5 line 10.

41 See Figure 6 line 2.

In chapter 17, the characters *wu zhi* 侮之 are preceded in other editions by the two characters *qici* 其次 but the Xuan edition does not do so.<sup>42</sup>

The above examples show the deletion of words in the Master Xi edition, of which many more exist but I will not list them here.

[4]. Words deleted in the *Xiang'er* edition that were not identically deleted in the Suo Dongxuan edition.

In chapter 9, the sentence “Bring misfortune upon oneself” 自遺（其）咎, in the *Xiang'er* edition deletes the character *qi* 其 after *yi* 遺 but the Xuan edition and other editions keep it.<sup>43</sup>

Chapter 16 contains the expression: “Knowing the constant is called luminous” 知常（曰）明.<sup>44</sup> The *Xiang'er* edition deletes the character *yue* 曰 before *ming* 明 but the Xuan edition and other editions keep it.<sup>45</sup>

Chapter 23 says: “Thus, follow its affairs and the Dao will be acquired” 故從事而（道者）道得之.<sup>46</sup> For this sentence, and the seven that follow it, each edition handles them differently. The *Xiang'er* edition reconfigures them into three sentences, as does the Xuan edition, but the Xuan edition differs in adding the two characters *Dao zhe* 道者.<sup>47</sup>

In chapter 28 we read: “Know the white yet guard the black” 知（其）白守其黑.<sup>48</sup> The *Xiang'er* edition deletes the character *qi* 其 after *zhi* 知 but the Xuan edition and other editions keep it.<sup>49</sup>

Chapter 31 contains the phrase: “Weapons are not auspicious instruments” 兵者不祥（之）器.<sup>50</sup> The character *zhi* 之 appears before *qi* 器 in the Xuan edition but the *Xiang'er* edition deletes it.<sup>51</sup>

Chapter 36 says: “What a person desires to take” 將（欲）奪之.<sup>52</sup> The Xuan edition and other editions all have the character *yu* 欲 after *jiang* 將 but it does not appear in the *Xiang'er* edition.<sup>53</sup>

42 See Figure 10 line 21. *Laozi jiaogu*, 17.109. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7 line 17.

43 See Figure 4 line 22. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 6 line 5. *Laozi jiaogu*, 9.52.

44 See Figure 10 line 5.

45 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7 line 15. *Laozi jiaogu*, 16.104.

46 See Figure 16, lines 16–17.

47 *Laozi jiaogu*, 23.158. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9 line 3.

48 See Figure 19 line 5.

49 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 10 line 3. *Laozi jiaogu*, 28.188.

50 See Figure 21 line 14.

51 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 10 line 16.

52 See Figure 24 line 21.

53 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 11 line 17. *Laozi jiaogu*, 36.236.

[5]. Though the meaning can be grasped in two ways, Suo Dongxuan follows the *Xiang'er*.

In chapter 8, there is the sentence:

水善利萬物又不爭。<sup>54</sup>

Water is good at benefiting the myriad things and does not compete with them.

It contains the character *you* 又 and the Xuan edition follows the *Xiang'er* edition in this regard,<sup>55</sup> but other editions replace it with the character *er* 而.

[6]. Though the meaning can be grasped in two ways, Suo Dongxuan follows other editions.

Chapter 17 contains the phrase “Accomplished matters always follow him” 成功事遂。<sup>56</sup> The Xuan edition follows other editions in reversing their order to *suishi* 遂事。<sup>57</sup>

[7]. The two editions are identical, preserving the ancient meaning.

Chapter 20 contains the following sentences:

美之與惡，相去何若。<sup>58</sup>

The beautiful and the grotesque, what is the difference?

And,

天下皆知美之為美，斯惡矣。<sup>59</sup>

When everyone in the world knows the beauty of the beautiful, this is ugliness.

This is a comparison between the concepts of beautiful and ugly. In other editions, the character *mei* 美 was incorrectly written *shan* 善 and *he ruo* 何若 was rhymed with *e* 惡. Other editions also incorrectly wrote *he ruo* as *ruo he* 若何。<sup>60</sup>

54 See Figure 4 line 4.

55 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 6 line 1. *Laozi jiaogu*, 8.44.

56 See Figure 11 line 2.

57 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 7 line 18. *Laozi jiaogu*, 17.112.

58 See Figure 13 lines 13–14. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8.5–6.

59 *Laozi jiaogu*, 2.12.

60 *Laozi jiaogu*, 20.123.

Additionally, when it comes to the expression “The vulgar person shines forth brightly” 俗人照照,<sup>61</sup> other editions write the last two characters *zhaozhao* 昭昭.<sup>62</sup> Lu Deming says: “*Zhao* 昭 in some editions was written *zhao* 照.”<sup>63</sup> The *Xiang'er* edition and Xuan edition cite the same character as Lu Deming’s variant.

In chapter 27, the sentence “Good actions have no pervading trace” 善行無徹跡,<sup>64</sup> contains the character *che* 徹 which was written *zhe* 轍 in other editions.<sup>65</sup> Lu Deming writes:

徹，梁云應車邊，今作彳邊者，古字少也。跡河上作迹。<sup>66</sup>

On the character *che* 徹, Liang [Emperor Jianwen of Liang 梁簡文帝] states it should be written with the cart radical but today the character with the *chi* 彳 radical is used, and we rarely find it in ancient texts. The character *ji* 跡 was written by Heshang Gong as *ji* 迹.

Regarding the characters *che* 徹 and *ji* 迹, both the *Xiang'er* and Xuan editions match Lu Deming’s theory.

The sentence in chapter 32 starting with “If the nobility can guard it” 王侯若能守<sup>67</sup> has the first two characters in other editions inversed to *houwang* 侯王.<sup>68</sup> Lu Deming reports:

梁武作王侯。<sup>69</sup>

Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty is the nobility.

Both the *Xiang'er* and Xuan editions match Lu Deming’s theory.

[8]. The two editions contain clerical errors which can be used to verify one another.

Chapter 36 says: “Fish cannot surpass a gulf” 魚不可脫於淵.<sup>70</sup> The Xuan edition and other editions all use the character *tuō* 脫 which indicates that the character *sheng* 勝 in the *Xiang'er* edition is a clerical error.<sup>71</sup>

61 See Figure 14 line 5. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 8 line 9.

62 *Laozi jiaogu*, 20.134.

63 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 25.721.

64 See Figure 18 line 6. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9 line 16.

65 *Laozi jiaogu*, 27.178.

66 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 25.722.

67 See Figure 25 line 16. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 11 line 2.

68 *Laozi jiaogu*, 32.215.

69 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 25.722.

70 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 11 line 18. *Laozi jiaogu*, 36.238.

71 See Figure 25 lines 7–8.

Chapter 12 contains the sentence: “The five notes cause people to go deaf” 五音令人耳聾.<sup>72</sup> The *Xiang'er* edition and other editions all use the character *yin* 音 which indicates the character *zhe* 者 in the Xuan edition is a clerical error.<sup>73</sup>

[9]. Examples of variant words in both editions.

In chapter 29, the character *lei* 羸 is written in both editions as *lei* 羸.<sup>74</sup> What is more, in chapter 26, the term *zizhong* 鞮重 was written with the character *zi* 鞮 in the *Xiang'er* edition and the character *zi* 鞮 in the Xuan edition;<sup>75</sup> both are variant words of *zi* 鞮. The interchangeable words of antiquity and modernity, such as *shu* 孰 and *shu* 熟, as well as characters from Han stele inscriptions such as *xiao* 𠂔, *shi* 十, and *cai* 才, were confusedly used. The two editions frequently have discrepancies, which I will not discuss here.

When it comes to the method of Daoist priests writing scriptures, according to the *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts*, one should directly begin with the precepts then ask the Master for scriptures. The Master writes one copy to be transmitted to his disciples, while the other copy is presented as a gift to his teacher. He must not omit things or commit any errors, for if he does, deductions will be made to his life-count and years and he will incur disaster. The Master then makes two more copies of the scripture and precepts. One is put into a cypress box and hidden away while the other was used in purification rites, visualization, meditation, discussion, and study. If a person encounters something they do not understand, they preserve these thoughts and make an offering to the scripture. When looking at the *Daodejing* manuscripts unearthed at Dunhuang, it is clear that copying scriptures was a requirement for teaching them and the precepts. In Laozi's *Classic of De*, which was copied in the third year of the Jinglong reign period of Emperor Zhongzong of the Tang Dynasty, we are told:

弟子唐真戒年十七歲，費信誓心，詣三洞法師北岳先生  
閭，求受《道德》五千文《經》，脩行供養。<sup>76</sup>

I, the disciple Tang Zhenjie, being 17 years of age, offer you an honest pledge to seek the Master of Three Caverns and the Gentleman of Northern Peak to receive the 5000-Character Classic of *Daode* so that I may cultivate myself with it and make offerings to it.

72 See Figure 6 lines 15–16. *Laozi jiaogu*, 12.65.

73 *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 6 line 14.

74 *Laozi jiaogu*, 29.196. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 10 line 9. See Figure 20 line 10.

75 See Figure 17 line 23. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 9 line 14. *Laozi jiaogu*, 26.175.

76 See Figure 29 lines 9, 17–18. *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 18 lines 9, 17–18.

This is a specific illustration. At the end of the scroll is a scripture of ten precepts, which was also received by Tang Zhenjie, and is known as the “precept text” (*jiewen* 戒文). Thus, it conforms to the *Commentary and Instructions for Rites of Textual Transmission*. However, if there are small discrepancies between the various copies discovered at Dunhuang, it is probably due to clerical errors and the slight differences in the scriptures transmitted by various Daoist Masters.

## The *Xiang'er Commentary* and *Scripture of Great Peace*

The *Xiang'er Commentary* frequently mentions the two words “great peace” (*taiping* 太平), as the following examples demonstrate:

Chapter 10:

治國令太平，當精心鑿道意。<sup>1</sup>

[The ruler] governs the kingdom by allowing a great peace to take hold.  
He should delve into the meaning of the Dao.

Chapter 19:

佐君不能致太平。<sup>2</sup>

Assisting their ruler cannot result in a lasting peace.

Chapter 28:

官長治人，能致太平。<sup>3</sup>

When his officials govern the people, they can deliver a great peace.

Chapter 30:

務在行道，道普德溢，太平至矣。<sup>4</sup>

Moving with the Dao, for when the widespread virtue of the Dao overflows, great peace will result.

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1 See Figure 5 lines 18–20.

2 See Figure 12 line 17.

3 See Figure 19 line 18.

4 See Figure 20 line 17.



## Chapter 35:

上聖之君，師道至行，以教化天下；如治，太平符瑞，皆感人功所積致之者。<sup>5</sup>

The ruler of supreme sagacity takes the Dao as his teacher to perfect his movements and uses its teachings to transform the world; governing in this way, he bears the auspicious talismans of a great peace and everyone is moved by their accumulated success.

These are the five instances “great peace” mentioned in the text. Regarding “great peace,” the first section of the *Scripture of Great Peace* states:

澄清大亂，功高德正，故號太平，若此法流行，即是太平之時。<sup>6</sup>

It clarifies turmoil with its esteemed accomplishments and correct virtue hence it is called great peace. Should this method prevail, there will be a time of great peace.

The *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* cites “great peace” on six occasions. Volume 746 of the *Daoist Canon* contains the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* but its first section does not have this text. Only in section 3 do we find:

太者，大也，言其積大如天，無有大于天者、平者、言治，太平均，凡事悉治，無復不平。<sup>7</sup>

Greatness refers to what is large, which is to say it amasses greatness like Heaven, and there is nothing larger than Heaven. Peace speaks to government, the dispenser of great peace. When all things know they are governed, there will be no return to turmoil.

Section 10 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* states:

太者，大也，大者，天也，天能覆育萬物，其功最大；平者，地也，地平然能育萬物。<sup>8</sup>

Greatness refers to what is large, the large refers to what is of Heaven, and Heaven can nurture the myriad things, thus its accomplishments are the greatest. Peace refers to what is of Earth and Earth’s peacefulness can foster the myriad things.

5 See Figure 23 lines 19–20.

6 *Taipingjing hejiao*, 1.10.

7 Lüqiū Fāngyuán, *Taipingjing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 324.

8 Lüqiū Fāngyuán, *Taipingjing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 378.

In the *History of the Han Dynasty*, the “Biography of Dongfang Shuo 東方朔” says:

陳《泰階六符》，以觀天變。<sup>9</sup>

Consult the *Six Tallies of the August Stairway* to observe the changes in Heaven.

In his commentary, Ying Shao 應劭 cites the Yellow Emperor's *Classic of the Six Tallies of the August Stairway* (*Taijie liufu jing* 泰階六符經):

三階平，則陰陽和，風雨時，社稷神祇咸獲其宜，天下大安，是為太平。<sup>10</sup>

If the Three Steps are peaceful, Yin and Yang will be harmonious, the season of wind and rain will arrive, society and the Spirit of Millet and Spirit of Earth will reap the benefits, and the world will enjoy great tranquility. This is great peace.

The meaning of “great peace” originated in the books of the Yellow Emperor that were transmitted during the Qin and Han dynasties. Reaching the time of Emperor Cheng of the Han Dynasty, Gan Zhongke 甘忠可, who hailed from the state of Qi 齊, fabricated the *Tianguan li Baoyuan Taiping jing* 天官曆包元太平經, in 12 scrolls. On account of this, Emperor Ai of the Han Dynasty 漢哀帝 responded by changing his title to “Emperor of Great Peace from the sages of the Liu clan” 陳聖劉太平皇帝.<sup>11</sup> During the reign of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, Gong Chong of Langye presented to the emperor the spiritual book (*shenshu* 神書) of his master in 170 scrolls<sup>12</sup> entitled *Book of Great Peace Written*

9 *Han shu*, 65.2851.

10 *Han shu*, 65.2851.

11 *Han shu*, 75.3193.

12 Yu Ji's name appears in the biography of Xiang Kai. See *Hou Han shu*, 30B.1084. His name is also written as “Gan Shi 干室,” “Qian Shi 千室,” and “Gan Ji 干吉.” The Dunhuang edition of Cheng Xuanying's *Introduction to the Laozi* states:

赧王時，授干室《太平經》並《百八十戒》，治國治身脩養要訣。

King Nan of the Zhou Dynasty received Gan Shi's *Scripture of Great Peace* and its 180 tenets, which were essential instructions in governing the kingdom and the body, as well as self-cultivation and life-nourishment.

See *Dunhuang miji liuzhen xinbian*, 54. Chapter 6 of *Discerning the Correct* says:

赧王之世，千室以疾病致感，老君授《百八十戒》，並《太平經》一百七十篇。

In the era of King Nan of the Zhou Dynasty, when Gan Shi was seriously ill, Lord Lao responded by teaching him the 180 tenets of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, in 170 scrolls.

in *Blue*.<sup>13</sup> The fragmentary edition of the *Scripture of Great Peace* is preserved in the “Great Peace” section of the *Daoist Canon*.<sup>14</sup> Thereafter, Zhang Jiao 張角

See *Guang Hongming ji*, 13.183. The character *qian* 千 was erroneously used for *gan* 干. The “Three Caverns and the Four Supplements” entry in the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* cites the 180 tenets, stating:

是周赧王時，老君於蜀郡臨邛縣授於瑯琊干吉。

During the time of King Nan of the Zhou Dynasty, Lord Lao, in Linqiong 臨邛 county of Shu 蜀 prefecture, transmitted [the *Scripture of Great Peace*] to Gan Ji at Langye 瑯琊.

See *Yunji qiqian*, 6.101. In the *Records of the Three Kingdoms Period*, in the “Biography of Lord Wu” 吳主傳 and “Biography of Sun Ce” 孫策傳, Pei Song’s 裴松 commentary cites the *Traditions of the People South of the Yangzi River* (*Jiangbiao zhuan* 江表傳) by Yu Pu 虞溥 of the Jin Dynasty, which says: “Yu Ji was a Daoist priest from Langye.” See *Sanguo zhi*, 46.1109. It also cites Yu Xi’s 虞喜 *Forest of Records* (*Zhilin* 志林), which states:

順帝時，瑯琊宮崇詣關上師干吉所得神書。

In the time of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, Gong Chong of Langye went to the capital to present the spiritual book of his master, Yu Ji.

See *Sanguo zhi*, 46.1109. In light of the aforementioned, it would appear that Yu Ji is actually Gan Ji.

13 *Hou Han shu*, 30B.1084.

14 The *Scripture of Great Peace* is in fact Gan Ji’s 干吉 *Book of Great Peace with Blue-Green Headings* (*Taiping Qingling shu* 太平青領書). The “Biography of Gong Chong” 宮崇傳 in Ge Hong’s *Biographies of Immortals* says:

天仙授吉青縑朱子《太平經》十部。

The celestial transcendent transmitted to Ji Qing 吉青 the *Scripture of Great Peace* which was written in vermilion ink on white silk, in 10 scrolls.

See *Shenxian zhuan jiaoshi*, 7.256. Chapter 673 of the *Imperial Overview from the Taiping Reign* cites part 2 of the *Book of Immortals* (*Xianjing* 仙經), which says:

《像天地品》曰：後漢順帝時，曲陽泉上得《神仙經》一百卷。內七十卷，皆白素朱界青幪朱書，號曰太平青道。

The *Heavenly Images and Earthly Rankings* (*Xiang Tian Di pin* 像天地品) states: “During the time of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, [Gan Ji] was on a spring in Quyang 曲陽 when he acquired the *Scripture of the Immortals* (*Shenxian jing* 神仙經), in 100 scrolls. The 70 scrolls comprising the “inner” section were written in vermilion ink on white silk with blue headings, hence it was known as the “Way of Great Peace in Blue” (*Taiping qing Dao* 太平青道).”

See *Taiping Yulan*, 673.2999. However, the “Biography of Xiang Kai” in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* states:

琅邪宮崇詣關，上其師于吉于曲陽泉上所得神書百七十卷，號《太平清領書》。其言以陰陽五行為宗，而多巫覡雜語。

Gong Chong of Langye went to the capital to present the spiritual book his master Yu Ji had acquired while on a spring in Quyang. Comprising 170 scrolls, it was known as the *Book of Great Peace Written in Blue* (*Taiping Qingling shu* 太平清領書). It is about the ancestral role of Yin and Yang and the five elements, and other miscellaneous sayings of a shamanic nature.

See *Hou Han shu*, 30B.1084. Zhang Huai’s commentary says:

神書即今道家《太平經》也。其經以甲、乙、丙、丁、戊、己、庚、辛、壬、癸為部，每部一十七卷也。

Spiritual books today belong to Daoism, such as the *Scripture of Great Peace*. This scripture was divided into 8 sections (Jia 甲, Yi 乙, Bing 丙, Ding 丁, Wu 戊, Ji 己, Geng 庚, Xin 辛, Ren 壬, Gui 癸), with each section comprised of 17 scrolls.

See *Hou Han shu*, 30B.1080. The "Bibliography of Arts and Letters" (*Yinwen zhi* 藝文志) in the *History of the Song Dynasty* (*Song shi* 宋史) states:

襄楷《太平經》一百七十卷。

Xiang Kai's *Scripture of Great Peace* contains 170 scrolls.

See *Song shi*, 205.5190. The "Xialan" chapter of the *Master Who Embraces Simplicity* says: 《太平經》五十卷。

The *Scripture of Great Peace* contains 50 scrolls.

See *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 19.333. It also states:

《甲乙經》一百七十卷。

The *Scripture of Jia and Yi* (*Jiayi jing* 甲乙經) contains 170 scrolls.

See *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 19.333. The *Garden of Immortals: A Pearl Treasury* (*Xianyuan bianzhu* 仙苑編珠) also says it contains 170 scrolls. See *Xianyuan bianzhu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 11:32–33. As for Jia Shanxiang's 賈善翔 *Biography of Youlong* 猶龍傳, it reads:

今於正經外，又有《複文》一卷，稱後聖君撰……又有《太平鈔》十卷。不著撰人名氏，大略發明本經篇目。又有《太平秘旨》一卷，稱上相青童君授，論守一之法。

Now, besides the canonical text, there is also the *Reduplicated Scripts*, in 1 scroll, which was said to be the saintly ruler's later compilation ... There is also the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged*, in 10 scrolls. The author's name is not mentioned and it generally reveals the chapters and sections of this classic. There is also the *Secret Instructions for Great Peace* (*Taiping mizhi* 太平秘旨), in 1 scroll. It was transmitted by the Great Minister Lord Azure Lad and discusses the method of guarding the One.

See *Youlong zhuan*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18:23. Each of these books can be found in volumes 746 and 747 of the *Daoist Canon* and are equivalent to sections 1 through 10 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged*. Volumes 748 to 755 are the *Scripture of Great Peace*, of which scrolls 35 to 119 are missing, meaning there are only 57 scrolls intact, with the *Preface to the Talismanic Writings of the Scripture of Great Peace* (*Taiping jing fuwen xu* 太平經複文序) and *Secret Instructions for Great Peace* located in the second half of volume 755. The *Scripture of Great Peace* has been in circulation since the Later Han Dynasty, while during the Liang Dynasty, Huan An 桓闍 from Donghai 東海 obtained one section which Tao Hongjing thereupon proclaimed to be an original edition by Lord Gan 干君. During the time of Emperor Xuan of the Chen Dynasty 陳宣帝, there was the Daoist priest Zhou Zhixiang 周智響 who was fond of the *Scripture of Great Peace* and regularly lectured on it, thus he was known as "the Master of Great Peace" 周智響善於《大平經》義，常自講習，時號太平法師。See "*Taiping jing fuwen xu*" 太平經複文序, in *Taiping jing hejiao*, 745. Further details can be seen in the *Purse of Pearls from the Three Caverns*, which cites Lu Xiujing's 陸修靜 *Biographies of Daoist Adepts* (*Daoxue zhuan* 道學傳). The *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* is by Lüqiu Fangyuan 閻丘方遠 of the Tang Dynasty and is comprised of excerpts from the *Scripture of Great Peace*. If we take the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* and compare it to the *Scripture of Great Peace*, they largely accord with one another. Only section 1 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* is suspect because the remainder of the text shows no evidence of textual alteration by later generations, meaning it is quite possibly the original edition from the Han Dynasty. Further details are found in Wang Ming's 王明 "Problems on the Authenticity of Part One of the *Scripture of Great Peace*" (Lun *Taiping jing chao jiabu zhi e*) 論太平經鈔甲部

might have owned a copy of the book because he promoted the Way of Great Peace. For more on the name Way of Great Peace, section 8 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* says:

太平道，其文約，其國富，天之命，身之寶。<sup>15</sup>

The content of the Way of Great Peace is sparse, yet a kingdom that has it will be abundant. It is the fate of Heaven and precious to the body.

Thus, everyone used the name “great peace.”<sup>16</sup> The meaning of the *Xiang'er Commentary* largely follows the theories of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, hence it repeatedly mentions the words “great peace.” However, the similarities between the *Scripture of Great Peace* and Celestial Masters Daoism, such as their prohibition of alcohol, obedience to the seasons, performing charity, repenting, and so forth, have all been discussed by recent scholars.<sup>17</sup> Today, the *Scripture of Great Peace* is also known by a variety of names, such as “Celestial Masters” and “Celestial Masters Daoism,”<sup>18</sup> which is enough to see the deep relationship between the *Scripture of Great Peace* and Celestial Masters Daoism.

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之譌 in volume 18 (1948) of the *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology*, Academia Sinica 史語所集刊.

15 Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 370.

16 See Fukui Kōjun 福井康順, *Dōkyō no kisoteki kenkyū* 道教の基礎的研究, 83, in *Fukui Kōjun chosakushū* 福井康順著作集, volume 1.

17 Fu Qinjia, *Zhongguo Daojiao shi*, 72–74.

18 For example, section 3 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* says:

天師書辭，常有上皇太平炁且至。

The books of the Celestial Masters often contain words pertaining to the arrival of the Celestial Sovereign's pneuma of great peace.

See Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 324. Section 6 of the *Excerpts from the Scripture of Great Peace* states:

請問天師之書，乃拘校天地開闢已來，前後賢聖河洛圖書神文，下及凡民之辭。

I would like to ask about the books of the Celestial Masters, whether they are based upon an examination of the world from its beginning, the pictorial writings and spiritual patterns of sages and worthies, or simply follow the words of the common people?

See Lüqiu Fangyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 344. Chapter 40 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* says:

願得天師道傳弟子，付歸有德之君能用者。今陰陽各得其所，天下諸承負之大病，莫不悉愈者也。

I wish to acquire the Dao of the Celestial Masters and transmit it to disciples, entrusting its return to virtuous rulers who may use it. When Yin and Yang acquire what they need, the people of the world will be burdened by great illness, and none will be curable.

See *Taiping jing hejiao*, 40.82. There are many more examples but I will not list them here.

The *Scripture of Great Peace* speaks of “guarding the One” 守一,<sup>19</sup> “equilibrium” 中和,<sup>20</sup> and “merging with the five elements” 合五行,<sup>21</sup> each of which was adopted by the *Xiang'er Commentary* as its own. Furthermore, its explanation of “The Dao of Heaven is certain to return” 天道好還,<sup>22</sup> is quite close to the meaning of “bearing a burden” (*cheng fu* 承負) in the *Scripture of Great Peace*.<sup>23</sup> Section 7 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* says:

惟上古得道之人……當昇之時，傳在中極，中極一名崑崙。<sup>24</sup>

Only those persons who obtained the Dao in high antiquity ... at the time of their ascension to Heaven, were summoned to the Middle Ultimate, also known as Mount Kunlun.

However, the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

一者道也……一散形為氣，聚形為太上老君，常治崑崙。<sup>25</sup>

The One is the Dao ... The One scatters its form as breath and then assembles its form as the Supreme Lord Lao ruling from Mount Kunlun.

These sayings also conform to the *Scripture of Great Peace*. The *Xiang'er Commentary* frequently mentions “Follow and practice the genuine Dao, working to remove the perverse and false arts” 按行真道，共卻邪偽，<sup>26</sup> and this type of expression is often seen in the *Scripture of Great Peace*.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, the explanation given by the *Xiang'er Commentary* to the sentence “There is safety and peace in abundance; joy and fine food cause the passing visitor to stop,” is unique compared to other commentaries, while the theory of Heavenly changes is similar to the viewpoint of the Yellow Emperor's *Classic of the Six Tallies of the August Stairway*. In his *Statutes of Celestial Officials*, Zhang Daoling determined the number of officers to be 1,200 which conforms to Gan Zhongke and his adopting the name “Calendar of Celestial Officials” (*Tianguan li* 天官曆) for the *Scripture of Great Peace*. All of these are clear signs of the deep relationship between Zhang Daoling's thought and the *Scripture*

19 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 18.16.

20 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 67.242.

21 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 56.221.

22 See Figure 20 line 22.

23 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 18.22.

24 Lüqiu Fanyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24:355. See also *Taiping jing hejiao*, 110.532.

25 See Figure 5 lines 9–10.

26 See Figure 11 lines 9–10.

27 Lüqiu Fanyuan, *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 346.

of *Great Peace*. There are still many other overlapping meanings which can be seen in my annotative notes above. Tang Xiyu writes:

《太平經》者，上接黃老圖讖之道術，下啟張角、張陵之鬼教。<sup>28</sup>

The first part of the *Scripture of Great Peace* follows the Daoist techniques of Huang-Lao and diagrammatic prophecies, whereas the second part is inspired by the “ghost teaching” of Zhang Jiao and Zhang Daoling.

This explanation is accurate.

When it comes to the origin of Daoist religion, its source lies in the remote past, however, in reality the *Scripture of Great Peace* forms the core of its theoretical system. Seeing Confucius and the books of Confucianism as deviant sayings, Daoist religion, not having any classical works of its own, borrowed Laozi's *5000-Character Classic*. Combining the *Daodejing* and *Scripture of Great Peace* into one, it established a new doctrinal reading, the painstaking efforts of which are clearly visible. Most of the *Xiang'er Commentary* uses the *Scripture of Great Peace* to explain the *Daodejing*, thus it is wholly different from those discussing Laozi since the time of Hanfeizi. Looking at it today, its meaning is far-fetched but the essence of Daoist religion's original thought and its relationship with the *Daodejing* is generally clear. Most scholars discussing the academic history of China have yet to fully explain this. Relying on the discovery of the *Xiang'er Commentary*, it is a pleasure to get a glimpse of its secrets. Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 in his *Daohan's Subtle Words* (*Daohan weiyan* 藟漢微言) says:

今之河上公《注》，劉子玄已徵其偽……竊意漢人述作，質厚有餘，眇義固非盡解。及張魯《想余》之注作，黃巾依以為名。<sup>29</sup>

The commentary of Heshang Gong that we have today has already been disproved by Liu Zixuan 劉子玄 ... My opinion is that Han Dynasty writings have a substance that is overly thick and a meaning that is solid but not exhaustive. As for Zhang Lu's *Xiang Yu* commentary, the Yellow Turbans named their uprising after it.

Thus, according to Lu Deming's *Textual Explanations of Classics and Canons*, those who take the *Xiang'er Commentary* as written by Zhang Lu did not, unfortunately, see this manuscript in order to clarify its relationship with the *Scripture of Great Peace*.

28 Tang Yongtong, *Han Wei liang Jin Nan Bei chao fojiao shi*, 104.

29 Zhang Taiyan, *Daohan weiyan*, in *Zhang Taiyan quanji*, 12:30.

## Supplement to the Lost Texts of the *Xiang'er Commentary*

When the *Xiang'er Commentary* was unearthed at Dunhuang, its opening chapter—"the Dao that can be spoken" (*Dao ke dao* 道可道)—was missing. Relying on scroll 13 of the *Expanded Collection of Magnifying and Clarifying Buddhism*, Shi Falin in the "Outer treatise" (*wailun* 外論) of his "Discerning the Correct" wrote:

尋漢安元年，歲在壬午，道士張陵分別《黃書》云：男女有和合之法，三五七九交接之道，其道真訣，在於丹田。丹田，玉門也，唯以禁祕為急，不許泄於道路。道路，溺孔也。呼為師友父母臭根之名。又云：女兒未嫁者，十四已上有決明之道。故注五千文云：道可道者，謂朝食美也；非常道者，謂暮成屎也。兩者同出而異名，謂人根出溺，溺出精也。玄之又玄者，謂鼻與口也。陵美此術，子孫三世相繼行之。<sup>1</sup>

In the first year of the Han'an reign period of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, in the year *renwu* 壬午, the Daoist priest Zhang Daoling devised the *Yellow Writ*, saying: "There is a method of equilibrium between men and women that uses the three, five, seven, and nine method of sexual practice. The true instruction of the method exists in the cinnabar field and the cinnabar field is the jade gate that only treats the forbidden with urgency, not allowing them to cross the path of the Dao. The path of the Dao is the aperture through which one urinates and is also the name of the foul root from which we call out to our masters, friends, and parents." The text also says: "Girls who are unmarried possess the Dao of bursting with brightness from the age of 14 and older." Thus, Zhang Daolin's commentary to Laozi's *5000-Character Classic* says: "On the Dao that can be spoken, it is called eating the beautiful in the morning; on the Dao that is not constant, it is called producing excrement at dusk. Both share the same source but differ in name, which is why we say the root of human beings is found in urine, and urine belongs to essence. The mysterious that is again mysterious is known as the nose and mouth." Zhang

1 Shi Falin, "Bianzheng lun," in *Guang Hongmingji*, 13.189.



Daoling's praise of this technique was practiced by three generations of descendants without interruption.

These words are perverse and ridiculous but they should come from the first chapter of the *Xiang'er Commentary* and can be used to supplement the text that is now lost.

## Examining Zhang Daoling's Writings

The “Treatise on Buddhism and Daoism” in the *History of the Wei Dynasty* states:

張陵受道於鵠鳴，其書多有禁祕，非其徒不得輒觀。至於化金銷玉，行符敕水，奇方妙術，萬等千條，上云羽化飛天，次稱消災滅禍，往往而尊事之。<sup>1</sup>

Zhang Daoling received the Dao on Mount Heming and his books were many and forbidden, hence only his disciples could see them. When it comes to melting gold and fusing jade, practicing talismans and manipulating water, his books have rare recipes and profound techniques that number in the thousands. The superior recipes could make people immortal and ascend to Heaven, while the lesser recipes could eliminate disasters and extinguish misfortune. They have always been revered.

Given his writings were kept secret, we cannot fully study them. Section 6 of the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* says:

陵自言太上老君親授四經於己。一曰《太清》，二曰《太平》，三曰《太玄》，四曰《正一》。<sup>2</sup>

Zhang Daoling says the Supreme Lord Lao personally transmitted to him four classics: The first is called *Great Purity* (*taiqing* 太清), the second is called *Great Peace* (*taiping* 太平), the third is called *Great Mystery* (*taixuan* 太玄), and the fourth is called *Orthodox Unity* (*zhengyi* 正一).

He only received these, so the books of Daoism emerged later, however, given they followed closely afterwards, this added to Zhang Daoling's brilliance and so their origin was attributed to him. What the historical record says about Zhang Daoling's writings, besides the *Xiang'er Commentary*, includes the following:

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<sup>1</sup> *Wei shu*, 114.3048–49.

<sup>2</sup> *Yunji qiqian*, 6.97.

[1]. *Book of the Dao* (*Dao shu* 道書)

The “Annals of Hanzhong” (Hanzhong zhi 漢中志) in the *Records of the Kingdoms South of Mount Hua* (*Hua yangguo zhi* 華陽國志) notes:

漢末沛國張陵學道於蜀鶴鳴山，作《道書》。<sup>3</sup>

At the end of the Han Dynasty, Zhang Daoling, from the kingdom of Pei, studied the Dao on Mount Heming and authored the *Book of the Dao*.

The character *he* 鶴 in Mount Heming is alternatively written *hu* 鵠. Chapter 23 of the Zhou Dynasty text *Supreme Secret Essentials* (*Wushang miyao* 無上祕要) cites the *Chart of Pneuma Parishes of Orthodox Unity* (*Zhengyi qizhi tu* 正一炁治圖), which states:

鶴鳴山上應氏宿，其山與青城天國山相連。<sup>4</sup>

What is above Mount Heming corresponds to the Root Mansion and this mountain connects to Mount Tianguo of Qingcheng.

Section 6 of the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* says:

其山去成都二百里，在蜀郡臨邛縣界。<sup>5</sup>

The mountain is 200 *li* from Chengdu in Linqiong county of Shu prefecture.

The *Extensive Records of the Taiping Reign* (*Taiping Guangji* 太平廣記) cites the *Biographies of Immortals*, which says:

張道陵本太學書生，博通五經……著《道書》二十四篇。<sup>6</sup>

Zhang Daoling was originally a scholar of the Imperial Academy, possessing a broad and comprehensive knowledge of the five classics ... and authored the *Book of the Dao* amounting to 24 chapters.

Chapter 69 of the *Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden* contains the entry “Mistakenly Transmitting Depraved Teachings” (Wang chuan xiejiao 妄傳邪教) which says:

3 *Huayang guo zhi jiaobu tuzhu*, 2.72.

4 *Wushang miyao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 25: 64.

5 *Yunji qiqian*, 28.636.

6 *Taiping Guangji*, 8.55–56.

後漢時張陵造《靈寶經》及章籙等道書二十四卷。<sup>7</sup>

During the Later Han Dynasty, Zhang Daoling crafted the *Scripture of Numinous Treasure* (*Lingbao jing* 靈寶經) and other texts on petition and sacrifice, as well as the *Book of the Dao*, which amounted to 24 scrolls.

At the time, “chapter” (*pian* 篇) was written “scroll” (*juan* 卷) but the difference between them is minimal.

Zhang Daoling's writings were also known as the *Book of Talismans* (*Fu shu* 符書). The *History of the Wei Dynasty* says “Zhang Daoling authored the *Book of the Dao*”<sup>8</sup> while the *History of the Later Han Dynasty* says Zhang Daoling “authored the *Book of Talismans*.”<sup>9</sup> Zhen Luan's *Laughing at the Dao* writes:

張魯祖父陵，桓帝時造《符書》。<sup>10</sup>

Zhang Lu's grandfather, Zhang Daoling, during the time of Emperor Huan of the Han Dynasty 漢桓帝, created the *Book of Talismans*.

In the “Bibliographic Record” of the *History of the Sui Dynasty*, the entry on Daoist scriptures says:

錄皆素書，紀諸天曹宮屬佐吏之名。又有諸符，錯在其間，文章詭怪，世所不識。<sup>11</sup>

This record contains simple books providing an account of the various names of the Officials of Heaven and their palace assistants. These books contain many talismans scattered within them, making for strange writings that are unrecognizable to the world.

Thus, later generations regarded Zhang Daoling as symbolizing the School of Talismans in Daoist religion.

[2]. *The Numinous Treasure* (*Lingbao* 靈寶)

In chapter 10, “Mingdian Zhenwei” 明典真偽, of Dao'an's *Treatise on the Two Teachings*, we read:

7 *Fayuan zhulin jiaozhu*, 55:1659.

8 *Sanguo zhi*, 8:263.

9 *Hou Han shu*, 75:2435.

10 *Guang Hongming ji*, 9:157.

11 *Sui shu*, 35:1092.

《靈寶》創自張陵，吳赤烏之年始出。<sup>12</sup>

The *Numinous Treasure* was composed by Zhang Daoling and appeared in the early years of Chiwu's 赤烏 [Sun Quan 孫權] reign of the state of Wu 吳.

*Laughing at the Dao* says the same thing. According to the *Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden*, the *Numinous Treasure* was one of the key books of Daoism.

[3]. *Statutes of Celestial Officials* (*Tianguan zhangben* 天官章本)

The “Treatise on Buddhism and Daoism” in the *History of the Wei Dynasty* states:

及張陵受道於鵠鳴，因傳《天官章本》千有二百，弟子相授，其事大行。齋祀跪拜，各成法道，有三元九府、百二十官，一切諸神，咸所統攝。<sup>13</sup>

When Zhang Daoling received the Dao on Mount Heming he transmitted the *Statutes of Celestial Officials*, of which there were 1,200, and his disciples transmitted it to one another resulting in its wide circulation. As for kneeling and bowing during fasting and sacrifices, each were modelled after the Dao. Consequently, the Three Primes, Nine Bureaus, 120 Officers, and various spirits, were collectively commanded.

The *Disquisition on the Elimination of Doubts* (*Miehuo lun* 滅惑論) by Liu Xie 劉勰 says:

陵魯醮事章符，設教五斗，欲拯三界。<sup>14</sup>

Zhang Daoling and Zhang Lu created the methods of fasting and praying, making petitions and talismans, and established the teaching of the Five Pecks of Rice to aid the Three Realms.

The “Great Peace” section of the *Daoist Canon*, volume 781, contains the *Purse of Pearls from the Three Caverns* by Wang Xuanhe of the Tang Dynasty, which writes:

<sup>12</sup> *Guang Hongming ji*, 8.147.

<sup>13</sup> *Wei shu*, 114.3048.

<sup>14</sup> *Hongming ji*, 8.52.

天師一千二百《官章》.<sup>15</sup>

The Celestial Masters list 1,200 Officials in the *Statutes of Celestial Officials*.

Furthermore, in volume 193 of the Mystery Cavern section (*Dongxuan bu* 洞玄部) of the *Daoist Canon*, there is Tao Hongjing's *Secret Instructions for the Ascent to Perfection*, the second half of which contains the entry "Petition and Talisman" (*zhangfu* 章符). It says:

今所應上章，當依千二百官儀。<sup>16</sup>

Today, all petitions should conform to the rites of the 1,200 Officials.

Lü Yuansu 呂元素 of the Song Dynasty, in his *Prescribed Paradigms for the Daoist Community* (*Daomen dingzhi* 道門定制), states:

按太上千二百《官章》，並正一真人（即道陵）所授南岳魏夫人治病制鬼之法。<sup>17</sup>

According to the Supreme Lord Lao there are 1,200 Officials in the *Statutes of the Officers of Heaven*. The Perfected Person of Orthodox Unity (Zhang Daoling) received the methods of Lady Wei 魏夫人 of Mount Nanyue 南岳山 to cure disease and control ghosts.

According to this, so-called "Petition and Offering" (*zhangzhan* 章醮), as the *Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden* says, belongs to the books of Daoism.<sup>18</sup>

[4]. *Yellow Writ* (*Huang shu* 黃書)

Following the entry "Containing Breath and Releasing Offenses" (*Hanqi shizui* 含氣釋罪) in Dao'an's *Treatise on the Two Teachings*, his commentary says:

陵妄造《黃書》，咒癩無端，乃開命門，抱真人嬰兒，迴龍虎戲。備如《黃書》所說，三五七九，天羅地網，士女溷漫。<sup>19</sup>

Zhang Daoling forged the *Yellow Writ* during a prolonged incantatory delirium and after opening the gate of life, embraced the infant Perfect Person who whirled him around as if a dragon playing with a tiger. It is as

15 *Sandong zhunang*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 25: 341.

16 *Dengzhen yinjue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 621.

17 *Daomen dingzhi*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 31: 665.

18 See Fukui Kōjun 福井康順, "Tenkan fumi hon sen yū nihyaku kō" 天官章本千有二百考, *Dōkyō no kisoteki kenkyū* 道教の基礎的研究, 44–58, in *Fukui Kōjun chosakushū* 福井康順著作集, volume 1.

19 *Guang Hongming ji*, 8.146.

the *Yellow Writ* says: “The three, five, seven, and nine method is the celestial and Earthly net that ensnares men and women when they comingle.”

Zhen Luan’s *Laughing at the Dao* cites the “*Daoshi he qi* 道士合氣” which refers to the *Yellow Writ*’s theory of combining breath.<sup>20</sup> What is more, Shi Falin’s “Discerning the Correct” says:

尋漢安元年，歲在壬午，道士張陵分別《黃書》云：男女有和合之法。<sup>21</sup>

In the first year of the Han’an reign period of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, in the year *renwu*, the Daoist priest Zhang Daoling devised the *Yellow Writ*, saying: “There is a method of equilibrium between men and women ...”

The “Treatise on Buddhism and Daoism” in the *History of the Wei Dynasty* records Kou Qianzhi purifying and correcting Daoist religion by discarding the false methods of the three Zhang’s, the taxes on rice used to rent land, and the techniques of combining the breath of men and women. Tao Hongjing’s *Declarations of the Perfected* provides more detailed records compared to the *Yellow Writ*.

The “Zhen Ming Shou” chapter of the *Declarations of the Perfected* states: “Lord Pei says the Dao of the *Yellow Writ* and *Yellow Writ with Red Borders* are the essentials of longevity” 道有《黃書赤界》，長生之要。<sup>22</sup> Elsewhere it says: “While there are many editions of the *Yellow Writ* in the world, it nevertheless deals with matters of the Dao’s secrecy” 《黃書》世多有者，然亦是祕道之事矣。<sup>23</sup> The commentary to this line then says: “The Celestial Masters named it and distributed its teachings ... This is the so-called *Scripture of the Yellow Writ with Red Borders and Three Pneumas* (*Huangshu chijie sanyi jing*) 天師取其名而布其化……此所云《黃書赤界三一經》。<sup>24</sup> In addition, the “Yun Xiang” chapter of the *Declarations of the Perfected* says: “The book transmitted by the Perfect Person of Pure Emptiness (*qingxu zhenren* 清虛真人) writes: ‘The Way of Yellow and Red is the method of intermixing breath and was received and taught by Zhang Daoling. It is one of the techniques of Master Zhong 種子 but

20 *Guang Hongming ji*, 9.157.

21 *Guang Hongming ji*, 13.189.

22 *Zhengao*, 5.79.

23 *Zhengao*, 5.80.

24 *Zhengao*, 5.80.

has no connection to the perfected person ... Observing its colors, it was called Yellow and Red, while those following the Supreme Dao called it a secret book” 清虛真人授書曰：黃赤之道，混氣之法，是張陵受教施化，為種子之一術耳，非真人之事也……色觀謂之黃赤，上道謂之隱書。<sup>25</sup> Elsewhere it writes: “The book transmitted by the Lady of Purple Tenuity says: ‘As for the *Yellow Writ* and *Yellow Writ with Red Borders*, although they are the mysterious essentials of longevity, they are in fact inferior techniques of living” 紫微夫人授書曰：夫《黃書》《赤界》，雖長生之祕要，實得生之下術也。<sup>26</sup> Concerning the *Yellow Writ*, there are many veiled criticisms of it.

### *Harboring Doubts about Ten Texts:*

[1]. *Instructions on the Spiritual Breath of Zhongshan's Jade Cabinet*, in 1 scroll (*Zhongshan yugui shenqi jue* 中山玉櫃神氣訣).

In the “Bibliography of Written Literature” (Yiwen lue 藝文略) in his *Comprehensive Treatises* (*Tongzhi* 通志), Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 has a record of this purported text by Zhang Daoling.<sup>27</sup> Of all the Daoist books listed in the “Xialan” chapter of *The Master Who Embraces Simplicity*, there is the *Celestial Master Scripture of the Spiritual Vessel* (*Shenqi jing* 神器經),<sup>28</sup> in 1 scroll, but I do not know what, if any, relationship it has with this scripture. The original title uses “vessel” (*qi* 器) but an alternative version replaces it with “breath” (*qi* 氣). Only part 3 of the “Gengshen” 庚申 chapter of the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* cites the *Zhongshan yugui jing fuqi xiao sanchong jue* 中山玉櫃經服氣消三蟲訣, which discusses how eating grains causes the three worms (*sanchong* 三蟲) to gather.<sup>29</sup> The three worms are the three corpses in the stomach that attack people's three fates. Chapter 92 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* contains the *Dongji shang pingqi wu chong chongfu zi jue* 洞極上平氣無蟲重複字訣, which also gives details of this theory yet appears to be derived from the *Scripture of Great Peace Pervading the Ultimate*.<sup>30</sup>

[2]. *Instructions on Hugangzi's use of Cinnabar* (*Hugangzi dan jue* 狐剛子丹訣), in 1 scroll.

25 Zhengao, 2.20.

26 Zhengao, 2.20.

27 *Tongzhi ershilüe*, 1626.

28 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 19.334.

29 *Yunji qiqian*, 83.1875.

30 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 92.378.



[3]. *Scripture on Divine Medicine for Immortals to attain the Dao* (*Shenxian de Dao lingyao jing* 神仙得道靈藥經), in 1 scroll.

[4]. *Record of Divine Marvels on Mount E'Mei* (*E'meishan shenyi ji* 峨嵋山神異記), in 3 scrolls.

The above works are found in the “Bibliography of Written Literature” in the *Comprehensive Treatises* but I suspect they were falsely attributed to Zhang Daoling.<sup>31</sup>

[5]. *The Mysterious and Numinous Northern Dipper's Perfect Scripture on Prolonging the Original Life* (*Taishang xuanling beidou benming yansheng zhen jing* 太上玄靈北斗本命延生真經).

Bai Yunji's 白雲齋 *Catalogue of the Spirit Cavern section of the Daoist Canon* (*Daozang mulu songshen bu* 道藏目錄洞神部) states:

桓帝永壽元年正月七日，太上降蜀臨邛，授天師張道陵《北斗延生經》一卷。上則有飛神金闕，中則有保國寧家，次則有延齡益壽，祈禱災福，養生之訣。<sup>32</sup>

During the reign of Emperor Huan of the Han Dynasty, on the 7th day of the first month of his Yongshou reign period, the Supreme Lord Lao descended in Linqiong county of Shu prefecture to transmit to the Celestial Master Zhang Daoling the *Northern Dipper's Scripture on Prolonging Life* (*Beidou yansheng jing* 北斗延生經), in 1 scroll. The first part is about the flying spirits of the gold portal, the second part is about protecting the kingdom and bringing peace to families, the third part is about prolonging people's years to increase their longevity and praying for blessings, and making offerings to ward off disasters. These are the instructions for nourishing life.

Today, the book is found in the Jade Instructions class of the Spirit Cavern of the *Daoist Canon*, with collected commentaries by Xuan Yuanzi 玄陽子 and Xu Daoling 徐道齡. Within it, Buddhist notions such as “samsara” (*lunhui* 輪迴) and “all living things” (*zhongsheng* 眾生) are frequently seen.

31 *Tongzhi ershilüe*, 1634, 1636, 1637.

32 See *Qinding gujin tushu jicheng* 欽定古今圖書集成, Bowu huibian 博物彙編, Shenyi dian 神異典, volume 275, Daoshu bu huikao 道書部彙考, 5.24a.

[6]. *Profound Scripture of the Eastern Dipper's Governing, Counting and Guarding Names* (*Taishang shuo dongdou zhu suan hu ming miao jing* 太上說東斗主算護名妙經).

Bai Yunqi's *Catalogue of the Spirit Cavern Section of the Daoist Canon* states:

太上老君為天師說.<sup>33</sup>

The Supreme Lord Lao conveyed this scripture to the Celestial Master.

[7]. *Profound Scripture of the Western Dipper's Register of Names and their Protection* (*Taishang shuo xidou jiming hu miao jing* 太上說中斗大魁保命妙經).

Bai Yunqi's *Catalogue of the Spirit Cavern Section of the Daoist Canon* states:

永壽二年正月二日，太上降蜀為天師說。<sup>34</sup>

On the second day of the first month of the 2nd year of the Yongshou reign period of Emperor Huan, the Supreme Lord Lao descended to Shu and conveyed this scripture to the Celestial Master.

[8]. *Profound Scripture on the Middle Dipper's Kui Star Protecting Destiny* (*Taishang shuo zhongdou dakui baoming miao jing* 太上說中斗大魁保命妙經).

Bai Yunqi's *Catalogue of the Spirit Cavern Section of the Daoist Canon* states:

太上於永壽中興年與正一真人敷說。<sup>35</sup>

During the Zhongxing year of the Yongshou reign period of Emperor Huan, the Supreme Lord Lao conveyed this scripture to the Perfected Person of Orthodox Unity.

The aforementioned works are found in the *Daoist Canon* and were created to benefit later generations. Zhang Xincheng's 張心澂 *Comprehensive Investigation of Forged Books* (*Weishu tongkao* 偽書通考) says:

33 See *Qinding gujin tushu jicheng*, Bowu huibian, Shenyi dian, volume 275, Daoshu bu hui-kao, 5.24b.

34 See *Qinding gujin tushu jicheng*, Bowu huibian, Shenyi dian, volume 275, Daoshu bu hui-kao, 5.24b.

35 See *Qinding gujin tushu jicheng*, Bowu huibian, Shenyi dian, volume 275, Daoshu bu hui-kao, 5.25a.

道陵自著《道書》，偽託老子等降授。《神仙傳》已明言之。時無所謂北斗延生之說，則又晉以後道家偽託。<sup>36</sup>

Zhang Daoling himself composed the *Book of the Dao* but falsely claimed he waited for Laozi to descend and transmit it to him. The *Biographies of Immortals* has already expounded this. At that time, the so-called theory of the Northern Dipper prolonging life did not exist, thus it was falsely attributed to Zhang Daoling by Daoists in the Jin Dynasty and later.

However, the “Dengshe” chapter of the *Master Who Embraces Simplicity* states:

以甲寅日，丹書白素，夜置案中，向北斗祭之……辟山川百鬼萬精。<sup>37</sup>  
[Write an amulet] on a *Jiayin* day and use vermilion ink on plain silk. Place it on a table at night, face the Northern Dipper before making an offering ... and this will ward-off hundreds of ghosts and ten-thousand spirits.

The matter of making offerings to the Northern Dipper probably existed prior to the Jin Dynasty. The “Biography of Cui Hao 崔浩” in the *History of the Wei Dynasty* says:

浩剪爪截髮，夜在庭中，仰禱斗極，為父請命 以延父命。<sup>38</sup>

Cui Hao was cutting his nails and hair one night in his courtyard when he looked upwards and prayed to the Northern Dipper to spare his father's life.

This is the Northern Dipper's technique of prolonging life. I suspect Cui Hao received it from Kou Qianzhi who had it transmitted to him from Celestial Masters Daoism. In the *Daoist Canon*, there is the *Profound Scripture of the Southern Dipper's Six Offices for Prolonging Life and Salvation* (*Taishang shuo nandou liusi yanshou duren miao jing* 太上說南斗六司延壽度人妙經), which the *Catalogue of the Spirit Cavern Section of the Daoist Canon* refers to as a work from the 1st year of the Yongshou reign period of Emperor Huan when Lord Lao taught it to the following disciples of Zhang Daoling: the Perfected Person of the Left Mystery (*zuoxuan zhenren* 左玄真人), Wang Chang 王長, and Zhao

36 *Weishu tongkao*, 1043–44.

37 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 17.308.

38 *Wei shu*, 35.812.

Sheng 趙昇, also known as the Perfected Person of the Right Mystery (*youxuan zhenren* 右玄真人).<sup>39</sup> This is also not credible.

Only Chao Gongwu's 晁公武 *Record of Books Read in My Studio* (*Junzhai dushu zhi* 郡齋讀書志) claims:

《度人經》，唐《志》有其目，古書也。<sup>40</sup>

The *Scripture of Salvation* (*Durenjing* 度人經) appears in the "Bibliography of Arts and Letters" in the *History of the Tang Dynasty* (*Tang shu* 唐書) and is an ancient book.

Jia Shanxiang's "Biography of Youlong" also cites this scripture.<sup>41</sup> As for the *Scripture of the Northern Dipper* (*Beidou jing* 北斗經) and *Scripture of the Southern Dipper* (*Nandou jing* 南斗經), which date to the Zhao and Song dynasties respectively, both were already lost by the Yuan Dynasty. Furthermore, in the Solemn Rites class (*Weiyi lei* 威儀類) of the Perfection Cavern section of the *Daoist Canon*, there is the *Beidou benming yanshou dengyi* 北斗本命延壽燈儀 and *Nandou yanshou dengyi* 南斗延壽燈儀. Esoteric Buddhism also has the *Beidou qixing yanming jing* 北斗七星延命經, which is a Brahmin translation from the Tang Dynasty. Chen Yinke 陳寅恪 says the Daoist technique of making offerings to ward off disasters and pray for blessings originally came from India<sup>42</sup> but his theory is questionable. Given the *Master Who Embraces Simplicity* already discussed this, its origin and namesake were widely known.

[9]. *Scripture of the Orthodox Laws of the Three Heavens* (*Taishang santian zhengfa jing* 太上三天正法經).

The "Dao Shan Ce" 道山冊 chapter of the "*Shangqing santian zhengfa jing*" 上清三天正法經 and "*Santian zhengfa lu*" 三天正法錄 are today found in the Orthodox Unity section of the *Daoist Canon*. The *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* states:

張道陵精思西山，太上親降，漢安元年五月一日授以「三天正法」命為天師。又授正一科術要道法文。其年七月七日又授《正一盟威妙經》三業六通之訣，重為三天法師正一真人。<sup>43</sup>

39 *Taishang shuo nandou liusi yanshou duren miao jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 11: 350.

40 *Junzhai dushuzhi*, 16.737.

41 *Youlong zhuan*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18:24.

42 Chen Yinke, "Tianshi dao yu Binhai diyu zhi guanxi," 449.

43 *Yunji qiqian*, 6.104.

When Zhang Daoling was engaged in refined thought on Mount Xi, the Supreme Lord Lao descended on the first day of the fifth month of the first year of the Han'an reign period of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, and transmitted to him the "Orthodox Laws of the Three Heavens," thereby making him the Celestial Master. He was also bestowed the rules and techniques of Orthodox Unity, and the essential texts on the methods of the Dao. In the same year, on the seventh day of the seventh month, Zhang Daoling was taught the instructions of the "Three Obstacles and Six Penetrations" from the *Zhengyi mengwei miao jing* and was re-appointed Master of the Three Heavens and Perfected Person of Orthodox Unity.

The *Extensive Records of the Taiping Reign* cites the *Biographies of Immortals* as saying:

授陵以新出正一明威之道，陵受之，能治病。<sup>44</sup>

Teaching Zhang Daoling the new emerged Dao of the Covenant of Orthodox Unity, and having received it, Zhang Daoling was able to cure diseases.

The Orthodox Unity section of the *Daoist Canon* mentions the titles of other works such as: *Taishang zhengyi zhongui jing* 太上正一咒鬼經, *Taishang zhengyi fawen jing* 太上正一法文經, *Taishang sanwu zhengyi mengwei lu* 太上三五正一盟威錄, *Taishang zhengyi yansheng baoming lu* 太上正一延生保命錄, and so forth. These are the scriptures and registers transmitted by Zhang Daoling and his school.

[10]. *Scripture of All-Pervading Great Peace* (*Taiping Dongji jing* 太平洞極經).

Section 6 of chapter 14 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* says:

名為皇天洞極，政事之文也，然後天地病一悉除去也。<sup>45</sup>

Its name is "Pervading the Ultimate of Sovereign Heaven," a text about matters of governance which results in the elimination of all diseases in the world.

<sup>44</sup> *Taiping Guangji*, 8.56.

<sup>45</sup> *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 345.

Section 7 of the *Pivotal Meaning of Daoist Teachings* (*Daojiao yishu* 道教義樞) states: “The *Scripture of Orthodox Unity* (*Zhengyi jing* 正一經) says:

按《正一經》云：「有《太平洞極之經》一百四十四卷。此經並盛明治道，證果修因，禁忌眾術也」其《洞極經》者，按《正一經》，漢安（順帝年號）元年，太上親受天師，流傳茲日。<sup>46</sup>

There is the *Scripture of All-Pervading Great Peace*, in 144 scrolls. This scripture fully elucidates the art of governance, testifying to its results while tending to its causes and many taboo techniques.” Regarding the *Scripture of All-Pervading Great Peace*, according to the *Scripture of Orthodox Unity*, in the 1st year of the Han’an reign period of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, the Supreme Lord Lao personally bestowed it to the Celestial Master and it has been in circulation ever since.

In sections 6 and 7 of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged*, and chapters 41, 88, 91, and 92 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, we find explanations of the *Scripture of All-Pervading Great Peace*. The meaning of this scripture is largely found in the *Scripture of Great Peace*.

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46 *Daojiao yishu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 814.

## The Nine Precepts and Three Harmonies of the *Xiang'er Commentary*, with Additional Discussion on the Newly Published Critical Edition of the *Scripture of Great Peace*

In the spring of 1956, I wrote my *Annotated Critical Edition of the Dunhuang Edition of the Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi* and its publication has been well received by the academic community. For example, I have had fruitful discussions with Yang Lien-sheng 楊聯陞, Chen Shih-hsiang 陳世驥, Yan Lingfeng 嚴靈峰, Yoshioka Yoshitoyo 吉岡義豊, and Ōfuchi Ninji 大淵忍爾. The *Xiang'er* text emerged in the Eastern Han Dynasty, of this there is no doubt.<sup>1</sup> Recently, I have read a great number of books on Daoism and have occasionally created commentaries to them, some of which have been incorporated into the present work in order to supplement its shortcomings. As I will draw upon the fragmentary Dunhuang text *Catalogue of the Scripture of Great Peace (Taiping jing mulu 太平經目錄)*, which is number 4226 in the Stein Catalogue, I will also briefly comment on the new book by Wang Ming 王明 entitled *Critical Edition of the Scripture of Great Peace (Taiping jing hexiao 太平經合校)*. I have noticed that Yoshioka Yoshitoyo has already published a paper on Wang's work,<sup>2</sup> thus I will keep my remarks brief and only offer the following examples:

[1]. The nine precepts (*jiu jie 九戒*) of the *Xiang'er Commentary*.

The second volume (chapter 20) of Meng Anpai's 孟安排 *Pivotal Meaning of Daoist Teachings* states:

戒律者，戒止也，法善也；止者，止惡心口，為誓不作惡也。戒之為義，又有詳略焉。詳者，太清道本無量法門百二十九條……是也。略者，道民

1 Ōfuchi Ninji 大淵忍爾, *Tonkō Dōkyō: Mokuroku hen 敦煌道經目錄編*, 54. Ōfuchi Ninji, "Rōshi Dōtoku kyō jo ketsu no seiritsu (ue)" 老子道德經序訣の成立 (上), *Tōyō gakuō 東洋學報*, 42.1 (1959): 1–40. Ōfuchi Ninji, "Rōshi Dōtoku kyō jo ketsu no seiritsu (shita)" 老子道德經序訣の成立 (下), *Tōyō gakuō*, 42.2 (1959): 52–85.

2 Yoshioka Yoshitoyo 吉岡義豊, "Tonkō hon Taihei kyō ni tsuite" 敦煌本太平經について, *Tōyō Bunka Kenkyūsho kiyō 東洋文化研究所紀要* 22 (1961): 1–103.

三戒，錄生五戒，祭酒八戒，想爾九戒，智慧上品十戒，明真二十四戒之例是也。<sup>3</sup>

Precepts and regulations are warnings to stop, hence they are models of the good. Stopping is to stop evilness in the heart-mind and mouth while promising not to do evil. Precepts explain the meanings [of regulations] and are either detailed or terse. When it comes to detailed explanations, there are 129 articles of the dharma gate of the immeasurable Daoist root of great clarity ... When it comes to terse explanations, there are examples of the Daoist citizen having three precepts, register-disciples having five precepts, libationers having eight precepts, the *Xiang'er* having nine precepts, the superior category of wisdom having ten precepts, and the luminous perfection having twenty-four precepts.

Among the precepts of Daoist teaching raised by Meng Anpai, the “register-disciples having five precepts” is also found in the *Sandong fengdong kejie ying-shi* 三洞奉洞科戒營始. The “superior category of wisdom having ten precepts” and the “luminous perfection having twenty-four precepts” are both found in the Tenets and Regulations class (*Jielü lei* 誡律類) of the Perfection Cavern section of the *Daoist Canon*. As for the *Nine Precepts of Xiang'er*, the original text is found in the *Taishang Laojun jing lü* 太上老君經律 and preceded by the *Daode zun jing Xiang'er jie* 道德尊經想爾戒. The text states:

行無為，行柔弱，行守雌，勿先動 (原注：此上最三行).

Act without action, act with yielding and weakness, act by guarding the female, and avoid moving first [The original commentary says: “These are the three highest kinds of action”].

行無名，行清靜，行諸善 (原注：此中最三行).

Act without naming, act with clarity and quietude, and act according to the good [The original commentary says: “These are the three middle kinds of action”].

行無欲，行知止足，行推讓 (原注：此下最三行).<sup>4</sup>

Act without desire, act by knowing when to stop, and act with humility [The original commentary says: “These are the three lowest kinds of action”].

<sup>3</sup> *Daojiao yishu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 818.

<sup>4</sup> *Taishang Laojun jing lü*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 218.



Afterwards there is a note which says:

此九行，二篇八十一章。集會為道舍，尊卑同科。備上行者神仙，六行者倍壽，三行者增年不橫夭。<sup>5</sup>

These nine actions comprise two chapters with 81 sections. They were collected and held in a Daoist dwelling where the revered and lowly have the same protocols. Those who engage in the highest kinds of action will achieve immortality, those who engage in the six actions will double their longevity, while those who engage in the lowest three kinds of action will increase their years and not die early.

These nine actions are in fact what Meng Anpai calls the *Nine Precepts of Xiang'er*. The *Regulations of the Scripture of Supreme Lord Lao* states: “The *Precepts of the Revered Classic of Dao and De* contains nine actions and twenty-seven precepts” 《道德尊經戒》九行二十七戒。<sup>6</sup> Following this are two sub-headings: one is *Revered Classic of Dao and De: Precepts of Xiang'er*, the other is *Precepts of the Revered Classic of Dao and De*. The former refers to the nine actions while the latter refers to the twenty-seven precepts. The text says: “There are two chapters with 81 sections.” This is referring to the two parts of the *Daodejing*. The same work mentions the *Scriptural Precepts of the Supreme (Taishang jingjie 太上經戒)*, at the end of which is the *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Lord Lao (Laojun ershiqi jie 老君二十七戒)* and includes the nine actions and twenty-seven precepts. These are identical to those mentioned earlier. There are only minor variances in the Chinese characters used for the nine actions, such as: *qingjing* 清靜 in the three middle kinds of actions is written *qingjing* 清淨, while *xing wuyu* 行無欲 in the three lowest kinds of action is written *xing zhongxiao* 行忠孝, and *xing zhi zhi zu* 行知止足 is written *xing zhi zu* 行知足 without the word *zhi* 止. Additionally, the text employs the twenty-seven precepts to command the nine actions but this appears to be a later amendment of the text. Chen Shih-hsiang says: “These nine actions and twenty-seven precepts coincide with those of the *Xiang'er* and, furthermore, the words used for these actions and precepts are simple. When compared to the original manuscript, it is obvious. Thus, the “actions and precepts” are the same as what is found in the *Xiang'er Commentary*.”<sup>7</sup> This means the *Xiang'er Commentary* is the source of the precepts.

5 *Taishang Laojun jing li*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 218.

6 *Taishang Laojun jing li*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 218.

7 Chen Shih-hsiang, “*Xiang'er Laozi Daojing Dunhuang canjuan lunzheng*,” 50.

Although the *Xiang'er Commentary* speaks of “upholding the tenets of the Dao” and “guarding the tenets of the Dao” in more than twenty chapters, we know the tenets themselves are a completely different matter. When it comes to the *Teachings of Xiang'er* and *Precepts of Xiang'er*, their doctrines are derived from the *Daodejing*, thus the commentary to the scripture reads: “The first part of the *Daodejing* is the *Teachings of Xiang'er*.” Regarding the precepts, it says: “They are the *Precepts of Xiang'er on the Revered Classic of Dao and De*.” Borrowing the concept of Tripitaka (*sanzang* 三藏) from Buddhism, the *Daodejing* is the sutra, the *Teachings of Xiang'er* are the Abhidharma, and the *Precepts of Xiang'er* are the Vinaya. According to the records of the *Pivotal Meaning of Daoist Teachings*, the theme of the *Tenets of Xiang'er* (*Xiang'er jie* 想爾誡) conforms to the nine actions, which should be the *Nine Precepts of Xiang'er* (*Xiang'er jiu jie* 想爾九戒). Thus, I suspect the *Precepts of Xiang'er* began with only nine precepts and did not necessarily include the twenty-seven precepts. The *Nine Precepts of Xiang'er* is a work from the early phase of Celestial Masters Daoism and was based on the essential meaning of the *Daodejing*; the text shows no traces of Buddhist precepts or regulations. It is quite different from the “superior category of wisdom having ten precepts” which speaks of Chakravarti (*zhuanlun shengwang* 轉輪聖王, the wheel-turning king) and the “precepts of the twenty-four gates” (*ershisi men jie* 二十四門戒) which elaborates on the underworld.

[2]. Interpreting the *Xiang'er Commentary*.

“Xiang'er” is the name of a text and not that of a person. Yang Lien-sheng 楊蓮生 has already discussed this. The *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing* 正一法文天師教戒科經 states:

道使末嗣，分氣治民漢中四十餘年。道禁真正之無神仙之說。道所施行，何以《想爾》（空四字）《妙真》、《三靈七言》，復不真正，而故謂道欺人，哀哉可傷!<sup>8</sup>

The last heir of the Dao divided its breath and ruled the people of Hanzhong for more than forty years. The prohibitions of the Dao, the nature of the true and correct, and the expressions of the immortals—these were all implemented by the Dao. How can one say the *Xiang'er* [...] *Profound Perfection*, and *Seven-Character Verses of the Three Souls* are not true and correct, and so proclaim the Dao deceives people? How pitiful!

8 *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 236.

The *Profound Perfection* (*miaozhen* 妙真) refers to the *Scripture of Profound Perfection* (*Miaozhen jing* 妙真經).<sup>9</sup> The *Seven-Character Verses of the Three Souls* (*Sanling qiyan* 三靈七言) refers to the *Scripture of the Yellow Court* (*Huangtingjing* 黃庭經). In part two of the section on the character “li 力” in the Spirit Cavern section of volume 563 of the *Daoist Canon*, the *Zhengyi fawen Tianshijiao jie ke jing* states:

《妙真》自吾所作，《黃庭三靈》七言皆訓喻。本經為道德之光華。道不欲指形而名之，賢者見一知萬，譬如識音者，道在一身之中，豈在他人乎？<sup>10</sup>

I composed the *Scripture of Profound Perfection* and the *Seven-Character Verses of the Three Souls* as its exegesis and explanation. The original scripture acts as the splendor of the Dao and its virtue. The Dao does not desire to name things to indicate their form, the worthy person sees one thing and knows the myriad, just like the person who recognizes sound. The Dao exists in his body alone; how can it exist in others?

The *Xiang'er*, together with the *Scripture of Profound Perfection* and *Three Souls*, were discussed in tandem, hence we know it is the name of a text. The *Three Souls* are known as seven-character verses, and examining its poetic structure, we can say it originated in the Eastern Han. Fu Xuan's 傅玄 “Preface to Imitating Four Sorrows” (*Ni sichou shi xu* 擬四愁詩序) reads: “In the past, Zhang Heng 張衡 wrote the poem “Four Sorrows.” Its structure is short and vulgar and it belongs to the class of seven-character poems” 張平子作《四愁詩》，體小而俗，七言類也。<sup>11</sup> Its influence was broad, thus at the time Daoist practitioners also wrote seven-character poems to explain their doctrines. Examples of seven-character verse poetry include:

- [1]. A stone inscription found in a cave in Gong county 鞏縣 of Henan province. It writes: “An essay on the *Songs* says seven-character verse poems contain few errors. I have committed much of the land yield tax to engraving this stone” 詩說七言甚無忘（妄），多負官錢石上作。<sup>12</sup> According to the script's font and mention of officials' titles, such as Scribe (*yuanshi* 掾史) and Director of the Royal Archives (*Lantai lingshi* 蘭臺令史), this text should be from the Eastern Han Dynasty.

9 Yang Lien-sheng, “Laojun yin song jie jing jiaoshi,” 31.

10 *Zhengyi fawen Tianshijiao jie ke jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 237.

11 *Quan Jin wen*, 46.9a, in *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 1724.

12 Fu Yongkui, “Henan Gongxian shiku de xin faxian.” *Kaogu* 1 (1977): 278.

- [2]. There are seven-character verse poems in the *Scripture of Great Peace*, such as the “*Shi cewen*” 師策文 which says: “My words amount to eleven and will stop [if their meaning] is clear. *Bing* 丙, *Wu* 午, *Ding* 丁, and *Si* 巳 act as their progenitors” 吾字十一明為止，丙午丁巳為祖始。<sup>13</sup>

The second part of the Dunhuang edition of Laozi's *Classic of Dao* speaks of “Xiang'er” or the “Xiang'er Commentary.” Part three of manuscript number 2337 in the Pelliot Catalogue, the *Sandong fengdao kejie yifan faci yi pin* 三洞奉道科誠儀範法次儀品 states:

《老子道德經》二弓，《河上真人注上下引》二弓，《想爾注》二弓，《五千文朝儀》一弓，《雜說》一弓，《關令內傳》一弓，《誠文》一弓。右受稱高玄弟子。<sup>14</sup>

The *Laozi Daodejing* is two chapters, Heshang Gong's commentary is two chapters, the *Xiang'er Commentary* is two chapters, the *Morning Rites of the 5000-Character Classic* (*Wuqianwen chaoyi* 五千文朝儀) is one chapter, the *Miscellaneous Sayings* (*Zashuo* 雜說) is one chapter, the *Essential Biography of the Guardian of the Pass* (*Guanling neizhuan* 關令內傳) is one chapter, and the *Book of Tenets* (*Jiwen* 誠文) is one chapter. The person who receives these is a disciple of the lofty mystery.

This can be cross-referenced with the order of recorded scriptures in the *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts* contained in the section on the character “*ying* 楹” in volume 989 of the *Daoist Canon*.

The meaning of the two characters “*xiang er*” is incomprehensible. The *Scriptural Precepts of the Supreme*, which is found in volume 562 of the *Daoist Canon*, argues the precept against sex is the most difficult:

一人曰：餘戒悉易，淫戒最難斷。所以爾者，我曾履斯事……雖苦加抑迮，不覺已爾，每每如此，是知最難。化人曰：色者是想爾，想悉是空，何有色耶？但先自觀身，知身無寄，便知無色，何可不忍。<sup>15</sup>

Someone said: ‘Other precepts are easy to learn but the precept against sex is the most difficult to sever. For you, I have already carried out this matter ... although the bitterness grew, I repressed it until I lost all self-feeling. Each time it occurred I knew the precept would be the most difficult.’ The transformed person said: ‘Appearances are simply thoughts

13 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 38.62.

14 *Dunhuang baozang*, 119:346. Yoshioka Yoshitoyo, *Dōkyō keiten shiron*, 320.

15 *Taishang jing jie*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 226.

but thoughts are empty, so how can appearances exist? However, if a person first observes themselves and knows they are not dependent on anything, thereby knowing there are no appearances, why are they unable to bear it?

This theory was a later one that emerged under the influence of Buddhism. “Thoughts are empty,” when compared to “appearances are empty,” goes one step further. Chapter 4 of the *Pivotal Meaning of Daoist Teachings* states:

五識則為心根，能生想，志於心，故名根也。徐法師云：六根之法，並因五常四大所成。若爾，彼師所有方寸為心根，又以五臟為內根。<sup>16</sup>

When the five types of cognition are the root of the mind, thoughts can be generated and devoted to the mind, hence it is named the root. Master Xu states: The method of six roots is formed on the basis of the five constants and four greats. Being so, the Master takes one square inch as the root of his mind and the five viscera as his inner root.

This explanation of “thought” (*xiang* 想) as emerging from the root of mind was later developed into regulations. The people of the Eastern Han frequently spoke of “visualization” (*cunxiang* 存想). For example, Bian Shao’s *邊韶 Inscription for Laozi* (*Laozi ming* 老子銘) states:

規矩三光，四靈在旁，存想丹田，太一紫房。<sup>17</sup>

Follow the regulations of the three illuminations, keep close the four souls, and visualize the cinnabar field and purple chamber of the Great One.

*Cunxiang* 存想 is also written *cunsi* 存思 as seen in chapter 78 of the *Scripture of Great Peace* with the *Rushi cunsi tu jue* 入室存思圖訣.<sup>18</sup> Chapter 84 contains the *Daren cunsi liujia tu* 大人存思六甲圖, and the *Xiang'er Commentary* to the line “In stillness the turbid slowly turns clear,” states:

16 *Daojiao yishu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 824.

17 *Quan Hou Han wen*, 62.3b, in *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 813.

18 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 761.

人法天地，故不得燥處；常清靜為務，晨暮露上下，人身氣亦布至，師設晨暮清靜為大要，故雖天地有失，為人為誠，輒能自反，還歸道素，人德不及，若其有失，遂去不顧，致當自約持也。<sup>19</sup>

People who model themselves after Heaven and Earth will thus avoid such a dry situation; constantly pursuing the clear and quiet, the morning and evening dew rises and falls, and the breath of the human body is evenly distributed. The master has constructed the essentials of the clear and still for morning and evening, and although Heaven and Earth make mistakes, these are tenets for the people who can revert themselves and return to the simplicity of the Dao. Human virtue is not like this, for when they make mistakes, they leave without looking back, hence people must persist with self-restraint.

This is a theory devoted to quietude and maintaining conventions. Does “visualize entering the chamber” (*rushi cunsi* 入室存思) indicate this? Chen Shih-hsiang says:

《真誥》卷十八言有靜室法，俱謂閉氣存想或存想入室，則功曹使者，龍虎真君，可與見語。且並云是漢中法，則源出張修所傳靜室明甚……若然，則或張魯託言入靜室存想見神，以注《老子》，而名其注曰想爾也。<sup>20</sup>

The *Declarations of the Perfected*, in 18 scrolls, speaks of the “method of the quiet chamber” which it calls “obstructing the breath and visualization” or “visualization by entering the chamber,” after which the Envoys of the Merit Bureau and the True Lord of Dragon and Tiger, can be seen and spoken to.” As it is also known as the “method of Hanzhong,” it clearly originates from Zhang Xiu’s “quiet chamber” ... Such being the case, perhaps Zhang Lu pretended to enter the quiet chamber and “visualized” seeing the spirits, writing a commentary to the *Daodejing* which he then named “Xiang’er.”

His theory can be taken as one possible explanation. The two characters *xiang er* 想爾 in the table of contents of manuscript number 4226 in the Stein Catalogue were written *xiang er* 相爾<sup>21</sup> and drop the heart (*xin* 心) radical, taking *xiang* 相 to be *xiang* 想. The manuscripts of Buddhist sutras at Dunhuang

19 See Figure 9 lines 10–14.

20 Chen Shih-hsiang, “Xiang’er Laozi *Daojing* Dunhuang canjuan lunzheng,” 50.

21 *Dunhuang baozang*, 34: 564.

dating to the Tang Dynasty use these two *xiang* characters interchangeably, which was a common practice.

For the line “Embrace the One, and they will not depart,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

今布道誠教人，守誠不違，即為守一矣；不行其誠，即為失一也。世間常偽伎指五藏以名一。瞑目思想，欲從求福，非也；去生遂遠矣。<sup>22</sup>

With the tenets of the Dao distributed as teachings for the people, those who guard and do not violate them are guarding the One; if they do not follow its tenets, they will lose the One. People who constantly deceive the world point to the five viscera and name them the One. They shut their eyes in thought, longing to seek fortune, but this is wrong; they are in fact moving further away from life.

This denounces people who only close their eyes in order to visualize without guarding the tenets, hence what they practice belongs to the false arts. One must cultivate the Dao and its tenets together because guarding the tenets is also guarding the One. Herein lies the reason for the existence of the *Teachings of Xiang'er* and the *Tenets of Xiang'er*.

[3]. The meaning of the Three Harmonies (*san heyi* 三合義) in the *Xiang'er Commentary* and *Scripture of Great Peace*.

I have already offered a rough discussion of the deep relationship between the thought of the *Xiang'er* and the *Scripture of Great Peace*. According to manuscript number 4226 in the Stein Catalogue, there is a paragraph at the beginning of the text which says:

……順帝之時，弟子宮崇，詣闕上書，言：師干吉所得《神經》於曲陽泉上，朱界青首，百有餘弓。謂為妖訛，遂不信用。帝君不脩太平，其自下潛習，以待後會。賢才君子，密以相傳，而世偽人邪，多生因假，矯詭肆愚，疵妨正典。《相爾》云：世多邪巧，託稱道云。千端萬伎，朱紫罄。故記三合以別真，上下二篇法陰陽。復出《青領太平文》，雜說眾要，解童蒙心；復出五斗米道，備三合，道成契畢，數備三道。雖萬惡猶紛猗公行，私竅號之正目，事乖真實，師之所除。<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> See Figure 5 lines 11–14.

<sup>23</sup> *Dunhuang baozang*, 34: 564.

... during Emperor Shun's reign, disciple Gong Chong set off for the palace to present the writings of his master. He said: "My master Gan Ji acquired the *Scripture of the Immortals* while on a spring in Quyang, written in vermilion ink with blue headings in 100 scrolls. It was called deviant and false, and was not trusted and used. The emperor did not cultivate great peace but those below him studied it in secret, waiting for [its reveal] in the future. The worthy person and gentleman privately transmitted it to each other but with the world full of deceptive and depraved people, giving rise to many falsities, deceptions, and indulgences in the foolish, all of which damage and impede the orthodox canon. The *Xiang'er Commentary* states: "There are many in the world skilled at depravity, swindling others about the Dao." There are a thousand beginnings and ten thousand skills when vermilion and purple clad officials listen to the chime stones. Thus, there is the record of the Three Harmonies to differentiate the genuine, while both the upper and lower parts are modelled after Yin and Yang. There again appeared the "*Qingling Taiping wen*" whose miscellaneous sayings and myriad essentials explained the ignorant heart-mind of children; there again appeared the Way of Five Pecks of Rice, preparing the way for the Three Harmonies. The Dao was thus completed and the covenant concluded, which carefully prepared the three Daos. Although the myriad kinds of evil resemble a disorderly procession of charioteers, they secretly stole the orthodox designation. As such, affairs violated the truth so the master removed them.

This preface of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, transmitted from the Tang Dynasty, manipulates the sentences of the *Xiang'er Commentary*, saying: "There are many in the world skilled at depravity, swindling others about the Dao." Following the sentence "When wisdom and intelligence appear, there is great deception," the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

真道藏，耶文出，世間常偽伎稱道教，皆為大偽不可用。何謂耶文？其五經半入耶，其五經以外，眾書傳記、尸人所作，悉耶耳。<sup>24</sup>

When the genuine Dao is concealed, depraved writings appear, and the use of these false arts of the world is called Daoist religion. They belong to a great deception and must not be used. What is meant by depraved writings? There are five scriptures of which one-half are depraved, while of those beyond the five scriptures, many are biographies and records written by corpse people, hence they are depraved.

24 See Figure 11 lines 9–12.



Following the sentence “Serving those with good skills,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

人等當欲事師，當求善能知真道者；不當事耶僞伎巧，耶知驕奢也。<sup>25</sup>  
 People of rank should want to tend to the matters of their masters and search for those with good skills who can know the genuine Dao; they should not tend to matters that are depraved, false, or deceitful, for depraved knowledge is complacent and excessive.

It also writes:

今世間僞技，因緣真文設詐巧。<sup>26</sup>  
 Today, the false arts of the world rely on this genuine text to construct their swindle.

Following the sentence “Cut off the sage and reject knowledge,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* states:

謂詐聖知耶文者……故令千百歲大聖演真，滌除耶文。今人無狀，裁通經藝，未貫道真，便自稱聖。<sup>27</sup>  
 This speaks to deceptive sages and their knowledge of depraved writings ... thus for centuries and millennia the great sage has acted out the genuine so as to clear away depraved writings. Today, people lack merit and cut through the Classics and arts without having encountered the genuineness of the Dao, referring to themselves as sages.

Accounts such as this are plentiful. Wang Zhongmin's 王重民 *Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Books from Dunhuang* (*Dunhuang guji xulu* 敦煌古籍敘錄) cites the *Xiang'er* from the Great Peace section of the *Daoist Canon*, which runs from “There are many in the world skilled at depravity” to “Explained the ignorant heart-mind of children,” which is approximate to the preface of the *Xiang'er Commentary to the Daodejing*.<sup>28</sup> In the words of the original text, “There again appeared the “*Qingling Taiping wen*,” and “There appeared the Way of Five Pecks of Rice,” and so forth. Judging from the context of these

25 See Figure 4 lines 11–13.

26 See Figure 6 lines 11–12.

27 See Figure 12 lines 7–10.

28 Wang Zhongmin, *Dunhuang guji xulu*, 235.

passages, they should belong to the preface of the *Catalogue of the Scripture of Great Peace* which cites the *Xiang'er Commentary* but alters its language. I believe there should be a period at the end of “swindling others about the Dao” but ancient books did not use punctuation marks, making them difficult to read, and this is one example.

The text also states: “There again appeared the Way of Five Pecks of Rice, preparing the way for the Three Harmonies.” Examining scroll 48 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, we find the “*Sanhe xiangtong jue*” 三合相通訣<sup>29</sup> which speaks of bundling together primal breath, the natural, and Heaven and Earth, and when these things are interconnected with the Three Harmonies and work together with the same heart-mind, everything will be accomplished. Section three of the *Critical Edition of the Scripture of Great Peace* states:

氣者，乃言天氣悅喜下生，地氣順喜上養。氣之法，行於天下地上，陰陽相得，交而為和，與中和氣三合，共養凡物，三氣相愛相通，無復有害者。太者，大也；平者，正也；氣者，主養以通和也。得此以治，太平而和，且大正也，故言太平氣至也。<sup>30</sup>

Breath is to speak of the breath of Heaven that descends and gives birth to things when it is pleased and joyful, whereas the breath of Earth ascends and nourishes things when it is in accordance with them and happy. The model of breath is to move in the space between Heaven and Earth such that Yin and Yang acquire it from one another. Their exchange is a harmonious one, and along with the harmonious breath, comprise the Three Harmonies that nourish all things. When the three breaths care for one another and are interconnected, no harm comes to things. What is great is large and what is peaceful is proper. Breath nourishes things to harmoniously connect them. To rule in this way is to have great peace and harmony, to be great and proper, thus it is said the breath of great peace has arrived.

In the same scroll, the *Scripture of Great Peace* says:

共生和，三事常相通，並力同心，共治一職，共成一事，如不足一事便凶。故有陽無陰不能獨生，治亦絕滅；有陰無陽，亦不能獨生，治亦絕滅。有陰有陽而無和，不能傳其類，亦絕滅。<sup>31</sup>

29 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 48.146.

30 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 48.148.

31 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 48.149.

Together, creation, and harmony, these three matters are constantly interconnected. Working with the same heart-mind, ruling from the same position, accomplishing the same thing, should one of them prove insufficient, the result will be inauspicious. Thus, if there is Yang but no Yin, the former cannot survive alone and the government will vanish; if there is Yin but no Yang, the former cannot survive alone and the government will vanish; if there are Yin and Yang but no harmony between them, they cannot be transmitted to others in their class and they will vanish too.

The meaning of the Three Harmonies is derived from the *Daodejing's* theory that “The myriad things carry the Yin and embrace the Yang, conjoining their breath in order to harmonize,” and expands upon it. However, the two characters *san he* 三合 are first seen in the “Tianwen” 天問 poem of the *Songs of Chu*, which says:

陰陽三合，何本何化？<sup>32</sup>

Among Yin, Yang, and the Three Harmonies, which is original and which is changed?

The record of the 3rd year of Duke Zhuang of Zheng's 鄭莊公 reign in the *Guliang zhuan* 穀梁傳 states:

獨陰不生，獨陽不生……三合然後生。<sup>33</sup>

Yin alone cannot give birth; Yang alone cannot give birth ... but the Three Harmonies can give birth.

In the *Collected Explanations on the Daodejing*, Fan Ning 范甯 cites Xu Miao 徐邈, seen in the above quoted passage from Laozi, to explain it but Yang Shixun's 楊士勛 annotation says:

陰能成物，陽能成物，天能養物，而總云生者，凡萬物初生，必須三氣合，四時和，然後得生，不是獨陽能生也。但既生之後，始分繫三氣耳。<sup>34</sup>

Yin can accomplish things, Yang can accomplish things, and Heaven can nourish things, but in speaking about creation, when the myriad things were initially born they had to first merge with the three breaths and

32 *Chuci buzhu*, 3.86.

33 *Chunqiu Guliang zhuan zhushu*, 5.78.

34 *Chunqiu Guliang zhuan zhushu*, 5.78–79.

harmonize with the four seasons before acquiring life. However, this is not something Yang alone can create. Once something is born, it is separated into three breaths.

From this we know the theory of Yin, Yang, and the Three Harmonies was already widespread in the Warring States period and Western Han Dynasty. The *Scripture of Great Peace* was based on this and expanded its meaning. For example:

Scroll 11 is the “Method of harmonizing Yin and Yang” 和合陰陽法. One should refer to the Stein edition of the *Scripture of Great Peace* as this edition is not included in the *Daoist Canon*.<sup>35</sup>

Scroll 31 is the “Method of harmonizing the three breaths and monarchs” 和三氣興帝王法. In the Stein edition, this line is written “harmonizing with the three and five,” which is incorrect.<sup>36</sup>

Scroll 48 is the “Instructions on interconnecting with the Three Harmonies” 三合相通訣.<sup>37</sup>

Section two of the *Scripture of Great Peace Abridged* explains primal breath as having three names, which are Great Yang, Great Yin, and Equilibrium,<sup>38</sup> of which equilibrium is the most valuable. On the sentence “It is better to guard the center” from the *Daodejing*, the commentary to the *Teachings of Xiang'er* says:

不如學生，守中和之道。<sup>39</sup>

People are better-off studying life and guarding the equilibrium of the Dao.

On the sentence “Use the Dao when it pours forth without letting it overflow,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* says:

道貴中和，當中和行之。<sup>40</sup>

35 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 728. *Dunhuang baozang*, 34: 565.

36 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 18. *Dunhuang baozang*, 34: 566.

37 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 48.146.

38 *Taiping jing chao*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 316.

39 See Figure 3 lines 1–2.

40 See Figure 1 lines 15.

The Dao values equilibrium, thus people should move in equilibrium with things.

These are based on the meaning of the *Scripture of Great Peace*. It is a shame the original edition of Gan Zhongke's 甘忠可 *Scripture of Great Peace* can no longer be examined. Observing the preface of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, which was unearthed at Dunhuang, it refers to the *Xiang'er* as “recording the Three Harmonies to differentiate the genuine. The upper and lower parts are modelled after Yin and Yang” 記三合以別真。上下二篇法陰陽。<sup>41</sup> It continues: “After this appeared the “*Qingling Taiping wen*,” out of which came the Way of Five Pecks of Rice, and so prepared the way for the Three Harmonies” 復出《青領太平文》、復出五斗米，備三合。<sup>42</sup> These are the works of Gan Ji and Gong Chong and are closely related to the theories of the *Xiang'er*, however, the meaning of the Three Harmonies is closely related to the essence of Celestial Masters Daoism. Those who talk about the history of Daoism in modern times rarely mention this, hence I am revealing it now. As for “The upper and lower parts are modelled after Yin and Yang,” it indicates the *Daodejing* contained the *Daojing* 道經 as its first part and the *Dejing* 德經 as its second part, which the *Xiang'er Commentary* unearthed at Dunhuang confirms. Thus, the *Daodejing* was divided into upper and lower parts, a practice already in use in the Eastern Han Dynasty.

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41 *Dunhuang baozang*, 564.

42 *Dunhuang baozang*, 564.

## Continued Discussion of the *Xiang'er Commentary*

### 1 Preface

Dunhuang manuscript number 6825 in the Stein Catalogue of the British Museum in London, which is manuscript number 6798 in the newly compiled Giles Catalogue, is the first chapter of Laozi's *Daojing*. The beginning of the *Xiang'er* text is incomplete. All told, there are more than 500 lines. The *Commentary* is interwoven with the original scripture and there is no difference in font or its size, nor is there any distinction between sections. Both the beginning of the scroll and its latter parts are missing, hence we cannot see the entire book. What a shame! In 1956 I tried to compile and publish this manuscript in order to share it with the world. At the same time, Chen Shih-hsiang wrote "A Proof of the Fragmented Scroll of the *Xiang'er*" (*Xiang'er canjuan lunzheng* 想爾殘卷論證), which was published in the *Qinghua Journal of Chinese Studies* (*Qinghua xuebao* 清華學報) and garnered great interest.<sup>1</sup> I heard that my book was used as a textbook in a class on the history of Daoism at the China Studies Program of the University of Paris. More and more contemporary scholars are pointing out the errors of my work. At the 18th meeting of the Japanese Association of Daoist Studies, Ōfuchi Ninji presented a paper entitled "The Establishment of the *Xiang'er Commentary*"<sup>2</sup> which verified the date of the *Xiang'er* and that it was written by the Way of Five Pecks of Rice sect of Celestial Masters Daoism from the late Eastern Han Dynasty. This is consistent with my theory that it is "the study of Celestial Masters Daoism." Ōfuchi Ninji also wrote "The Teaching Method of the Way of Five Pecks of Rice"<sup>3</sup> which centered on the *Xiang'er* and offered a complete explanation. Recalling my visit to North America, where I participated in a conference on Eastern studies, I met Fukui Kōjun and inquired about his book. During the last few years, I have

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- 1 Chen Shih-hsiang 陳世驥, "Xiang'er Laozi *Daojing* Dunhuang canjuan lunzheng" 想爾老子道經燉煌殘卷論證, *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies* 清華學報, 1.2 (1957): 41–62.
  - 2 Ōfuchi Ninji 大淵忍爾, "Rōshi Sōjichū no seiritsu" 老子想爾注の成立, *Okayama shigaku* 岡山史學 19 (1967): 9–31.
  - 3 Ōfuchi Ninji, "Gotobei-dō no kyōhō ni tsuite (ue): Rōshi Sōjichū o chūshin to shite" 五斗米道の教法について(上): 老子想爾注を中心として, *Tōyō gakuhō* 東洋學報 49.3 (1966): 40–68. Ōfuchi Ninji, "Gotobei-dō no kyōhō ni tsuite (Shita): Rōshi Sōjichū o chūshin to shite" 五斗米道の教法について(下): 老子想爾注を中心として, *Tōyō gakuhō* 東洋學報 49.4 (1966): 97–129.

learned a thing or two. On the occasion of Fukui Kōjun's 70th birthday, I was invited to write a paper. Based on my observations of his work, I wrote a paper and sent it to Fukui Kōjun for his correction and to add to his personal library.

## 2 Addendum to Manuscript Number 6825 in the Stein Catalogue

Regarding the original condition of the manuscript,<sup>4</sup> Lionel Giles states: "It is a good manuscript of the 6th century, written on thin yellow paper and unrolled reaches 30 feet."<sup>5</sup> In the summer of 1966, I was at the British Museum in London reviewing the Dunhuang manuscript, which took me around one month. I kept the *Xiang'er* manuscript for a long time. The manuscript is made of very thin dyed yellow paper and written in dark ink. There are occasional alterations, such as the word *rong* 榮 in the phrase *bugan qiu rong* 不敢求榮. On the back of the manuscript are transcriptions of Buddhist sutras written in light ink, which include miscellaneous transcriptions of the *Great Exegesis of Abhidharma* (*Dapi posha lun* 大毗婆沙論), volume 10 of the *Mahāvāna-Vaipulya One Hundred Treatise* (*Dacheng guangbai lun* 大乘廣百論), volume 38 of the *Yogācārabhūmi-Śāstra* (*Yujiashidi lun* 瑜珈師地論), volume 8 of the *Abhidharma-jñāna-prasthāna* (*Apidamo fazhi lun* 阿毗達磨發智論), and volume 197 of the *Satyasiddhi-Śāstra* (*Chengshi lun* 誠實論), and so forth. The last sections of the *Xiang'er Commentary* are blurry due to water damage caused by writing on the back of the manuscript. The *Xiang'er Commentary* was transcribed first and Buddhist scriptures were added later. As for the writing style and calligraphy, they are very close to the stele inscriptions of the Northern Wei Dynasty. The Daoist scriptures of the Tang Dynasty discovered in the Mogao Grottoes are mostly made of yellow paper but it is not as thin as that used for transcribing the *Xiang'er Commentary*, while the font resembles the styles of Yu Shinan 虞世南, Zhu Suiliang 褚遂良, and the *Longfei jing* 龍飛經, which differ from the style of the *Xiang'er* manuscript but are closer in style to the stele inscriptions of the Longmen caves. Therefore, this manuscript should be by the hands of people from the Northern Wei Dynasty and is most certainly not fake. It has been identified as an artifact of the 6th century, predating the Tang Dynasty, of this there is no question.

4 Ōfuchi Ninji, *Tonkō Dōkyō: Mokuroku hen* 敦煌道經目錄編, 54.

5 See Lionel Giles, *Descriptive catalogue of the Chinese manuscripts from Tunhuang in the British Museum London*. London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1957: 54.

### 3 Sun Simiao Citing the *Precepts of Xiang'er*, with Further Discussion of Xiang'er Being Called a Transcendent Person

Scroll 33 of the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* cites Sun Simiao's 孫思邈<sup>6</sup> *Pillow Book of Methods for Nourishing Life* (*Sheyang zhenzhong fang* 攝養枕中方):<sup>7</sup>

《想爾》曰：勿與人爭曲直當減人算壽。若身不寧，反舌塞喉，嗽漏咽液無數，須臾即愈。道人疾，閉目內視，使心生火，以火燒身，燒身令盡，存之今使精神如髣髴，疾即愈。若有痛處，皆存其火燒之祕驗。<sup>8</sup>

The *Xiang'er* says: "Do not contend with others for the bent and straight" which will subtract people's life-count. If the body is not stable, invert the tongue and block the throat, collect the saliva and repeatedly swallow it, then one will be instantly healed. When the person of Dao is sick, they close their eyes and inwardly observe themselves, making their heart-mind give birth to fire; taking this fire to burn their body, they burn their body to bring order to everything, and preserve it to make their essence and spirit alike, healing any ailments. If one has sores, visualize the burning fire and one will receive the secret verification.

In the original *Xiang'er* manuscript, after the two characters *Xiang'er* 想爾 there is a sentence which reads: "Xiang'er is the name of a transcendent person." This description surely comes from Sun Simiao and conforms to what the *Xiang'er Commentary* says: "I am a transcendent." What is more, the *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts* states: "When Master Xi obtained the Dao, he wanted to transform the ways of Shu in the west ... hence he relied on the *Teachings of Xiang'er* to instruct new converts" 係師得道，化道西蜀……託邁想爾，以訓初迴。<sup>9</sup> By examining the meaning of the text, it seems that this teaching was made under the pretense of being Xiang'er the Transcendent. Pretending to meet with him is to turn this into a spiritual affair. The character Dao 道 in the *Xiang'er Commentary* is a personification, which gives "Xiang'er" a pretext for being the name of a transcendent person. This is not out of the ordinary. Lu Deming seems to take "Xiang'er" as a personal name and his theory has been passed down through the centuries.

6 Nathan Sivin, *Chinese Alchemy: Preliminary Studies*, 120 note 69.

7 See Okanishi Tameto 岡西為人, *Song Yiqian yiji kao* 宋以前醫籍考.

8 *Yunji qiqian*, 33:737–38.

9 *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 170.



The first of the “*Regulations of the Scripture of Supreme Lord Lao*” as found in part one of the section on the character “*li* 力” in the *Daoist Canon* is the *Daode zunjing jie* 道德尊經戒, which is comprised of nine actions and twenty-seven precepts. Amongst the lower nine precepts, the seventh states:

戒勿與人爭曲直，得諍，先避之。<sup>10</sup>

The precepts do not contend with people for the bent and straight; if an argument is inevitable, first try to avoid it.

This is the first sentence of the text cited by Sun Simiao in his *Pillow Book of Methods for Nourishing Life* and the twenty-seven precepts are also included in the *Precepts of Xiang'er*.

In volume 572 of the *Daoist Canon*, part one of the section on the character *lin* 臨, there is the *Sheyang lun* 攝養論 by Sun the Perfected (*Sun zhenren* 孫真人). In volume 571, part two of the section on the character *ming* 命, there is Sun Simiao’s *Cunshen lianqi ming* 存神鍊氣銘. From this we can observe Sun Simiao’s ideas on preserving and nourishing life. He says when the person of Dao is sick, they close their eyes and inwardly observe themselves, which is a method of visualization and has a close relationship with the *Precepts of Xiang'er*.

#### 4 The Nine Practices of the *Xiang'er Commentary* and Lord Lao’s *Visualization Diagram*

Scroll 43 of the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* cites eighteen chapters from Lord Lao’s *Visualization Diagram* (*Laojun cunsi tu* 老君存思圖), of which the tenth, “Zuochao Cunsi” 坐朝存思 states:

凡行者，亦存《想爾注》；三業在《盟威經》後。凡存思者，急宜憶之，故標出如左：

All nine actions are also preserved in the *Xiang'er Commentary*; the three conducts are located at the end of the *Scripture of Profound Covenant of Orthodox Unity*. During visualization they need to recall them instantly, thus they are marked-out as on the left:

<sup>10</sup> *Taishang Laojun jing lü*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 218.

上最三行：行無為，行柔弱，行守雌勿先動。

The three highest kinds of action: Act without action, act with yielding and weakness, act by guarding the female, and avoid moving first.

中最三行：行無名，行清靜，行諸善。

The three middle kinds of action: Act without naming, act with clarity and quietude, and act according to the good.

下最三行：行無欲，行知止足，行推讓。

The three lowest kinds of action: Act without desire, act by knowing when to stop, and act with humility.

一者不殺，二者不盜，三者不淫。此三事屬身業。

[Concerning the first group] First, do not kill; second, do not steal; third, do not be lustful. These three matters belong to affairs of the body.

一者不妄言，二者不綺語，三者不兩舌，四者不惡口。此四事屬口業。

[Concerning the second group] First, do not speak recklessly; second, do not speak flatteringly; third, do not speak with double meaning; and fourth, do not speak with bad language. These four matters belong to affairs of the mouth.

一者不嫉妒，二者不瞋恚，三者不邪疑。此三事屬心業。

[Concerning the third group] First, do not be jealous; second, do not be angry and resentful; and third, do not be deviant and skeptical. These three matters belong to affairs of the heart-mind.

右九行，三業十事，存念驚恐，人思相干，皆速思之，危即安也。<sup>11</sup>

These are the nine actions, three conducts, and ten matters. For those who are fearful of meditation and have a problem of body and mind disturbing one another, they should think about them quickly then the danger will be pacified.

In the *Daoist Canon*, part one of the section on the character *su* 夙, is the *Taishang Laojun da cunsi tu zhu jue* 太上老君大存思圖注訣. The "Sitting in the Court and Visualizing" lists nine actions, three conducts, and ten matters,

11 *Yunji qiqian*, 43.961–62. *Yuji qiqian*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 22: 303–4.

which is identical to the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel*. Comparing both texts, the *Daoist Canon* edition writes:

九行在《想爾注》前，三業在《明威經》後，存思者急宜憶之。<sup>12</sup>

The nine actions are located at the beginning of the *Xiang'er Commentary*, the three conducts are at the end of the *Scripture of Profound Covenant of Orthodox Unity*, because during visualization they need to be recalled instantly.

This accords with the *Daoist Canon* edition. In the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel*, *jiuxing* 九行 was erroneously written *fanxing* 凡行. Furthermore, the character *qian* 前 was omitted and so the meaning is uncertain. Consulting the original edition of the *Xiang'er*, the nine precepts are put before the *Commentary*. It is a shame the opening paragraph of the Dunhuang manuscript is missing, as without it we cannot verify this.

The *Precepts of the Revered Scripture of Dao and De* was originally divided into two parts: the nine actions and the twenty-seven precepts. The nine actions were given the title *Precepts of Xiang'er's Revered Scripture of Dao and De* (*Daode zunjing Xiang'er jie* 道德尊經想爾戒) and the twenty-seven precepts were named *Precepts of the Revered Scripture of Dao and De* without the two characters “*xiang er*.”<sup>13</sup> The two kinds of precepts about a Daoist practitioner's behavior are the detailed (*xiang* 詳) and the terse (*lüe* 略). For the terse, Master Song (Song *fashi* 宋法師) in the *Meaning of the Twelve Categories* [of Daoist writings] (*Shier bu yi* 十二部義) enumerates the following: Daoist citizens (*Dao min* 道民) have three precepts, register-disciples (*lu sheng* 錄生) have five precepts, libationers (*jjiu* 祭酒) have eight precepts, the *Xiang'er* has nine precepts, the superior category of wisdom (*zhahui shangpin* 智慧上品) has ten precepts, those with luminous perfection (*mingzhen* 明真) have twenty-four precepts, and so forth. Looking at part six of the “*Shi jielü*” 釋戒律 in the *Dongxuan Lingbao xuanmen dayi* 洞玄靈寶玄門大義—which appears in volume 760 of the *Daoist Canon*, part one of the section on the character *yi* 儀—and the “*Shi shier bu yi*” 釋十二部義 in scroll 24 of the *Daojiao yishu* 道教義樞—which appears in volume 763 of the *Daoist Canon*, part two of the section on the character *zhu* 諸—the narrative is identical.<sup>14</sup> The nine actions were referred to by Meng Anpai as the *Nine Precepts of Xiang'er*. These are the

12 *Yuji qiqian*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 22: 303.

13 *Taishang Laojun jing lü*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 218.

14 *Dongxuan Lingbao xuanmen dayi*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 738. *Daojiao yishu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 818.

so-called terse precepts. In part four of the section on the character *li* 力 in the *Daoist Canon* there is the *Taishang jing jie* 太上經戒; this text mentions the *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Lord Lao*, which includes the nine conducts but does not mention the name Xiang'er, and the twenty-seven precepts of high, middle, and low orders. In his *Chuanshou sandong jing jie fa lu lüe shuo* 傳授三洞經戒法錄略說, Zhang Wanfu 張萬福 lists sixteen kinds of high order precepts, such as the *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Xiang'er* (*Xiang'er ershiqi jie* 想爾二十七戒),<sup>15</sup> and these are the same as Sun Simiao's citing the *Xiang'er* sentence "The precepts do not contend with people for the bent and straight,"<sup>16</sup> which includes the twenty-seven precepts. In the early Tang Dynasty, the *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Lord Lao* and the *Precepts of the Revered Scripture of Dao and De* were taken to be the *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Xiang'er*, which proves the accuracy of Zhang Wanfu's discussion. At the time, mention of the *Precepts of Xiang'er* was not limited to the nine actions of the terse explanations of the precepts. The *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts* records the *Xiang'er* as saying: "The essential precepts of the three orders were a great vessel that aided the masses" 三品要戒，濟眾大航.<sup>17</sup> The essential precepts of the three orders point to the twenty-seven precepts of the higher, middle and lower orders.

Regarding *Lord Lao's Visualization Diagram*, there is a record in the Song Dynasty edition of the *Catalogue of the Complete Collection of Four Treasures, Supplemental Series* (*Xuxiu siku quanshu zong mulu* 續修四庫全書總目錄), of its existence in one scroll, which predates Du Guangting. In the *General Catalogue of the Academy for the Veneration of Literature* (*Chongwen zongmu* 崇文總目), there is the *Li Laojun Daodejing cunxiang tu* 李老君道德經存想圖, which ought to be the same work within which *cunsi* 存思 is written *cunxiang* 存想. The *Detailed Explanation of the Catalogue of the Daoist Canon* (*Daozang mulu xiangzhu* 道藏目錄詳注), Spirit Cavern section, states: "The *Taishang Laojun da cunsi tu zhu jue* 太上老君大存思圖注訣, in one scroll, contains diagrams<sup>18</sup> that visualize the five stars of the five viscera, and constantly preserve the nine actions and three conducts. When sitting, lying flat, and mounting a seat, visualize the images."<sup>19</sup> Zhang Wanfu's *Chuanshou sandong jing jie fa lu lüe shuo* points out in the Catalogue of the *Daodejing* there was the "*Dacun tu*" 大存圖, in one scroll, followed by the upper and lower parts of

15 *Chuanshou sandong jing jie fa lu lüe shuo*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 184.

16 *Taishang Laojun jing lü*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 218.

17 *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 170.

18 *Daozang mulu xiangzhu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 36: 814.

19 See *Qinding gujin tushu jicheng*, Bowu huibian, Shenyi dian, volume 276, Daoshu bu hui-kao, 6.11b–12a.

the *Xiang'er Commentary*.<sup>20</sup> In fact, “*Dacun tu*” is an abbreviated name for *Lord Lao’s Great Visualization Diagram* (*Laojun da cunsi tu* 老君大存思圖). From this we can observe the close connection between the “*Cunsi tu*” and the *Xiang'er Commentary*. They are like the harnesses around the two outer horses of a three-horse team—they must cooperate. The character *xiang* 想 of *Xiang'er* is also the character *xiang* in *cunxiang* 存想. The “*Dacun tu*” documents the *Nine Precepts of Xiang'er* being used for religious practice. The *Taishang Laojun da cunsi tu zhu jue* elaborates:

……存思精審，自然忘勞……當誦經行戒，以善興居……煩惱生災，臥坐無寧，急存九行（想爾）。行之檢身，心存口誦，解了無疑。以空三業，三業既定，眾災自消。<sup>21</sup>

... visualize accurately and carefully, naturally forgetting [one’s] toiling ... one should recite the scriptures and practice the precepts so as to improve one’s daily life ... when vexing worries generate disaster, such that lying down or sitting lacks serenity, one should urgently preserve the nine actions (of the *Xiang'er*). Practicing them for self-examination, the heart-mind preserves them while the mouth chants them, hence one’s understanding will be free of doubts. Empty the three conducts and having established them, disasters can be eliminated.

At the time of practicing visualization, one must consider the “nine actions of the *Xiang'er*” and “three conducts” as a credo. Keeping them in one’s mind all of the time, one can change danger into safety and take cultivation of the body using the Dao and its virtue as the root. On the meaning of “visualization,” the *Taishang Laojun da cunsi tu zhu jue* states:

凡存思之時，皆閉目內視。人體多神，必以五藏為主，主各料其事，事各得其成；成正則一而不二，不二則隱顯無邪，無邪則眾妙可見，見妙則與聖符同，同聖則即可弘積學，自然感會。是以朝夕存思，不可懈怠。<sup>22</sup>

When engaging in visualization, close the eyes and inwardly observe oneself. The human body has many spirits but the five viscera must be taken as principal because they appraise all matters, ensuring each one can be accomplished; when they accomplish what is proper their unity will not be divided, and not being divided means the concealed and visible are

20 *Chuanshou sandong jing jie fa lu lue shuo*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 186.

21 *Taishang Laojun da cunsi tu zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 718.

22 *Taishang Laojun da cunsi tu zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 715.

not deviant. If they are not deviant many marvelous things can be seen, and seeing the many marvelous things, one will be the same as a sage. Being sagely, one can spread one's amassed learning and natural responsiveness to it. Thus, one must visualize day and night and not become lazy.

This paragraph on the great principle of the Dao develops the philosophical theory of visualization. We know the name Xiang'er is derived from the word "visualization," a term appearing in Biao Shao's *Inscription for Laozi* where he speaks of "visualizing the cinnabar field" (*cunxiang dantian* 存想丹田).<sup>23</sup> Thus, one should practice the precepts day and night, inwardly observe oneself, not leaving for a single moment so as to cultivate the Dao and stay on the proper track. This is what matters. It is known that the *Dacun tu* matches the *Xiang'er Commentary* and its significance is far-reaching. The precepts of the *Xiang'er* are used to establish its foundation, the teachings of the *Xiang'er* are used to convey its meaning, and the diagrams of the *Xiang'er* are used to indicate the direction of its practice. The *Essential Works on the Daodejing* (*Daodejing yao-dian* 道德經要典) in the *Daoist Canon* lists these two texts as numbers three and four respectively, which was done for good reason and is not accidental.

##### 5 On the *Xiang'er Commentary's* "First was the *Scripture* then the 5,000-Character Classic as the Daoist Numerical System"

In volume 1034 of the *Daoist Canon*, scroll 4 of the *Dongzhen taishang taixiao langshu* 洞真太上太霄琅書, entry 10 [the *Weishi jue* 為師訣] states:

……志行此道，存文五千。文千雖五，義冠無央，先代相傳，師資叵計。今之所遵，十天大字，神仙人鬼，共所歸宗，文同數等，無有一異；但感者未齊，應者微革。河上《章句》，係師《想爾》。轉字會時，立題標議，始殊終同，隨因趣果，洞明之師，諦宜宣誥。其大字以數入道，故先言五千而後云經；《想爾》以道統數，故先云經而後言五千。河上道數相涉，故分經以及文品，章為第句，各有應焉。妙思之儔，研期感應，勿牙舛亂筌蹄也。<sup>24</sup>

... intent to practice this Dao, preserve the 5,000-Character Classic. Though only 5,000 characters, its meaning endlessly transcends them, being transmitted since antiquity such that the number of masters

23 *Quan Hou Han wen*, 62.3b, in *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 813.

24 *Dongzhen taishang taixiao langshu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 33: 666.

cannot be counted. What is followed today is the Great Character edition of the ten heavens, the ancestor to which the spirits, transcendent person, and ghosts return, and whose numbers match without discrepancy; however, those who are moved by it are not equal while those who respond to it are subtly transformed. Heshang Gong has his *Section and Verse* and Master Xi has the *Xiang'er*. Changing the characters to fit the times, they established the topics and denoted the views of these texts. Although they began differently, their conclusions were the same, hence they relied on the same cause yet produced interesting results. They were masters who knew these texts completely and worked to proclaim and reveal them. The Great Character edition uses numbers to enter the Dao, thus it first speaks of the number 5,000 and then elucidates the scripture. The *Xiang'er* uses the Dao to govern numbers, hence it speaks of the scripture first and its 5,000 characters later. In Heshang Gong's edition, the Dao and numbers are interrelated, hence it divided the scripture into literary grades, with sections marked by a sentence [from the *Daodejing*], followed by the content of Heshang Gong. Both works serve as companions to the marvelous thought of the *Daodejing*, and while having an enduring impact, they should not be used haphazardly to achieve the latter's goals.

From the above quotations it can be seen that Daoist priests used the *Daodejing* and the relationship between the Dao and numbers has different meanings. The *Xiang'er* is the opposite of the Great Character edition. The former first speaks of the number 5,000, which is the number needed to enter the Dao; the latter speaks of the number 5,000 later on since the Dao uses numbers to govern. From this we know that following the scriptures at the end of the original text, the total number of characters must be 5,000. The *Weishi jue* clearly says "Master Xi's *Xiang'er*" and we know the Master Xi edition was 5,000 characters. Within the *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts*, the *Xuci jing fa* 序次經法 states:

昔尹子初受大字三篇，中經在太清部中，所以付上下兩卷。漢文精感，真人降跡，得此（河上）《章句》，所滯即通……係師得道，化道西蜀，蜀風淺末，未曉深言。託邁想爾，以訓初迴；初迴之倫，多同蜀淺，辭說切近，因物賦通，三品要戒，濟眾大航，故次於河上。河上《想爾》，注解已自有殊，大字文體，意況亦復有異。皆緣時所須，轉訓成義，舛文同歸。<sup>25</sup>

25 *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 170.

Yin Xi originally received three sections of the Great Character edition and the *Scripture of the Middle*, which is found in the Great Purity section [of the *Daoist Canon*], hence he was entrusted with both the upper and lower scrolls. The writing of the people in the Han Dynasty is so refined that the perfected person descended from Heaven and revealed himself. Receiving Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*, I was able to penetrate those parts where I felt stuck ... When Master Xi obtained the Dao, he wanted to transform the ways of Shu in the west but the customs of Shu were narrow and shallow, making it hard for them to comprehend profound language. He fabricated the *Xiang'er* and used it to teach new converts. Regulations for new converts had the same shallowness as the customs of Shu but the words [of the *Xiang'er*] were near at hand and so he relied on them to transmit the Dao. The essential precepts of the three orders were a great vessel that aided the masses but are inferior to what Heshang Gong says. The annotations by Heshang Gong and Xiang'er are not the same; the style and content of the Great Character edition also has inconsistencies. The reason is their catering to the needs of different times, changing exegeses into interpretative meaning and explaining different texts in the same manner.

This clearly states the significance of the order of the Great Character edition, Heshang Gong's *Section and Verse*, and the *Xiang'er Commentary*, within the 10 scrolls of the Great Mystery section of the *Daoist Canon*.

The three orders of the essential precepts of the *Xiang'er* exist when one receives the 5,000-Character Classic as well as when one receives the precepts. In the *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts*, the sixth of the "methods for writing the Three Masters' taboo names" (*shu sanshi hui fa* 書三師諱法) states:

山館宅舍，受《道德》五千文三品要戒。<sup>26</sup>

In a mountain lodging or residence, receive the *Daodejing's* essential precepts of the three orders.

The Three Masters are the Ordination Master (*dushi* 度師), Registration Master (*jishi* 籍師), and Scripture Master (*jingshi* 經師). The "method of inviting the Master protector" (*qingshi bao fa* 請師保法) in the same text says:

26 *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 172.



第一曰三師，以三人為之，其一人為正師，一人為監度師，一人為證盟師。<sup>27</sup>

The first is called the Three Masters and consists of three people. One is the Master of Orthodoxy, one is the Master Supervising the Ordination, and one is the Master Testifying to the Covenant.

Among the Three Masters, the Scripture Master serves as the Master of Orthodoxy and protects the conferral of the *5,000-Character Classic*. As for why the scripture contains 5,000 characters, it is also related to holding the precepts. In volume 562 of the Daoist Canon, part one of the section on the character *li* 力, the *Taishang Laojun jie jing* 太上老君戒經 states:

老君曰五戒者，天地並始，萬物並有。持之者吉，失之者凶。過去成道，莫不由之。故列神二十五也；經文五千，是其義也。<sup>28</sup>

Lord Lao speaks of the five precepts, which begin together with Heaven and Earth and exist together with the myriad things. Holding them is auspicious and losing them is inauspicious. The departure of transgressions completes the Dao and is that upon which all things depend. Thus, there are the twenty-five deities; the *5,000-Character Classic* is its explanation.

“Five” is a very important number in that when it comes to the precepts there must be five of them, and in the case of the scripture there must be 5,000 characters. When receiving the scripture, one concurrently receives the precepts. The *Xiang'er* uses the Dao to govern numbers, hence the scripture was placed at the front and the numbers were placed afterwards. In this way, it serves as “a wing” for the Great Character edition.

## 6 The *Xiang'er* Scripture as Received by the Preceptor of Eminent Mystery

Within the *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Xiang'er* by Zhang Wanfu there is the *Chuanshou sandong jing jie fa lu lüe shuo* which claims “these are what the Preceptor of Eminent Mystery (*gaoxuan fashi* 高玄法師) will receive.”<sup>29</sup> Scroll 5

<sup>27</sup> *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 171.

<sup>28</sup> *Taishang Laojun jie jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 204.

<sup>29</sup> *Chuanshou sandong jing jie fa lu lüe shuo*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 184.

of the *Sandong fengdao kejie yifan faci yi pin*, which is manuscript number 2337 in the Pelliot Catalogue, says in scroll 5:

老子《道德經》二弓；河上真人《注》上下二弓；《想爾注》二弓；《五千文朝儀》一弓；《雜說》一弓；《關令內傳》一弓；《誡文》一弓；右受稱高玄弟子。<sup>30</sup>

Laozi's *Daodejing*, in 2 scrolls; Heshang the Perfected's commentary in one upper and one lower scroll; the *Xiang'er Commentary*, in 2 scrolls; *Morning Rites of the 5,000-Character Classic*, in 1 scroll; the *Miscellaneous Sayings*, in 1 scroll; the *Essential Biography of the Guardian of the Pass*, in 1 scroll; and the *Book of Tenets*, in 1 scroll. Those who receive these scriptures are called disciples of the Preceptor of Eminent Mystery.

According to volume 761 of the *Daoist Canon*, in part two of the section on the character *yi* 儀, and scroll 4 of the *Dongxuan Lingbao sandong feng dao kejie ying shi* 洞玄靈寶三洞奉道科戒營始, practitioners receiving these texts were called “disciples of Eminent Mystery” (*gaoxuan dizi* 高玄弟子).<sup>31</sup> The ritual garments of the Preceptor of Eminent Mystery consists of a black cap (*xuan guan* 玄冠), yellow skirt (*huang qun* 黃裙), yellow robe (*huang he* 黃褐), and yellow cape (*huang pei* 黃帔), along with twenty-eight other items.<sup>32</sup> The illustrations in part 4 of scroll 5 of the same text are also valuable. The ranks of Daoist priests can be divided into the Spirit Cavern section (*dongshen bu* 洞神部), Eminent Mystery section (*gaoxuan bu* 高玄部), Ascending Mystery section (*shengxuan bu* 昇玄部), Mystery Cavern of Middle Covenant section (*zhongmeng dongxuan bu* 中盟洞玄部), Three Caverns section (*sandong bu* 三洞部), and the Great Cavern section (*dadong bu* 大洞部). Volume 989 of the *Daoist Canon* contains the *Sandong xiu Dao yi* 三洞修道儀 which, under the entry for *Gaoxuan bu Daoshi* 高玄部道士, states:

自修洞神有功後，遷授太上高玄，錄稱太上紫虛高玄弟子高玄法師……參究《道德經》……《存思神圖》，《太上文》，《節解》，《內解》，《自然齋法儀》，《道德威儀》。<sup>33</sup>

After successfully cultivating the Spirit Cavern for oneself, one should be promoted to the position of Supreme Eminent Mystery, which the record will refer to as “Disciple of the Preceptor of Eminent Mystery of Supreme

30 *Dunhuang baozang*, 119: 346.

31 *Dongxuan Lingbao sandong feng dao kejie ying shi*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 758.

32 *Dongxuan Lingbao sandong feng dao kejie ying shi*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 24: 760.

33 *Sandong xiudao yi*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 167.

Purple Vacuity” ... alluding to the *Daodejing* ... *Spiritual Diagrams for Visualization*, the *Supreme Writing*, *Sectional Explanations of the Laozi*, *Inner Explanations of the Laozi*, *Rules and Rituals for Natural Retreats*, and *Solemn Rites of the Daodejing*.

The aforementioned are classics that must be read and they appear in the Great Mystery section of the *Daoist Canon*.

The *Xiang'er Commentary* and *Lord Lao's Visualization Diagram* are listed together, the *Illustrated Commentary and Instructions for Visualizing the Spirits*, which appears in scroll 7 of the Great Mystery section and is an alternative name for *Lord Lao's Visualization Diagram*, are all obligatory classics for the disciples of Eminent Mystery. The *Commentary and Instructions on Spontaneous Rites of the Court* and *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts* contain formulated texts such as the following:

竊聞《道德》五千文，淵奧遐邇，仰希稟受，以遂至心。謹依法齋信，清齋奉辭，伏願法師賜垂成就。謹辭詣太上高玄大法師某先生門下。<sup>34</sup>

I secretly heard the 5,000-Character Classic of *Dao* and *De*, a profound and vast work that saw my gaze turn upwards with the hopes of receiving it and having it reach my heart-mind. I solemnly follow the rituals and retreat with the offerings, while at the purification retreat, I wish to present my statement to the Master so that my achievements can be bestowed upon me. I thus present my remarks to the Preceptor of Supreme Eminent Mystery in order that I may become his disciple.

The *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Xiang'er* were received by the Preceptor of Eminent Mystery who was able to practice these precepts, becoming the Daoist priest of the Eminent Mystery section of the *Daoist Canon*.

## 7 Discussing “Do Not Harm the Kingly Breath” in the *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Xiang'er* and the *Scripture of Great Peace*

Among the upper nine precepts of the *Twenty-Seven Precepts*, the third states:

戒勿傷王氣。<sup>35</sup>

34 *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 173.

35 *Taishang Laojun jing lü*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 218.

Do not harm the kingly breath.

Following the sentence “Moving when the time is right,” the *Xiang'er Commentary* writes:

人欲舉動，勿違道誠，不可得傷王氣。<sup>36</sup>

If people wish to act upon something and not violate the tenets of the Dao, they must not harm the kingly breath.

The meaning of these two are the same. When it comes to “kingly breath” (*wangqi* 王氣), the *Scripture of Great Peace* offers a detailed elaboration. Scroll 72 of the *Zhai jie sishen jiushi jue* 齋戒思神救死訣 states:

四時五行之氣，來入人腹中，為人五藏精神，其色與天地四時色相應也。畫之為人，使其三合，其王氣色者蓋在外，相氣色次之，微氣最居其內，使其領袖見之，先齋戒居閒善靖處，思之念之。作其人畫像長短自在。<sup>37</sup>

The breath of the four seasons and the five elements enters a person's abdomen and acts as the essence and spirit of the five viscera. Its color matches that of Heaven and Earth and the four seasons. Painting them as humans is to employ the Three Harmonies. Kingly breath applies to what is external, ministerial breath applies to what is of the middle, and profound breath applies to what resides within. If a leader is to see them, they should retreat and practice the precepts, dwelling in a place of peace and tranquility in order to ponder the painting. When it comes to drawing human images, their length is open.

Retreat and practice the precepts, pondering the spirits, then one can save the dying and alleviate danger. The *Illustrations for Visualizing the Great* (*Dacun tu* 大存圖), also known as the *Illustrated Commentary and Instructions for Visualizing the Spirits*, says something similar. The *Scripture of Great Peace* explicitly notes the five viscera and spirits:

法為具畫像，人亦三重衣，王氣居外，相氣次之。微氣最居內，皆戴冠幘乘馬。馬亦隨其五行色具為。其先畫像於一面者，長二丈，五素上疎畫五五二十五騎。<sup>38</sup>

36 See Figure 4 lines 13–14.

37 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 72.292.

38 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 72.292–93.

They are modelled after painted portraits of people wearing three types of clothing. Those with kingly breath display them on the outside, those with ministerial breath display them in the middle, and those with profound breath display them on the inside. Such people wear caps and ride horses. The horse's color conforms to the five elements. First, one paints the image on one side of a piece of silk two *zhang* in length, after which one coarsely paints twenty-five horses on five pieces of plain silk.

These portraits are used as the basis for visualization and have a special purpose, principal of which is to individually cooperate with the kingly breath, ministerial breath, and profound breath, otherwise known as the Three Harmonies. In scroll 69 of the same text, the *Tian chen zhigan xiangpei fa* 天讖支干相配法, says:

夫五行者，上頭皆帝王，其次相，其次微氣。王者，帝王之位也。相者，大臣之位也。微氣者，小史之位也。王者之後老氣者，王侯之位也；老氣之後衰氣者……百姓萬民之象也；囚氣之後死氣者，奴婢之象也。死氣之後亡氣者，死者丘冢也。故夫天垂象，四時五行周沍，各一與一衰……是故萬民百姓，皆百王之後也，興則為人君，衰則為民也。<sup>39</sup>

Regarding the five elements, the first has kingly breath, followed by the ministerial, and then the profound breath. The kingly breath is the position of the monarch, the ministerial is the position of a great official, while profound breath is the position of a minor scribe. What follows kingly breath is old breath, the position of the nobility; what follows old breath is declining breath ... the image of the masses; what follows imprisoned breath is dead breath, the image of slaves and maids. What follows dead breath is destroyed breath, the dead referring to a tomb. Thus, Heaven hangs images and the four seasons and five elements circulate them, one rising and the other declining ... In this way, the masses are descendants of the historical kings. When it rises it becomes the emperor, when it declines it becomes the common people.

This illustrates that kingly breath represents rising and in doing so it becomes the emperor, but when it declines it becomes the common people. On teaching people who are dim-sighted, see Dong Zhongshu's 董仲舒 *Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals* (*Chunqiu fanlu* 春秋繁露).<sup>40</sup> This notion began circulating in the Western Han hence the common people are seen as

39 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 69.274–75.

40 *Chunqiu fanlu yizheng*, 10.286.

declining. Comparing the rise and decline in politics to the rise and decline of essence and spirit, people must preserve the kingly breath in their essence and spirit, ensuring it remains in a dominant position. Thus, the *Xiang'er* deeply cautions to “not harm the kingly breath.” The concept of kingly breath is in fact derived from the *Scripture of Great Peace*.

In his textual research, Ōfuchi Ninji argues the *Rules and Tenets for Families of the Great Dao* (*Dadao jia lingjie* 大道家令戒) in the *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing* contains many ideas in line with the thought of the *Xiang'er Commentary* and so designates it a work from the time of Cao Wei 曹魏 (220–266 CE).<sup>41</sup> The text first mentioned Yu Ji's “Way of Great Peace.” The *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing* again says:

由以太平不備，悉當須明師口訣，指謫為符，命道復作五千文……付關令尹喜。<sup>42</sup>

Since the “Way of Great Peace” was not complete, one also needs a wise master's oral instruction. The criticism was an order, which commanded that the Dao make the *5,000-Character Classic* ... entrusting it with the commander of the pass, Yin Xi.

In this way, the creation of Master Xi's *5,000-Character Classic* supplements the deficiencies of the Way of Great Peace and there is no doubt the Celestial Masters saw the *Scripture of Great Peace*. In scroll 112 of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, the *Bu wang jie chang de fu jue* says: “The register of the transcendents lies in the North Pole where it is linked with Mount Kunlun and among the ruins of Mount Kunlun is the perfected person, hence constancy prevails throughout” 神仙之錄在北極，相連崑崙，崑崙之墟有真人，上下有常。<sup>43</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary* states: “The One scatters its form as breath and then assembles its form as the Supreme Lord Lao ruling from Mount Kunlun.”<sup>44</sup> As for the highest transcendent person on Mount Kunlun, the *Scripture of Great Peace* merely calls him a perfected person, however, the *Xiang'er* refers to him as Supreme Lord Lao. On the name “Lord Lao” see the “Biography of Prince Jing of Chen 陳敬王” in the *History of the Later Han Dynasty*. Moreover, the *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing* internally records the *Yangping zhi* 陽平治 as saying:

41 Ōfuchi Ninji, “Gotobei-dō no kyōhō ni tsuite (ue): Rōshi Sōjichū o chūshin to shite” 五斗米道の教法について(上): 老子想爾注を中心として, *Tōyō gakuho* 東洋學報 49:3 (1966): 41.

42 *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 236.

43 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 112.583.

44 See Figure 5 lines 9–10.

吾以漢安元年五月一日從漢始皇帝王神氣受道，以五斗米為信，欲令可仙之士，皆得升度……吾從太上老君，周行八極。<sup>45</sup>

I received the Dao on the first of May in the year 142 CE from the spiritual breath of the emperor at the beginning of the Han Dynasty, taking five pecks of rice as a sign of my faith. I hope to let those who are capable of transcendence to attain deliverance ... I follow the Supreme Lord Lao as he travels throughout the world.

It also says: “It was entrusted to our master of the Dao, Lord Lao the Supreme, to seek judgements on former matters” 委託師道老君太上，推論舊事。<sup>46</sup> We can thus see the Way of Five Pecks of Rice was already using the title Supreme Lord Lao.

The beginning of the *Rules and Tenets for Families of the Great Dao* says: “The Dao is conferred by way of its profound breath, which has three colors, and they are related to the mysterious, primal, and original breath” 道授以微氣，其色有三，玄元始氣是也。<sup>47</sup> It also says: “One who wants to establish the twenty-four parishes should distribute the mysterious, primal, and original breath in order to govern the people” 要立二十四治，分布玄元始氣治民。<sup>48</sup> The phrase “mysterious and primal” also appeared during this time and continued to be used thereafter. Among the newly discovered “tomb contracts” (*maidì quan* 買地券) by Liu Ji 劉翹, written in the third year of the Yongming 永明 reign period of the Southern Qi Dynasty 南齊 (i.e., 485 CE), we see:

太上老君符勅天一地二孟仲四季黃神后土土皇土祖土營土府……一如泰清玄元上三天無極大神太上老君陛下之青詔書律令。<sup>49</sup>

The Supreme Lord Lao used talismans on the Heavenly One, the Earthly Two, the first and middle months, the four seasons, the Yellow Spirit, the Sovereign Earth, the Earth Spirit, the Earth Ancestor, the Earth Barrack, the Earth Bureau ... this is akin to the Great Clarity and Primal Mystery of the Three Heavens whose limitless Great Spirit is that of the Supreme Lord Lao and reflects the laws and decrees of Your Majesty's imperial edict.

45 *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 238.

46 *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 238.

47 *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 235.

48 *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 236.

49 Guo Moruo, “You Wang Xie muzhi de chutu lundao *Lanting xu de zhenwei*,” 21.

We can see that the designations Primal Mystery and Supreme Lord Lao were already widely used in the Southern Dynasties period. Indeed, Emperor Gaozong used the reign title Supreme Primal Mystery and its origin comes from this. Primal Mystery and Supreme are actually from the Way of Five Pecks of Rice. Furthermore, Primal Mystery is the primal breath used to govern the people. The *Yangping zhi* says: “From the first emperor of the Han Dynasty, those having a spiritual breath received the Dao and used five pecks of rice as an offering” 從漢始皇帝王神氣受道，以五斗米為信。<sup>50</sup> What is called the “spiritual breath of the first emperor” is actually the “kingly breath” from which the Dao originates. On the meaning of “kingly breath,” as it was of such great importance, the Way of Five Pecks of Rice used it to establish their teachings, thus the *Xiang'er* cautions against harming the kingly breath. Knowing the operation of the great Dao, that it must be nourished by kingly breath, as does a person's self-cultivation, not impairing the kingly breath is especially important.

## 8 A Brief Record of Daoist Writings Citing the *Xiang'er Commentary*

The only catalogue containing a record of the *Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi* is the preface to Lu Deming's *Textual Explanations of Classics and Canons*. Lu Deming writes: “*Xiang Yu* 想余, in 2 scrolls. Author unknown. One account says it is by Zhang Lu, another says it is by Liu Biao 劉表. *Yu* 余 is a scribal error of *Er* 爾.” The *Catalogue of Texts Missing from the Daoist Canon* (*Daozang quejing mulu* 道藏闕經目錄) lists a *Xiang'er Commentary to Laozi's Daodejing* (*Xiang'er zhu Laozi Dadejing* 想爾注老子道德經), in 2 scrolls,<sup>51</sup> and that is all. However, since the Wei Dynasty, there have been many Daoist works mentioning the *Xiang'er*.

Knowing that the “*Xiang'er*” has spread widely since the Wei Dynasty, I will discuss four points:

**Title:** Some works merely refer to the text as the *Xiang'er*, which conforms to the records of Dunhuang. Others call it the *Xiang'er Commentary*, or *Teachings of Xiang'er*. The words “commentary” and “teaching” are later additions.

**Author:** The name of the author is largely overlooked, such as when Sun Simiao bluntly refers to the work as the *Xiang'er*. However, the *Commentary*

50 *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 238.

51 *Jingdian shiwen huijiao*, 1.27.



and *Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts* states: “Master Xi fabricated the *Xiang'er*.”<sup>52</sup> The *Dongzhen taishang taixiao langshu* also says “Master Xi’s *Xiang'er*.”<sup>53</sup> It is the preface to Lu Deming’s *Textual Explanations of Classics and Canons* that first speaks of [the author] either being Zhang Lu or Liu Biao.<sup>54</sup> Master Xi, however, is none other than Zhang Lu. Du Guangting says: “The commentary was by the Master of Three Heavens, Zhang Daoling.”<sup>55</sup> Shi Falin, in his “Discerning the Correct,” cites now-lost passages of Zhang Daoling’s commentary to the *5,000-Character Classic*, which indicates people in the Tang Dynasty believed Zhang Daoling was the author of the *Xiang'er*.<sup>56</sup> The text should be attributed to Zhang Daoling but it was completed by Master Xi, Zhang Lu. The *Xiang'er* took the *5,000-Character Classic* as its base text, which is the same as Zhang Lu’s ancient edition of the *Daodejing* in 5,000 characters determined by Master Xi. These matters perfectly coincide.

**Precepts:** The *Xiang'er* has precepts and instructions. Precepts that are terse are called the *Nine Precepts of Xiang'er*, a name already seen in Master Song’s *Meaning of the Twelve Categories*.<sup>57</sup> The *Taishang Laojun jing lü* indicates it is the *Precepts of Xiang'er’s Revered Scripture of Dao and De* 道德尊經想爾戒.<sup>58</sup> Precepts are included in *Lord Lao’s Great Visualization Diagram* and are referred to as nine actions.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, there is the *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Xiang'er* and Zhang Wanfu wrote its catalogue which is the so-called “essential precepts of the three orders,” alternatively known as the *Precepts of Xiang'er’s Revered Scripture of Dao and De* and *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Lord Lao*.<sup>60</sup>

**Lost Texts:** There is only one known example, that cited by Shi Falin in his “Discerning the Correct.”

52 *Chuanshou jing jie yi zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 170.

53 *Dongzhen taishang taixiao langshu*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 33: 666.

54 *Jingdian shōwen huijiao*, 1.27.

55 Du Guangting, *Daode zhenjing guang shengyi*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 14: 309.

56 Shi Falin, “Bianzheng lun,” in *Guang Hongmingji*, 13.189.

57 See Pelliot Catalogue 3001 recto, *Dunhuang baozang*, 125: 593.

58 *Taishang Laojun jing lü*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 218.

59 *Taishang Laojun da cunsi tu zhu jue*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 718.

60 *Chuanshou sandong jing jie fa lu lüe shuo*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 32: 184.

## 9 Conclusion

Based on the aforementioned, we can summarize the key points as follows:

1. The *Xiang'er Commentary* was composed by Master Xi (i.e., Zhang Lu) but attributed to Zhang Daoling.
2. There should be nine precepts listed at the beginning of the *Xiang'er Commentary*.
3. The *Xiang'er* text, after becoming a scripture, was recorded as a work of 5,000 characters.
4. The *Xiang'er* text became the *5000-Character Classic* yet it is the same as the edition by Master Xi (i.e., Zhang Lu)
5. The *Xiang'er* and Lord Lao's *Great Visualization Diagram* complement one another.
6. The *Xiang'er Commentary* and *Twenty-Seven Precepts of Xiang'er* were received by the Preceptor of Eminent Mystery.

Regarding the position of the *Xiang'er* in the history of Daoist religion, it was widely read and proved highly influential. The term "*Xiang'er*" was also alluded to in, for example, works of poetry. The first poem of the *Gaoshang taixiao langshu qiongwendi zhang jing* 高上太霄琅書瓊文帝章經 says the following:

棄去雲外念，專一守黃寧。披誦大霄章，三關自當明。玄降徘徊輦，虛遣飛霞駟。九天雖玄遐，妙想安爾形。<sup>61</sup>

Abandon thoughts beyond the clouds, focus on guarding the yellow serenity. Display and read the section on the great rains, and the three passes will make themselves clear. Mysteriously the hovering royal carriage descends, flying into the emptiness of rosy clouds goes the curtained carriage. Although the nine Heavens are mysterious and distant, marvelous thoughts bring peace to your form.

This is an example of "*Xiang'er*" being used by a classicist; I note it here to conclude this chapter.

61 *Gaoshang taixiao langshu qiongwendi zhang jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 1: 890–91.

## Four Points on the *Xiang'er Commentary*

Hu Daojing's 胡道靜 *An Opinion on the Third Supplement to the Daoist Canon* (*Sanxu Daozang chuyi* 三續道藏芻議) writes: "The new commentary and annotations should be paid attention to. For example, the *Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi* is a text discovered at Dunhuang and when it was first revealed, it would have been arranged and recorded but the edition edited by Jao Tsung-i, which was systematized through his textual research, is particularly admirable. Thus, to take Jao Tsung-i's edition as the base text is to kill two birds with one stone."<sup>1</sup> In the Daoist religion section of the *Encyclopedia of China*, the entry on the *Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi* reads: "It is a classic of Daoist religion. The complete title is *Lord Lao's Daodejing and Teachings of Xiang'er* (*Laojun Daodejing Xiang'er xun* 老君道德經想爾訓). According to the *Annotations on the Outer Commentary to the True Classic of Dao and De* compiled by the Tang Dynasty emperor Xuanzong, Du Guangting's *General Meaning of the True Classic of Dao and De*, and other Daoist texts from the Song Dynasty, the *Xiang'er* was written by Zhang Daoling. Only the *Commentary and Instructions for the Transmission of Scriptures and Precepts* believes it was by Zhang Lu."<sup>2</sup> This follows the old theory of the Tang and Song Dynasties. Wang Jiayou's 王家祐 *Zhang Daoling and Celestial Masters Daoism* (*Zhangling yu Tianshi Dao* 張陵與天師道) says: "The only work by Zhang Daoling extant today is the Dunhuang manuscript entitled *Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi*. Most of the words of the *Xiang'er* match those of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, hence it should be a classic belonging to Celestial Masters Daoism. For example, what the *Xiang'er* says about the genuine Dao, depraved writings, and tenets of the Dao, are not as good as learning how to guard life using the central harmony of the Dao, a notion taken from the *Scripture of Great Peace* but which is likely Zhang Daoling's explanation."<sup>3</sup> Xie Xiangrong 謝祥榮, in his "How to Interpret the *Xiang'er Commentary* to the *Laozi* as Religious Theology," (*Xiang'er zhu zenyang jie Laozi wei zongjiao shenxue* 想爾注怎樣解老子為宗教神學) discusses the *Xiang'er Commentary* and its altering of the *Laozi* by personifying and deifying the latter's concept of the Dao while changing its perspective from that of the Dao to the One. Xie Xiangrong also thinks the

1 Hu Daojing, "Si lun *Xiang'er zhu*," 202.

2 "Daozang," *Zongjiao xue yanjiu*, 2 (1983): 23.

3 Hu Daojing, "Si lun *Xiang'er zhu*," 202.

*Xiang'er Commentary* portrays the Dao of longevity of life and enduring vision as a world of the transcendents while admitting that Zhang Daoling's *Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi* offers a mystical and religious interpretation of the *Laozi's* philosophy. We can thus see that the *Xiang'er Commentary* occupies an important position in the history of Daoist religion.<sup>4</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary* is the result of Zhang Daoling and the Celestial Masters and this conclusion is now unanimously accepted.

Japanese scholars treat this issue from two perspectives: Ōfuchi Ninji's "Regarding the Teaching Style of the Way of Five Pecks of Rice: Focusing on the *Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi*" (Guanyu wudoumi Dao zhi jiaofa; yi Laozi Xiang'er zhu wei zhongxin 關於五斗米道之教法：以老子想爾注為中心) confirms it is a classic written by the Celestial Masters. There are, however, those who disagree. Recently, Kusuyama Haruki 楠山春樹 and Mugitani Kunio 麥谷邦夫 have published papers with the title "On the *Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi*" (Lun Laozi Xiang'er zhu 論老子想爾注) wherein they examine the text based on its vocabulary and content, while also discussing the "*dajia ling jie* 大家令戒" in reference to Yang Lien-sheng's 楊聯陞 theory and conclude it was written in the late Wei Dynasty, not the early Wei Dynasty when the Cao 曹 family ruled.<sup>5</sup> This is a rather controversial claim. Mugitani Kunio also wrote a book entitled *Concordance to the Xiang'er Commentary to the Laozi* (*Laozi Xiang'er zhu suoyin* 老子想爾注索引) which sequences each sentence such that there is even more material available to serve as an exegetical wing to the *Xiang'er*. To only say the *Xiang'er Commentary* is a work from the 4th to 5th centuries is a very biased argument and must be corrected.<sup>6</sup>

Mugitani Kunio believes the "breath of the Dao" became an established concept in the Eastern Jin Dynasty, in the states of Qi 齊 and Liang 梁, and that the teachings of Daoist religion promote the idea that the Dao and primal breath are identical in nature. He also presents a new theory of the breath of the Dao and amongst his evidence, the oldest material comes from scroll 8 of *Magnifying and Clarifying Buddhism* (*Hongming ji* 弘明集) in which Dhyāna Master Sengshun 僧順 replies to a Daoist priest's false claim that Zhang Rong 張融 in the "On the Three Destructions" (*Sanpo lun* 三破論) said "the Dao is breath." Additionally, in the "On the Elimination of Doubts" (*Miehuo lun* 滅惑論), Liu Xie 劉勰 cites the "On the Three Destructions," saying "the Dao takes breath as its ancestor." What is more, Mugitani argues that concepts such as the breath of virtue (*deqi* 德氣), breath of humaneness (*renqi* 仁氣), breath of

4 Xie Xiangrong, "Xiang'er zhu zenyang jie Laozi wei zongjiao shenxue," 17, 20, 27.

5 Kusuyama Haruki, "Rōshi Sōjichū kō," 240. Mugitani Kunio, "Rōshi Sōjichū ni tsuite," 99.

6 Mugitani Kunio, *Rōshi Sōjichū sakuin* 老子想爾注索引, Kyoto: Hōyū shoten, 1985.

righteousness (*yiqi* 義氣), and breath of ritual (*liqi* 禮氣) appeared much later on. Since the Qin and Han dynasties, examples of the “breath of the Dao” seen in the classics cannot be used to explore its origin, hence there are extremely strange theories about it.

The dawn of the “breath of the Dao” theory seems to have begun in the Jixia 稷下 area of the state of Qi and was promoted by the Huang-Lao tradition. Reaching the Eastern Han Dynasty, Confucianism and Daoism blended together and became peppered with apocryphal texts, constituting the theory of “primal breath.” Arriving at the *Scripture of Great Peace*, this theory had been developed to the extreme. Here is a brief outline of its development:

### 1 The Jixia Academy and the Theory of Essence and Breath

The language of the “Neiye” 內業 and “Xinshu” 心術 chapters of the *Guanzi* 管子 share many similarities. Guo Moruo 郭沫若 has compared them and believes the “Xinshu” chapter is a duplicate of the “Neiye” chapter and they are presumed to be the posthumous theory of the School of Song Jian 宋鉞 and Yinwen 尹文.<sup>7</sup> The following examples are from the “Neiye” chapter:

精也者，氣之精者也。氣，道乃生，生乃思，思乃知。<sup>8</sup>

As for essence, it is the essence of breath. When there is breath, the Dao creates life; with life there is thought and with thought there is knowledge.

民氣杲乎如登於天……是故此氣也，不可止以力而可安以德。<sup>9</sup>

The breath of the people is brilliant, as if mounting Heaven ... hence there is this breath which cannot be stopped with effort but can be secured with virtue.

善氣迎人，親於弟兄；惡氣迎人，害於戎兵。<sup>10</sup>

To welcome others with good breath, they will become closer than one's own brothers; to welcome other with evil breath, they will become more harmful than a weapon.

7 Guo Moruo, “Song Jian Yinwen yizhu kao,” 553, 564.

8 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 16.937.

9 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 16.931.

10 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 16.943.

搏氣如神，萬物備存。<sup>11</sup>

Concentrate your breath to the level of the spiritual and the myriad things will be complete within you.

思之而不通，鬼神將通之，非鬼神之力也，精氣之極也。<sup>12</sup>

Think about it and if you cannot penetrate it, ghosts and spirits will help you penetrate it; this is not because of the effort of ghosts and spirits, but the ultimacy of their essence and breath.

And,

靈氣在心，一來一逝，其細無內，其大無外。<sup>13</sup>

The numinous breath in the heart-mind arrives at one moment and departs the next; it is so fine that nothing lies within it and so vast that nothing lies outside it.

On “When there is breath, the Dao creates life,” Yin Zhizhang 尹知章 comments: “When breath acquires the Dao, it can produce life” 氣得道，能有生。<sup>14</sup> To establish this, the “Neiye” chapter says:

凡道，無根無莖，無葉無榮，萬物以生，萬物以成。命之曰道。<sup>15</sup>

The Dao is without root and stalk, without leaves and flowers, yet it creates the myriad things and is that by which the myriad things are made complete. Forced to name it, it is called the Dao.

The Dao is born from breath and breath has the glorious names of essence, breath, and numinous breath. The grasping of breath lies in its manipulation and this is what makes the myriad things complete. The later theory used by Mugitani Kunio—“The Dao takes breath as its ancestor”<sup>16</sup>—is not as incisive as this one, thus we can surmise “the breath of the Dao” must be a derivative of this. In the *Yijing*, the *Xici* 繫辭 says: “Essence and breath forming things,” 精氣為物<sup>17</sup> and “With essence and correct principles one enters the spiritual”

11 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 16.943.

12 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 16.943.

13 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 16.950.

14 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 16.937.

15 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 16.937.

16 Mugitani Kunio, “Rōshi Sōjichū ni tsuite,” 77.

17 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 7.313.

精義入神。<sup>18</sup> These, and other examples, are also related to this. Clues about the Daoist concepts of essence, breath, spirit, and so forth, can be found in the state of Qi's study of "inner training" (*neiyè* 內業), hence the origin of this concept is old indeed.

## 2 The State of Chu and the Theory of Proper Breath and Primal Breath

Qu Yuan's poem "Distant Wandering" (*Yuanyou* 遠遊) says:

內惟省以端操兮，還應正氣之所由。<sup>19</sup>

Looking into myself to correct my conduct, I search for the source of proper breath.

保神明之清澄兮，精氣入而粗穢除。<sup>20</sup>

Protect the clear serenity of spiritual illumination, allow subtle breath to enter but the crude and defiled is purged.

And,

道可受兮，不可傳……壹氣孔神兮，於中夜存；虛以待之兮，無以為先。<sup>21</sup>

The Dao can be received but not transmitted ... unify the breath and concentrate the spirit, preserving them at midnight by waiting in emptiness and not taking any prior action.

In the *Mencius* 孟子, the first of two chapters on Gaozi 告子 states: "If the fetters are repeated, the night breath will not be enough to preserve it" 梏之反覆，則夜氣不足以存。<sup>22</sup> The night breath (*yeqi* 夜氣) is what Qu Yuan meant when speaking of unifying the breath and preserving it at midnight. If the night breath cannot be preserved then a person will be no different from birds and beasts. Midnight is the best time for gathering breath because the night breath naturally contains the proper sentiments for protecting and awaiting

18 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 8,358.

19 *Chuci buzhu*, 5,164.

20 *Chuci buzhu*, 5,166.

21 *Chuci buzhu*, 5,167. Also see Tu Youguang, "Lun Qu Yuan de jingqi shuo," 183.

22 *Mengzi zhushu*, 11B,359.

the clear illumination of proper breath (*zhengqi* 正氣). The doctrines of Qu Yuan and Mencius are thus related, which is also what the “Xinshu” chapter of the *Guanzi* means when it speaks of unifying the breath in: “The unified breath that can change is called essence” 一氣能變曰精.<sup>23</sup> Qu Yuan was an emissary of the state of Qi and his theory can be said to come from the gentlemen of the Jixia Academy. The “Guan” 觀 chapter of the “Ten Great Classics” (*Shi da jing* 十大經) section of the *Four Classics of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi Sijing* 黃帝四經) says: “The long night breath obstructs pregnancy, so take advantage of it” 長夜氣閉地繩者，所以繼之也.<sup>24</sup> The *Books of the Yellow Emperor* (*Huangdi shu* 黃帝書) also places great importance on the night breath.

Heguanzi 鶡冠子 was from the state of Chu and avoided the Qin Dynasty taboo on the character *zheng* 政 in his text, which was later labelled a forgery. Modern scholars have tried to rehabilitate it, arguing it was written in the Qin Dynasty. We can see that the theory of primal breath had already taken rudimentary form in the “Huanliu” 環流 chapter of the *Heguanzi*, examples of which are:

有一而有氣，有氣而有意……故氣相加而為時……萬物相加而為勝敗，莫不發於氣，通於道。<sup>25</sup>

There is the One and then breath, there is breath and then meaning ... thus breath mutually adds up to become temporality ... the myriad things mutually add up to become victory and defeat, hence all things issue forth from breath and all are penetrated by the Dao.

空之謂一，無不備之謂道，立之謂氣，通之謂類。<sup>26</sup>

The empty is called the One, the flawless is called the Dao, the established is called breath, and the penetrated are called categories.

The text also says:

陰陽者，氣之正也，天地者，形之正也。<sup>27</sup>

Yin and Yang are the properness of breath; Heaven and Earth are the properness of form.

23 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 13.780.

24 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 152.

25 *Heguanzi jiaozhu*, A.65–67.

26 *Heguanzi jiaozhu*, A.80.

27 *Heguanzi jiaozhu*, B.133.



In the “Tai Lu” 泰錄 chapter, we read:

精微者，天地之始也……故天地成於元氣，萬物乘於天地。<sup>28</sup>

The essence of the subtle, this is the beginning of Heaven and Earth ... thus, Heaven and Earth are completed by the primal breath, and the myriad things ride upon Heaven and Earth.

Reaffirming the meaning of the proper breath, the *Heguanzi* again proposes that Heaven and Earth are completed by the primal breath which the cosmological theory of primal breath then took as its foundation. Everything is the Dao. This is an abstract and difficult notion to understand. Breath is a thing whose existence has a form thus the Dao is established because of breath and issues forth from breath. How is this not the theory of the breath of the Dao?

### 3 Huang-Lao and the Theory of Identical Breath, Profound Breath, and Tyrant Breath

Recently, Li Jiayan 李家彥 in his “*Taiping jing de yuan qi lun*” 太平經的元氣論 said the phrase “primal breath” only appeared in the Western Han Dynasty and was first used by Dong Zhongshu in his *Luxuriant Dew of the Spring and Autumn Annals*: “If the king is proper then the primal breath will resonate harmoniously.” Liu Xin 劉歆 in his *Book on Bell Modes and Tunings* (*Zhonglü shu* 鍾律書) uses the name “primal breath of the Great Ultimate” (*Taiji yuanqi* 太極元氣) and when we reach the time of apocryphal texts (*Wei shu* 緯書), “primal breath” had become a topic of great interest.<sup>29</sup> If the *Heguanzi* is taken to be a work of the Qin Dynasty, then “primal breath” must have already been a common concept at the time.<sup>30</sup> Here, I am speaking of the “Ying Tong” 應同 chapter in the *Master Lü’s Spring and Autumn Annals* which cites the words of the Yellow Emperor: “Vast and obscure, I rely on the awe-inspiring power of Heaven and its primal and identical breath” 芒芒昧昧，因天之威，與元同氣。<sup>31</sup> Gao You’s commentary reads: “Identical breath means it is identical with the primal breath.”<sup>32</sup> This chapter also argues that a person having primal breath will become emperor, a position above the king and tyrant (*ba* 霸).

28 *Heguanzi jiaozhu*, B.242, 244.

29 Li Jiayan, “*Taiping jing de yuanqi lun*,” 11.

30 See Wu Guang 吳光. *Huang Lao zhi xue tonglun*, 158–61: “*Heguanzi yuanqi lun zhi chuxing*,” 175–79: “*Lüshi Chunqiu jingqi shuo*,” 199–203: “*Huainanzi daolun yu qilun*.”

31 *Lüshi chuqiu zhushu*, 13.1288.

32 *Taiping Yulan*, 77.359.

In other words, when *Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals* cites the name "Yellow Emperor" it is referring to the *Books of the Yellow Emperor*. The line "The valley spirit does not die," 谷神不死 comes from the "Tianrui" 天瑞 chapter of the *Liezi* 列子 and is also derived from the *Books of the Yellow Emperor*.<sup>33</sup> They must have had the same source, with "rely on the awe-inspiring power of Heaven" in the old collated version being written "rely on the Dao of Heaven," while the Song Dynasty edition of the *Imperial Overview from the Taiping Reign*, in the section on "Xu Huangwang" 敘皇王 in scroll 77, cites the aforementioned words from *Master Lü's Spring and Autumn Annals*, to which Gao You comments:

芒芒昧昧，廣大貌也，因天之威，無不敗也，與元同氣，無不協也。<sup>34</sup>  
To be vast and obscure is to be extensive in appearance, to rely on the awe-inspiring power of Heaven is to be invincible, and to be with the primal and identical breath is to be without compromise.

Examining the *Huainanzi*, we find:

帝者體太一，王者法陰陽，霸者則四時，君者用六律。<sup>35</sup>  
The supreme ruler embodies the great One, the king models himself after Yin and Yang, the tyrant follows the four seasons, and the prince uses the six pitch pipes.

Elsewhere, the *Huainanzi* states:

同氣者帝，同義者王，同力者亡。<sup>36</sup>  
Who has identical breath becomes supreme ruler, who has identical meaning becomes king, and who has identical power will be destroyed.

From this we can see the three levels are supreme ruler, king, and tyrant. This was a common notion in Daoist political theory from the late Warring States Period through the Qin and Han dynasties. Of the silk texts discovered in the Han Dynasty tomb at Mawangdui 馬王堆, the *Source of the Dao* (*Dao Yuan* 道原) states:

33 *Liezi jishi*, 1.4.

34 *Taiping Yulan*, 77.359.

35 *Huainanzi jishi*, 8.582.

36 *Taiping Yulan*, 77.360.

垣無之初，迴同太虛。虛同為一，恆一而止。濕濕夢夢，未有明晦。神微周盈，精靜不熙。故未有以，萬物莫以；故無有形，大迴無名……莫知其名。人皆用之，莫見其形。一者其號也。<sup>37</sup>

In the beginning there was constant nothingness, a state identical to great emptiness. Being uniformly empty it became the One, and as the perpetual One it stopped. Murky and dreamlike, it was without bright and dark. A spiritual subtlety filling everywhere, its quiet essence was unilluminated. Thus, it did not have existence and the myriad things were yet to be. It was without form and expansive in its namelessness ... none knew its name. People employed it but none could see its form. It was designated the One.

This is the great One embodied by the emperor. When the text says “Murky and dreamlike, it was without bright and dark. Like a subtle spirit filling everywhere,” this indicates the vague and undefined condition of primal breath. The *Dao Yuan*’s description of “great emptiness” (*taixu* 太虛) is actually the great Dao. The *Xiang'er Commentary* says “the One scatters its form as breath”<sup>38</sup> while the *Rules and Tenets for Families of the Great Dao* states: “The Dao aids things with profound breath” 道援以微氣.<sup>39</sup> Profound breath (*weiqi* 微氣) is actually the primal breath of “a spiritual subtlety filling everywhere” seen in the *Dao Yuan* silk text. At the time, Celestial Masters Daoism also transmitted another text, the *Secret Classic* (*Wei jing* 微經).

#### 4 The “Five Elements” Silk Text and the School of Rites’ Theory of the Breath of Benevolence, Breath of Righteousness, and Breath of Ritual

The “You Guan” 幼官 chapter of the *Guanzi* states: “When the breath of righteousness arrives, repair the gates” 義氣至修門閭.<sup>40</sup> This marked the appearance of the term “breath of righteousness” (*yiqi* 義氣).

Among the silk texts unearthed at Mawangdui is one entitled *The Five Elements* (*Wuxing* 五行). In it we read:

37 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 189.

38 See Figure 5 line 9.

39 *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiao jie ke jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 18: 235.

40 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 3:147.

變也者，勉也，仁氣也。直也者，直其中心也，義氣也。遠心也者，禮氣也。<sup>41</sup>

Change requires effort and this is the breath of benevolence. Uprightness requires being upright in one's heart-mind and this is the breath of righteousness. Having a distant heart-mind is the breath of ritual.

The text also says:

知君子所道而嫻然安之者，仁氣也……既安之矣，愜然行之，義氣也……既行之矣，又愜愜然敬之者，禮氣也。<sup>42</sup>

To know the Dao of the gentlemen and be warmly put at ease by it, this is the breath of benevolence ... To be at ease and directly take action, this is the breath of righteousness ... To take action while blushing in a respectful manner, this is the breath of ritual.

As for the breaths of benevolence and righteousness, the School of Rites (*Liji* 禮家) in the Han Dynasty also spoke of them. The “Xiang Yinjiu Yi” 鄉飲酒義 chapter of the *Book of Rites* states:

天地嚴凝之氣，始於西南而盛於西北，此天地之尊嚴氣也；此天地之義氣也。<sup>43</sup>

The rigorous and icy breath of Heaven and Earth begins in the south-west and fills the north-west. This is the revered and rigorous breath of Heaven and Earth, the breath of righteousness of Heaven and Earth.

天地溫厚之氣，始於東北而盛於東南，此天地之盛德氣也；此天地之仁氣也。<sup>44</sup>

The warm and generous breath of Heaven and Earth begins in the north-east and fills the south-east. This is the abundant breath of virtue of Heaven and Earth, the breath of benevolence of Heaven and Earth.

To divide Heaven and Earth into two kinds of breath is to distinguish the positions of host and guest. The text goes on to say:

41 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 75.

42 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 86.

43 *Liji zhengyi*, 61.1901.

44 *Liji zhengyi*, 61.1901.

……而坐介於西南以輔賓，賓者接人以義者也，故坐於西北。<sup>45</sup>

[The host] ... has his attendant sit on the south-west in order to assist his guest. The guest is to be treated by others with righteousness, thus he sits on the north-west.

主人者，接人以德厚者也，故坐於東南。而坐僕於東北，以輔主人也。<sup>46</sup>

The host treats others with virtue and generosity, hence he sits on the south-east. However, his attendant is seated on the north-east in order to assist the host.

This is to use the breaths of benevolence and righteousness to distinguish the position of host and guest. Rituals are in harmony with Heaven and Earth and are identical with the primal breath, thus primal breath mixes with ritual to distinguish the breaths of benevolence and righteousness. This is how the School of Rites refers to the theory of primal breath. In addition, the “Cijie Zhenxie” 刺節真邪 chapter of the *Numinous Pivot* (*Lingshu jing* 靈樞經) also speaks of the breath of virtue, the genuine breath (*zhenqi* 真氣), the proper breath, and so forth.<sup>47</sup>

## 5 The Scripture of Great Peace's Theory of Preserving the Primal Breath and Wang Fu's Theory of the Breath of the Dao

The “Biography of Li Xun 李尋” in the *History of the Han Dynasty* states: “Gan Zhongke 甘忠可 from the state of Qi presented the *Scripture of Embracing the Primal and Great Peace* (*Baoyuan Taiping jing* 包元太平經), in 12 scrolls, to Emperor Chengdi 漢成帝,”<sup>48</sup> which was the predecessor of the *Scripture of Great Peace* but, unfortunately, this text is no longer extant. What is called “embracing the primal” (*baoyuan* 包元) is to “enfold the primal breath” (*baoguo yuanqi* 包裹元氣).<sup>49</sup> In the *Scripture of Great Peace* we frequently see similar expressions, such as: “The primal breath enfolds the eight directions of Heaven and Earth” 元氣迺包裹天地八方;<sup>50</sup> and “Enfold the primal breath, nature, and Heaven and Earth, and in all matters the Three Harmonies will

45 *Liji zhengyi*, 61.1901.

46 *Liji zhengyi*, 61.1901.

47 *Lingshu jing*, 11.8a.

48 *Han shu*, 75.3192.

49 Li Jiayan, “*Taiping jing de yuanqi lun*,” 11.

50 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 40.78.

be interconnected” 右包裹元氣自然、天地，凡事三合相通。<sup>51</sup> The theory of the Three Harmonies was already seen in the “Tian Wen” chapter of the *Songs of Chu*, which I have already discussed. The phrase “primal breath” in the “Tianwen” chapter of the *Huainanzi* was already taken to be the origin of the universe, which scroll 1 of the Song Dynasty edition of the *Imperial Overview from the Taiping Reign*, in the entry on primal breath, cites as follows:

《淮南子》：道始生虛霏，虛霏生宇宙，宇宙生元氣，有涯垠清陽者薄劑而為天。<sup>52</sup>

The *Huainanzi* says: The Dao was first born in a vast emptiness, vast emptiness gave birth to the universe, the universe gave birth to the primal breath, and a boundary divided this pure Yang such that it spread forth to produce Heaven.

The edition of the *Huainanzi* extant today only writes “the universe gave birth to breath,” the character *yuan* 元 (primal) being absent.<sup>53</sup> Liu Xin explained the yellow bell (*huangzhong* 黃鍾) as: “Yellow is the color of centrality, thus yellow is the name of the primal breath.”<sup>54</sup> The apocryphal text *Chart to Open Mountains using the Hidden Shield* (*Dun jia kai shan tu* 遁甲開山圖) also speaks of the primal breath, such as when the Great Spirit (*chenling* 巨靈) “along with the primal breath simultaneously gave birth to chaos” and “the people of Lishan scattered the primal breath, each giving birth to an order that generated the mountains and valleys.”<sup>55</sup>

In the “Benxun” 本訓 chapter of his *Comments of a Recluse* (*Qianfu lun* 潛夫論), Wang Fu 王符 says:

上古之世，太素之時，元氣窈冥，未有形兆，萬精合併，混而為一……和氣生人，以統理之。是故天本諸陽，地本諸陰，人本中和。<sup>56</sup>

In high antiquity, the time of great simplicity, the primal breath was remote and obscure, not yet having form but comprising myriad essences that merged and intermixed to become one ... The harmonious breath gave birth to humans who then managed it. Thus, Heaven takes as its root the various modes of Yang, Earth takes as its root the various modes of Yin, and humans take as their root central harmony.

51 *Taiping jing hejiao*, 48.156.

52 *Taiping Yulan*, 1.1.

53 *Huainanzi jishi*, 3.166.

54 *Taiping Yulan*, 1.1.

55 *Taiping Yulan*, 1.1.

56 *Qianfu lun jian jiaozheng*, 32.365–66.

是故道德之用，莫大於氣。道者，氣之根也。氣者，道之使也。必有其根，其氣乃生，必有其使，變化乃成。<sup>57</sup>

Thus, when it comes to the usefulness of the Dao and its virtue, nothing is more important than breath. The Dao is the source of breath and breath is the envoy of the Dao. There must be a source if breath is to be born, just as there must be an envoy if transformations are to succeed.

天之尊也，氣裂之，地之大也氣動之，山之重也，氣徙之，水之流也，氣絕之，日月神也，氣蝕之，星辰虛也，氣殞之……莫不氣之所為也。以此觀之，氣運感動，亦誠大矣，變化之為，何物不能，所變也神，氣之所動也。當此之時，正氣所加，非唯於人，百穀草木，禽獸魚鼈，皆口養其氣。<sup>58</sup>

Heaven is revered but breath divides it, Earth is large but breath moves it, mountains are heavy but breath relocates them, water flows but breath interrupts it, the sun and moon are spiritual but breath eclipses them, the stars are empty but breath makes them vanish ... all of these are done by the breath. Seen in this way, the movement of breath affects things, is sincere in its greatness such that things cannot but change and transform, yet what changes is spiritual and this is due to the movement of breath. At this time, the proper breath adds up but it is not for humans alone; the hundred kinds of grain, plants, trees, birds, beasts, fish, and tortoises, all use their orifices to nourish this breath.

The discussion of this text is from primal breath to harmonious breath to proper breath. This indicates the Dao is the source of breath and breath is the envoy of the Dao, not to mention the reverse effects breath has on the universe, and that breath manifests all changes. This text is merely a brief description of the breath of the Dao (*Dao qi* 道氣).

From the above, we can see the relationship between the Dao and breath that, since the *Guanzi*, has evolved into a theory of the breath of the Dao.<sup>59</sup> The *Xiang'er Commentary* simply inherited it.

57 *Qianfu lun jian jiaozheng*, 32.367.

58 *Qianfu lun jian jiaozheng*, 32.368–69.

59 See Cheng Yishan 程宜山, *Zhongguo gudai yuanqi xueshuo* 中國古代元氣學說.

## 6 The Early Han Mawangdui Recipe for Nourishing Life and the Theory of Contracting Breath as the Root of Zhang Daoling's Thought

As for sayings about men and women combining their breath (*heqi* 合氣) and the false arts of sexual practice, these were not topics of later historical discussion. In the Han Dynasty, people frequently spoke of men and women combining their breath. For example, the “Wushi” 物勢 chapter of the *Balanced Discourses* says:

儒者論曰：天地故生人。此言妄也。夫天地合氣，人偶自生也，猶夫婦合氣，子則自生也。夫婦合氣，非當時欲得生子，情欲動而合，合而生子矣。<sup>60</sup>

The Confucians claim that Heaven and Earth deliberately created humans. This saying is reckless. When Heaven and Earth combined their breath, humans were accidentally born of themselves, which is similar to when a husband and wife combine their breath, children are born of themselves. When husband and wife combine their breath, it is not that they desire to give birth to children, but that the merging of their emotions and desires results in children being born.

In the “Ziran” 自然 chapter of the text, we read:

天地合氣，萬物自生，猶夫婦合氣，子自生矣。<sup>61</sup>

Heaven and Earth combine their breath and the myriad things are born of themselves. This is similar to when a husband and wife combine their breath and children are born of themselves.

Wang Zhongren 王仲任 maintains the theory of accidental creation. He believes the generation of human beings by Heaven and Earth is purely by chance, which is analogous to when a husband and wife combine their breath, children are born of themselves. Thus, we know husband and wife combining their breath was, since the time of the Qin and Han dynasties, an expression frequently used by specialists of sexual practice. When it comes to the section in the “Discerning the Correct” that cites Zhang Daoling—“There is a method of equilibrium between men and women that uses the three, five, seven, and nine method of sexual practice. The true instruction of the method exists in

60 *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 3.144.

61 *Lunheng jiaoshi*, 18.775.



the cinnabar field, and the cinnabar field is the jade gate<sup>62</sup>—it again shows the ancient roots of this theory. The *Recipe for Life-Nourishment* (*Yangsheng fang* 養生方) discovered in tomb 3 of Mawangdui contains headings such as “Removing the Centre to Benefit Breath” (*chu zhong yi qi* 除中益氣), and “Governing Power” (*zhi li* 治力),<sup>63</sup> which speaks of recipes on “blackening the hair to benefit breath” (*heifa yi qi* 黑髮益氣),<sup>64</sup> “benefitting power” (*yi li* 益力), and “respectfully removing the evil breath within one’s breast” (*jing chu xin-xiong zhong eqi* 敬除心胸中惡氣).<sup>65</sup> Another recipe whose title is now lost says:

有氣則生，無氣則死……問□□男女之齊至相當毋傷於身者若何？答曰：益生者食也，損生者色也，是以聖人必有法則。<sup>66</sup>

To have breath is to be born, to not have breath is to die ... How can [...] equalize the strength of men and women without harming their bodies? Answer: What benefits life is food, what injures life is beauty, hence the sages must have their models.

Below are some examples used by specialists of sexual practice mentioned in the bamboo-slip texts (*zhujian* 竹簡) *Combining Yin and Yang* (*He Yin Yang* 合陰陽) and *Discussing the Ultimate Way in the World* (*Tianxia zhi Dao tan* 天下至道談) that were also discovered in tomb 3 and speak of the “ten postures” (*shi shi* 十勢), “eight ways” (*ba Dao* 八道), and so forth. Furthermore, the *Recipe for Life-Nourishment* mentions “oral communication” (*kouyu* 口語), stating: “If I desire to combine the breath, then men and women will flourish. What should I do about this? Shaohe said: All ways of combining the breath must ... (text is missing).”<sup>67</sup> Within this text we see the art of combining the breath was already freely discussed. The bamboo-slip text *Ten Questions* (*Shi wen* 十問), discovered in the same tomb, frequently speaks of the jade lock (*yubi* 玉閉) but this should be the jade gate mentioned by Zhang Daoling. The text preserves a number of examples pertaining to sexual practice, a few of which are:

黃帝問於曹熬曰：……曹（曰）侍彼合氣，而微動其形……長生之稽，貞用玉閉，玉閉時辟，神明來積。積必見章，玉閉堅精，必使玉

62 Shi Falin, “Bianzheng lun,” in *Guang Hongmingji*, 13:189.

63 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 37.

64 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 55.

65 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 56.

66 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 61–62.

67 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 63.

泉毋傾，則百疾弗嬰，故能長生。接陰之道，必心塞葆，形氣相葆……（此為）曹熬之接陰治神氣之道。<sup>68</sup>

The Yellow Emperor asked Cao Ao: ... Cao Ao said: Serve it by combining its breath and subtly moving its form ... the way to reach longevity of life involves faithfully using the jade lock, for when the jade lock is open, spiritual clarity occurs and amasses. In amassing, its manifestations are seen and the jade lock strengthens its essence, yet one must not let the jade spring leak out. Doing so, the hundred diseases will not bother you and longevity of life can be had. As for the Dao of Yin, it must fill the heart-mind and be retained there so that form and breath depend on one another ... this is Cao Ao's way of receiving Yin and managing the spiritual breath.

黃帝問於容成曰：……容成答曰：……翕氣之道，必致之末，精生而不厥。上下皆精，寒溫安生？息必深而久，新氣易守。宿氣為老，新氣為壽。善治氣者，使宿氣夜散，新氣朝聚，以澈九微而實六府。<sup>69</sup>

The Yellow Emperor questioned Rong Cheng, saying: ... Rong Cheng replied: ... the Dao of contracting the breath requires it first reach the extreme if essence is to be born without any deficiency. If what is above and below are pure essence, from where are cold and warm born? Breathing must be deep and prolonged so that the new breath is easy to embrace. Old breath belongs to agedness while new breath belongs to longevity. One who is good at governing the breath lets old breath scatter during the night and new breath assemble in the morning. This is to penetrate the nine apertures and fill the six viscera.

堯問於舜曰：……舜曰：……必鹽之而勿予，必樂矣而勿瀉，材將積，氣將褚，行年百歲，賢於往者。舜之接陰治氣之道。<sup>70</sup>

Yao questioned Shun, saying: ... Shun said: ... one must know when to stop and not yield, must take joy in it and not drain it. If the resource amasses and the breath is stored, having reached the age of 100, one will be more worthy than before. This is Shun's way of receiving Yin and governing the breath.

68 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 142.

69 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 143.

70 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 146.

王子巧父問彭祖曰：人氣何是為精虛？彭祖答曰：人氣莫如媮精。媮氣宛閉，百脈生疾；竣氣不成，不能繁生……必先吐陳，乃翕竣氣，與竣通息，與竣飲食，飲食完竣，如養赤子。赤子驕悍數起，慎勿出入，以脩美理，帖白內成，何病之有？彼生有央，必其陰精漏泄，百脈宛廢……巫成招□□不死。<sup>71</sup>

Wangzi Qiao asked Pengzu: Which of the breaths of humanity are refined? Pengzu replied: There is no human breath more refined than the essence of male genitalia. If the breath of male genitalia becomes bent and obstructed, the hundred blood vessels will give birth to disease; if the mature breath of the genitalia is incomplete, it cannot produce life ... one must first eject the stale breath before contracting the mature such that the latter penetrates one's breathing and permeates one's drink and food. Drink and food help complete the mature breath in a manner similar to the way one nourishes the red child. The red child is complacent and fierce, arising repeatedly, but one must refrain from forcibly using it or allowing it to cultivate the beautiful. If the revolving whiteness within is complete, how can one become ill? The disasters one encounters in life must be due to the leakage of Yin essence, the hundred blood vessels becoming crooked and wasted ... Wu Chengshao [...] did not die.

And,

帝盤庚問於耆老曰：聞子接陰以為強，翕天之精，以為壽長，吾將何處而道可行？耆老答曰：……治之有節：一曰垂肢，直脊撓尻；二曰疏股，動陰，縮竅；三曰合走毋聽，翕氣以充腦；四曰含其五味，飲夫泉英；五曰群精皆上，翕其大明。至五而止，精神日怡。耆老妾陰食神氣之道。<sup>72</sup>

Emperor Pan Geng asked a respected elder: I have heard you became strong by receiving the Yin and contracting the essence of Heaven to achieve longevity. What should I do to make this way of yours attainable? The respected elder replied: ... governing it has its orders. The first is called hanging the arms, whereby you straighten your spine and scratch your bottom; the second is called relaxing the thighs, whereby you move the Yin and contract its opening; the third is called rapidly closing the eyes and not listening, whereby you contract the breath in order to enhance the brain; the fourth is called cherishing its five flavors, whereby

71 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 146–47.

72 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 147.

you drink from the spring of essence; the fifth is called the ascending of collective essence, whereby you contract their great luminosity. To stop when reaching the fifth, your spiritual essence will be daily cheerful. This is the respected elder's way of receiving the Yin and nourishing spiritual breath.

The above cited records are all found in the newly published fourth volume of silk texts unearthed at Mawangdui. The "Bibliography of Arts and Letters" in the *History of the Han Dynasty* records eight schools of sexual practice whose writings amount to 186 scrolls. Among them is *The Dao of Yin by Rong Cheng*, in 26 scrolls.<sup>73</sup> The Yellow Emperor's questions to Rong Cheng cited above must, therefore, come from this text. When the *Xiang'er Commentary* speaks of "Rong Cheng's writings,"<sup>74</sup> we can get a general feel for it. The "Bibliography of Arts and Letters" in the *History of the Han Dynasty* also lists *The Dao of Yin by Yao and Shun* 堯舜陰道, in 23 scrolls, and *The Dao of Yin by Tang Panggeng* 湯盤庚陰道, in 26 scrolls.<sup>75</sup> There is also *The Dao of Yin by Wu Chengzi* 務成子陰道, in 36 scrolls,<sup>76</sup> which can be explained by the fact that the pronunciation of Wu Cheng 務成 approximates that of Wu Cheng 巫成, hence we have the legend of Wu Cheng 務成 being called to serve as Shun's master. This story is found in the "Dalüe" 大略 chapter of the *Xunzi*.<sup>77</sup> In the "Tianyun" 天運 chapter of the *Zhuangzi*, Wu Xianshao 巫咸招 says: "Heaven has six poles and five constants."<sup>78</sup> Wu Xianshao is in fact Wu Chengshao 巫成招. The *Ten Questions* states: "Wu Chengshao took the four seasons as his assistant, and Heaven and Earth as his guiding thread" 巫成招以四時為輔，天地為經。<sup>79</sup> Wu Chengshao was an ancient gentleman of the Dao. The text cites Pengzu's words "mature essence and mature breath," but the character *jun* 竣 should be read *juan* 駿. The *Shuowen Dictionary* writes: "*Juan*, the Yin of the red child" 駿，赤子陰也。<sup>80</sup> The *Daodejing* says: "[The child] does not know of the merging of male and female yet its genitalia functions. This is because its essence is at the extreme" 未知牝牡之合而駿作，精之至也。<sup>81</sup> In the *yi* 乙 version of Heshang Gong's

73 *Han shu*, 30.1778.

74 See Figure 4 lines 17–18.

75 *Han shu*, 30.1778.

76 *Han shu*, 30.1778.

77 *Xunzi jijie*, 19.578.

78 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 5C.496.

79 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 143.

80 *Shuowen jiezi*, 4B.90.

81 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 55.221.

text, the “Dejing” 德經 chapter says: “Not knowing the meeting between male and female, [the child’s] genitalia is full of fury” 未知牝牡之會而媵怒，精之至也。<sup>82</sup> We know that Laozi’s theory was in reality based on that by Pengzu 彭祖. The Mawangdui bamboo-slip text *Merging Yin and Yang* 合陰陽 records matters of sexual practice in precise detail, with descriptions of how to govern the breath (*zhi qi* 致氣) and eliminate heat (*shu re* 抒熱), as well as the features of the ten movements (*shi dong* 十動), ten moderations (*shi jie* 十節), ten cultivations (*shi xiu* 十脩), and ten stoppings (*shi yi* 十已).<sup>83</sup> These theories would later become the source of the *Secrets of the Jade Chamber* (*Yufang mijue* 玉房秘訣).<sup>84</sup> The original text still exists so I will not provide further details. The bamboo-slip text was written at the beginning of the Han Dynasty and we can see the origin of the arts of sexual practice had already taken shape prior to the Qin Dynasty.

The Mawangdui bamboo-slip text *Discussing the Ultimate Way in the World* also speaks of the methods of sexual practice and its ideas are similar to those found in the *Ten Questions*. Some examples include:

氣有八益，有七損。不能用八益去七損，則行年四十而陰氣自半也……七十下枯上脫，陰氣不用。<sup>85</sup>

Breath has eight benefits and seven harms. If one does not use the eight benefits to dispel the seven harms, then having lived to the age of 40, the Yin breath will only be reduced by one-half ... having lived to the age of 70, the lower portion of your body will be withered while the upper portion will be separated [from the lower], making the Yin breath unusable.

八益：一曰治氣，二曰致沫，三曰知時，五曰和沫，六曰積氣。<sup>86</sup>

The eight benefits are: one, govern breath; two, produce saliva; three, know the right time; five, harmonize saliva; and six, amass breath.

為而爽脊，翕周，抑下之，曰畜氣。<sup>87</sup>

Do it and then relax your spine, fully contracting and restraining the breath; this is called preserving breath.

82 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 195.

83 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 153.

84 *Yixin fang jiaozhu*, 28.584.

85 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 165.

86 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 166.

87 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 167.

出臥，令人超之，怒釋之，曰積氣。<sup>88</sup>

Go out and lie down, have a person leap across you, then release the breath in a fury; this is called amassing breath.

Within the text are preserved now-lost theories on the methods of sexual practice from the pre-Qin period whose meaning demonstrates “the seven harms and eight benefits can regulate each other, but if one does not know how to use them, they will be on the cusp of early decline” 七損八益二者可調，不知用此，則早衰之節也。<sup>89</sup> This passage is found in the “Yin Yang Yingxiang Dalun” 陰陽應象大論 chapter of the *Basic Questions* (*Suwen* 素問) part of the *Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine* (*Huangdi Neijing* 黃帝內經). The text frequently uses the phrase “Yin breath” (*Yinqi* 陰氣). Observing the record of the “Bibliography of Arts and Letters” in the *History of the Han Dynasty*, books on sexual practice were all named *The Dao of Yin* (*Yin Dao* 陰道) and were also known as the arts of “receiving Yin” (*jie Yin* 接陰). The methods of handling women also include “preserving breath” (*xuqi* 畜氣) and “amassing breath” (*jiqi* 積氣), which indicates an ancient source, thus Zhang Daoling was not the first person to discuss the Dao of sexual practice.

Of the false arts of the world mentioned by the *Xiang'er Commentary*, Haruki Kusuyama believes they point to theories of life-nourishment advocated by the Maoshan 茅山 sect and texts such as the *Scripture of the Yellow Court* and Laozi's *Scripture of the Middle*.<sup>90</sup> Emperor Wen of the Wei Dynasty 魏文帝, in his *Standards for Literature* (*Dian lun* 典論) says: “Xi Jian of the river Ying, Gan Shi of the river Ganling, and Zuo Ci of the river Lu, are all military officials” 潁川郤儉，甘陵甘始，廬江左慈，並為軍吏。<sup>91</sup> Gan Shi and others were able to practice Rong Cheng's art of handling women and so Cao Cao recruited them. Cao Zhi's *Treatise on the Dao* (*Bian Dao lun* 辨道論) states: “The world's masters of methods have all been recruited by my king” 世有方士，吾王悉所招致。<sup>92</sup> This is pointing to Gan Shi and his companions who were contemporaries of Zhang Lu. Why are the false arts of the world not indicated as such but must be applied to the Maoshan sect?

88 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 167.

89 *Huangdi Neijing suwen*, 2.43. Also see Yi Jianchun, “Tianxia zhidao tan ‘qi sun ba yi’ zhushi,” 27.

90 Kusuyama Haruki, “Rōshi Sōjichū kō,” 259.

91 *Hou Han shu*, 82B.2748.

92 *Quan Sanguo wen*, 18.6b, in *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 1151.

According to the aforementioned theories, Mugitani Kunio's views seem correct but are in reality mistaken. His ideas on its later developments are right but he lacked insight into the early stages of its development. He followed the stream but seldom traced it to its source. As we have seen it from different angles, the conclusions are also different. Having explained and discussed it in detail, I will wait for those in the future to come to know it.

# Appendices

## Diagram of the 24 Dioceses

In his commentary to the “Jiutou Ji” 九頭紀 chapter of the *Grand History* (*Lu shi* 路史), Luo Ping 羅莘 cites the *Diagram of the Twenty-Four Dioceses* (*Ershisi zhi tu* 二十四治圖).<sup>1</sup> Zeng Pu 曾樸, in his *Supplement to the “Bibliography of Arts and Letters” of the History of the Later Han* (*Bu Hou Han shu Yiwenzhi* 補後漢書藝文志), believes it was composed by Zhang Daoling.<sup>2</sup> Chapter 18 of the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* says:

按張天師《二十四治圖》云：太上以漢安二年正月七日中時下二十四治，上八治，中八治，下八治，應天二十四氣，合二十八宿，以付天師張道陵，奉行布化。<sup>3</sup>

The Celestial Master Zhang Daoling, in the *Diagram of the Twenty-Four Dioceses*, states: The Supreme, on the seventh day of the first month of the 2nd year of the Han'an reign period of Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty, decreed twenty-four dioceses: Eight upper dioceses, eight middle dioceses, and eight lower dioceses. These correspond to the twenty-four breaths and conform to the twenty-eight Celestial Mansions. The Supreme entrusted them to the Celestial Master Zhang Daoling, who followed his instructions and spread them.

This scripture was attributed to the Celestial Master Zhang Daoling. Under the Daoist class of writings in the *General Catalogue of the Academy for the Veneration of Literature* (*Chongwen zongmu* 崇文總目) by Wang Yaochen 王堯臣, and the “Bibliography of Written Literature” in the *Comprehensive Treatises*, there is the Perfect Person of Orthodox Unity’s *Diagram of the Twenty-Four Dioceses*, in 1 scroll, which was written by the Tang Dynasty Daoist priest Linghu Jianyao 令狐見堯.<sup>4</sup> Should this be the case, then the *Diagram of the Twenty-Four Dioceses* was not necessarily composed by Zhang Daoling. When it comes to the names of these dioceses, one can consult chapter 6 of the *Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel* and the entry on “Investigating the Origin of Daoist

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1 *Lu shi*, 1.14.

2 Zeng Pu, *Bu Hou Han shu Yiwenzhi bing kao*, in *Ershiwu shi yiwen jingji zhi kaobu cuibian*, 8: 311.

3 *Yunji qiqian*, 28.632.

4 *Chongwen zongmu*, 4.309. *Tongzhi ershilüe*, 1616.



Temples" (*Daoguan kaoyuan* 道館考原) in Chen Guofu's 陳國符 *Reading Notes on the Daoist Canon* (*Daozang zhaji* 道藏劄記).<sup>5</sup> On the meaning of the word "diocese" (*zhi* 治), one can refer to volume 1 of Yun Jing's 惲敬 *Draft Notes of Abode on Dayun Mountain* (*Dayun shanfang wengao* 大雲山房文稿).<sup>6</sup>

### Supplemental Biography of Zhang Daoling

Looking at chapter 69 of the *Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden*, the entry on "Daoist religion and honoring spirits" (*Daojiao jingshen* 道教敬神) cites a Daoist priest's *Supplemental Biography of Zhang Daoling*, which states:

陵在鵠鳴山中，供養金像，轉讀佛經。<sup>7</sup>

When Zhang Daoling was on Mount Heming, he made sacrificial offerings to the golden statue and recited Buddhist sutras.

The "Treatise on Buddhism and Daoism" in the *History of the Wei Dynasty* also says:

陵又稱劫數，頗類佛經。<sup>8</sup>

Zhang Daoling spoke of "apocalyptic astrological configurations" (*jieshu* 劫數), a term he likely borrowed from Buddhism.

Zhang Daoling's theories largely depend on the established meaning of the *Scripture of Great Peace*, yet the *Scripture of Great Peace* borrows Buddhist theories from time to time, hence the words of the *History of the Wei Dynasty* are not wrong.

5 *Yunji qiqian*, 28.632. Chen Guofu, *Daozang yuanliu kao*, 266.

6 Yun Jing, "Zhenren fu yin shuo," 1.39.

7 *Fayuan zhulin jiaozhu*, 55.1668.

8 *Wei shu*, 114.3048.

## Postscript

The old manuscript of the *Xiang'er Commentary* was found in the Cave of One Thousand Buddhas at Dunhuang and is a revered book of Daoist religion that has received very little attention. My teacher Jao Tsung-i, according to the theories of Emperor Xuanzong and Du Guangting, attributed the authorship to Zhang Daoling of the Celestial Masters.<sup>1</sup> After further investigation, he realized that most of its sayings are consistent with the meaning of the *Scripture of Great Peace* from the Han Dynasty, with occasional borrowing from Heshang Gong's commentary. Thus, the origin and context of the original thought of Daoist religion is brilliantly elucidated. Within this original thought are strange words and meanings of a profound nature, many of which were excavated from the text by Jao Tsung-i. The rest of Jao's work, such as his investigation into the compilation of the *Xiang'er Commentary* by Zhang Daoling, also goes into great detail about the entire matter and can supplement the insufficiencies of earlier historical accounts. Jao Tsung-i is indeed an outstanding contributor to the study of the *Laozi*. During my free time, I indulge in reading the *Laozi*, sighing deeply at the thought that of all the ancient commentaries preserved today, there are only the two traditions of Heshang Gong and Wang Bi; the rest of them have not been transmitted. Today, the *Xiang'er Commentary*, thanks to its preservation in the stone caves at Dunhuang, has reappeared in the world, yet very few people know it! I have thus invested my money to print it so that it may be spread amongst and assist scholars studying the *5000-Character Classic* and history of Daoist religion. The manuscript was written by a person from the Six Dynasties in a neat and straight script and will be admired by anyone who loves calligraphy.

方繼仁

*Fang Jiren*

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1 Du Guangting, *Daode zhenjing guang shengyi*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 14: 309.

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# Index

- Anqi Sheng 安期生 xvii, 167, 174–5n28  
Anqiu Wangzhi 安丘望之 xvii, 174–5n28
- Balanced Discourses (Lunheng 論衡)* by Wang Chong 王充 113, 114, 129, 136, 137, 259
- Biographies of Immortals (Shenxian zhuan 神仙傳)* by Ge Hong 140, 190n14
- Biographies of Immortals (Liexian zhuan 列仙傳)* by Liu Xiang 劉向 139, 198, 206, 208
- Book of Great Peace with Blue-Green Headings (*Taiping qingling shu 太平青領書*) 190–1n14
- Book of Talismans (*Fu shu 符書*) 5, 199
- Book of Tenets (*Jie shu 誡書*) 109, 215, 237
- Book of the Dao (*Dao shu 道書*) 198, 199, 206
- Cao Wei 曹魏 241
- Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 xix, 6m15, 95, 98, 99, 155, 168, 189n12
- Comments of a Recluse (Qianfu lun 潛夫論)* by Wang Fu 王符 257
- Critical Edition of the Scripture of Great Peace (Taiping jing hexiao 太平經合校)* 210, 221
- Daoist Canon (Daozang 道藏)* xviii, 2, 3, 6, 8, 104, 116, 153, 188, 190, 190–1n14, 200, 201, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 211, 214, 215, 220, 228, 229, 230, 231, 233, 235, 236, 237, 238, 243, 246, 268
- Death 13, 15, 40, 44, 48, 49, 75, 83, 84, 116, 127, 129, 142, 144, 148, 149
- Declarations of the Perfected (Zhengao 真誥)* by Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 5, 106, 107, 117, 120, 123, 145, 152, 153, 159, 190–1n14, 202, 217
- Du Guangting 杜光庭 2, 7, 231, 244, 246, 269
- Emperor Ai of the Han Dynasty 漢哀帝 189
- Emperor Cheng of the Han Dynasty 漢成帝 174–5n28, 189, 256
- Emperor Guangwu of the Han Dynasty 漢光武皇帝 109, 167–8n6
- Emperor Huan of the Han Dynasty 漢桓帝 xvii, 199, 204, 205, 206
- Emperor Ling of the Han Dynasty 漢靈帝 8
- Emperor Shun of the Han Dynasty 漢順帝 5, 7, 174–5n28, 189, 189–90n12, 190–1n14, 195, 202, 208, 209, 219, 267
- Emperor Wen of the Han Dynasty 漢文帝 2, 167, 174–5n28
- Emperor Wen of the Wei Dynasty 魏文帝 265
- Emperor Wu of the Jin Dynasty 晉武帝 167–8n6
- Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty 梁武帝 100, 184
- Emperor Xian of the Han Dynasty 漢獻帝 5
- Emperor Xiaowen of the Northern Wei Dynasty 魏孝文帝 167–8n6
- Emperor Xuan of the Chen Dynasty 陳宣帝 190–1n14
- Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty 唐玄宗 xix, 1, 6, 6m15, 7, 95, 246, 269
- Exemplary Figures (Fayan 法言)* by Yang Xiong 揚雄 114
- Five viscera (*wuzang 五藏*) 13, 24, 52, 119, 126, 127, 145, 176, 216, 218, 231, 232, 239
- Forest of Pearls from the Dharma Garden (Fayuan Zhulin 法苑珠林)* 104, 113, 167, 198, 200, 201, 268
- Gan Ji 干吉 xvii, xviii, 189–90n12, 190n14, 219, 224
- Gan Shi 干室 110, 139, 140, 189n12, 265
- Ge Hong 葛洪 4, 110, 143, 168, 174
- Giles Catalogue 225
- Gong Chong 宮崇 xvii, 174–5n28, 189, 189–90n12, 190–1n14, 219, 224

- Hanfeizi* 韓非子 xvii, 176, 194
- Heshang Gong 河上公 xvii, 2, 3, 4, 94, 97, 98, 101, 104, 122, 141, 151, 157, 162, 166, 167, 167-8n5, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 174-5n28, 175, 176, 178, 181, 184, 194, 215, 234, 235, 237, 263, 269
- History of the Later Han Dynasty (Hou Han shu 後漢書)* 5, 7, 8, 109, 111, 112, 113, 121, 139, 190-1n14, 199, 241, 267
- History of the Sui Dynasty (Sui shu 隋書)* 1, 138, 147, 153, 174-5n28, 199
- History of the Wei Dynasty (Wei shu 魏書)* 8, 103, 137, 197, 199, 200, 202, 206, 268
- Huainanzi* 淮南子 xvii, 94, 95, 128, 136, 138, 154, 155, 253, 257
- Huan Tan 桓譚 113, 114
- Huangfu Mi 皇甫謐 174-5n28
- Jade maiden (*yu nü* 玉女) 18, 137
- Ji Kang 嵇康 174-5n8
- Jupiter (*Taisui* 太歲) 136, 145
- King Nan of the Zhou Dynasty 周赧王 174-5n28, 189-90n12
- Kou Qianzhi 寇謙之 103, 113, 137, 202, 206
- Lady of Purple Tenuity (*Ziwei furen* 紫微夫人) xvii, 203
- Lady of the South Celestial Pole (*Nanji furen* 南極夫人) 120
- Laughing at the Dao (Xiao Dao lun 笑道論)* by Zhen Luan 甄鸞 111, 147, 199, 200, 202
- Life Count (*suan* 筭) 54, 148, 149, 150, 185, 227
- Liu Dabin 劉大彬 5, 6n14
- Liu Xiang 劉向 xvii, 113, 131, 160
- Liu Yimin 劉遺民 7
- Longxing stele 龍興碑 93, 101, 180
- Lord Azure Lad (*Qingtong jun* 青童君) 116, 190-1n14
- Ma Rong 馬融 xvii, 1
- Master Xi 係師 xviii, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 93, 96, 98, 101, 158, 175, 178, 180, 182, 227, 234, 235, 241, 244, 245
- Mount Heming 鶴鳴山 xviii, 5, 197, 198, 200, 268
- Mount Nanyue 南岳山 201
- Mount Tianguo 天國山 198
- Muzi 牟子 110
- Northern Dipper (*beidou* 北斗) xviii, 204, 206
- Pei Kai 裴楷 167, 167-8n6
- Pelliot Catalogue 93, 97, 167-8n6, 178, 215, 237, 244n57
- Profound Covenant of Orthodox Unity (Zhengyi mengwei 正一盟威)* xix, 228, 230
- Records of the Grand Historian (Shiji 史記)* 130, 131, 132, 134, 142, 167, 174-5n28
- Records of the Three Kingdoms Period (Sanguo zhi 三國志)* 8, 189-90n12
- Rong Cheng 容成 22, 70, 138, 139, 140, 164, 261, 263, 265
- Scripture of Gold and Jade (Jinyu jing 金玉經)* 107
- Scripture of Great Peace (Taiping jing 太平經)* xv, 9, 104, 105, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 121, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 137, 143, 144, 145, 146, 150, 151, 154, 157, 158, 160, 166, 177, 188, 189-90n12, 190, 190-1n14, 192, 192n18, 193, 194, 203, 209, 215, 216, 218, 219, 221, 223, 224, 239, 241, 246, 248, 256, 268, 269
- Scripture of Great Peace Abridged (Taiping jing chao 太平經鈔)* 104, 105, 108, 116, 119, 121, 126, 143, 152, 188, 190-1n14, 192, 192n18, 193, 208, 209, 223
- Scripture of Numinous Treasure (Lingbao jing 靈寶經)* 199
- Seven Tablets in a Cloudy Satchel (Yunji qiqian 雲笈七籤)* 115, 188, 189-90n12, 197, 198, 203, 207, 227, 228, 230, 267
- Shi Falin 釋法琳 7, 110, 140, 171, 195, 202, 244, 259-60
- Stein Catalogue 1, 210, 217, 218, 225, 226
- Suo Dongxuan 索洞玄 93, 101, 159, 165, 178, 180, 181, 182, 183
- Sutra in Forty-Two Chapters (Sishier zhang jing 四十二章經)* 110, 111

- Talismanic writings (*fuwen* 複文) xviii, 190–1914
- Textual Explanations of the Classics and Canons (Jingdian shiwen* 經典釋文) by Lu Deming 陸德明 6, 7, 97, 98, 100, 139, 174–528, 184, 194, 227, 243, 244
- The Master Who Embraces Simplicity (Baopuzi* 抱朴子) by Ge Hong 葛洪 109, 113, 116, 122, 137, 138, 141, 143, 145, 148, 149, 150, 152, 155, 190–1914, 203, 206, 207
- Three Luminaries (*sanguang* 三光) 131
- Three Officials (*sanguan* 三官) xviii, 145, 146, 147, 148
- Three Primes (*sanyuan* 三元) xvii, 146, 148, 200
- Three, five, seven, and nine method of sexual practice (*san, wu, qi, jiu jiaojie* 三五七九交接) 195, 202, 259
- Transcendent Person (*xianren* 仙人) xviii, 4, 18, 19, 31, 33, 34, 42, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54, 61, 74, 83, 111, 112, 114, 137, 151, 163, 176, 227, 234, 241, 247
- Treatise on the Two Teachings (Erjiao lun* 二教論) by Shi Dao'an 釋道安 104, 150, 199, 201
- Wang Bi 王弼 (Wang Fusi 王輔嗣) xv, xvii, 151, 161, 269
- Wang Xuanhe 王懸河 xviii, 200
- Way of Five Pecks of Rice (*Wudoumi Dao* 五斗米道) 8, 103, 111, 219, 220, 221, 224, 225, 242, 243, 247
- Way of Great Peace (*Taiping Dao* 太平道) 8, 115, 192, 241
- Xiang Yu 想余 xviii, 6, 7, 194, 243
- Xunzi 荀子 112, 263
- Yan Shigu 顏師古 111, 131, 142, 161
- Yang Xi 楊羲 6
- Yang Xiong 揚雄 99, 114
- Yellow Emperor (*Huangdi* 黃帝) xvii, 15, 22, 26, 76, 114, 138, 139, 149, 156, 17428, 189, 193, 251, 252, 253, 261, 263, 265
- Yellow Writ (Huang shu* 黃書) xviii, 7, 10719, 195, 201, 202, 203
- Yin Xi 尹喜 1, 2, 4, 235, 241
- Yu Ji 于吉 110, 111, 174–528, 189–9012, 19014, 241
- Zhang Daoling 張道陵 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 103, 104, 107, 110, 132, 162, 169, 171, 173, 174, 174–528, 193, 194, 195, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 206, 208, 244, 245, 246, 247, 259, 260, 265, 267, 268, 269
- Zhang Jiao 張角 8, 190, 194
- Zhang Lu 張魯 xviii, 5, 6, 7, 8, 102, 103, 173, 194, 199, 200, 217, 243, 244, 245, 246, 265
- Zhang Xiu 張脩 8, 217
- Zhang Zai 張載 125
- Zhang Zhennan 張鎮南 xviii
- Zhuangzi 莊子 xix, 114, 139, 146, 154, 263

This work is a translation of the *Xiang'er Commentary* to the *Laozi*, a.k.a. *Daodejing* and Jao Tsung-i's (1917–2018) supplemental notes and analysis. Jao Tsung-i offers a historically and hermeneutically rich study of the *Xiang'er Commentary*, discovered in the Mogao caves at Dunhuang in the final years of the Qing Dynasty, and its author Zhang Daoling. Opening a new and fascinating window into the early reception of the *Daodejing*, Jao Tsung-i also uncovers the important influence texts such as the *Scripture of Great Peace (Taiping jing)* had on Celestial Masters Daoism and the construction of the *Xiang'er Commentary*.

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