

COLLECTED WORKS OF JAO TSUNG-I: XUANTANG ANTHOLOGY



Histories of
Spiritual Traditions in China

A Selection of Jao Tsung-i's Essays in Religious Studies

Edited and Translated by Frank P. Saunders Jr

Co-edited by Richard J. Sage

BRILL

Histories of Spiritual Traditions in China

Collected Works of Jao Tsung-i

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Cover Calligraphy: Jao Tsung-i. This character, 化 (*hua*) denotes “transformation” or “change,” often in spiritual, religious, or moral contexts.

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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.¹ 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.² 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 for 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, N.Y.: 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.

Translator's Introduction

Throughout the course of his life, Jao Tsung-i had probably forgotten more than most of us could ever hope to know. His curiosity, erudition, rigor, tenacity, passion, and wit are just a few of the qualities the reader can expect to engage in this volume. I say “engage” because reading Jao’s scholarly works is not a passive activity on the part of the reader, but rather constitutes an active learning experience that demands familiarity with both the history of China as well as the rigorous sinological tradition upon which he is commenting. As my colleague and fellow translator, Colin Huehns, has remarked in Volume 1 of this series, “Jao Tsung-i takes no prisoners,” (xiii). Jao’s work demands detailed background knowledge of and textual familiarity with (at least) the Chinese corpus, including both canonical texts and recently excavated materials. This is because many of his arguments, at least those collected in this volume, take the form of encouraging a new perspective on a familiar topic informed by either newly discovered or under-appreciated textual or archaeological materials. As a result, his arguments can be terse and often rely upon numerous and extended quotations and references, both familiar and novel, in the service of his broader point. For at least this reason, reading Jao’s work is as challenging as it is rewarding.

I offer here a translation of a carefully curated selection of Jao Tsung-i’s works on the topic of “religious studies.” This label is somewhat contrived, as Jao’s works are thoroughly interdisciplinary, being at once philosophical, historical, philological, and more. The common theme that unites the chapters of this volume, however, is their focus on beliefs, practices, histories, and artifacts that are undoubtedly *spiritual* in nature. By “spiritual” I mean for the purpose of this volume a focus on elements of the human experience that lie with a power greater than our own or that pertain generally to attitudes of reverence, humility, and awe. Such traditions in China began in prehistory and as expressions of reverence towards various spirits, ancestors, and leg-ends, but over time came to form more precisely defined spiritual programs, chiefly, Daoism and Buddhism. There is also a tendency towards syncretism throughout the Chinese intellectual tradition, wherein the elements of various individual schools of thought—whether spiritual, political, philosophical, or scientific—are blended together in a combination capable of addressing problems no one school could adequately address on its own. The unique interplay between Buddhism and Daoism brings to bear its own challenges given their concurrent development as spiritual traditions and their (at times) cynical employment for political ends throughout Chinese history. We can see this

from Jao's discussion of Wu Zhao 武曩 (better known as Wu Zetian 武則天) in this volume, for example, as she masterfully utilized both Buddhist mythology and Confucian tradition to establish her political authority. But later on in life, she turned towards Daoism in the interest of extending her life.¹ In this way, Jao's approach in these articles can be seen as doing justice to the overlapping and interwoven strands of different spiritual traditions throughout Chinese history. The complexity of his works speaks directly to the interconnectedness of these traditions as well as their relationship with both their domestic and foreign origins and their effects on Chinese culture and history more generally.

My main goal in translating this volume is to render Jao's works into as informative a format as possible for an English-speaking audience. This means that I have tried to strike a difficult balance between readability and authenticity, the former of which Jao himself believes that many translators overlook.² I have attempted to stay as close as possible to Jao's original Chinese by preserving to the best of my ability the overtly classical influence on his use of language, including the frequent use of topic-comment structures, his breadth of classical idioms, and terse and suggestive style, as well as other features of his writings. I have, however, sometimes made some sacrifices for the sake of readability. For example, in cases where Jao refers to the same person or text by different titles and names, sometimes within the same paragraph, I have opted to keep proper names and titles as consistent as possible so as to prevent confusion. Jao's many references to classic texts have also been updated to refer to standard editions. Additionally, I have taken the liberty to quietly correct the smaller errors Jao sometimes made when citing texts—a missed or extra character here and there, or a misremembering of the source of a quote. In cases where such issues might impact understanding, I have left a note. Also, in the interest of informativeness, I at times offer notes to help fill in some of Jao's more obscure and demanding references to specific events, legends, and persons. The reader will no doubt still quite often find herself in need of a search engine (or a library) to help fill in the background context in order to fully understand an article, but in cases where a short note might assist the reader to that end, I have provided them.

A secondary goal is to give the reader a sense of who Jao is. I have already briefly spoken about Jao's style, but I hope that this volume also gives the reader a sense of Jao's interests when it comes to religious studies. In my view, two themes in particular stand out. The first is Jao's passion for archaeological material both from the received tradition and those more recently discovered.

1 See Chapter 5 of this volume.

2 See Chapter 13 of this volume.

Several articles in this volume focus on archaeological findings, stone inscriptions, records of inscriptions, and materials excavated over the past century or so, such as those recovered from Dunhuang 敦煌 and Mawangdui 馬王堆. To Jao, the canonical texts of Chinese history constitute but one tool to help us to understand the past, and physical artifacts, however much they may challenge the received tradition, are equally important. A second major theme is his focus on the historical development of spiritual traditions. In many articles, Jao discusses the geographical and ideological origins of practices or ideas, painting a holistic picture colored by Jao's infectious enthusiasm for drawing these temporally extended and wide-ranging connections. I sincerely hope to have adequately conveyed this attitude in the current translation.

Each chapter of this volume could serve as a jumping-off point for further research, with myriad connections and references to an impressive range of literary, archaeological, and historical sources, leaving the curious reader who wishes to learn about any of the topics referenced in chapter titles in a position to reap substantial benefits from Jao's work. I have tentatively labelled the major divisions of the volume under the rubrics of "General Religious Studies," "Daoism," and "Buddhism" for organizational purposes, and will now offer a brief sketch of each major section and its accompanying chapters.

The first five chapters concern Chinese spiritual traditions in general, owing largely either to their focus on prehistorical beliefs and practices or the syncretic nature of their topics. Chapters 1–3 fall under the former category, while chapters 4 and 5 belong to the latter. Chapters 1–3 each trace various elements of Chinese spiritual and religious practices to their most ancient origins in prehistory, focusing on some of the earliest examples of oracle bone inscriptions, divination practices, musical instruments, and pottery inscriptions. Chapter 1 focuses on the origins of such practices during the Shang dynasty. Chapter 2 traces the development of divination by and worship of turtle shells and related spiritual practices from their origins in the cultures responsible for archaeological sites now being explored at Hongshan 紅山, Peiligang 裴李崗, and Longgang Temple 龍崗寺. Jao makes comparisons with analogous practices found in India and connects them with the development of the *Shui mu* 水母 (Old Mother of the Waters) trope in classical works of literature such as the *Chuci* 楚辭. Chapter 3 discusses the origins of sun and moon worship in the artifacts of Dawenkou 大汶口 culture, whose remnants Jao combs over in detail in order to identify their subtle relationship with celestial rituals of later Chinese history, such as the equinox ceremonies performed during the Tang dynasty. Chapter 4 moves beyond prehistory and looks to the earliest formal records of Chinese religious ceremonies, the roles various invocators and shamans played therein, and in particular the connection of such practices

to literature. It is an immensely informative chapter that any student of early Chinese history would benefit from reading. Chapter 5 then applies this background knowledge to the fascinating case of Wu Zhao and her own personal religious beliefs and spiritual development throughout her life. The article recounts fascinating details about her relationship with Xue Huaiyi 薛懷義 (662–695), interest in Buddhism, claims to be the Boddhisatva, construction of the Mingtang 明堂 palace, and eventual turn to Daoist sages and their wisdom regarding longevity as her health began to deteriorate later in life. Most importantly, however, it prioritizes the records found in contemporaneous stone inscription carvings to further enhance our understanding. This is a daunting but rewarding article that has much to teach any student of Tang studies, replete with useful references to classic texts that could lead in turn to further investigations.

Chapters 6 through 10 then turn to Daoism, but still largely showcase Jao's respect for diverse archaeological sources and historical development. The focus in these chapters is overwhelmingly on Daoist spiritual and wellness practices, precisely because within the Daoist tradition there was not a distinction between the two: the expulsion of bad *Qi* and harmful spirits was intimately tied to one's health and wellbeing. Chapter 6 discusses these practices with special attention being paid to their origins in and around the state of Chu 楚, drawing heavily on excavated Mawangdui materials, in particular the "Wushi'er bingfang" 五十二病方. Chapter 7 focuses on the development of Laozi as a religious and spiritual figure, drawing on the early relationship between Daoism and Buddhism from the Eastern Han period onward as well as steles erected in honor of Laozi. Chapter 8 offers a brief discussion of the mythological character, Zhonghuang 中黃, the "Central Yellow," which sometimes appears in Daoist classics, covering an impressive breadth and depth of ancient sources in just a few dense pages.

Chapters 9 and 10 examine excavated materials and offer two detailed discussions of vastly different topics. The first is an appraisal of a text excavated from Dunhuang with the label of P.2732. The item is divided into two major sections, the first of which is widely recognized to be a partial version of the *Dengzhen yinjue* 登真隱訣 by Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456–536), a text that focuses on Daoist medicinal, spiritual, and massage practices and became one of the founding documents of Shangqing 上清 Daoism. In the article, Jao draws connections between the Dunhuang manuscript, the received text, and other received classics including the *Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing* 西王母寶神起居經 and the *Sandong zhu'nang* 三洞珠囊 to contextualize the fragment. Jao goes on to argue that the second part of the Dunhuang manuscript is actually a partial reproduction of Tao Hongjing's *Zhen'gao* 真誥, whose complete text

has been lost. He surmises further that the second part of the manuscript may contain some of the *Dengzhen yinjue's* lost contents. Chapter 10 continues on this theme with a discussion of Daoist medicinal and dietary practices gleaned from excavated texts, in particular those from Mawangdui and Mt. Zhangjia 張家山. The chapter offers an impressive catalogue of ancient Daoist practices and legends that should be of interest to any student of the Daoist tradition.

Chapters 11 through 15 focus on Buddhism and the arrival of Indian Buddhist ideas in China and their subsequent development. Jao is especially interested in the development of Chan Buddhism, the indigenous Chinese form of Buddhism whose patriarchs have a deep connection with southern Chinese territories. Chapter 11 focuses on the relationships between Chinese, Tibetan, and Indian mythical geographies about the wellspring of all the world's rivers and the location of the legendary Kunlun Mountain(s). Chapter 12 continues to focus on cultural exchange by discussing the history of and challenges facing the earliest translators of Sanskrit scriptures into Chinese, with a particular focus on the work of Shi Yangcong 釋彥琮 (549–638), Zhen Di 真諦 (499–569), and Xuanzang 玄奘 (629–645). Chapters 13, 14, and 15 discuss the patriarchs of Chan Buddhism, Jianzhi Sengcan 鑑智僧璨 (d. 606), the Third Patriarch, and Huineng 慧能 (638–713), the Sixth Patriarch. All three studies are both biographical and archaeological in nature. They focus on what can be gleaned about the life of each of these patriarchs based on temple remains, extant inscriptions, and received tradition, leaving the reader with an impression of these figures as full human beings rather than as mere repositories of wisdom, as a student of philosophy or religion might typically approach them in a textbook.

Overall, this volume promises to reward any willing and open mind that earnestly engages with it. It can be read cover-to-cover as a tour de force in Chinese spiritual traditions or selectively depending on a researcher's particular topic. In both cases, the reader will get out of the experience exactly what she puts into it: if you come armed with knowledge and curiosity, you will leave with much more of both.

PART 1

Religion in China throughout the Ages



Yin Dynasty Religion

殷代的宗教

The¹ *Liji*'s 禮記, “Biao ji” 表記 chapter, cites Kongzi (Confucius) explaining institutional differences between the Three Dynasties as follows: “The way of Xia was to venerate fate. The way of Yin was to venerate the spirits. The people of Zhou venerated ritual 夏道尊命，殷道尊神，周人尊禮。”² By the time Zhou succeeded the Shang dynasty, rituals had already been institutionalized, but the new dynasty reformed them to some extent. In Kongzi's eyes, these rituals were *cultural*, expressions of the “civilized,” and thus an improvement over the “crude” ways of the Yu and Xia.³ He also said: “The Yin commanded their people to serve the spirits. They placed ghosts above rituals, and they placed punishments above rewards 殷人率民以事神，先鬼而後禮，先罰而後賞。”⁴ Oracle bone records as well as statements in the *Shenzi* 慎子 and *Shangjun shu* 商君書 prove that the Yin (i.e., Shang)⁵ dynasty's pedantic procedures for worshipping ancestors and the torturous cruelty of their punishments were real.

“Biao ji” also says,

The Master said: Long ago the Three dynasties had enlightened rulers, each serving the deities of Heaven and Earth. They were doing nothing else but using divination and would not dare to be selfish or reckless in serving the Lord on High. Therefore, they did not transgress in either day

1 Note: This article was based on a keynote lecture given by Prof. Jao at the opening ceremony of a seminar on “Religion and Chinese Society” organized jointly by the French School of the Far East (École française d'Extrême-Orient), the Religious Studies Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong's Chung Chi College, and the “Centre for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society.”

2 *Liji zhengyi*, 54.1732–34.

3 Note: Jao is contrasting the polysemic terms *wen* 文, (“cultural”, “refined”, or “ornamental”), and *zhi* 質 (“crude”, “substantial”, or “actual”). The overall point seems to be that spirit worship and the associated rituals began as a more literal practice during the Yu and Xia dynasties but eventually became more of a form of cultural expression during the Zhou period.

4 *Liji zhengyi*, 54.1733.

5 Note: For the purpose of this article, I will maintain Jao's references to “Yin dynasty” rituals, artifacts, etc. In all other articles, I will refer only to the more common “Shang dynasty” to refer to this period in time.

or month, and did not violate the results of divinations, nor did they use different divination methods in succession.

子言之：「昔三代明王，皆事天地之神明，無非卜筮之用，不敢以其私，褻事上帝。是故不犯日月，不違卜筮。卜筮不相襲也。」⁶

Each of the Three Dynasties had their own methods to prognosticate and divine. And from oracle bones that were unearthed from graves in Jiahu 賈湖, Henan province, and that made use of eight such systems, we know that these ancient divination practices were popular already 7000–8000 years ago. That each of the three dynasties had their own specific arrangements of the divinatory diagrams within their respective “books of changes” (*yi* 易) is a credible assumption since the *Lianshan* 連山, *Guicang* 歸藏, and the *Zhouyi* 周易 contain no duplicate content.⁷ Divination was seen as the procedure through which the divine spoke, decisions were made according to the will of the “Lord on High 上帝” who stood above everything. When divining, one would definitively not dare to conduct blasphemous acts for selfish intentions. What the “Hongfan” 洪範 chapter of the *Shangshu* 尚書 refers to as the “Great Harmony 大同” are precisely these decisions people jointly made with the spirits, as the decisions that were approved by divination are made by both the spirits and the people, the above and the below, as perfectly impartial expressions of a common will. This is essentially the basis for the ideas of the “Will of Heaven 天志” and “conforming upwards 尚同” in the *Mozi* 墨子.

The most venerated of the deities in Yin dynasty religion is the “Lord 帝.” The Lord is the natural ruler of the universe. The term “Lord” is written as a compound in oracle bone inscriptions, and, in special cases, includes the character *shang* 上 (“up” or “above”) above the character *di* 帝 (lord). Regrettably, there are only four of such instances,⁸ but we find countless instances of “Lord”. The importance that the Yin dynasty placed on the word “Lord” was already common knowledge in early writings. The *Lunyu* 論語, “Yao yue” 堯曰, for example, cites legendary emperor Tang 湯, saying, “I, the mere child Lü ... dare to proclaim [the following] to the celestial ruler, Lord 余小子履... 敢昭告于皇皇后帝.”⁹

6 *Liji zhengyi*, 54.1745.

7 Note: The purported divination manuals of the Xia, Yin/Shang, and Zhou dynasties respectively. For further reading, see Edward Shaughnessy, *Unearthing the Changes*, ch. 4–5.

8 Another appearance is found on *Jiaguwen heji* 甲骨文合集 no. 16703, on which one phrase says, “The seventh month divination, fu 𠄎, the Lord on High.” Further details appear in *An Investigation into Yin Dynasty Diviners. Yindai zhenbu renwu tongkao*, 859.

9 *Lunyu zhushu*, 20.302.

On the Muye 牧野 campaign, the *Shijing* 詩經, “Da ming” 大明, says, “The Lord on High watches over you. Do not have a disloyal heart 上帝臨女，無貳爾心，”¹⁰ cautioning both officials and the masses, enabling them to resist enemies with a unified will. The Zhou made use of already existing Yin terminology, including the term “Lord on High” to admonish and alert themselves.¹¹ Later generations frequently quoted from the “Da ming” poem and it happened to become used in sacrificial ceremonies.

“The Yin commanded their people to serve the spirits,” but in fact, the rulers of the Yin themselves were also recognized as spirits. In the *Yi Zhou shu* 逸周書, “Shifa jie” 諡法解, the first title discussed is “spirit 神.” The next is “sage 聖,” and only the third is “lord 帝,” with the list continuing as follows:

- 1) Spirit: What the one person cannot name is called “spirit” or “divine.”¹²
神：一人無名曰神。
- 2) Sage: One who is revered and bestows simplicity is called a “sage.”
聖：稱善賦簡曰聖。
- 3) Lord: One whose virtue resembles Heaven and Earth is called “lord.”
帝：德象天地曰帝。
- 4) Sovereign: One who calms the people with regulations and models is called a “sovereign.” 皇：靜民則法曰皇。
- 5) King: One in whom benevolence and righteousness reside is called a “king.” 王：仁義所在曰王。¹³

Because “the one person” signifies “divinity,” Yin rulers generally referred to themselves as “I, the one person 余一人.”¹⁴ According to the “Shifa”, *yu* 余 was

10 *Maoshi zhengyi*, 16.1142.

11 The *Shangshu* and the *Shijing* frequently mention the “Lord on High.” “Pan Geng” 盤庚 says, “The Lord on High will restore the virtue of our earliest ancestors 肆上帝將復我高祖之德.” *Shangshu zhengyi*, 9.288. The “Zhou shu,” 周書 “Jun Shi” 君奭 says, “attained to the Lord on High 格於上帝.” *Shi da ya* 詩大雅, “Sheng min” 生民 says, “The Lord on High is not at peace 上帝不寧.” *Maoshi zhengyi*, 17.1246. “The Lord on High dwells in tranquility and enjoys the sacrificial offerings 上帝居歆.” *Maoshi zhengyi*, 17.1265. Additionally, there is the *Lu song* 魯頌, “Bi gong,” 閟宮, which extols Duke Xi of Lu in his ability to carry on the manner of the Duke of Zhou, also tracing back the phrase to the respective ancestral teaching: “In the campaign in the Muye, Lord on High was watching over you. Disposing of the Shang troops, he and his subjects both took part in the achievement 牧野之役，上帝臨女，敦商之旅，克咸厥功.” *Maoshi zhengyi*, 20.1659–60.

12 Note: I will throughout this volume translate *shen* 神 as both “spirit” and “divine” depending on the context. When unambiguously a noun, especially in ancient contexts, “spirit” seems most appropriate. In other instances, especially adjectival uses in later periods, “divine” is more appropriate.

13 *Yi Zhou shu huijiao jizhu*, 6.627–30.

14 Note: Jao’s inference here is tenuous. Other versions of this passage in the *Yi Zhou Shu* have “What the people are unable to name is called ‘spirit.’” Thus, it might be hasty to

another name for “spirit.” The *Wenzi* 文子 quotes the *Zhonghuangzi* 中黃子, which divides people into 25 categories. Those on top of the highest category are spirit-like and sagely persons. Since the spirit-like person is identified as “I, the one person”, we can see that the Yin rulers compared themselves to spirits and regarded themselves to be the spiritual spokespersons for the people. Leaders of different territories in the Near East all regard themselves as divine. China and the rest of the world are united in this general practice.

Zhou’s overthrowing of Yin was a success chiefly due to its ability to respond to the “Mandate of Heaven 天命.” At the time when King Jing of Zhou cast his ceremonial bells, Lingzhou Jiu 伶州鳩 (fl. 544–520 BC) put forward theories of how the Zhou victory over Yin was secured. According to these, the Zhou attack occurred when the five celestial indicators were coordinated with the three significant locations. This is one potential astrological explanation of the phrase, “The king desired to coordinate [the seven-tone scale] with the five celestial indicators and the three significant places and utilize it ... People and spirits are tallied according to the numbers and illuminated by the tones 王欲合是五位三所而用之... …人、神以數合之，以聲昭之.”¹⁵ The explanations of the five celestial indicators can all be found in the “Hongfan” 洪範. Lingzhou Jiu established his theory based on musical scales, which is simply a statement of the principle of mutual correspondence between the divine and humankind. Liu Tao 劉陶 (d. 185 CE) of the Eastern Han dynasty submitted a memorandum which said:

Without Heaven and Earth, humankind would not have been generated. Without humankind, Heaven and Earth will have nothing to inspire. This is why without people, the king cannot be established, whereas without the king, the people cannot be peaceful. The relationship between Heaven and Lord on High, as well as that between Lord on High and humankind, is like that of head and feet, which depend on each other to proceed and function.

conclude that the frequent use of *yu yi ren* 余一人 by ancient rulers to refer to themselves derives from this thought process.

- 15 *Guoyu jijie*, 3.125–26. According to the *Shiji*, the five celestial indicators are: years, months, days, stars and constellations, and the movements of celestial bodies and calendar system (*Shiji*, 27.1343). The *Guoyu jijie* claims that the three significant places are 1) where the Duke of Pang crossed over into the spirit realm, 2) where the Zhou divided up the wilderness, and 3) where Hou Ji located the warp and woof (i.e., tilling lines), see *Guoyu jijie*, 3.125.

臣聞人非天地無以為生，天地非人無以為靈，是故帝非人不立，人非帝不寧。夫天之與帝，帝之與人，猶頭之與足，相須而行也。¹⁶

He points out that the relationship between these three—the Lord on High, Heaven, and humankind—resembles that between the parts of the human body. The Lord on High is the spirit, but people also have their “inspiration” (i.e., nature). Heaven is the highest celestial entity, residing above people’s heads, which is why the crown of the head can be used to signify Heaven. Yin dynasty divination inscriptions provide evidence from the later period of Wen Wu Ding 文武丁 (r. 1116–1106 BCE) that he was already referred to as “Lord Wen Wu.” One large deer antler is inscribed with the following phrase: “On *wuxu* day, the king performs the *Hao* sacrifice ... at the Temple of Wen Wu Ding 戊戌，王蒿……文武丁祈。”¹⁷ The character *hao* 蒿 can be read as *jiao* 郊, which is the ritual of offering a sacrifice to Heaven. The “Zhongyong” 中庸 says, “The *jiao* and *she* rituals are used to serve the Lord on High 郊、社之禮，所以事上帝也。”¹⁸ *Jiao* indicates the worship of Heaven, while *she* indicates the worship of the Earth. Divination phrases all say that burning soil is to worship the Earth, and that *hao* is to worship Heaven, both of which are rituals performed in serving the Lord on High. At the time, the Lord on High was the highest-ranking spirit of the entire cosmos, possessing Heaven and Earth and exercising power over them.

The people of the Yin dynasty praised only the Lord and the Lord on High, while the people of Zhou conversely emphasized Heaven. Therefore, the sequence of the hexagrams *qian* 乾 and *kun* 坤 was altered within the *Zhouyi* being revised from having *kun* first and *qian* second to having *qian* first and *kun* second.¹⁹ The *jiao* sacrifice to Heaven takes place during the winter solstice ceremony, which is considered the beginning of the emergence of *yang* 陽. Divination rituals using turtle shells and milfoil were not practiced in succession, as each formed its own distinct system. The Zhou people venerated rituals and thus augmented and further transformed these systems. The Yin and Zhou had different systems, and as recorded in the “Biao ji”, remarks like Kongzi’s became the norm. But as is clear from divinatory phrases, the notion of “leading the people to serve the spirits”, and thus “serving the spirits” more generally, is specifically a feature of Yin dynasty culture.

16 *Hou Han shu*, 57.1843.

17 *Tunjia* 屯甲, 3940.

18 *Liji zhengyi*, 52.1681.

19 This is because *qian* represents Heaven, while *kun* represents the Earth.

Since the Yin people regarded the Lord on High as the highest spirit, can we call their beliefs monotheistic? As seen in divination writings, among the targets of their worship and sacrifices were also “the five servants of the Lord 帝五臣,” or “the Lord’s five servants and officials 帝五臣正” that formed a different category besides the ruling spirit. At the same time, there are numerous sacrifices to mountains, rivers, worthy people, sages, and ancestors of the same clan, and so they did not have just one deity. A Zhou dynasty vessel inscription, for example, refers to, “only the majestic Lord on High and the hundred spirits.” The reference here to the hundred spirits makes it clear that the one spirit and the many spirits coexist with one another, and this tradition continues all the way to later Daoist teachings. Thus, we should explain their religion as “heno-theism,” which has some general similarities with the ancient Hindu religion, according to which one spirit is venerated, but simultaneously, the other spirits are not rejected.

A Discussion of Turtles Becoming the *Shui mu* 水母 and Related Topics

論龜為水母及有關問題

This¹ year [1999] marks the centenary of the unearthing of oracle bone inscriptions from the ruins of Yin, the last capital of the Shang dynasty, in Anyang, Henan province. To commemorate the long and brilliant tradition of turtle shell divination throughout Chinese history, this article adopts a cultural studies perspective to examine the mysterious origins of the practice.

1 Turtle Shells and “Jade Turtles” of the Distant Past

The turtle shells from the Jiahu 賈湖 site of the Peiligang 裴李崗 culture (currently on display at the Henan Museum) are among the most ancient ones that have been excavated to date. The “centerlines 千里路” of these turtles’ plastrons can be clearly seen, and each side of the shells appear to have gone through a specialized process assigned to diviners with administrative expertise. Additionally, one type of hole in the shells appears to have been drilled in the midst of the divination process. Ancient relics left by the Yangshao 仰韶 culture date to some 7500–8000 years ago according to C-14 tree ring dating. On the plastrons, the two pictograms, ☉ and ☽, are inscribed in bright red, and we also find the pictogram 𠄎 engraved on the carapace. The owner of the tomb was a man who was buried after being decapitated in the prime of his life. His funerary objects include a forked bone implement and eight turtle shells containing inlaid pebbles. There are also two bird bones with seven holes drilled into them, which constitute a pair of “male and female 雌雄” flutes. Modern day specialists in ancient music have gauged the tones they produce and believe that their music scale treated C as the *gong* 宮 note, and also contained “altered *gong* 變宮” and “altered *zhi* 變徵” notes. The

1 Note: In Daoist folklore, the *Shui mu*, often rendered as “Old Mother of Waters”, is associated with several mythological episodes that vary in different areas of China, perhaps the most famous of which being the destruction of the ancient city of Sizhou 泗洲. I will leave the term untranslated throughout the discussion given Jao’s focus on the term’s most distant origins before the development of more substantive mythological connotations.

discovery of these musical instruments verifies records found in ancient literature. For example, “Ling Lun selected bamboo canes in order to establish the scales. His flutes were divided into two distinct types: male and female 伶倫取竹以定律，其管分有雌雄。”²

It is still difficult to say whether there is a relationship between the character eight *ba* 八 (“eight”) engraved in the eight turtle shells and the idea of “regulating the eight notes and circulating the eight winds 節八音而行八風,”³ found in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳.

The Hongshan 紅山 culture also created so-called “jade turtles 玉龜.”⁴ Of particular interest is the jade turtle collection from Hanshan 含山, Anhui province, which contains turtles with jade boards between the plastron and carapace. These boards illustrate both the directions of a compass as well as the nine Heavenly partitions. Several holes have also been drilled, which could possibly have been a means of tying the shells together with a rope but might also have had mathematical significance. (Scholars are divided on this matter.) Several apocryphal writings contain the phrase, “the divine turtle bears writing on its back 神龜負書,” and perhaps these shells are in fact its inspiration.

Additionally, in 1989, 63 turtle shells buried alongside the dead were unearthed in a site belonging to the Longgangsi 龍崗寺 culture in Nanzheng 南鄭, Shaanxi province. Graves associated with the Dawenkou 大汶口 culture of Shandong province similarly produced 53 turtle shells. The Daxi 大溪 culture as well as the nearby Majiabai 馬家濱 culture also left turtle shells behind. These findings have been discussed at length in specialist articles that the interested readers may consult, so we need not say more than this here.⁵

Worth mentioning also are ancient divination games, such as those attested by TLV bronze mirrors. In particular, one Han dynasty example of a *liubo* 六博 divination game board was found in Yinwan 尹灣 and contains both a drawing of a divine turtle as well as a description of how to use the divine turtle for divination.⁶ The process begins at the turtle’s back left leg and goes towards

2 “Gu yue” 古樂 chapter, *Lüshi chunqiu jishi*, 5.120–22.

Note: Prof. Jao is paraphrasing the original text.

3 “5th year of Duke Yin 隱公,” *Zuo Qiuiming, Chunqiu zuozhuan zhengyi*, 3.113.

4 Note: The “jade turtles” referred to here appear to be the remnants of live turtles combined with jade articles rather than, e.g., turtles entirely carved from jade, as the name might imply.

5 See especially Gao Guangren, Shao Wangping, “Zhongguo shiqian shidai de guiling yu quan-sheng,” 57–70.

6 Note: The game of *liubo* has been variously depicted in ancient illustrations with a TLV design and was believed in ancient times to be a pastime of divinities. This finding from Yinwan contains both the bronze mirror with the TLV or *liubo* illustration as well as an accompanying divination chart and has solidified the connection between the *liubo* game and divination. Prof. Jao’s discussion here, of course, is focused on the turtle imagery. For a detailed discussion of *liubo* and this artefact, as well as an illustration of the divination chart from

the right side (counterclockwise). There are also eight surnames and positions drawn on the wooden tablet, as well as a circular image created by ordering the six *jia* 甲-headed Stem-Branch pairs of the sixty-day cycle, which also contains the two words “divining for rain 占雨.” This divine turtle divination works by counting the number of days along the right side, from which we can read the divinatory result based on where the day lands on the turtle. The process constitutes a previously unattested form of divination. On the back side of the wooden tablet from the divination game, the upper part contains the sixty-day cycle calendar, while the bottom part has five columns which relate to the auspiciousness or inauspiciousness of certain days for weddings, traveling, incarceration, disease, and exile.⁷ The first characters of each paragraph include *fang* 方, *lian* 廉, *jie* 楛, *zhang* 長, and *gao* 高, among others, totaling in nine words. This is a mnemonic device for the game set, which originally comes from a book titled *Dabo jing* 大博經 or *Liubo jing* 六博經 by Xu Bochang 許博昌 (fl. 157–141 BCE) which survived in the Han dynasty collection, *Xijing zaji* 西京雜記.⁸ This kind of game has no connection with the original meaning and usage of “turtle” at all.

2 The Turtle is the Earthly Liquid—The Fluid of Life

In the Indian fire sacrifice for Agni, the *agnicayana*, a live turtle must be buried underneath the sacrificial altar. In Sanskrit, turtles are called *kūrma*. The root of *kūr* is *kr-*, which means “to make.” Another word for “turtle” in Sanskrit is *kaśyapa*, which is in turn a name of the Earth deity, Prajāpati. It is said that liquid flowed out of this deity and transformed into a turtle, and so the turtle was regarded as the liquid of the Earth or the fluid of life. In Indian mythology, turtles possess an exalted status. Because of their domelike shape, they are regarded as symbols of the three primary domains: water, sky, and atmosphere.⁹ Brahmins would hold magnificent sacrificial ceremonies with altars erected atop buried turtles, thereby highlighting their importance.

Yinwan, see Armin Selbitschka, “A Tricky Game: A Re-Evaluation of *Liubo* 六博 Based on Archaeological and Textual Evidence,” in: *Oriens Extremus* 55, 105–66, 2016.

7 Note: See Selbitschka 2016, 109.

8 *Xijing zaji jiaozhu*, 4.203.

9 See, Frits Staal, C. V. Somayajipad, Itti Ravi Nambudiri, *Agni—The Vedic Ritual of the Fire Altar*, Vol. 1, 120–21.

Note: The original quote reads “earth, sky, and atmosphere”, so this quote might not do as much work for Jao’s argument as he may have intended.

In the *Mahātripiṭaka of the Southern Tradition* (*Hanyi nanchuan Dazangjing* 漢譯南傳大藏經) of the Pali Canon, there are four *jātaka* 本生 (birth stories) that relate to turtles:

- *Jātaka* 178: The *Kacchapa-jātaka* recalls the story of a tortoise, allegorically representing Prince Anada, who refused to leave his home during a drought and buried himself in the mud instead, thereby embodying the lesson that one must not become too attached to one's home.¹⁰
- *Jātaka* 215: see “Mahisasaka-vinaya,” (*Wu fen lü* 五分律), 25.¹¹
- *Jātaka* 273: The *Vana Parva* (*Senlin pin* 森林品), records a turtle named Kassapa and a monkey named Koundinya attaining enlightenment.¹²
- *Jātaka* 345: The *Gajakumbha-jātaka* records that the king of Vāraṇasi was incredibly lazy. He saw a turtle taking small, slow steps all day, and so as a result had to be constantly vigilant.¹³

In the *Samyutta-nikāya* (*Xiangying bu* 相應部), “Li de yu gong yang xiang ying” 利得與供養相應, contains a turtle as its third item.¹⁴

In Pali, “turtle” is *kacchapa* or *kūmma*, which in Sanskrit are rendered *kaśyapa* and *kū* respectively. Here, I have offered a brief record of a few citations that might supplement the current study.

3 The Dark Turtle and Astronomy

The *Shanhai jing* 山海經 contains two accounts of “dark” or “mysterious turtles 玄龜.”¹⁵ In ancient astronomy, turtles were arranged to be pointing northward and came to symbolize water. Additionally, a turtle entwined together with a snake was called the “Dark Warrior 玄武.” The *Chuci* 楚辭 says:

I took a comet as my feathery flag,
And lifted the handle of the big dipper up to serve as my banner.

10 *Hanyi nanchuan dazangjing*, Xiaobu jingdian 小部經典 no. 8, Bsheng jing 本生經 no. 178 “Gui bsheng tan” 龜本生譚, 33: 76–78.

11 *Taishō*, No. 1421, “Mahīśasaka-vinaya,” 22: 165. *Hanyi nanchuan dazangjing*, Xiaobu jingdian no. 8, Bsheng jing no. 215, “Gui bsheng tan,” 33: 177–79.

12 *Hanyi nanchuan dazangjing*, Xiaobu jingdian no. 9, Bsheng jing no. 273, “Gui bsheng tan,” 34: 90–92.

13 *Hanyi nanchuan dazangjing*, Xiaobu jingdian no. 9, Bsheng jing no. 345, “Gui bsheng tan,” 34: 331–33.

14 *Hanyi nanchuan dazangjing*, Xiangying bu jingdian 相應部經典 no. 2, Lide yu gongyang xiangying 利得與供養相應 no. 6, “Gui” 龜 no. 3, 14: 281–83.

15 *Shanhai jing jianshu*, 1.5.

Its multicolored bands went up and down,
 As we wandered through the waves of sudden mists.
 But as the hours gave way to dark obscurity,
 I called upon the Dark Warrior, and we forged ahead together.

攬彗星以為旂兮，舉斗柄以為麾。
 叛陸離其上下兮，遊驚霧之流波。
 時暖隳其曠莽兮，召玄武而奔屬。¹⁶

In the text, we find a list of many constellations, and as a sort of banner, the Dark Warrior is one of them. In its description of the nine types of decorative banners, the *Zhouli* 周禮 says, “there is a turtle and serpent on four edges of the banner, taking on the likeness of the Yingshi asterism 龜蛇四旂，以象營室也。”¹⁷ The Yingshi 營室 asterism, also called Ding 定 (“determinator”), is located in the northern part of the sky. The *Shijing* 詩經 records the following: “When Ding culminated, [Lord Wen of Wei] began to build the Chu Palace 定之方中，作于楚宮。”¹⁸ The ancients utilized the configurations of the stars to settle scheduling matters pertaining to the construction of palaces, great walls, and so on, which is referred to as, “Issuing the official calendar based on examining astronomical signs 觀象授時。”¹⁹ There are also bronze sundials with the Dark Warrior, which is a highly relevant usage. Chen Rentao’s 陳仁濤 collection contains a tubular pedestal of the Dark Warrior, full of gorgeous, inlaid gold threads, which was excavated in Luoyang and dates from the Warring States period. It is 10.5 cm high, 10.2 cm long, and 13 cm wide (Fig. 1). The Dark Warrior has the shape of a turtle and serpent intertwined, and its eyes are inlaid with black pigment and turquoise.²⁰ The city of Wuhan has produced a sort of turtle-shaped serpent creature that has been interpreted by some as the Dark Warrior.²¹

Lacquerware unearthed from the tomb of the Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙 in Sui county 隨縣 (modern day Hubei) was decorated with images of the “Azure Dragon 青龍” and the “White Tiger 白虎” alongside the names of the 28 “mansions 宿” of the Chinese constellations system. In the middle of the lacquerware is the character *dou* 斗 (“dipper”), but there is no reference

16 *Chuci buzhu*, 5.170–71.

17 *Zhouli zhushu*, 40.1283.

18 *Maoshi zhengyi*, 3.232.

19 Qin Huitian, *Wuli tongkao*, 181.1a, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 139: 352.

20 See, Xu Liangzhi, Chen Rentao, *Jingui lungu zonghe kan*, vol. 1.

21 See Hou Yuming, “Hunan shimen de shegui heti dongwu,” 96.

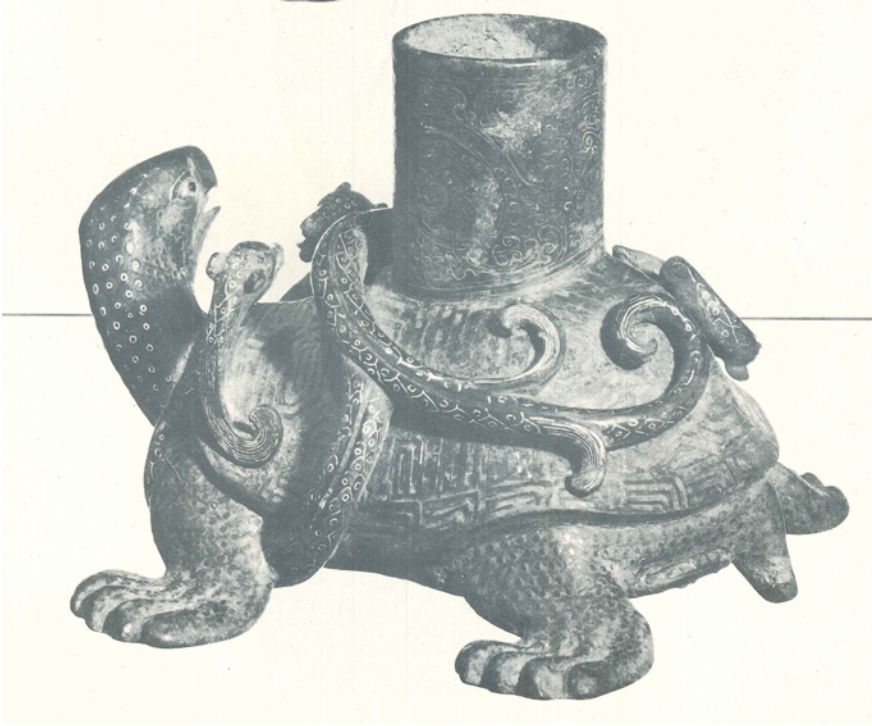


FIGURE 2.A A Bronze “Dark Warrior” Tubular Stand from Chen Rentao’s collection

to the “Vermillion Bird 朱雀” of the south nor to the northern Dark Warrior. Alongside skeletal remains, the Neolithic grave site at Puyang 濮陽 contains clamshell-constructed dragons and tigers but makes no reference to the northern Dark Warrior. The Jiahu site of Wuyang 舞陽 has only produced turtle shells. The crossover between the turtle-serpent and the Dark Warrior thus seems to be a product of later generations.

Zhang Heng 張衡 (78–139 CE), in a discussion of the “four spirits 四靈”²² in his “Lingxian” 靈憲, writes, “The Vermillion Bird lifts its wings in front, while the spirit turtle corrals from the rear 朱雀奮翼於前，靈龜圈卷於後.”²³ The *Liji* 禮記, “Quli” 曲禮 says, “First comes the Vermillion Bird, and then comes the Dark Warrior 前朱雀而後玄武.”²⁴ And in its “Kao gong ji” 考工記, it says,

22 Note: The “four spirits” here are the “four mythological creatures 四大神獸:” the Azure Dragon, Vermillion Bird, White Tiger, and the Dark Turtle, with each representing a direction and season.

23 *Yuding peiwen yunfu*, 55.1.59a rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 1020: 514.

24 *Liji zhengyi*, 3.95.

“there is a turtle and serpent on four banner edges, taking on the likeness of the Yingshi asterism 龜蛇四游，以象營室。”²⁵ In the early Han dynasty, the title of “Dark Warrior Marquis 玄武侯,” was conferred upon a noble from the Xiang clan 項氏.²⁶

The title of “Dark Warrior” is first seen in *Chuci*, “Yuan you” 遠遊, but we might wonder how this title came about. Hong Xingzu 洪興祖 (1090–1155) explains: “The Dark Warrior refers to the turtle-serpent. Because it was located in the north, it was called ‘dark,’ and because its body had scales and a shell, it was called ‘warrior’ 玄武謂龜蛇，位在北方，故曰玄，身有鱗甲，故曰武。”²⁷ Seven of the 28 astrological mansions belong to the Dark Warrior, namely, Dou 斗, Niu 牛 (“ox”), Nü 女 (“girl”), Xu 虛 (“void”), Wei 危 (“rooftop”), Shi 室 (“encampment”), and Bi 壁 (“wall”), with Xu and Wei being considered the cardinal mansions of the North. In Western astronomy, the seven mansions are identified as belonging to Sagittarius, Aquarius, and Perseus.²⁸

The Dark Warrior sundial appears to have been used as a marker for establishing morning and evening, thus being utilized as a utensil for coordinating directions and positions by means of observing astronomical phenomena. The instrument takes the shape of a turtle-serpent and bears a tube on its back, taking the Yingshi asterism as its model and utilizing the northern Ding constellation to delineate the four cardinal directions.

4 Turtles Becoming the *Shui mu* 水母

In ancient times, turtles were called water spirits. Wang Bao 王褒 (fl. Western Han) wrote in his *Jiu huai* 九懷 that, “The Dark Warrior and the *Shui mu* went together to meet me in the glowing south 玄武步兮水母，與吾期兮南榮。”²⁹ Wang Yi 王逸 commented on this passage: “The Heavenly turtle is the spirit of waters 天龜，水神。”³⁰ Presumably from time immemorial the turtle was identified with the *Shui mu* owing to the association of the north with the element water.

The “Shui di” 水地 chapter of the *Guanzi* 管子 says, “Turtles live in the water, but are exposed by the fire, thereupon being able to foretell all things and

25 *Zhouli zhushu*, 40.1283.

26 “Xiang Yu benji” 項羽本紀, *Shiji*, 7:338.

27 *Chuci buzhu*, 5.171.

28 Liu Caonan, “Ershiba xiu shiming,” 159–61.

29 *Chuci buzhu*, 15.277.

30 *Chuci buzhu*, 15.277.

verify the coming of good fortune and disaster 龜生於水，發之於火。於是為萬物先，為禍福正。”³¹ What is meant by being “exposed by the fire” is the use of fire to scorch the turtle such that it generates cracks used for prognosticating. The “Za ji” 雜記 chapter of the *Liji*, says, “The turtle represents old *yin*, while the yarrow represents old *yang*. The dragon cannot settle down without water, while the turtle cannot express its omens without fire: using *yang* to stir *yin* 龜、陰之老也，著、陽之老也。龍非水不處，龜非火不兆，以陽動陰也。”³² Thus, we can see here that “fire” refers to the scorching of the shell to generate cracks to serve as omens. Li Yong’s 李顥 (fl. Eastern Han) “Gui fu” 龜賦 says, “The substance corresponds to the image of the hexagram *li* and finds its peaceful dwelling in the house of hexagram *kan* 質應離象，位安坎居。”³³ This explains that the turtle originally lies in the waters of *kan* and requires the fire of *li* in order for its omens and determinations to become known.

We can thus better understand how the turtle-serpent became the *zhao* 旄 banner of the northern Dark Warrior. Liu Xi’s 劉熙 (fl. Eastern Han) *Shiming* 釋名, “Shing Bing” 釋兵 says, “The turtle-serpent is the *zhao*-banner. The banner is the omen. The turtle knows the good or ill fortune of *qi* 龜蛇為旄；旄，兆也。龜知氣兆之吉凶。”³⁴ The turtle is able to recognize the *qi* and promote its flow. The *Shiji*, “Guice liezhuan” 龜策列傳, records the story of a turtle being used as a bed support, saying, “The turtle was able to promote the flow of *qi* and guide its expansion 龜能行氣導引。”³⁵ From this also came the so-called “turtle’s breath 龜息,” a turtle-inspired breathing method that was used by students of that time to promote and normalize the flow of *qi*.

Since turtles are said to realize the good or ill fortune that comes with the *qi*, we find them within numerous terms connected with divination practices, such as “the great treasured turtle 大寶龜,”³⁶ the “primary turtle 元龜,”³⁷ the “divine turtle 神龜” and “numinous turtle 靈龜,”³⁸ and the “dragon turtle 龍龜” among others.³⁹ They are praised particularly for their longevity and represent the passage of time itself, in turn embodying the Chinese ideal of longevity and

31 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 14.827.

32 Note: This passage from the *Liji* is lost, but is cited in *Baihutong* 白虎通, 7 “Shigui” 著龜. *Baihu tong shuzheng*, 7:333.

33 Li Yong, “Gui fu,” *Quan Jin wen*, 53.11a, rpt. in *Quan shanggu Sandai Qinhan Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 1768.

34 Liu Xi, *Shiming*, 7.104.

35 *Shiji*, 128.3228.

36 *Shangshu* 尚書, 13 “Dagao” 大誥. *Shangshu zhengyi*, 13.405.

37 *Shijing*, 20 “Lusong” 魯頌 “Banshui” 泮水. *Maoshi zhengyi*, 20.1653.

38 *Erya* 爾雅, 9 “Shiyu” 釋魚. *Erya zhushu*, 9.338.

39 *Shanghai jing* 山海經, 3 “Bei shan jing” 北山經. *Shanghai jing jianshu*, 3.99.

indicating the common yearning for one of the constituents of the tripartite unity of fortune, prosperity, and longevity.⁴⁰

As a result of turtles arising from the water, it has gained the title of “*Shui mu*.” This resonates with the Indian tradition’s conception of turtles as Prajāpati (“earth mother”) and the earthly liquid. Turtles can influence *qi* and can be used together with milfoil in divination, including that of the hexagrams invented by Fu Xi 伏羲. For this reason, the “Da zongshi” 大宗師 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 says, “Fu Xi attained [the *Dao*] and thereby penetrated into the [mystery of the] mother of *qi* 伏羲氏得之，以襲氣母。”⁴¹ *Qi mu*, the Mother of *Qi*, and *Shui mu*, the Mother of Waters, are both believed to be related to turtles.

40 *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽, 931 “Linjie bu” 鱗介部 3 says, “The sayings of turtles have longevity 龜之言久也.” See *Taiping yulan*, 931.1b (4137). Ren Fang’s 任昉 *Shu yi ji* 述異記 says, “Turtles of a thousand years grow hairs. One whose age reaches five thousand years can be called the ‘divine turtle.’ One whose age reaches ten thousand years can be called the ‘spirit turtle’ 龜一千年生毛，壽五千歲謂之神龜，壽萬年曰靈龜.” *Taiping yulan*, 931.10a (4141).

41 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 3A.247.

Records of “Luminous Deities” in the Dawenkou 大汶口 Culture and the Rituals of Later Generations: A Discussion of Sun and Moon Worship of the Distant Past

大汶口「明神」記號與後代禮制——論遠古之日月崇拜


Humankind is astonishingly insignificant. When standing on the Earth, people look up at the innumerable stars and constellations in the sky, finding therein phenomena both gratifying and astounding. It takes one day and one night for one cycle of the Earth’s rotation; living things absorb heat and light from the sun, without which the world would be a mere undifferentiated darkness. Throughout history, human beings have held all sorts of religious beliefs, though they have all invariably deified the Sun, such as the Babylonian Marduk or Ra in Egypt. Thus, Sun worship has become an important research topic in anthropology and the study of mythology.

Recent archaeological studies have produced an abundance of new material regarding the ancient practices of Sun worship in China. We find the figure ☀ painted on Neolithic pottery from China’s northwest, for example, whose shape unmistakably resembles the Sun surrounded by its rays, and some scholars believe the symbol to indicate an aurora.¹ The Banpo 半坡 site similarly contains a ☀ symbol. On rock paintings from Inner Mongolia’s Lang Mountain 狼山, we find the drawings ☀ and ○. In southeast China, sites such as those at Hemudu 河姆渡 contain an impressive ivory carving of a twin phoenix with a rising sun. The excavation report reads as follows:

On the front side are Yin line engravings that form an image. In the center is a group of concentric circles of varying sizes. Around the edge of the outer circles are engravings that appear to signify flames. On both sides of the central engraving are two phoenixes facing one another, taking on vivid and lifelike shapes. Additionally, there are six small circular holes surrounding the phoenixes. The piece is 16.6 cm long, 5.9 cm wide, and 1.5 cm thick.

1 See Zhengzhou shi bowuguan fajuezu, “Tantan Zhengzhou Dahe cun yizhi chutu caitao shang de tianwen tuxiang,” 44–47, 57.

在正面部位用陰線雕刻出一組圖案，中心為一組大小不等的同心圓，外圓邊雕刻有似烈焰光芒，兩側雕有昂首相望的雙鳥，形態逼真。同時還鑽有六個小圓孔，長一六·六，線寬五·九，厚一·五釐米。²

The Dahe 大河 village excavation in Zhengzhou 鄭州, Henan province, has produced several bowls, among other Neolithic painted pottery items, containing twelve sun-shaped  decorations on the outside. Also unearthed were pottery shards with arches formed on both sides of the sun, which may indicate a halo produced by its light. Both constitute valuable examples of Sun iconography.

Since 1959, archaeological sites connected to the Dawenkou 大汶口 culture have been excavated on the border between Tai'an 泰安 and Ningyang 寧陽 counties in Shandong. Of particular interest is the discovery of pottery *zun* 尊 vessels that contain engraved symbols, captivating historians and inspiring various explanations. I will discuss my own perspective in the rest of this article. The first order of business, however, concerns the items' dating and provenience.

Regarding the age of the pottery inscriptions, several investigations have shown them to be from the late period of the Dawenkou culture (ca. 4300–2600 BCE). Radiocarbon dating has offered us a more precise estimate at about 2780 BCE ±145 years, certainly predating the Shang dynasty, but no remains from more than 6000 years ago were found. The excavation sites with inscribed pottery appear precisely over the area of the ancient Wenshang Mingtang 汶上明堂.³ Interestingly, the *Wei shu* 魏書 “Dixing zhi” 地形志 tells of Fenggao 奉高 county of the Mount Tai 泰山 commandery, saying, “The Ancestral Hall of Mt. Tai and Yufu Mountain—they are the foundation of the Mingtang 岱岳祠、玉符山，故明堂基。”⁴

Thus, with the period and location settled, we can now begin a detailed investigation.

In the Winter of 1980, I travelled to Shandong. By way of Jinan 濟南, I arrived at Qufu 曲阜, went up Mt. Tai, and thereafter passed through Dawenkou. I was welcomed by local archaeologists as well as experts from the Shandong Museum. Throughout the journey, I was able to examine the excavated artifacts and learned that the excavations at Dawenkou were still ongoing.

2 See Hemudu yizhi kaogudui, “Zhejiang Hemudu yizhi di er qi fajue de zhuyao shouhuo,” 7. Wu Yuxian, “Hemudu de yuanshi yishu,” 61–69.

3 Note: *Mingtang* were sites erected for the performance of rituals as well as for demonstrating imperial power. The *mingtang* in Wenshang is said to have been built during the reign of Han Wudi 漢武帝 (r. 141–87 BCE) in 109 BCE, see Michael Loewe, *Problems of Han Administration*, Leiden: Brill, 2016, pp. 108–09.

4 *Wei shu*, 106B.2519.

Nevertheless, there were already several impressive discoveries, including as many as 19 “writings,” containing 11 distinct symbols.⁵ Most strikingly, each of the engraved symbols contains a solar disk shape. The Beijing Museum of History displays a pottery *zun* vessel from Juxian 莒縣, adding the explanation that the engraving on it consists of the Sun, the Moon, and a mountain grouped together. The Shandong Museum has a similar exhibit, but it lacks a corresponding explanation. The following illustrations depict five different shapes of such engravings:



FIGURE 3.A
Symbol resembling the sun marked on a clay
artifact of the Dawenkou culture
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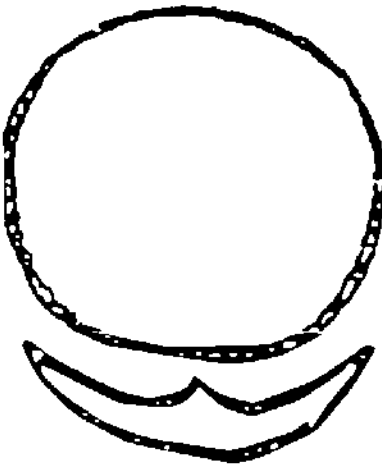


FIGURE 3.B
A Symbol marked on a clay artifact of the
Dawenkou culture
PHOTO AUTHORIZED BY JAO STUDIES
FOUNDATION

5 See Wang Shuming, “Tan Lingyang he yu Dazhu cun chutu de taozun ‘wenzi,’” 249–308. See also Li Xueqin, “Lun xinshu Dawenkou wenhua taoqi fuhao,” 75–80.






FIGURE 3.C
A Symbol marked on a clay artifact of the Dawenkou culture
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FIGURE 3.D
A Symbol marked on a clay artifact of the Dawenkou culture
PHOTO AUTHORIZED BY JAO STUDIES FOUNDATION



FIGURE 3.E
A Symbol marked on a clay artifact of the Dawenkou culture
PHOTO AUTHORIZED BY JAO STUDIES FOUNDATION

The fourth and fifth can be regarded as more complicated graphic forms of the first three. It is difficult to say whether the lower part  is a precursor to the character *huo* 火 (“fire”), as it also resembles a mountain. However, these two forms clearly come from a later period. Some say that they already constitute a script, either representing the character *dan* 旦 (“sunrise”) or the character *jiong* 炁 (“daylight”). However, it appears that all these explanations are incorrect. I still believe that it should be considered a symbol rather than a character. Pang Pu 龐樸 in an article on what the so-called “fire calendar 火曆” believes this to be a symbol of the tripartite unity of the sun, moon, and fire, but he did not notice that the marking  is just a more complicated version of . There are yet more jade artifacts that can attest to this:

1. The Beijing Museum of History purchased from Mr. Yin Shi'an 尹世安 of Shandong an enormous, 49.2 cm high, green jade *cong* 琮 with the engraving at its highest point having a decorative pattern incised in the same shape as those of Dawenkou pottery vessels.⁶
2. The collection of the Freer Gallery in the US contains several jade *bi* 璧 from the Liangzhu 良渚 culture. Their decorative patterns can be seen in the following pictures:⁷

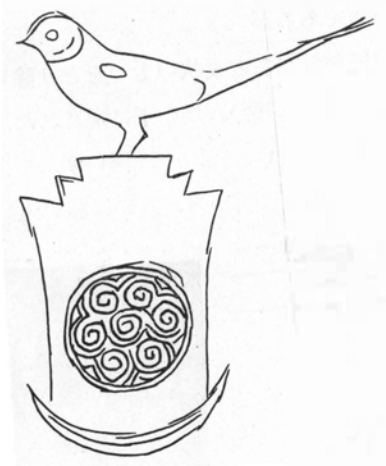



FIGURE 3.F
A Symbol marked on a jade artifact of the
Liangzhu culture
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6 See Shi Zhilian, “Zuida zuigu de  wen bi yucong,” *Zhongguo wenwu bao*, October 1, 1987.

7 See Minao Hayashi, “Chūgoku kodai no sakagame,” 1–22. See also S. Paronavitana, “Devangala Rock-inscription of Parakramabahu 1,” *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, 3: 312–325.



FIGURE 3.G
A Symbol marked on a jade artifact of the Liangzhu culture
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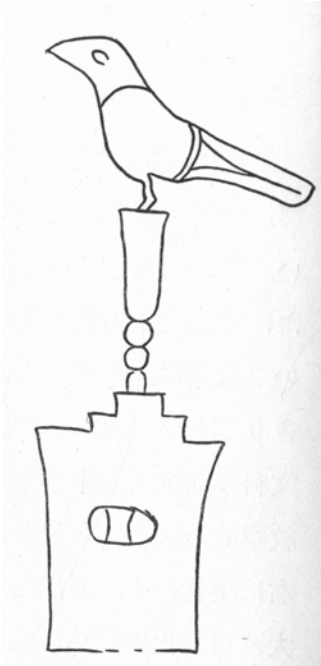


FIGURE 3.H
A Symbol marked on a jade artifact of the Liangzhu culture
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FIGURE 3.1
A Symbol marked on a clay
artifact from Dawenkou culture
PHOTO AUTHORIZED BY JAO
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All three jade *bi* resemble one another in that they are decorated with birds that are standing on something that has a ☰-shaped outer frame. This shape is indeed the same as the ☰ that was added to the bottom of the Dawenkou ☷ symbols, which upon closer examination resemble a sacrificial altar; it could also indicate a mountain or a tall hill over which sun and moon ascend, but it certainly does not represent fire. Within the solar disk on one of the jade artifacts are thunder patterns, which clearly suggests it is a depiction of the sun. Underneath, there is a ☾, clearly representing the moon. The whole shape could possibly represent the harmony between the sun and moon.

Thus, based on the aforementioned artifacts, we can infer that ☷ and ☽ represent the original shape of the symbol. The Liangzhu jade *bi* further indicate that they represent the unity of the sun and moon.

When we examine the Dawenkou figures 1 and 4, we find that the ☽ shapes below their solar disk images lack a central protrusion in the middle of the crescent, just as on the jade *bi* from Liangzhu.

The figure above shows yet another pottery fragment from Dawenkou with a deformed ☽ below the solar disk, suggesting that the sun is given priority within the image. We are now able to make the following conclusions:

1. The preceding patterns and shapes had not yet been standardized, and the symbols may have been changed arbitrarily at any time. Thus, we can determine that they are definitively not a form of writing.
2. There are two main patterns. One has a solar disk as its main part, while the other has the sun and moon combined in a single image, with a crescent moon appearing at the lower part of the body of the solar disk.

Ancient ways of referring to the sun included the title of “great illuminator 大明.” The *Guangya* 廣雅, “Shi tian” 釋天 says, “The Sun ... one name for it is the great illuminator 日……一名大明.”⁸ Thus, among the celestial bodies that were venerated, the sun was considered chief. The *Yulan* 御覽 cites Liu Xiang’s 劉向 (ca. 77–6 BCE) *Hongfan zhuan* 洪範傳 as claiming that, “The sun is the luminous great marker, the illustrious great indicator 日者，照明之大表，光景之大紀.”⁹ Although these statements were formulated later, they adequately demonstrate that their ancient predecessors regarded the sun as the main ruler of the heavens.

Stone inscriptions with a ☉ figure have also been found in Sri Lanka, which some scholars believe to symbolize sun and moon and their permanence. This stone inscription dates from 1165 CE. Moreover, a ☉ symbol was found in Tibet, which also indicates the sun and moon. Yuan Hong 袁宏 (328–376 CE) in the *Hou Han ji* 後漢紀 says, “The Enlightened Lord dreamed and saw a golden man of great height; around his neck were the rays of the sun and moon 明帝夢見金人長大，項有日月光.”¹⁰ Thus, the sunlight and moonlight were deemed emblems of the Buddha. Within the ancients’ experience of observing astrological signs, the idea that sun and moon form a harmonious match has been extraordinarily precious, and led to the people regard it as an auspicious sign.

Thus, we can be sure that the ☉ figure from the Dawenkou culture is certainly not writing but simply an auspicious symbol, perhaps indicating that the owner of the pottery possessed some authority on par with “the unified brilliance of the sun and moon.” The sun and moon were also called “luminous deities 明神” and this one symbol appears to be a predecessor for the character *ming* 明 (“luminous”).

The Dawenkou culture brought forth inscriptions, writings, and symbols on pottery, many having been unearthed about 30 miles from the sea, in the hills of Lingyanghe 陵陽河, near Dazhu village 大朱村, Ju County 莒縣, in the upper reaches of the Shu River 沭河 and Wei River 濰河. During the Han era, the Marquis of Zhuxu 朱虛侯, Liu Zhang 劉章 (d. 177 BCE) was bestowed the title of Prince of Chengyang 城陽王, and he established a town in Ju County.

The hieroglyphic and pictographic writing connected with sun worship in Egypt and West Asia all depicted a rising sun, similar to the symbols found in Dawenkou. The Egyptians used ☀, in which the Sun is placed just above the horizon, thereby indicating the shining sunlight as well as the Sun’s daily rebirth. Sumerian cuneiform writing contains the sign ☀, pronounced *utu*, which indicates the Sun rising above a mountain, and symbolizes the sun deity

8 *Taiping yulan*, 3.7b (17).

9 *Taiping yulan*, 3.3b–4a (15).

10 *Hou Han ji jiaozhu*, 10.277.

Šamaš. The shape of *utu*, discovered in Uruk, a site dating from 3000 BCE, is very similar to the symbol found in Dawenkou. The Southwest Asian sun deity was called Šamaš. The highest deity is called Marduk, which comes from *ma* (the Akkadian word for “son”) and *utu*, and therefore stands for “the son of the Sun”. In Peru, the king is also called the Son of the Sun.

The pottery *zun* vessels inscribed with this symbol are quite tall, with some being 60cm and higher, which led some scholars to believe that they are ritual artifacts. Given a few holes in their upper parts that allowed liquids to leak out, such artifacts are nowadays known to have been used for fermentation, though more detailed research must be done on this topic.

The Dawenkou site persisted for two thousand years or more, producing *bei* 杯, *gu* 菰, and *dou* 豆 drinking vessels, all of which shared the common feature of being stemmed. Shao Wangping 邵望平 reports, “At Dadunzi, earthenware vessels were discovered in the early period tomb, M44. The tomb owner buried therein was a tall and imposing man whose skeleton was very sturdy 在大墩子墓地發現陶尊的早期墓地M四四，其墓主人體軀高大，骨骼粗壯。”¹¹ In antiquity, ethnic groups from the East were referred to as *chang* 長 (“tall”). Examples for this can be found in the *Shiji* 史記, “Wudi benji” 五帝本紀 when it talks about “Yu’s great accomplishments 唯禹之功為大” and mentions, “the tall island barbarians of the East 東長島夷.”¹² The *Shuoyuan* 說苑, “Xiuwen pian” 修文篇 says, “To the east one meets tall barbarians and island barbarians 東至長夷、島夷.”¹³ The *Chuci* 楚辭, “Zhaohun” 招魂 refers to, “tall people who are of a thousand *ren* in height 長人千仞.”¹⁴ The three engraved jade *bi* from Liangzhu mentioned above depict the Sun, Moon, and a bird perching above an altar three layers high. These and the twin phoenix and rising sun patterns on the artifacts from Hemudu are clearly connected to the culture of the “barbarians from the eastern islands.” The “Qin benji” 秦本紀 says:

The ancestor of the Qin was a remote descendant of Lord Zhuanxu, his granddaughter was called Lady Xiu. While she was weaving, a mysterious bird dropped its egg. Lady Xiu swallowed it and later gave birth to a son, Ye the Great. Ye thereupon took a descendent of Shaodian, called Lady Hua, as his own, who gave birth to Fei the Great (Bo Yi 伯益). Alongside Yu, Fei the Great controlled the floods ... He had two sons, and one was called Lian the Great, who was of the Niaosu Clan.

11 Shao Wangping, “Yuangu wenming de huohua: taozun shang de wenzi,” 74.

12 *Shiji*, 1.43.

13 *Shuoyuan jiaozheng*, 19.490.

14 *Chuci buzhu*, 199.

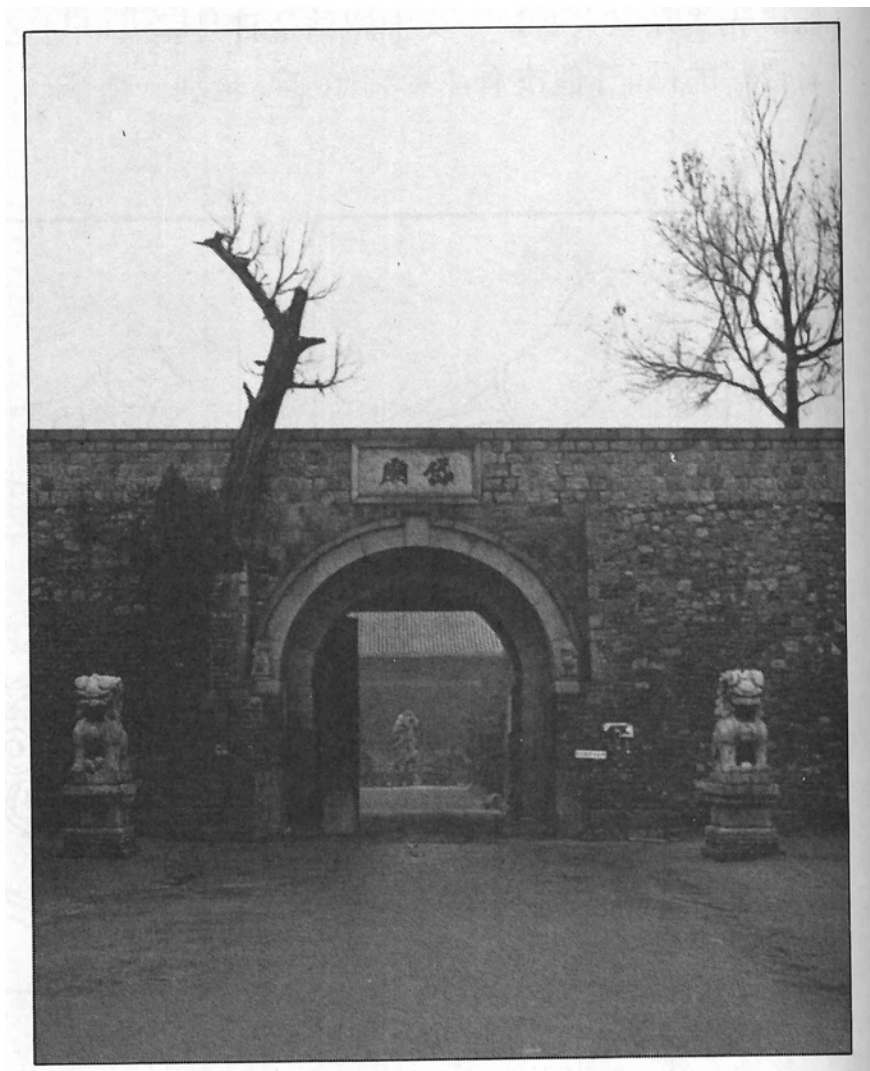


FIGURE 3.J Dai Temple 岱廟 in Mount Tai, Shangdong province
 PHOTO AUTHORIZED BY JAO STUDIES FOUNDATION

秦之先，帝顓頊之苗裔孫曰女脩。女脩織，玄鳥隕卵，女修吞之，生子大業。大業取少典之子，曰女華。女華生大費，與禹平水土……大費生子二人：一曰大廉，實鳥俗氏。¹⁵

15 *Shiji*, 5.173-74.

A giant *qing* 磬 has been unearthed from the tomb of Duke Jing of Qin 秦景公 (d. 537 CE) in Shaanxi province.¹⁶ Engraved on it is the following phrase: “(Qin’s ancestor) Gaoyang has his spiritual power; the four corners of the empire are pacified by means of the [nine] *ding* 高陽有靈，四方以鼎平.” The Qin people are all descendants of Zhuangxi, and in former ages they were called members of the Niaosu Clan 鳥俗氏, with the term *niao* 鳥 (“bird”) therein being related to the fable. The upright standing bird on the jade circlets might be a representation of the “mysterious bird,” thereby suggesting that Dawenkou culture and Liangzhu culture had already been in contact.

In ancient times, people were accustomed to waiting in the east to greet the rising Sun each morning. This is the ceremony that the *Shangshu*’s 尚書 “Yao dian” 堯典 refers to in its description of “respectfully welcoming the sunrise 寅賓出日.”¹⁷ The Qin and Han people performed the rituals of sun worship in Chengshan 成山, Shandong. The “Qin shi huang benji” 秦始皇本紀 says, “Passing by Huang and Chui, [Qin Shi Huang] reached the boundaries of Chengshan and ascended Zhifu Mountain 過黃、隄，窮成山，登芝罘，”¹⁸ whereupon he carved stone inscriptions in praise of Qin’s virtues. The *Han shu* 漢書, “Wudi ji” 武帝紀 says, “In the third year of Qin Shi Huang’s reign, he travelled to Langya and ritually worshipped the sun at Chengshan 秦始三年，幸琅邪，禮日成山.”¹⁹ Chengshan 成山 is written Shengshan 盛山 in the *Han shu*, “Jiaosi zhi” 郊祀志.²⁰ Chengshan is located in Shandong’s coastal border area, often called Shandong’s mountainous spur. We therefore know that ancient ceremonies for the sun took place in the coastal areas of Shandong, and earthen vessels from Juxian were unearthed nearby. In the area surrounding Mt. Tai are locations for performing sacrifices to the sun, including the ancient site of the Mingtang also referred to as the “Wenshang Mingtang.”²¹ Emperor Wu of Han 漢武帝 (r. 141–87 BCE) paid tribute to Heaven and Earth at Mt. Tai and descended to the Mingtang. Chen Zan 臣瓚 (fl. Western Jin) comments on the “Wu di benji:” In ancient times, the Mingtang was located to the northeast of Mt. Tai 泰山東北陞古時有明堂處.”²² I once travelled to the Dai Temple 岱廟 and saw pictures hanging on the wall of the temple depicting the Han dynasty Mingtang site, outlining its general features. (See the previous illustration.) In the 15th year of the Kaihuang 開皇 era (596 CE), Emperor

16 A *qing* 磬 was a lithophone used in ancient China for state rituals.

17 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 2.33.

18 *Shiji*, 6.244.

19 *Han shu*, 6.206.

20 *Han shu*, 25A.1202.

21 Note: Same as above. See fn. 3.

22 Annotations by Wang Xianqian 王先謙 (1842–1917). *Han shu*, 6.192.

Wen of Sui 隋文帝 (ca. 541–604 CE) travelled to Yanzhou 兗州 and stopped at Mt. Tai. He raised an altar and travelled to the “southern suburban altar 南郊,” and in the area outside the earthen embankment was another firewood altar. Two burial pits were dug outside the southern gate. When worshipping at Mt. Tai, the emperor must establish altars and dig pits, both being essential ritual practices from time immemorial.

Ancient people also found spiritual significance in the Sun rising in the East and setting in the West. Among the deities in the *Chuci*, there is a “Sovereign Great One of the East 東皇太一,”²³ the “Eastern Ruler 東君” (on which Wang Yi 王逸 comments, “This is the sun deity”)²⁴ and the “Western Sovereign 西皇” (from the poem, “Li Sao” 離騷).²⁵ The *Shiji*’s “Fengshan shu” 封禪書 ranks the “Eight Deities of Qi 齊地八神,” which contain both the Sun Lord and the Moon Lord.²⁶ There are 19 songs from Han sacrifices recorded in the *Han shu* that pertain primarily to extolling the four seasons and Heaven and Earth. The 9th song is called, “the Sun’s rising and setting,” which was at the time a chant for the Han dynasty sacrifice at the village shrine. It reads as follows:

Sunrise and sunset, when will they stop? The seasons and eras surpass the lifespan of any single human. Spring is not my Spring; the Summer is not my Summer; the Autumn is not my Autumn; the Winter is not my Winter. I am stuck like a puddle within the four seas, seeing all that goes by—what can we do? I know what is enjoyable: I enjoy only the six dragons. Taming the six dragons makes my heart smooth. Why not come down, Ci Huang?

日出入安窮？時世不與人同。故春非我春，夏非我夏，秋非我秋，冬非我冬。泊如四海之池，徧觀是邪謂何？吾知所樂，獨樂六龍，六龍之調，使我心若。訾黃其何不徠下！²⁷

The *qian* 乾 hexagram of the *Zhouyi* 周易 says, “In accordance with the seasons, I ride the six dragons to manage Heaven 時乘六龍以御天,”²⁸ and the Han sacrifice songs utilize similar phrases. The sacrifice is to the sun but not to the moon. The poem, “The Sun’s Rising and Setting” inherits the Shang dynasty

23 *Chuci buzhu*, 57.

24 *Chuci buzhu*, 76.

25 *Chuci buzhu*, 45.

26 *Shiji*, 28.1367.

27 *Han shu*, 2.1059.

28 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 1.8.

ritual. Within oracle bone inscriptions, we regularly see records for “sunrise” and “sunset”, with some examples as follows:

On *wuxu* day, divine as follows, Nei: (One) shall call upon Que to cut up sheep [for sacrifice] to the rising sun (and) to the setting sun.

戊戌卜，內：呼雀臧于出日，于入日，宰。²⁹

... the sun sets, perform *you*-sacrifice ...

.....其入日，出（侑）.....³⁰

At *dingsi* day divine as follows: perform *you*-sacrifice to the rising sun. At *dingsi* day divination: perform *you*-sacrifice to the setting sun.

丁巳卜：又（侑）出日，丁巳卜又（侑）入日。³¹

guiwei day: on *jiashen* day regarding the rising and setting sun, (we) should perform *sui*-sacrifice using three cows as offerings. (We) used (this oracle).

癸未：甲申，出入日，歲三牛，茲用。³²

On *yíyou* day divination: perform the *you*-sacrifice to the rising sun (and) to the setting sun.

乙酉卜：又（侑）出日入日。³³

Divination records also contain episodes of the king observing the sunrise. For example:

29 *Jiaguwen heji* 6572, *Yinxu wenzi bingbian*, 171. See also Paul L-M. Serruys, Ken-ichi Takashima trans. *Studies of Fascicle Three of Inscriptions from the Yin Ruins*, 366–67.

30 *Jiaguwen heji*, 13328.

31 *Yinqi yicun*, 407.

32 *Xiaotun nandi jiagu*, 870.

33 *Oracle Bones from the White and Other Collections*, 1569.

The king observed the sunrise. He performed a sacrifice to the sun. Also, perform the *gang*-sacrifice. Do not perform the *gang*-sacrifice.

王其藿日出，其戡于日，剛，弼剛。³⁴

“Sunset and sunrise” can be considered a single phrase, but some divide it into the “rising sun” and the “setting sun.” During the Shang dynasty’s sun worship rituals, three cows, or alternatively sheep, were used for the sacrifice. The *Shangshu*, “Yao dian” refers to, “respectfully welcoming the sunrise 寅賓出日,”³⁵ and “Respectfully bidding farewell to the setting Sun 寅餞納日.”³⁶ Nowadays we write, “setting Sun 入日,” which the *Shiji* interprets as “reverently welcome the setting Sun 敬道日入,”³⁷ and is identical to the Yin inscription. Sima Qian 司馬遷 (b. 145 BCE) interprets the character *jian* 餞 in *yinjian* 寅餞 (“seeing off”) in the previous quote as *dao* 道 (“welcome”). Coming back to the ☉ engravings on the Dawenkou pottery *zun*, the sign is incomparably significant: the “Si zunyi” 司尊彝 of *Zhouli* 周禮 says, “during the court farewell banquet ceremony two large *zun* must be used 其朝踐用兩大尊.”³⁸ Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (ca. 127–200 CE) comments, “The court farewell banquet ceremony is called the sacrifice of blood 朝踐謂薦血腥.”³⁹ A large *zun* was utilized in the Sun sacrifice ceremony, and the Yin people for their own ceremonies during the sunrise and sunset had the term, “a cow should presently be used in annual sacrifices 歲牛茲用.” The Liang 梁 dynasty (502–557 CE) scholar Ming Shanbin 明山賓 (443–527 CE) composed the *Mingtang yizhu* 明堂儀注, which is recorded in the “Liyi zhi” 禮儀志 of the *Sui shu* 隋書.⁴⁰

As for divination phrases regarding the sunrise and sunset, there are those who believe that they do not refer to a day of sacrifices for welcoming the sun deity, but rather were early morning and evening ceremonies for the Spring and Autumn equinoxes.⁴¹

34 *Xiaotun nandi jiagu*, 2232.

35 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 2.33.

36 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 2.34.

37 *Shiji*, 1.16.

38 *Zhouli zhushu*, 20.607.

39 *Zhouli zhushu*, 20.607.

40 *Sui shu*, 6.119.

41 Based on the *Yinxu wenzi bingbian*, no. 171 of Wuding 武丁 divination record on the heavenly stems and earthly branches of the day, Song Zhenhao 宋鎮豪 deduces that the sacrificial ritual was performed in both Spring and Autumn months, which demonstrates

Fu Sheng 伏生 (ca. 260–161 BCE) in his *Shangshu dazhuan* 尚書大傳 states that the expression “respectfully welcoming the sunrise,”⁴² refers to the early morning of the Spring equinox. Zheng Xuan also understood the sunrise as the early morning of the Spring equinox, anticipating Fu Sheng. The *weishu* 緯書 (“weft text”),⁴³ *Shangshu diming yan* 尚書帝命驗 says:

In Autumn and Winter, the people desire to rest early, so command your subjects to rest at sunset. This is called respectfully bidding farewell to the setting Sun. Spring welcomes its arrival, and Autumn sees off its departure. Nothing does not follow it.”

秋冬民欲早息，故令民候日入而息，是謂寅餞納日。春迎其來，秋送其去，無不順。⁴⁴

When the people of Zhou appropriated the Shang rituals, the sacrifices to the sun and moon became national ceremonies called “Morning Sun and Evening Moon 朝日夕月.” The “Zhouyu” 周語 says:

In ancient times, the Former Kings gained control of all under Heaven, and the supreme Lord on High, as well as the luminous deities, were established, and we respectfully served them. From then on, there were the Morning Sun and Evening Moon rituals.

古者先王既有天下，又崇立上帝、明神而敬事之，於是乎有朝日、夕月。⁴⁵

Wei Zhao 韋昭 (ca. 204–273 CE) comments, “The ‘luminous deities’ are the Sun and Moon 明神，日月也。”⁴⁶ He also comments, “as for the magnificent beings

that the Yin were clearly familiar with responding to the Spring and Autumn equinoxes. See Song Zhenhao, “Jiaguwen churi ruri kao,” 33.





42 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 2.33.

43 Note: *Wei shu* 緯書, “weft texts,” also known as “apocrypha,” constitute a group of ancient works on a variety of topics that lie outside the received early Chinese corpus, the title “weft” referring to their perception as representing the “crosswise” fabrics of the corpus, rather than the lengthwise *jing* or classic works. See Grégoire Espeset, “Epiphanies of Sovereignty and the Rite of Jade Disc Immersion in Weft Narratives,” for a detailed study of several weft texts.

44 Huang Shi ed., *Shangshu diming yan*, in *Shangshu wei*, 15.

45 *Guoyu jijie*, 1.33.

46 *Guoyu jijie*, 1.33.

suspended in the sky and their radiant brilliance, none is greater than the Sun and Moon 懸象著明莫大乎日月。⁴⁷ Thus, the two bodies came to be known as the “luminous deities.” Writings from Mawangdui Tomb No. 3 read as follows: “Wang Qi answered King Zhao of Qin, ‘you must look at the Sun and Moon and absorb their essence and brilliance’ 王期答秦昭王，必朝日月而歛其精光。”⁴⁸ The poem “Shejiang” 涉江 from the “Jiuzhang” 九章 section of the *Chuci* says, “emulate the longevity of Heaven and Earth; match the brilliance of the Sun and Moon 與天地兮同壽，與日月兮同光。”⁴⁹ From the time of the mythical emperors, there have been numerous eulogies venerating the Sun and Moon. Because the Sun and Moon are “luminous deities,” they were ranked alongside the Lord on High and became objects of reverence and sacrifice by kings, their respective place of sacrifice being called the Mingtang. Thus, the shapes  and  resembling grave mounds were added. This is a reasonable inference so long as the  figure of Dawenkou and the  figure of the Liangzhu jade *bi* indeed represent the unity between the Sun and Moon and their combined roles as luminous deities.

In the “Luyu” 魯語, Mu Bo’s 穆伯 wife, Jing Jiang 敬姜, remarks to the Son of Heaven that people are toiling because, “In the morning, the Son of Heaven will sacrifice to the Sun. In the evening, the Son of Heaven will sacrifice to the Moon. When the Sun sets, the Son of Heaven will inspect the nine maidservants 大采朝日，日中考政；少采夕月，日入監九御。”⁵⁰ Wei Zhao’s comments offer a theory that:

Spring Equinox—Morning Sun—*dacai* (morning) (this is the earthly virtue)—*yang* administration.

春分 朝日 大采（此為地德）陽政。

Autumn Equinox—Evening Moon—*shaocai* (evening) (this is the heavenly reformation)—*yin* administration.

秋分 夕月 少采（此為天刑）陰政。⁵¹

47 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 7.340.

48 *Changsha mawangdui hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 150.

49 *Chuci buzhu*, 129.

50 *Guoyu jijie*, 5.194–96.

51 *Guoyu jijie*, 5.194–96.

During the Zhou dynasty, the Morning Sun and Evening Moon ceremonies were performed at the Spring and Autumn equinoxes. The *Da Dai liji* 大戴禮記, “Bao fu pian” 保傅篇 expresses a ritual principle from the Zhou dynasty as follows: “The rituals of the Three dynasties: The Son of Heaven early in the Spring morning carries out the Sun ritual, and at the end of the Fall evening carries out the Moon ritual—this clarifies the differences between them 三代之禮，天子春朝朝日，秋莫夕月，所以明有別也。”⁵²

A Shang period divination fragment says, “... divination ... *zi* wind ... *cai*, rain ... Sunset, *wu*,”⁵³ which was originally seen in the *Xiaotun yibian* 小屯乙編. Yao Xiaosui’s 姚孝遂 *Yinxu jiagu keci leizhuan* 殷墟甲骨刻辭類纂 places the above item under the category of the “setting Sun”, but the transcription reads “six suns,”⁵⁴ mistaking the character *ru* 入 (“set”) for *liu* 六 (“six”). Following the assumption that it should read “setting Sun”, then the missing character before *cai* 采 should be the *shao* 少 (“lesser”), just as within the phrase “Autumn Equinox evening Moon *shaocai* ritual” from the “Luyu”. It’s a pity these writings have been lost or fragmented, so we cannot say anything with absolute certainty.

The rituals of the Morning Sun for the Spring equinox and the evening Moon for the Autumn equinox were superficially observed by later generations and underwent numerous transformations, in turn giving rise to spirited debates among ritual practitioners.

The *Liji* 禮記, “Yuzao” 玉藻, for example, says, “[The Son of Heaven] wears a black robe and sacrifices to the Morning Sun beyond the Eastern Gate 玄端而朝日於東門之外.”⁵⁵ The sub-commentary of Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (ca. 574–648 CE) reads as follows:

In antiquity, there were two rituals in which the Son of Heaven welcomed the Sun: One is done during the first month and welcomes the Sun at the Southern Altar; the other is done at the Spring Equinox and welcomes the Sun at the Eastern Altar.

古天子迎日之禮有二，一建寅元月迎日於南郊；一春分迎日於東郊。⁵⁶

52 *Da Dai liji jiegou*, 3:53.

53 *Jiaguwen heji*, No. 20959.

54 *Yinxu jiagu keci leizhuan*, 427.

55 *Liji zhengyi*, 29.1016.

56 *Liji zhengyi*, 29.1018.

The *Shangshu dazhuan* offers this same view and adds, “At the first month of the lunar year, welcome the early morning Sun at the Eastern Altar; the sacrifice to the Lord on High occurs at the Southern Altar 正月朝迎日於東郊，祀上帝於南郊。”⁵⁷ It further remarks that the Spring Equinox welcoming ceremony is identical.

The *Sui shu* 隋書, “*Liyi zhi*” 禮儀志 says:

Ritual: The Son of Heaven carries out the Spring Equinox Morning Sun welcoming ceremony at the Eastern Altar. The Spring Equinox Evening Moon ceremony is done at the Western Altar. According to Han law, there would not be two separate ceremonies in the Eastern and Western Altars, but a combined ceremony using the altar at Taizhi instead. The Son of Heaven comes out from the bamboo palace in the morning, faces east, and bows towards the sun. For the evening ritual, he faces west and bows towards the Moon. Emperor Wen of Wei criticized this as chaotic and convoluted, as though it were a casual, family affair, and so held that on the first month of the lunar year, the Morning Sun worshipping ritual should be held beyond the Eastern Gate. Prior historians also considered it to be untimely.

禮天子以春分朝日於東郊，秋分夕月於西郊。漢法，不俟二分於東西郊，常以郊泰時。旦出竹宮東向揖日，其夕西向揖月。魏文譏其煩褻，似家人之事，而以正月朝日于東門之外。前史又以為非時。⁵⁸

By the *dinghai* day, second month of the first year of the Taihe era under Emperor Ming’s reign, the Morning Sun worshipping ritual occurred at the Eastern Altar. In the eighth month, on *jichou* day, the Evening Moon ritual took place at the Western Altar. This practice from that point forward accorded with that of the ancient times.

及明帝太和元年二月丁亥，朝日于東郊。八月己丑，夕月于西郊。始合於古。⁵⁹

In the Later Zhou dynasty (951–954 CE), the Spring Equinox Morning Sun worshipping ritual occurred beyond the state’s Eastern Gate. [The Son of Heaven would] raise a mound for its altar and arrive in the suburbs to

57 *Shangshu dazhuan*, 5, 8b.

58 *Sui shu*, 7.140–41.

59 *Sui shu*, 7.141.

perform the sacrifice. The Autumn Equinox Evening Moon ritual takes place beyond the Western Gate. [He would] make an altar in the pit measuring 4 *zhang* across and 4 *chi* deep and burn it for the ritual, like that of worshipping the Sun.

後周以春分朝日於國東門外，為壇，如其郊。秋分夕月於國西門外，為壇，於坎中，方四丈，深四尺，燔燎禮如朝日。⁶⁰

At the beginning of the Kaihuang era (581–600 CE) of the Sui dynasty: The Son of Heaven built a mound beyond the Luminous Gate of the Eastern Spring and arrived at the suburbs to perform the sacrifice. [He would] sacrifice to the Sun during the Spring Equinox. Moreover, [he would] build a pit beyond the western Kaiyuan Gate 3 *chi* deep and 4 *zhang* wide and build a mound within the pit 1 *chi* tall and 4 *chi* wide. [He would] use it for each Autumn Equinox Evening Moon ritual.”

開皇初，於國東春明門外為壇，如其郊。每以春分朝日。又於國西開遠門外為坎，深三尺，廣四丈。為壇於坎中，高一尺，廣四尺。每以秋分夕月。⁶¹

In *Tongdian* 通典, the section on “Morning Sun and Evening Moon” claims that there are supposed to be four expressions of Sun and Moon worship per year:

1. At the time of the Welcoming *Qi* ritual, make Moon at the Western Altar.⁶²
2. The sacrifice to the Sun and Moon at the two equinoxes.
3. The suburban altar sacrifice: Make a great announcement to Heaven and treat the Sun as the main part while matching it with the Moon.⁶³
4. “Yue ling” 月令 says, “On the 10th month, sacrifice to the celestial bodies. Sacrifice to the Sun alongside the Moon.”⁶⁴

Han rulers transformed the Zhou standards into regular expressions of sun worship. This is evident from the *Hou Han shu* 後漢書, “Li yi zhi,” which says, “Each month, two days before and after the first day of the lunar month, use sheep for sacrifice 每月朔前後各二日……牽羊……以祭。”⁶⁵ Cao Pi 曹丕 (ca.

60 *Sui shu*, 7.141.

61 *Sui shu*, 7.141.

62 *Liji Zhengyi*, 47.1543.

63 See also the sacrifice to the Moon during the *jiao* sacrifice, which is quoted from the *Liji*, “Jiyi” 祭義. *Liji zhengyi*, 47.1542.

64 *Liji zhengyi*, 17.642.

65 *Hou Han shu*, 4.3101.

187–226 CE), who reigned as Emperor Wen of Wei 魏文帝 (r. 187–226 CE) also issued an edict saying:

The Han transformed the Zhou standards. On each morning and evening, the Han worshippers regularly face east to worship the Sun under the hall steps. The ritual is extremely complicated. Nowadays, we adopt the Spring Equinox ceremony of the Zhou, and curtail the Han model of Sun worship. Moreover, there is not any affair involving the vassal lords. We no longer perform the sacrifice at the Eastern Altar—the records of Evening Moon ritual are not clearly documented. This is our view.

漢改周法……然旦夕常於殿下東向拜日，其禮太煩。今採周春分之禮，損漢日拜之儀，又無諸侯之事，無所出東郊——其夕月文不分明，其議奏。⁶⁶

What we have described here is a massive revolution in the performance of the ritual.

During the Six dynasties (220–589 CE), there were detailed discussions regarding Sun and Moon worship, with the most important writing being the *Nan Qi shu* 南齊書, “Li zhi shang” 禮志上. It says, “In the first year of the Yongyuan era (89 CE): The infantry commander He Tongzhi put forward this suggestion 永元元年，步兵校尉何佟之議.”⁶⁷ He Tongzhi 何佟之 (ca. 449–503 CE) quotes the *Da Dai liji*, “Chao shi yi” 朝事儀, as follows:

The Son of Heaven wears the ceremonial cap and grasps the *zhengui* tablet of 2 *cun* ... He then leads the vassal lords to conduct the Sun-worshipping ceremony at the Eastern Altar, thereby teaching them to respect their ancestors and superiors.

天子冕而執鎮圭尺有二寸……率諸侯而朝日東郊，所以教尊尊也。⁶⁸

During the Tang dynasty, the Spring and Autumn equinox ceremonies of the Morning Sun and the Evening Moon were performed to the east and west of the capital, each using a calf of corresponding color in connection with the respective direction (i.e., a green calf for the east, and a white calf for the west). People at the time added another sacrifice called the Sacrifice to the Morning

66 *Nan Qi shu*, 9.140–41.

67 *Nan Qi shu*, 9.140.

68 *Da Dai liji jiegu*, 12.229. See also the proclamation of Emperor Wen of Wei.

Sun, which was opposed by Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (ca. 773–819 CE) who, in his essay “Si chao ri shuo” 祀朝日說, cited a classic text in support of his view as follows: “to meet in the daybreak is called *chao* while to meet during sunset is called *xi* 旦見曰朝，暮見曰夕。” The *Liji* says “the Sun sets and *xi*'s 日入而夕.” The *Zuozhuan* 左傳 mentions that to meet at dusk is called *xi* 夕, both being cases where *xi* is a verb.⁶⁹ We can see that three of the nineteen pottery *zun* vats from the Dawenkou culture contain the word *xi*, though we always were unclear on its meaning. It may be that these large vats were later used as ritual vessels for the Moon-worshipping ceremony, thereby explaining the word *xi* on the vessels, as they were ceremonial articles used during the sunset ritual.

The phrase “the Sun retreats and emerges” from the Han sacrifice song did not distinguish between sunrise and sunset, as the Han format did not follow the system of the Zhou, occurring only at the altar of Mt. Tai. At sunrise in the bamboo palace, one would face east and bow towards the Sun. The same goes for the Evening Moon ceremony on the same day, except one would turn around and face west to bow towards the Moon. They brought the sun sacrificial ceremony in the Spring equinox and the moon sacrificial ceremony in the Autumn equinox together, holding them both on the same day. Moreover, the Han ruler regularly bowed before the Sun and Moon at daybreak and dusk respectively in front of the palace hall (and was later considered excessive for it). The Yin rituals for the rising and setting Sun speak only of the Sun but not of the Moon, and the Yin ritual of sun worship might have been just as cumbersome as the daily rituals of the Han dynasty. However, because the historical evidence is too scant, we can't be certain of much on this issue.

The Dawenkou earthen pottery *zun* date to at least 2700 BCE. *Da Dai liji*, “Wu di de” 五帝德, and *Shiji*, “Wu di benji” both say, “The Lord chronicled the movements of the Sun and Moon, welcomed them, and sent them off 帝譽曆日月而迎送之.”⁷⁰ The *Erya* 爾雅 says, “*Li* means to observe 歷，相也.”⁷¹ Wang Pinzhen 王聘珍 (early 19th century) offers the following explanation:

Observing the rising and setting of the Sun and Moon and examining them is just like within the ceremonies for respectfully welcoming and sending off the Sun and Moon. Thus, it is called “welcoming and seeing off the sun and moon.”

相日月之出入而察之，若寅賓寅饑然，故曰迎送之。⁷²

69 *Liu Hedong ji*, 16.293–94.

70 *Da Dai liji jiegou*, 7.121. *Shiji*, 1.13.

71 *Erya zhushu*, 2.55.

72 *Da Dai liji jiegou*, 7.121.

The Dawenkou *zun* are contemporaneous with the mythical Lord Ku, which indicates alongside the respective engravings that the Sun and Moon were indeed “luminous deities.”

In ancient times, many different prayers were utilized during sun worship. The *Shangshu dazhuan* records the Eastern Altar Sun-welcoming prayer as follows: “Your brilliance illuminates both above and below; your movements benefit the entire realm; everything is done in utter perfection 明光於上下，勤施於四方，旁作穆穆。”⁷³ Chen Shouqi 陳壽祺 (1771–1834) considers these three sentences to be very old sayings, as King Cheng 成王 (ca. 1055–1021 BCE) used them to praise the Duke of Zhou 周公 (11th century BCE). They also appear in “Luo gao” 洛誥, with the additional sentence “holding on to power without getting lost 迓衡不迷.”⁷⁴ An announcement recorded during the first year of the Yankang 延康 era (220 CE) under the reign of Emperor Wen of Wei cited this line, replacing the character *ya* 迓 (“welcome”) with *ya* 御 (“welcome”).⁷⁵ Altogether, there are only a few extant ancient prayers. The *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍, “Zhumeng pian” 祝盟篇 cites from the same source as the above mentioned. The relevant passage reads as follows: “Therefore, give rise to the numerous things; display them at the altar of Heaven and Earth. Everything is done with utter perfection. We sing out our praises when we are bowing to welcome the Sun 是以庶物咸生，陳於天地之郊，旁作穆穆，唱於迎日之拜。”⁷⁶ Sun deity worship in Egypt was even more ardent. For example, Aton was represented by a solar disk depicting the Sun, which is the only cosmic deity. The “Ode to Aton” can be seen in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament with Supplement*.⁷⁷ Hebrew literature was substantially influenced by the Egyptians, and their odes to the Sun in the *New Testament* can be found in *Psalms* 104.

Later Daoist traditions also absorbed the notions of the Morning Sun and the Evening Moon. *Quanzhen yinjue* 全真隱訣 records Pei Zhenren 裴真人 as saying, “My left eye is the Sun; My right eye is the Moon. And so it is said, ‘If the ruler desires to follow the Way, his eyes must think of the Sun and Moon’ 左目為日，右目為月，故云：君欲為道，目想日月。”⁷⁸ Daoist ritual study also discusses a meditation method wherein someone meditates on the brightness of the Sun and Moon. Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456–536 CE) speaks of the Sun and Moon as Yuyi 鬱儀 and Jielin 結璘, as for example in the saying: “Yuyi and

73 *Shangshu dazhuan*, 5, 8b.

74 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 15, 486.











75 *Sanguo zhi*, 2, 67.

76 *Wenxin diaolong zhu*, 2, 176.

77 *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament with Supplement*, 369–71.

78 *Dengzhen yinjue jijiao*, B, 36.

Jielin of the Supreme Heaven of Jade Aurora flee to the Sun and the Moon 太上玉展鬱儀，結璘奔日月閣。⁷⁹ When the *Huangting jing* 黃庭經 talks about the “rising Sun and setting Moon 出日入月，”⁸⁰ it contrasts the Sun with the Moon. It therefore differs from divination phrases regarding the sunrise and sunset. Thus, this usage must have arisen later, but they should all be discussed together.

There are numerous explanations of the remnants of the Dawenkou culture. For the most part, comparisons with oracle bone inscriptions have been a bit far-fetched, and examinations of the graphs have also contained many errors, so we should discuss these issues here. From the Zhujian Dazhu village pottery inscriptions, we can observe that below the Sun is a , which is very clearly a crescent Moon that lacks a central protrusion. As for the character *huo* 火 (“fire”), on oracle bone inscriptions it is for the most part written as , a flame with three points. In bronze inscriptions, *huo* constituted the lower part of the character *shu* 庶 with the following graphic variations: , , and .⁸¹ There are no instances of a five-pointed blaze of fire. With the exception of its common shapes  and , the character *shan* 山 (“mountain”) is only once written as .⁸² , is definitively not a version of the character *huo*. Li Xueqin 李學勤 interprets the graph as “five peaks,” and recognizes it as the character *shan* 𡵓, or as two distinct characters, forming the term *jiong shan* 炁山. We know that  means hill, and deducing the meaning “mountain” from this seems appropriate. Hills and mountains both indicate high-lying areas that may be utilized for ritual devotion. The *Guangya*, “Shi tian” says:

A great altar on a circular hill—this is [where one] reveres Heaven ... The pit and the altar commemorate the Winter and Summer. The Imperial Palace is where the Sun is venerated, while the Nightly Glow is where the Moon is venerated.

圜丘大壇，祭天也。……坎壇，祭寒暑也，王宮，祭日也，夜明，祭月也。⁸³

Wang Niansun 王念孫 (1744–1832) in *Guangya shuzheng* 廣雅疏證 says,

79 *Zhengtong daoze*, 6: 698.

80 *Zhengtong daoze*, 6: 517.






81 *Jinwen bian*, 9,658.

82 *Jinwen bian*, 9,655.

83 *Guangya shuzheng*, 9A.683.

When the weather is cold, the sacrifice is performed in the pit. When it is hot, the sacrifice is conducted at the altar. The Royal Palace is the Altar of the Sun, and the king is the ruler. The Sun is called the ruler. The altar is the area of the lunar lodging. The Nightly Glow is also called the Lunar Altar.

寒於坎，暑於壇，王宮，日壇，王，君也，日稱君；宮、壇，營域也，夜明亦謂月壇也。⁸⁴

Accordingly,  and  can also be considered altars for worshiping the Sun and Moon. Later on, the two were distinguished as the Royal Palace and the Nightly Glow respectively, serving as locations for the worship of the luminous deities from the ancient past. For the ancient ritual, people worship the Sun at the Eastern Altar outside the environs of the capital, traveling to the suburbs and offering sacrifices at the altar situated on the outskirts. According to the records in the *Sui shu*, “Liyi zhi,” the pits and altars differed from generation to generation, but their height was always several *chi*, while their width was always more than one *zhang*.⁸⁵ From this we can conclude that the Liangzhu *bi* engravings represent three-story altars. In Shang dynasty bone and shell inscriptions the character *ming* 明 (luminous) are sometimes written ,⁸⁶ which consisted not of the radical *ri* 日 (sun) but *mu* 目 (eye). The Liangzhu bird-shaped *bi* have an engraving of the shape , and we know that ancient people at times borrowed the character *mu* for *ri*, the idea being that the Sun in the heavens is like people's eyes.⁸⁷ The character *ming* also might have consisted of .

At this point, we can be confident that Dawenkou pottery inscriptions of the combined shapes of the Sun and Moon constitute a solar disk seated on a crescent moon, both of which were considered by ancient people to be signs of luck and fortune. The *Kun ling tu* 坤靈圖 says, “As for the sprouts of utmost virtue, the Sun and Moon are like a set of jade disks 至德之萌，日月若連璧。”⁸⁸ From the time of Lord Zhuanxu, the phrase, “Chronicle the Sun and Moon; welcome them and see them off,” had already existed, and so this convention originated a long time ago. Mt. Tai was at the center of coastal Shandong




84 *Guangya shuzheng*, 9A.684.

85 *Sui shu*, 7.130.

86 *Yinxu jiagu keci leizuan*, 440.

87 The *Taiping Yulan* 太平御覽 contains a quote saying, “The sun and moon are the eyes of all under Heaven. People do not know their virtue 日月為天下眼目，人不知德。” *Taiping yulan*, 3.6a (16).

88 *Taiping yulan*, 3.2b (14).

communities, and from ancient times it was the location where the emperors and kings would pay homage to Heaven and Earth. It has changed throughout the time of the 72 emperors, whose vestiges Du Zhenglun 杜正倫 (d. 658 CE) went to visit at Mt. Tai during the early Tang dynasty,⁸⁹ but it is a pity that today these cannot be examined. The area of Mt. Tai also contains the Wengshang Mingtang, wherein sometimes the ceremony of welcoming the Sun and Moon would be held--but ceremonies of the more distant past cannot be ascertained in greater detail. Our understanding of the ceremonies of respectfully welcoming and seeing off the luminous deities and slaughtering a calf in a sacrifice can now be improved by Dawenkou earthen vessels, oracle bone inscriptions, and other records such that we can begin to speculate on their general form, particularly regarding the  and  shapes engraved on prominent areas of the earthen pottery vessels. The Zhucheng city 諸城市 and Qianzhai village 前寨村 earthenware fragments depict the shape, , in an engraved outline covered in vermillion, which is certainly significant. Furthermore, we can obtain even more solid evidence based on the Liangzhu jade circlet engravings. We knew that the ceremonies for sacrifices to the Sun and Moon have been revered since ancient times, and in this article, we carried out a classification and examination of them, seeking to clarify for historians the traces of the evolution of such practices from one dynasty to the next.

89 *Xin Tang shu*, 14.349.

The Exceptional Relationship between Religious Studies and Literature in the History of Chinese Culture

中國文化史上宗教與文學的特殊關係

The term “religion” derives its meaning from expressions of reverence towards the divine. Western Zhou vessel inscriptions contain the term “reverent virtue 敬德” which is comparable to “religion.” The religious ideals (*idéál religieux*) of humankind constitute a kind of “Law” (Fr. *loi*, and *torah* in Hebrew), a divine order (*ordre divin*) to be upheld, and a divine will (*volonté divine*) to be obeyed in the single-minded pursuit of honesty and justice (called *tzedhek* in Hebrew). The character *zhen* 貞 (𠄎; sometimes written as 鼎), meaning “divinatory determination,” appears in nearly all Shang dynasty turtle shell and bone inscriptions, which include some 60,000 specimens by recent estimates. A divinatory determination is an “inquiry into the correctness of an affair 問事之正,” or the adoption of a formal divination procedures and following divine directives to obtain a “correct” answer.

In general, these inscriptions only state the “question,” but do not offer the final outcome or meaning of what is “correctness,” thereby leaving us with a one-sided understanding. Auspicious divinations are referred to as “lasting divinatory determinations 恆貞.” The *Baoshan chujian* 包山楚簡 contains an oft-mentioned idiom, “lasting divinatory determinations are auspicious 恆貞吉.” Lasting divinatory determinations are also called “eternal divinatory determinations 永貞,” which refers to a grand invocator seeking blessings (*bénédiction*, or *berâkhâh* in Hebrew) from the divine. Thus, the idea of a divinatory determination can be viewed as commensurate with that of the Hebrew *tzedhek*. It has been a crucial concept in divination practices and theology since the Shang and Zhou dynasties.¹

The idea of serving the divine played an important role in early Chinese religion. Guan Shefu 觀射父 of the ancient state of Chu 楚 reveals four kinds

1 I have discussed this concept at length in another article, “The Philosophy of Divination”. Note: This article had been translated by Joern Peter Grundmann and appears in the volume of this series titled, *Space, Time, Myth, and Morals: A Selection of Jao Tsung-i's Studies on Cosmological Thought in Early China and Beyond*, 169–219.

of important figures to this effect—templars, invocators, shamans, and scribes—which are identified as follows:

Templars 宗: They manage the affairs emerging between higher and lower deities and different clans. For example, in the *Shangshu* 尚書, Bo Yi 伯夷 is given the title of *zhizong* 秩宗, which can be understood directly as “organizing the templars.”

Invocators 祝: This is the Grand Invocator, the one who is able and knowledgeable in calling out the names of the mountains and rivers and the services of the ancestral temples. The *Zhouli* 周禮 says, “The Grand Invocator is responsible for praying for good fortune and omens 大祝掌祈福祥.”² The *Shuowen* 說文 says, “Invocator: One who leads sacrifices with words of praise 祭主贊詞者.”³

Shamans 巫: Lead contact with the divine.

Scribes 史: Lead the process of organizing the ranking system of the spirits and deities.⁴

The invocator’s position is comparatively high, and the title must belong to somebody with prestige, e.g., a descendant of the ancient sages; “only such a one [as he] can serve 方可充任.” His duties largely relate to literary matters. The “Chun guan zong bo” 春官宗伯 chapter of the *Zhouli*, for example, writes of grand invocators as follows:

They are responsible for the six prayers used to serve the ghosts, deities, and ancestors, for seeking good fortune and blessings, and for seeking eternal divinatory determinations ... The six prayers are related to: sacrifices of the ancestral hall, commands, proclamations, gatherings, entreatments,⁵ and eulogies.

掌六祝之辭，以事鬼神示，祈福祥，求永貞。……六辭者：祠、命、誥、會、禱、誅。⁶

² *Zhouli zhushu*, 25.774.

³ *Shuowen jiezi*, 1a.8.

⁴ The “Chuyu” 楚語 says, “Experts serve as shamans and scribes 家為巫史,” under which the above explanation is given in the Wei Zhao 韋昭 (201–273 CE) commentary. *Guoyu jijie*, 18.515.

⁵ Note: I use “entreatments” for *dao* 禱 and reserve the more generic “pray” for *ci* 辭 in this context, as *dao* refers specifically to prayers in the sense of imploring or entreating, while *ci* here more generally refers to several literary forms directed towards divinities.

⁶ *Zhouli zhushu*, 25.774, 777.

Note: Jao is paraphrasing the main text here.

The ranks and official titles of templars, invocators, shamans, and scribes all appear within Shang divination inscriptions, thereby demonstrating the reliability of their respective explanations in these later texts. The Grand Invocator is responsible for these six prayers, specifically for writing down, drafting, and composing various words of prayer to “seek lasting divinatory determinations 求恆貞,” and acquiring blessings. The six prayers represent six kinds of literary forms, each relating to ritual sacrifices, and these too demonstrate the deep affinities between literature and religion within Chinese culture. Sun Yirang 孫詒讓 (1848–1908) has carefully studied the six literary forms in the *Zhouli zhengyi* 周禮正義, and modern investigations can be augmented by numerous excavated texts.

Sacrifice of the Ancestral Hall 祠: The *Shuowen* says, “The Spring sacrifice is called the Sacrifice of the Ancestral Hall. Few instruments are involved, but much literature is 春祭曰祠。品物少，多文詞也。”⁷ This resembles the Qin bamboo slips that contain records of, “the invocation to pray during the ‘horse sacrifice’ 馬禘祭祝辭。”⁸

Commands 命: In bronze inscriptions, we find examples of the phrase, “convey royal orders 出厥命.” For instance, this phrase occurs twice in the inscriptions on the *Yongyu* 永盂,⁹ and there are numerous others.

Proclamations 誥: The *He zun* 何尊¹⁰ offers several examples, such as, “The king proclaimed to the common people 王冝宗小子,” as well as, “in the courtyard, he announced unto Heaven, saying ... 廷告于天曰...” and concludes with, “The king completed the proclamation 王咸冝.” According to Tang Lan 唐蘭, the graph used in the inscription, 冝, is an alternative version for the character *gao* 誥 (“proclamation”), an assumption which allows us to treat this inscription as another clear example of this usage, on par with the appearance of the so-called “Proclamations of Pan Geng 盤庚之誥,” the “Great Proclamations 大誥,” or the “Kang proclamations 康誥” that appear in the *Shangshu* 尚書. These writings contain numerous instances of the exclamatory term, *wu hu* 烏呼/呜呼 (“Alas!”), which furthermore serves to demonstrate a strong, vigilant sentiment on the part of the speaker.

7 *Shuowen jiezi*, 1A.8.

8 *Shuohudi qinmu zhujian*, 227–28.

9 A bronze vessel from the Western Zhou period with an inscription ascribed to the period of King Gong 周恭王 (ca. 922–900 BCE).

10 A bronze vessel from the time of King Cheng of Zhou 周成王 (ca. 1042–1021 BCE).

Gathering 會: This signifies the gathering of feudal lords to formalize alliances as well as to offer oaths and admonitions, such as that expressed in the “Houma mengshu” 侯馬盟書 and the “Zu Chu wen” 詛楚文.

Entreatments 禱: This term appears at the end of bronze vessel inscriptions, with many examples connected to invocations for good fortune and prayers for longevity, as in the case of the Hu *gui* 欒簋.

Eulogy 誄: These are words of commemoration in response to a death. Duke Ai of Lu’s 魯哀公 (r. 494–468 BCE) eulogy for Kongzi is a famous instance (recorded in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 for the 16th year of Duke Ai).¹¹

The six prayers of the Grand Invocator can be understood as instances of sacrificial literature. Conducting sacrifices and warfare were the most important state affairs. Cao Pi 曹丕 (r. 220–226 CE) explains that “Literary works are great undertakings in the governing of the state 文章，經國之大業。”¹² In the ancient world, literary works regarding the coordination of state ceremonies, works that “bring the state into proper alignment 經國,” were all produced by the Grand Invocator himself, but unfortunately, very few documents of value have been preserved. However, in recent years, lengthy proclamations have been unearthed during excavations, including such examples as the Qiang *pan*’s 牆盤 “Narration of Ancestral Virtue 歷述先德,” and the admonishment of the king’s heir in the *Zhongshan wang Cuo hu ming* 中山王壺銘, both of which forcefully express a sense of authoritative justice, and are of similar literary quality as the recordings in the *Shangshu*.

The earliest focal points in Chinese literature include “intention 志” and “virtue 德.” The idea that “poetry speaks of intentions 詩言志” is perhaps the earliest concept in Chinese literary theory, and myriad works of literary criticism discuss it in detail. Eulogies, among the Grand Invocator’s six types of prayers, are also an expression of “narrating intentions.” The *Mozi* 墨子, for example, says, “Eulogies: they narrate the intentions of the dead 誄者，道死人之志也。”¹³ The idea that “poetry speaks of intentions” indicates that the living utilize poems to convey their own intentions, as the authors’ feelings are expressed through poetic verses. The idea of “eulogies narrating intentions” refers to the act of narrating in the place of the dead, thereby expressing the intentions of the dead, which had been entrusted to the author. In some cases, eulogies were appraisals by rulers in response to their officials’ deaths, similar to posthumous canonization titles (*shi* 諡). However, posthumous canonization titles

11 *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhengyi*, 60.1945.

12 *Wenxuan*, 52.2271.

13 *Mozi jiangou*, 13.470.

and eulogies are not the same, as the former are indicators of “virtue”, while the latter are used to express intentions. However, both eulogies and canonization titles are statements regarding a person’s character in response to their death, bestowing both honors and condemnations upon them in a general appraisal. For example, Duke Ai of Lu responded to Kongzi’s death with a eulogy that was slightly inappropriate, causing Kongzi’s student, Zigong 子貢 (520–456 BCE), to offer this denigrating reproach: “To lose the intentions is dim-witted. To lose one’s place is an error 失志為昏，失所為愆。”¹⁴ This is because the eulogy fails to embody Kongzi’s intentions and achievements appropriately. Besides narrating intentions, ancient literature also contains the major theme of relaying one’s virtue. The *Chunqiu Gongyang zhuan* 春秋公羊傳 states, “When the feudal lords meet with one another, they must on that occasion commend the former rulers 諸侯相見，號辭必稱先君。”¹⁵ Vessel inscriptions also frequently narrate the virtue of prior rulers. The best illustration of this comes from the Western Zhou inscription on the Shi Zai *ding* 師鬲鼎, which begins by saying,

(You) served as a minister to my august father, King Mu, using your great virtue. I, but a young boy, have only just begun to take the virtue of the former kings as a model for goodness; day and night, I set out to follow the radiant virtue of my ancestors.

臣朕皇考穆王，用乃孔德、余小子肇淑先王德、夙夕專由先祖刺（烈）德。¹⁶

It also mentions “the august ruler’s exemplary virtue 皇辟懿德” and, “using his radiant ancestor’s sincere virtue 用厥刺祖□（節）德,” further utilizing virtue as a *leitmotiv*. The concept of “virtue” can be traced back to the Xia dynasty. Mozi references an ancient version of the *Shangshu*, “Yu zhi zong de” 禹之總德, saying, “If you are not careful about your virtue, how can you keep the Heavenly Mandate? 不慎厥德，天命焉保。”¹⁷ The *Shangshu* also says, “Gaoyao was diligent in his cultivation of virtue 皋陶邁種德。”¹⁸ By the time of the Western Zhou, the phrase, “pay careful attention to virtue” became commonplace. The Qiang *pan* says, “The Lord on High conferred exemplary virtue 上帝

14 *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhengyi*, 60.1946.

15 Gongyang Shou, *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan zhushu*, 6.144.

16 *Yin Zhou jinwen jicheng*, no. 2830.

17 *Mozi jiangou*, 9.281.

18 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 4.108. Also quoted in *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhengyi*, 8.266.

降懿德,”¹⁹ meaning that moral excellence is something handed down by the Lord on High. The *Yi Zhou shu* 逸周書 warns kings that if they neglect virtue, they may lose the Mandate of Heaven given to them by Lord on High, an idea which seems to have developed from the traditions of the Xia dynasty which held virtue in high esteem. At the individual level, people also thought it essential to hold virtue in high esteem. Posthumous canonization titles, for example, signified one’s virtue, summarizing a lifelong accumulation of virtuous conduct and deeds that posterity would never forget, thereby enabling them to revere their ancestors as models of virtue. Thus, the notions of “narrating virtue” and “expressing intentions” coexisted in literature. In later dynasties, though to a lesser degree, Lu Ji’s 陸機 (261–303 CE) “Shu zu de fu” 述祖德賦 and Xie Lingyun’s 謝靈運 (385–433 CE) “Shu zu de shi” 述祖德詩 are examples where these notions are still combined. It’s a shame that some scholars of Chinese literature only discuss one element while neglecting the other.

Literary descriptions of the dead are closely related to sacrificial and funeral rituals. The “Li lun” 禮論 chapter of the *Xunzi* 荀子 says, “Sacrificial rites signify the reverential serving of the spirits. Inscriptions, eulogies, records, and genealogies are used to respectfully pass on their names 祭祀，敬事其神也，銘、誄、繫、世，敬傳其名也。”²⁰ These inscriptions and eulogies were originally grouped into the category of funeral rites, other examples of which include the *Chuci* 楚辭 chapters “Zhaohun” 招魂 and “Dazhao” 大招. Liu Xie 劉勰 (ca. 465–532 CE) says, “The *Chuci*’s ‘Zhaohun’ can be called an invocator’s masterpiece 《楚辭·招魂》，可謂祝辭之組麗者也。”²¹ These chapters include both writings that mourn the dead, on the one hand, and eulogies whereby the Grand Invocator narrates the will of the dead, on the other. Some call this shamanistic literature, as shamans are typically the invocators of the dead. They are thus different from the Grand Invocator who was in charge of organizing literary works. Liu Shipai 劉師培 (1884–1919) says that “Chinese literature began with the offices of the shamans and priests,” but this explanation is only partially correct.

The main teachings of Ruism can be summarized in a single word: “ritual.” The rituals at the inception of Chinese religion sought to capture the regularities of life. They were originally a kind of social activity whose purpose was serving the spirits and eliciting blessings. Such ritual norms would divide participants into ranks and classes during sacrificial rites, official meetings, banquets, and court affairs. The primary sacrificial offerings in ancient times

19 *Yin Zhou jinwen jicheng*, no. 10175.

20 *Xunzi jijie*, 13.439.

21 *Wenxin diaolong zhu*, 2.176.

were called the “two essences 二精,” namely, jade and silk. When Yu gathered his vassal lords at Mt. Tu 塗山, those who held jade and silk came from all the myriad states, upon which Wei Zhao 韋昭 (201–273 CE) comments, “Bright and clean is the essence 明絜為精.”²² In ancient China, jades were used as ritual objects. From the Hongshan 紅山 culture of Liaoning 遼寧 to the Liangzhu 良渚 culture of Jiangnan 江南, numerous exquisite pieces have recently been unearthed, validating descriptions found in texts such as the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 and ancient ritual manuals—such as *Zhouli* 周禮, *Yili* 儀禮, *Liji* 禮記—which record that jade was used in sacrificial ceremonies and other rituals. The “Shi fu jie” 世俘解 chapter of the *Yi Zhou shu* records the defeat and self-immolation of King Zhou 紂 (1105–1046 BCE), the last emperor of the Shang Dynasty, and the victory of the Zhou people as well as the spoils seized in the conquest, including 100,080,000 pieces of jade.²³ A Shang tomb recently unearthed in Dayangzhou town 大洋洲鎮, Xin’gan county 新淦縣 of Jiangxi province contained 1072 pieces of jade, suggesting that the *Yi Zhou Shu*’s claim is no exaggeration. Fan Mountain 反山 in Zhejiang province has produced a spooled cloth bundle set decorated with all sorts of jade inlays at both ends, which is a testament to the extensive use of woven hemp fabrics at the time. The use of silk was equally widespread, and thus we can confidently identify jade and silk with the “two essences.”

The birth of ritual and music is also related to sacrifices to the divine. The *Shangshu*, “Shun dian” 舜典, records that Bo Yi was given the office of highest ancestral rank. There, Yao 堯 asks, “Is there anybody able to preside over my three rituals?” The court responded unanimously, ‘Bo Yi!’ 有能典朕三禮，兪曰伯夷。²⁴ This is why the “Zheng yu” 鄭語 celebrates his ability to effectively carry out the ritual to the divine when he assisted Yao. At this time, the divinities involved in the ritual included both nature deities and ancestral deities. Musical tuning in China already existed within the Peiligang 裴李崗 culture some 7000 years ago. Sixteen bone flutes have been unearthed from a grave in the Jiahu 賈湖 settlement, Hunan province, some having seven openings on the top. Thus, we can surmise that the flutes would have issued a precise kind of sound when blown, and they offer clear evidence of the usage of a seven-tone musical scale. The Taosi 陶寺 settlement (2500–1900 BCE, corresponding roughly to the Xia dynasty) from the Longshan 龍山 culture in Shanxi province has produced *gu* drums made of alligator hide, earthen *gu* drums,

22 *Guoyu jijie*, 18,520.

23 *Yi Zhou shu*, 4,446.

24 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 3,93.

and unique *qing* lithophones, so we can be sure that music was already highly developed at that time. The *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 records Kongzi as saying:

Shun made [Kui] rectifier of music. Kui thereupon rectified the six pitches and harmoniously tuned the five tones, circulating the winds of the eight directions ... Shun said, “Music is the vital essence of Heaven and Earth ... Only a sage is able to harmonize the foundations of music.”

舜以（夔）為樂正，夔于是正六律和五聲，以通八風。
……舜曰：夫樂，天地之精也……惟聖人能樂之本。²⁵

The *Shangshu*, “Shun dian” says, “When the eight notes are brought into accord, the human and the divine can be harmonized 八音克諧，神、人以和，”²⁶ and thus Shun, through musical education, harmonized the divine and human realms. Shun’s ancestor, Mu of Yu 虞幕, “was able to listen to and harmonize the winds by forming music 能聽協風以成樂.”²⁷ Gusou 瞽叟 was Shun’s father and was also a rectifier of music, serving as a sort of progenitor with his studies. Thus it seems that at this time, “music” (*yue* 樂) was more important than “ritual” (*li* 禮). Owing to the early flourishing of musical knowledge there were surely periods in the ancient world when music was utilized to establish, instruct, and promote harmonious coexistence between the divine and the human realms. In order to accord with music and achieve harmonious sounds by means of employing the *lü* 律 mode, “poetry” (*shi* 詩) was then developed. The “Song” 頌 (i.e., “eulogies”) section of the *Shijing* 詩經 relays both the beautiful appearance of majestic virtue and the works of the divine. That all is yet more evidence of the unique relationship between Chinese literature and religion.

As for belief in the spiritual significant turtle shell remains, a Jiahu site dating to 7000 years ago has produced three extremely intricate turtle shell engravings resembling oracle bone inscriptions. Inside the turtle remains from Lingjiatan 凌家灘 in Hanshan 含山 county, Anhui province, there is a jade plate, which serves as strong evidence that turtle shell divination was a long-standing and well-established practice well before the Shang dynasty. Such findings demonstrate both the extent to which there was respect for the divine as well as the particular activities people undertook to serve the deities. All records of sacrificial activity—to sum it up in a word—amount to divination

25 *Lüshi chunqiu jishi*, 22.618.

26 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 3.95.

27 *Guoyu jijie*, 16.466.

literature. This demonstrates that “divination” is a literary genre, as even Liu Xie 劉勰 (fl. 465–532 CE) claimed. In addition to turtle shell divination, milfoil divination expressing *yin* and *yang* were also utilized. The 64 hexagrams already existed during the Shang dynasty and were engraved upon various kinds of stones, bones, pottery, and bronzeware. In the Mawangdui 馬王堆 silk version of the *Changes*, the names for the hexagrams and their sequence differ from the received version, such as the hexagram *qian* 乾 being written as *jian* 鍵 “key”. A “key” is the masculine counterpart of a lock, and because the *qian* and *kun* 坤 trigrams together are the gateway to the *Changes*, and *qian* is what opens the door, “key” is used as a loan word. Hexagram names contain both abstract and concrete elements, and are utilized abundantly in literature as instances of promoting an analogical, example-based mode of thinking. *Bi* 比 represents an analogical mode of thinking, while *xing* 興 signifies that the examples utilized are concrete things that generate a keen awareness and comprehension of others. Numerous analogies cite indirect metaphors as well as offer examples of metonymy. A single hexagram could represent many different things, giving rise to diviners capable of myriad mental association activities, rendering the deciphering of the logic of the *Zhouyi* hexagrams as a sort of literary skill. Aside from prognostication with hexagrams, ancient China also had dream divination, just like in ancient Babylon. The *Zhouli*, for example, lists the responsibilities of the Grand Diviners 太卜 as follows: “The divination methods of the Three Omens, Three *Changes*, and Three Dreams, are used to examine the good or ill fate of the state and household, and to utilize edicts to relieve political affairs 三兆、三易、三夢之占，以觀國家之吉凶，以詔救政。”²⁸ The “Three Omens” originally had accompanying eulogies—amounting to 1200 in total respectively—which ought to be regarded as literary works, but unfortunately they are no longer extant.

Records of ancient religious divination literature constitute a grand repository and make it clear that Shang and Zhou did not use only one type of divination. But why do we find records of the simultaneous use of turtle shells and milfoil? One reason can be found in the detailed explanation of the “Hongfan” 洪範. The main objective of divination lies in achieving unity and agreement between Heaven and humankind, the name for which is the “Great Unity 大同.” In the planning of all affairs, there needed to be agreement between the high-ranking officials, the officers, the masses, turtle shell divination, and milfoil divination—each of which in some respect indicates the “agreement” or the common support of Heaven and humanity. Only then could

28 *Zhouli zhushu*, 24.753.

a course of action be settled upon and carried out. Previously, the “Hongfan” was met with suspicion, but nowadays, when read carefully, its descriptions coincide with excavated materials.

The diverse and complex sacrificial practices of the Shang dynasty led to formal procedures for divination practices, finally arriving in the hands of the Zhou, who ushered in major changes. The Shang dynasty had a unified system of deities, and the Lords and the Lord on High were regarded as ruling the entire natural world. The Zhou people seemingly adopted both the ideas of *tian* 天, “Heaven,” and *ming* 命 (fate/decreed), which had been revered since Xia times, and put forward the notion of *tianming* 天命, the “Heavenly Mandate,” which served as testimony of the acquisition of political legitimacy in place of the Shang dynasty.²⁹ The emphasis here is that when one has virtue, only then can he maintain his position, and if one ceases to be virtuous, then necessarily he will lose it. This principle is promoted everywhere throughout the written proclamations of the Western Zhou. The position of Heaven and the influence of the Heaven on human beings at this stage of development was absolute. “The omens hang down from Heaven and make manifest good or ill fate 天垂象，見吉凶。”³⁰ The space between Heaven and Earth produces the appearance of various unusual natural phenomena. When the ruler made a transgression it causes Heaven to make manifest an inauspicious omen. The ruler, if he is able to cultivate his conduct and enact virtuous government, can then make amends. The *Zhouli* refers to “using edicts to relieve political affairs 以詔救政,” where “relieve” (*jiu* 救) here means “make amends.” Therefore, the expression “relieving political affairs,” illustrates that at that time the people trusted in the causal relationship between Heaven and humankind.

The Zhou people adopted Yao’s etiquette, expressing their deep commitment to rituals, as ritual became the shared foundation by which all human affairs and activities were ordered. The *Liji* claims that “the Zhou people esteemed ritual and promoted the bestowal of rewards 周人尊禮尚施,”³¹ and that the Shang people “esteemed the divine (and promoted sacrifices) 尊神（尚祀）”³² and “put ghosts/spirits first and then rituals second 先鬼而

29 The Mawangdui silk manuscript, “Jing fa” 經法 says, “The Yellow Ancestor became Emperor by Heavenly Mandate, determining his standing over the Earth 黃宗受命于天，定立于地.” This statement traces the source of the idea back to Huangdi 黃帝, the “Yellow Emperor,” see *Changsha Mawangdui hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4:151.

Note: Prof. Jao mistakenly cites “Jing fa” here, but the quote in fact comes from the “Li ming” 立命 section of the “Shiliu jing” 十六經.

30 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 7:341.

31 *Liji zhengyi*, 54:1734.

32 *Liji zhengyi*, 54:1733.

後禮。”³³ Each represents an episode in the great transformation of early Chinese religious practices. Kongzi was a descendant of the Shang people, but he ingratiated himself with the Zhou teachings, thereby wholeheartedly revering ritual in all his affairs when he said, “I follow the Zhou 吾從周。”³⁴ In creating the *Chunqiu* 春秋, he manifested and put into practice the idea of “vigorously pursuing knowledge while scrupulously observing ritual 博文約禮。”³⁵ The *Zuozhuan* commentaries all hold that Kongzi compiled the *Chunqiu* and “organized the text using the Zhou rituals 約以周禮,” the idea being that he rectified the text in accordance with proper ritual practice and thereby determined what is right and wrong within human relations. The language of the *Chunqiu* is rather simple but gives rise to a plethora of interpretations, which in itself is also an example of “organizing the text using rituals.” But Kongzi said that “the Way of Heaven is remote, while the Way of humankind is near 天道遠人道邇,”³⁶ and thus encouraged others to abandon the remote and focus on what is nearby. Accordingly, the *Lunyu* 論語 only contains one instance of the term *tiandao* 天道, the “Way of Heaven.” Instead, Kongzi prioritized human affairs, morality, and conduct, thereby weakening the religious taste of the ritual system. At the end of Mawangdui manuscript, “Xi ci zhuan” 繫辭傳, there is a section called “Yao,” 要, which records a dialogue between Kongzi and Zigong. Kongzi says his study of the *Zhouyi* 周易 is different from that of the diviners, claiming, “I examine it with regard to aspects of virtue and righteousness 我觀其德義耳,”³⁷ and “I go along with the scribes and the shamans on the same path, but we return to different homes 吾與史巫同途而殊歸。”³⁸ Kongzi studies the *Zhouyi* in order to pursue “virtue and righteousness,” thereby emphasizing the rational in his scholarship. Since Kongzi and Mengzi, the Ruists all delight in talking about benevolence and focused on the study of the human. However, they lacked the ambition to establish a formal religion.

The concept of the the Way (*Dao* 道) includes both Heaven and humankind, being the all-encompassing origin of things, with greatness, emptiness, and principle, found wholly therein. The *Guanzi* 管子, “Xin shu” 心術 says, “The emptiness being that is formless is called the Way 虛無無形謂之道。”³⁹ The *Laozi* 老子 says, “There is a thing both mixed and complete, arising before Heaven

33 *Liji zhengyi*, 54.1733.

34 *Lunyu zhushu*, 3.39.

35 *Lunyu zhushu*, 9.130.

36 *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhengyi*, 48.1581–82.

37 *Changsha Mawangdui hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 3:118.

38 *Changsha Mawangdui hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 3:118.

39 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 13.759.

and Earth 有物混成，先天地生，⁴⁰ and continues “I style it as ‘the Way’; forced to give it a name, I call it ‘Great’ 字之曰道，強為之名曰大。”⁴¹ The *Zhuangzi* 莊子, “Shan xing” 繕性 says, “The Way is principle 道，理也。”⁴² The final chapter of the silk manuscript, “Jing fa” 經法, is “Dao yuan” 道原, which describes the birth of the cosmos, starting with “lasting nothingness 恆無” and ending with “lasting oneness 恆一，”⁴³ thereby suggesting that Oneness is the origin of the Way. Also, the “Cheng fa” 成法 chapter says, “Oneness is the foundation of the Way 一者，道其本也。”⁴⁴ Later, it caused the creation of the term *Taiyi* 太一, the “Great One,” or “Great Unity.” The notion of “leading them by means of the Great One 主之以太一”⁴⁵ is a view shared both by Laozi and Zhuangzi. A text from the *Huainanzi* 淮南子, “Yuan dao” 原道, also says, “The primordial chaos is pure simplicity without creating anything; it has not yet been created and formed into a thing—call it the Great One 渾沌為樸，未造而成物，謂之太一。”⁴⁶ The group responsible for these ideas formulated the essentials of Daoism, and even went so far as to explain the Ruist rituals and music as “coming out from the Great One.” The *Lüshi Chunqiu*, “Da yue” 大樂, and the *Liji* “Li yun” 禮運 both contain the same formulation. Later on, the Great One was deified as an entity that issued forth the nine musical modes. The Great One is one of the more abstract deities of Daoism, comparable to the notion of the *Di* 帝, the “Lord,” yet pushed one step further into transcendence.

Also emerging was an understanding of a great *Qi* 氣 manifesting between Heaven and Earth and representing the driving force of the myriad things. Zhuangzi says, “Fu Xi got it, and used it to imitate the mother of *Qi* 伏羲氏得之，以襲氣母。”⁴⁷ The *Shuowen* says that, “*xi* 羲 means *Qi*,”⁴⁸ and so the original sense of *xi* in Fu Xi is *Qi*. In the *Chu boshu* 楚帛書, *qi* is written as *xi* 𠄎, and Fu Xi is written as Bao Xi 鬲戲. The canonical commentaries on the *Zhouyi* hold that the writing of hexagrams began with Fu Xi, and also contains the

40 *Laozi Daodejing zhu jiaoshi*, 25.62.

41 *Laozi Daodejing zhu jiaoshi*, 25.63. This last quote explains why Zhang Yi 张揖 (3rd. century CE) in the *Guangya* 廣雅, when listing the characters that mean “great,” places “the Way” before the characters representing Heaven and Earth.

42 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6A.548.

43 *Changsha Mawangdui hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 189.

44 *Changsha Mawangdui hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 165.

45 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 10B.1093.

46 *Huainanzi jishi*, 14.991.

47 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 3A. 247.

48 *Shuowen jiezi*, 5A.101.

line, “One *yin*, one *yang*—call it the Way 一陰一陽之謂道.”⁴⁹ Fu Xi is thus seen as the creator of vital *Qi*, and later students of the *Zhouyi* and Daoists all revere Fu Xi as a founding figure.

Later writers would go on to abundantly utilize both the Way and *Qi*. The chapter, “Yuan dao” 元道, in Liu Xie’s *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍, says, “the Sage creates literature to illuminate the Way 聖因文以明道.”⁵⁰ Han Yu 韓愈 (ca. 768–824), the Tang dynasty author, wrote an essay also called “Yuan dao.” His friend, Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (ca. 773–819) also said, “Literature is used to illuminate the Way 文以明道” His student, Li Han 李漢 said, “Literature is a tool to be used in traversing the Way 文者，貫道之器.”⁵¹ Later on, a great many literary critics all maintained that “Literature is used to convey the Way,” but as a matter of fact, even a text as old as the *Zhuangzi* itself contains the sentence, “The Way can be conveyed 道可載.”⁵²

Arriving at the notion of *Qi*, Mengzi holds that “Intention leads the *Qi*; *Qi* pervades the body 志，氣之帥；氣，體之充.”⁵³ During the Spring and Autumn period, Tu Kuai 屠蒯 said, “With flavors, *Qi* is put in motion 味以行氣.”⁵⁴ Cao Pi held that, “*Qi* is the principal element of literature 文以氣為主.”⁵⁵ Han Yu also said, “If *Qi* is vigorous, the length of speech and pitch of sound are appropriate 氣盛則言之短長與聲之高下者皆宜.”⁵⁶ Such examples are numerous and well-known, so there is no need to go into details. Most people consider Ruist and Daoist thought to be the backbone of Chinese literary theory, though the Daoists were most important.

The progression of religious thought alongside literature thus exemplifies an interdependent relationship between profundity on the inside and broadness on the outside. Only because religion depended upon literature it came to possess a voice of the highest caliper. Literary works are products of their times, and they also transform over time and rely upon religious ideas to enrich their contents. After the Eastern Han dynasty, Buddhism entered into China, and Chinese culture underwent a massive transformation. Religious Daoism absorbed every aspect of the framework of Buddhist thought throughout its development, bringing about a great many new forms of literary and artistic

49 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 7.315.

50 *Wenxin diaolong zhu*, 1.3.

51 Zhu Xi, *Zhuzi yulei*, 139.4298.

52 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 5C.510.

53 *Mengzi zhushu*, 3A.90.

54 *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhengyi*, 45.1466.

55 *Wenxuan*, 52.2271.

56 *Xinkan jingjin xiangzhu Changli xiansheng wenji*, 16.12b. In *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1309.604.

works. To give an example, ancient China lacked long-form creation myths, let alone epics. During the Jin dynasty, Wang Fu 王浮 (fl. 290–307) wrote the *Hua hu jing* 化胡經, which has a section called “*Shiyi bian*” 十一變, that says, “The flooding waters rise up to the sky and arrive at Tokhara, picking out the loyal people; Fu Xi was selected to remain 洪水滔天到月支，選擇種民留伏羲。”⁵⁷ Thus, Fu Xi became one of the “chosen people.” Later on, the *Yuanshi shang-zhen zhongxian ji* 元始上真眾仙記 quoted the *Zhen shu* 真書 and explained that Pan Gu 盤古 created the world,⁵⁸ a story that was actually based in Ruist texts. The Buddhist, Liu Xie, resided in the Ding Ling Monastery 定林寺, and was skilled in his “*prajñā* of letters,”⁵⁹ authoring the *Wenxin diaolong* and following the *mārga* (correct path) line of reasoning, blending the two poles of literary form and content, and staying true to the style of contemporary poetry from the Qi-Liang 齊梁 period, which held that “literary works must be unconventional 文章且須放蕩。”⁶⁰ He was praised by Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661–721) as “having perfect knowledge and overcoming his ignorance 識味圓通,”⁶¹ and was thus able to start down the road of practicing “Ruism on the outside but Buddhism on the inside 陽儒陰釋.”

It then became common for authors to harvest religious resources when cultivating the Chinese literary spirit. Authors were not necessarily settled upon one kind of steadfast religious faith but rather drew extensively upon the works of Ruism, Buddhism, and Daoism. Among the poets of the Tang and Song dynasties, Wang Wei’s 王維 (699–761) landscape poetry is filled to the brim with Chan Buddhist ideas. Li He’s 李賀 (fl. 790–816) poetry utilizes a great many instances of the terminologies of *sheng* 生 (life) and *si* 死 (death), and there are those who believe this was due to the influence of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* 楞伽經. Additionally, Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101) immersed himself in Daoist treatises, and Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045–1105) immersed himself in Chan Buddhism. There are many other instances of the use of literary methods among religious individuals, such as Wang Fanzhi’s 王梵志 (fl. 907) hymn and verse style five-character poetry, and the adoption of *Ci* 詞-poem tunes by followers of the Quanzhen 全真 teachings, who in turn

57 “Laozi huahu jing,” *Taishō* no. 2139, 54: 1269.

58 *Zhengtong daoze*, 3: 269.

59 Note: “*prajñā* of letters” is Jao’s translation of *wenzi bore* 文字般若, which refers to a particular kind of Buddhist wisdom wherein the practitioner grasps the true essence of things in the context of literature.

60 *Quan Liang wen* 全梁文, 11.1a. In *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 3010.

61 *Shitong tongshi*, 10.271.

altered the original patterns and rhyming schemes so much that they created a novel style through mutual cultivation. As religious people utilized literary methods as their means of disseminating their views, Chinese people adopted a tolerant attitude towards religion, and the various traditions mutually taught and learned from one another. This article attempts to bring to light the main points on this topic, with a special emphasis on antiquity and the origins of the relevant ideas, but a detailed discussion would be too complex for anything less than a whole book, which is a project for a later date.

A Study of Empress Wu Zetian's Religious Convictions Based on Stone Inscriptions

從石刻論武后之宗教信仰

1 Introduction

The people of the early Tang dynasty were quite interested in ancient stone inscriptions. The *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 says, “The Prince of Han 韓, Li Yuanjia 李元嘉 (619–688) was fond of ancient stone inscriptions and historical sites and obtained many different editions of them 韓王元嘉愛古碑、古蹟，多得異本.”¹ The Song dynasty author Yang Wengong 楊文公 (974–1020) records in the *Tanyuan* 談苑:

Wang Pu 王溥 (922–982) recommended Xiang Gong 向拱 (912–986) to be commander-in-chief of Fengxiang county. Xiang Gong thought about it, reported to him, and then asked Wang Pu what he desired. Wang Pu replied: “The ancient capital of Chang’an has stone tablets and inscriptions erected by the worthies of former times. I would like to see them.” Xiang Gong arrived at Chang’an and dispatched artisans, instructing

1 *Tang huiyao*, 5.55. The *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書, “Yuanjia, the Prince of Han, was the eleventh son of Emperor Gaozu of Han. When he was young, he was fond of learning, and so he gathered some ten thousand scrolls’ worth of documents and also collected stone inscriptions from ancient historic sites, he obtained many different editions (of ancient manuscripts) 韓王元嘉，高祖第十一子也。少好學，聚書至萬卷，又採碑文古蹟，多得異本.” *Jiu Tang shu*, 64.2427.

The *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 says, “When he was young, he was fond of learning and collected as many as ten thousand scrolls’ worth of documents. Such articles had their writing corrected and revised according to ancient scripts 少好學，藏書至萬卷，皆以古文字參定同異.” *Xin Tang shu*, 79.3551.

Early in the Zhenguan 貞觀 era (627–649), rubbings of stone inscription writings were created and preserved in the palace repository. See Feng Yan, *Fengshi wenjianji jiaozhu*, 2.12.

At the end of the “Wenquan ming” 溫泉銘, now preserved in Paris, there is a line containing the era name, Yonghui 永徽 (650–656), which may be the earliest of all the Tang rubbings we have. The Tang dynasty depositories, *Hongwen guan* 宏文館 and *Chongwen guan* 崇文館 both employed scribes responsible for creating rubbings, indicating that these were collected from the early Tang onward.

them to make copies of the inscriptions. Altogether, more than 3000 stone rubbings were acquired and presented [to Wang Pu]. Wang Pu commanded his capable calligraphers to make records of the inscriptions in the *Wanyan ji* 琬琰集, which consists of one hundred scrolls.

王溥薦何拱為鳳翔帥，拱思所以報、問溥所欲？溥曰：長安故都多前賢碑版，願悉得見之。拱至，遣使督匠摹打，凡得石本三千餘以獻。溥命善書者分錄為《琬琰集》，凡百卷。²

This happened prior to the time of Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) and Zhao Mingcheng 趙明誠 (1081–1129), which shows that interest in reading and collecting stone inscriptions began before the Song dynasty. That said, it is well-known that the documentary use of stone inscriptions to validate historical data flourished from the Song dynasty onward. Besides merely collating records of such inscriptions, scholars would often use them to verify the names of people, places, and official titles. While specialists on ancient tablets and bronzes tend to focus on a single stone inscription in isolation, historians instead pose politico-historical questions and then utilize stone inscriptions to answer them. Thus, there are really two tasks here: the use of stone tablets to enhance our understanding of history, and the use of history to inform our understanding of such tablets.

This article focuses on the religious convictions of Wu Zhao 武曩, or Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (ca. 624–705; r. 690–705).³ It offers an extensive discussion of the empress's relationship to Buddhism, Daoism, Nestorianism, and Ruism. Before doing so, we will recall the three main focal points of Chen Yinke's 陳寅恪 (1890–1969) article, "Wuzhao yu Fojiao" 武曩與佛教, to frame the current discussion. The first concerns Wu Zhao's Buddhist beliefs inherited from the Yang 楊 clan, the imperial family of the Sui dynasty, which, as Chen points out, substantially influenced Wu Zhao. The second point is that

2 Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866–1940) in his *Zhaoling bei Lu* 昭陵碑錄 records this matter. Luo Zhenyu, *Zhaoling beilu*, "Fulu" 附錄, 17a (8: 3321).

3 Note: I will refer to Wu Zhao 武曩 using her personal name, *Zhao* 曩, rather than the title, *zetian* 則天, "conforming to Heaven," by which most later sources, historians, and scholars, including Jao, refer to her. However, many translated texts and titles that Jao utilizes refer to her as "Wu Zetian," and I will maintain such references. I will also translate references to her in primary texts by the phrase *Wu hou* 武后 as "Empress Wu." In cases where Wu Zhao is implicit as the subject of a passage, I will insert [Wu Zhao] in brackets. On the significance of Wu Zhao's personal name, see N. Harry Rothschild, *Wu Zhao: China's Only Female Emperor*, 1–2.

Wu Zhao believed Buddhism to prophesize her coming in the *Dayun jing* 大雲經 (Skt.: *Mahāmegha-sūtra*; hereafter: *Great Cloud Sutra*).⁴ The third is that from the imperial edicts of the early Tang period onward, we see the status of Buddhism fluctuate.

On the first point, Chen utilizes the “Xiao Yu zhuan” 蕭瑀傳, as well as the related texts, “Yang Gongren zhuan” 楊恭仁傳 and *Guang Hongming ji* 廣弘明集, which in turn support the claim that the Yang family were sincere adherents of Buddhism. However, Chen’s research neglected stone inscriptions, and, as a result, his sources were limited. Indeed, materials relating to Wu Zhao’s maternal lineage be seen in the *Tang shu* 唐書, “Yang Zhirou zhuan 楊執柔傳,”⁵ as well as the four-thousand character stele inscription composed by Wu Sansi 武三思 (649–707) called the *Shunling* stele 順陵碑.⁶ The *Qiugu lu* 求古錄 by Gu Yanwu 顧炎武 (1613–1682), the *Xu guwen yuan* 續古文苑 by Sun Xingyan 孫星衍 (1753–1818), and the *Baqiong shi jinshi buzheng* 八瓊室金石補正 by Lu Zengxiang 陸增祥 (1871–1949) each record the complete text.⁷ Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866–1940) included a corrected version in his *Shijiao lu* 石交錄.⁸ These constitute detailed records of the Yang clan and their Buddhist beliefs. When Wu Zhao was at the Shaolin Temple 少林寺 of Mt. Song 嵩山 during the second year of the Yongchun 永淳 era (682–683), Wang Zhijing 王知敬 (d. unknown) wrote the inscription of the *Yuzhi Shishu* Stele 御制詩書碑, which says, “Follow the carriage to the Shaolin Temple; see the place that the late lady constructed; move beyond the sorrow of yearning from a distance 從駕幸少林寺，睹先妃營建之所，逾悽遠慕。”⁹ The poem also includes the

4 Note: *Mahāmegha-sūtra* was first translated into Chinese from Sanskrit in the fourth or fifth century CE presumably by Dharmakṣema. Wu Zhao ordered Xue Huaiyi and nine other monks to write a commentary to the text that would serve as a marvelously effective piece of religious propaganda that would secure her divine authority. The full title of the text is *Commentary on the Meanings of the Prophecies About the Divine Sovereign in the Great Cloud Sutra* (*Dayunjing shenhuang shouji yishu* 大雲經神皇受記義疏; hereafter: *Commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra*). However, traditional sources, and Jao in this article, simply refer to it as the *Great Cloud Sutra*, as the commentary was the authoritative version of the text. In quotations, I have identified where the *Commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra* is the most likely referent of “*Dayun jing*”. See N. Harry Rothschild, *Emperor Wu Zhao and her Pantheon of Devis, Divinities, and Dynastic Mothers*, Chapter 12, for a detailed discussion of the significance of the *Great Cloud Sutra* for Wu Zhao’s ascendancy.

5 *Xin Tang shu*, 100.3928.

6 Li Dan 李旦 (662–716), Prince of Xiang, was responsible for the calligraphy, and it was erected in the 6th month of the second year of the Chang’an 長安 era (702).

7 “Da Zhou wushang Xiaoming Gao Huanghou beiming bingxu”, 5: 549–58. *Xu guwen yuan*, 17.1018–38. Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi zhaji*, 45.14a–33a (10: 21–31).

8 Luo Zhenyu, *Shijiao lu* 石交錄, 4.3b–13b (3: 1044–64).

9 *Quan Tang shi*, 5.58.

phrase, “The Golden Wheel moves about on the golden ground; the fragrant chamber draws in fragrant clothes 金輪轉金地，香閣曳香衣。”¹⁰ Later, in the second year of the Changshou 長壽 era (692), Wu Zhao added the designation “Golden Wheel 金輪” to her regnal title, which was a phrase frequently used in poetry at the time.¹¹ Emperor Gaozong of Tang 唐高宗, (628–683; r. 649–683) in his later years twice toured Mt. Song: once during the second year of the Tiaolu 調露 era (679–680), and once during the second year of the Yongchun era (ca. 683). This poem was a product of the tours from this period. Wu Zhao’s mother, died in the 8th month of the first year of the Xianheng 咸亨 era (670) at age 92, and Emperor Gaozong bestowed upon her the title of “Taiyuan Princess 太原王妃.” This is why the poem refers to her as “the late Lady.” The Yang clan had constructed buildings at the Shaolin Temple of Mt. Song, which deeply moved Wu Zhao upon visiting them. Wu Zhao’s Buddhist convictions eventually led to Buddhism flourishing under her and to the creation of temples and statues throughout her empire. All this was said to be the result of her family’s religious convictions, although they also did not conflict with her own. The origins of the relationship between the Yang clan and Buddhism can be seen in numerous stone inscriptions. Consider, for example, the *Qiyán daochang Sheli ta Stele* 栖岩道場舍利塔碑 from the third year (607) of the Daye 大業 era (605–618),¹² which Chen Yinke recounts as follows: “The Qiyán Temple was constructed under the decree of Sui Taizu, the Wuyuan Emperor¹³ (r. 557–568) 其栖巖寺者即是太祖武元皇帝之所建造。”¹⁴

The Buddhist beliefs of the official, Xiao Yu 蕭瑀 (575–648),¹⁵ can be gleaned from inscriptions on the memorial tablets within the tombs of the female Buddhist master, Fale 法樂, Xiao Yu’s eldest daughter, who renounced her family in childhood to pursue monastic life.¹⁶ Although Buddhist beliefs and

10 *Quan Tang shi*, 5.58.

11 Note: The term “Golden Wheel” is a reference to the mythological Cakravartin King, “Lord of all the Four Continents,” and was added to Wu Zhao’s imperial title early on in her reign. See Denis Twitchett, “*Chen gui* and Other Works Attributed to Empress Wu Zetian,” for a detailed study.

12 “Qiyán si Sheli ta bei,” 3.23a–31b, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 15: 399–403.

13 Note: The Wuyuan Emperor (personal name Yang Zhong 楊忠) was posthumously declared emperor by his son Yang Jian (楊堅 581–604), the founder of the Sui dynasty. However, Yang Zhong’s lineage is itself a disputed topic, and it is not immediately clear how he is related to Wu Zhao, save for the sharing the surname “Yang” with her mother.

14 Chen Yinke, “Wuzhao yu Fojiao”, 140.

15 Note: Xiao Yu was an imperial prince of the Western Liang dynasty who later went on to become a high ranking official under the Sui and Tang dynasties.

16 See Li Zonglian 李宗蓮 (b. 1829), *Huaimin jingshe jinshi ba* 懷岷精舍金石跋. The story is also recounted in the *Ni Fayuan* Epitaph 尼法愿墓志, dating from the third year of

practices were opposed by Emperor Taizong of Tang 唐太宗 (r. 626–649), multiple daughters of the Xiao household shaved their heads and became nuns. All this demonstrates the imperial clans' sincere belief in Buddhism.

In light of Chen's overlooking of stone inscriptions as resources, I will here consult stone tablet inscriptions relating to Wu Zhao's religious beliefs and her profound religious interests and introduce several novel ideas:

1. Wu Zhao's religious convictions transformed throughout her life. Her Buddhist beliefs during the time she was closest to Xue Huaiyi 薛懷義 (662–695) were distinct from those she utilized for political gain as well as from her sincere, personal beliefs. During her later years, she frequently toured Mt. Song, and her interests shifted towards Daoism.
2. Her promotion of Buddhism as the preeminent state religion during the second year of the Tianshou 天授 era (691) was a temporary affair. She later desired to create a gigantic statue of the Buddha, though she was heavily criticized for this and eventually abandoned the project. She also eventually returned the title of the Great Cloud Temple 大雲寺 to its original title of Renshou Temple 仁壽寺.¹⁷
3. Wu Zhao was involved in several distinct religious activities. For example, she carried on the tradition established by Tang Gaozong to offer the imperial sacrifices at Mt. Song. Regarding her relationship with the Mingtang 明堂,¹⁸ she brought to fruition the incomplete grand undertakings of every emperor since the Sui dynasty. Taking up the position of "Heaven's Pivot 天樞," she assembled people from all nations, thereby demonstrating her prowess as a Heavenly Khan.

The rest of the article will utilize records from stone inscriptions to offer a detailed discussion of these topics.

the Longshuo 龍朔 period (663). See "Jidu si ni Xiao Fayuan muzhi", in *Jinshi cuibian*, 54.7b–8b.

17 Note: As part of her efforts to establish on religious and ideological grounds her divine authority and that of her Zhou dynasty, Wu Zhao declared by imperial edict that "Great Cloud" temples be established in both capitals (Luoyang and Chang'an) and in every prefecture. (See N. Harry Rothschild, *Emperor Wu Zhao*, Chapter 12.) For the Renshou temple of Yishi 猗氏 (modern Linyi 臨猗 county, Shanxi), however, she reverted the title back to its original some 11 months after the initial edict. Presumably this was due to its cultural significance for Sui Buddhism out of respect for her Sui ancestors. See Chen Jinhua, "Empress Wu's Political Use of Buddhist Relics," 63–65. Jao makes a note of it here as evidence that Wu Zhao's Buddhist convictions were not ironclad even in those moments when she was politically most supportive of it.

18 Note: Wu Zhao's Mingtang or "Brilliant Hall" in Luoyang (constructed 688–689) was one of the largest ever built and became the seat of the most important state ceremonies.

2 Wu Zhao and Buddhism

The *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書, “Zetian huanghou benji” 則天皇后本紀, says:

In the 7th month of the first year of the Zaichu era (689) ... there were ten Buddhist monks who created the *Commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra*, which discussed Wu Zhao's ascent to her position, and exuberantly recounted the instructions she received by divine revelation. After completion, the scripture was disseminated throughout the empire, and it was furthermore commanded that each prefecture establishes its own Great Cloud Temple. Thousands of laypeople thereupon became monks.

(載初元年七月) ……有沙門十人，偽撰《大雲經》，表上之，盛言神皇受命之事。制頒於天下，令諸州各置大雲寺，總度僧千人。¹⁹

On the 9th day of the 9th month, *renwu* day, the Tang dynasty was overthrown, and the name of the ruling dynasty was changed to Zhou, thereby ushering in the era of Tianshou. On *yiyou* day, [Wu Zhao] gave herself the honorific title of “Holy, Divine, and August Lord” ...

九月九日壬午，革唐命，改國號為周，改元為天授……乙酉，加尊號曰聖神皇帝。²⁰

In the second year, fourth month of her reign, it was decreed that Buddhism is superior to Daoism, and Buddhist monks and nuns would occupy an exalted status above that of Daoist priestesses.

二年四月，令釋教在道法之上，僧尼處道士女冠之前。²¹

This decree from Wu Zhao's second year also contains the following:

The *Great Cloud Sutra* is both luminous and profound, illuminating the good fortunes of the kingdom. It universally manifests unrestrained greatness in the kingdom's grand development ... Hereupon, I discharge this command from on high ... thereupon expressing my regulations.”

¹⁹ *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.121.

²⁰ *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.121.

²¹ *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.121.

大雲闡奧，明王國之禎祥；方（等）發揚，顯自在之丕業。……爰開革命之階，……以申自我之規。²²

These examples utilize Buddhist phraseology to show that her ascension to the throne was granted by Heaven. The *Great Cloud Sutra* says, “thereupon take the female body as the soil of the kingdom 即以女身為王國土,”²³ which serves as foundation for Wu Zhao, a woman, calling herself *di* 帝, “Lord” or “Emperor.” Although the *Great Cloud Sutra* itself was not a forgery, we can say that it was dubiously relied upon. The process of Wu Zhao ascending the throne began in the fourth year of the Chuigong 垂拱 era (685–688) when the Prince of Wei 魏王, Wu Chengsi 武承嗣 (649–698), fabricated a piece of jade with an inscription reading, “The Sage Mother dwells among us; everlasting and prosperous will be the sovereign’s reign 聖母臨人，永昌帝業.”²⁴ He then commanded the Yongzhou 雍州 local, Tang Tongtai 唐同泰 (d. unknown), to claim that he found the stone in the Luo River 洛水, and thereupon called the stone “Precious Diagram 寶圖.” In the fifth month (688) Wu Zhao, utilizing her status as empress dowager, adorned herself with the venerated title of “Sage Mother, Divine and August One 聖母神皇.” In the 7th month (688), the title of the Precious Diagram was changed to “Heaven-sent Sage Diagram 天授聖圖.” In the 12th month (688–689), the “August One” visited the Luo River to receive the stone, and engraved the title upon it, “Manifestation of the Heaven-sent Sage Diagram 天授聖圖之表.” Having successfully overthrown the Tang dynasty, she changed the name of the ruling dynasty to Zhou 周 and also changed the name of her inaugural year to Tianshou 天授, “Heaven-sent”, based on the newly minted title of the Precious Diagram. This arduous process of fabricating an auspicious omen to legitimize one’s own ascent to the throne is strikingly similar to what happened under Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BCE–25) during the Han dynasty, wherein he relied upon Ai Zhang 哀章 (d. 23 CE) to present the so-called “Golden Case 金匱” as an omen of his ascension. The underhanded tactics by which Wu Zhao was enthroned thus assumed a traditional format and methodology.²⁵

22 *Quan Tang wen*, 95.4b (981).

23 *Taishō*, No. 387, “Dafang deng wuxiang jing,” 12: 1098.

24 *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.119.

25 Wu Zhao’s ascent was in fact the result of Wu Chengsi’s plotting. The *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書, “Chengsi zhuan”, says, “Early on, Wu Zetian governed surreptitiously, and Zhongzong (Tang emperor Li Xian 李賢, 655–684) was deposed. Chengsi claimed that the kingdom would be passed to him if Wu Zhao should assume control of the empire. Thus, along with Chengsi, she ushered in a revolution, expelling all the heirs from the Tang clan. She also put to death all those ministers who did not follow or submit to her 初，后擅政，中宗

The *Great Cloud Sutra* was a further means for Wu Zhao's ascent. We find evidence of this in the *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書, "Wu hou zhuan" 武后傳, which says:

During the Zaichu era (689–690), [Wu Zhao] appointed Xue Huaiyi as Auxiliary Commander of the Imperial Army also conferring upon him the title of Duke of E'guo. She ordered him to gather other Buddhist monks together to craft the *Commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra*, which would relay that she was the August One who received the divine mandate from Heaven.

載初中，拜薛懷義輔國大將軍，封鄂國公，令與羣浮屠作大雲經，言神皇受命事。²⁶

Additionally, Song Minqiu 宋敏求 (1019–1079) wrote in his *Chang'an zhi* 長安志 of how the Guangming Temple 光明寺 was renamed to the "Temple of the *Great Cloud Sutra* 大雲經寺:"

During the early part of Wu Zhao's reign, the śramaṇa²⁷ of the Guangming Temple, Xuan Zheng 宣政 (d. unknown), submitted the *Commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra* to court, which claimed that a female ruler would receive a heavenly sign, and so the temple was renamed "Temple of the *Great Cloud Sutra*." She thereupon commanded that all the administrative regions construct temples in honor of the *Great Cloud Sutra*.

武太后初，光明寺沙門宣政進《大雲經》，經中有女主之符，因改為大雲經寺，遂令天下每州，置一大雲經寺。²⁸

This stage in the grand farce was obviously a scheme of Xue Huaiyi and his Buddhist followers. The *Jiu Tang shu* writes of Xue Huaiyi as follows:

幽逐，承嗣自謂傳國及己，武氏當有天下，即諷后革命，去唐家子孫，誅大臣不附者。” *Xin Tang shu*, 206.5837.

Note: The role of Wu Chengsi in Wu Zhao's ascent is probably less decisive than Jao is suggesting here. Although he had much to gain and did in fact view himself as next in line for the throne, he was more of a willing accomplice rather than hidden mastermind. See Rothschild, *Wu Zhao*, 171–172.

26 *Xin Tang shu*, 76.3481.

27 Note: Śramaṇa (*sha men* 沙門) is a term for a Buddhist monk or ascetic.

28 See Song Minqiu, *Chang'an zhi*, 10.10a (587: 147), Nan Huaiyuan Fang 南懷遠坊, under the entry of "Dongnan yu Dayun jing si" 東南隅大雲經寺.

Xue Haiyi and the monk Faming 法明 (fl. 668–703) and others together created the *Commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra*, displayed it as a sign of Wu Zetian's authority, and claimed that she was Maitreya incarnated and ruler of Jambudvīpa (i.e., Greater India). The Tang clan fell into decline. Thus, Wu Zetian changed the dynasty name to Zhou. Xue Huaiyi and the monk Faming formed a group of nine²⁹ who were all conferred the title of Duke, and they each received rewards of different grades, which included purple robes and silver tortoise bags. They created the *Commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra* and disseminated it throughout the empire, such that every temple had a copy, and commanded monks to ascend the pulpit and offer sermons on it.

懷義與法明等造大雲經，陳符命，言則天是彌勒下生，作閻浮提主，唐氏合微。故則天革命稱周，懷義與法明等九人並封縣公，賜物有差，皆賜紫袈裟、銀龜袋。其偽《大雲經》頒於天下，寺各藏一本，令升高座講說。³⁰

The monks resorted to establishing the theory based on the *Mile xiasheng jing* 彌勒下生經, the “Sutra on the Descent of Maitreya,” just like the Maitreya School 彌勒教 of the Sui dynasty and the later Society of the White Lotus 白蓮教. Thus, all these monks were certainly of the Pure Land Lineage 淨土宗 of Buddhism. *Zengyi ahan* 增一阿含 verse 42 says that Maitreya (*Mile* 彌勒) should after 30 *kalpas* reach *anuttarā samyak-sambodhi*, “unsurpassed, complete enlightenment in both correctness and truth,” and the *Fazhuji* 法住記 tells us that, “when Maitreya responded to the unexcelled complete enlightenment and appeared in the world, the southern continent (Jambudvīpa) was extensive, solemn, and pure 彌勒應正等覺出現世間時，瞻部洲廣博嚴淨.”³¹ Both examples confirm the descent of the Maitreya in order to rule Jambudvīpa. The Eastern Jin dynasty scholar and monk, Shi Dao'an 釋道安 (ca. 312–385), took an oath before the Maitreya, and a statue of Maitreya was constructed during the Northern Wei dynasty Taihe 太和 period (477–499). Fu Dashi 傅大士 (497–569) of the Qi dynasty called himself the reincarnation of Maitreya

29 The “Huaiyi zhuan” 懷義傳 of the *Jiu Tang shu* lists the nine, including Xue Huaiyi himself, as follows: “One of great virtue from Luoyang, the monk Faming, along with Chu Yi 處一 (fl. 670–693), Hui Yan 惠儼 (fl. 689–695), Leng Xing 稜行 (d. unknown), Gan De 感德 (d. unknown), Gan Zhi 感知 (d. unknown), Jing Gui 靜軌 (d. unknown), and Xuan Zheng 宣政, were included among those who chanted the sutra 與洛陽大德僧法明、處一、惠儼、稜行、感德、感知、靜軌、宣政等，在內道場念誦。”

30 *Jiu Tang shu*, 183.4742.

31 *Taishō*, No. 2030, “Da aluohan nantimiduoluo suoshuo fazhuji,” 49: 13.

Bodhisattva 彌勒菩薩 and sought to provide salvation for the myriad living things. During the Sui dynasty, Song Zixian 宋子賢 (d. 613) and Xiang Haiming 向海明 (d. 613) both called themselves living incarnations of the Maitreya Bodhisattva.³² The monk, Faming simply took a similar approach and there is nothing especially novel about it. The Dunhuang Scriptures also mention that Xue Huaiyi was one of the supervisors of sutra translations. The *Baoyu jing* 寶雨經 of the British Stein collection (item no. 2278) is a Chinese version of the Sanskrit *Ratnamegha-sūtra* ("Precious Rain Sutra") translated by Dharmaruci 達摩流支 (d. 727). The notes read:

In the second year of the Changshou era of the Great Zhou dynasty, thirtieth year, *guisi*, of the 60-year cycle, for three days between *dinghai* and *jichou* of the 9th month (693), [this text was] translated in the Temple of the Buddha's Prophecy. The Bhadanta,³³ Huaiyi of the Great White Horse Temple supervised the translation.

大周長壽二年歲次癸巳九月丁亥朔三日己丑佛授記寺譯。大白馬寺大德沙門懷義監譯。³⁴

The *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書, "Yao Shu zhuan" 姚璿傳, says:

At that time, Wu Sansi led the Fan and Yi chieftains to petition Wu Zetian regarding the construction of the Heavenly Pivot³⁵ outside the southern gate entrance to the Imperial Palace. They would carve records of accomplishments into stone and sing hymns to the virtue of Zhou. Yao Shu 姚璿 (632–705) was made the overseer of the construction works. In the beginning of the Zhengsheng 證聖 era (695), Shu was promoted to the Autumn Secretariat, and given the title Manager of State Affairs. That year (695), disaster descended upon the Mingtang. Wu Zetian desired to punish herself and avoid occupying the main hall of the palace. Shu proposed as follows, "This fire was the work of human beings, and cannot be deemed

32 *Sui shu*, 23.662–63.

33 Note: Bhadanta or *da de* 大德 was a title given to venerated monks during Sui and Tang times who were tasked with translating sutras.

34 Ikeda On, *Zhongguo gudai xieben shiyu jilu*, 240.

35 Note: The "Heavenly Pivot" refers to a massive bronze pillar set on an iron mountain that was meant to be a testament to the diversity and splendor Wu Zhao's empire, being the result of work and funding from a diverse cross-section of the empire that include many non-Chinese peoples. This is further discussed in section 4 of this chapter. See also Rothschild, *Wu Zhao*, 153.

a natural disaster. I have also seen in the *Sutra on the Descent of Maitreya* it says, 'At the time when the Maitreya becomes the Buddha, the Seven Jewel Tower will be destroyed instantly in a disaster.' The observation of impermanence has caused them to reach enlightenment. Moreover, now the Mingtang is the place where government administration occurs, and not the location of an ancestral shrine. Your majesty avoiding the main hall does not comply with the rituals." Wu Zetian thereupon took Shu's advice and commanded him to oversee the creation of the Heavenly Pivot. For his accomplishments in these matters, he was advanced one grade in rank.

時武三思率蕃夷酋長，請造天樞於端門外，刻字紀功，以頌周德，璫為督作使。證聖初，璫加秋官尚書、同平章事。是歲，明堂災，則天欲責躬避正殿，璫奏曰：「此實人火，非曰天災。……臣又見彌勒下生經云，當彌勒成佛之時，七寶臺須與散壞。觀此無常之相，便成正覺之因。……況今明堂乃是布政之所，非宗廟之地，陛下若避正殿，於禮未為得也。則天乃依璫奏。先令璫監造天樞，至是以功當賜爵一等。」³⁶

The *Jiu Tang shu*, "Li Zhi" also says:

[After the fire at the Mingtang], the official Pang Min 逢敏 (d. unknown) submitted an official memorandum to the emperor that says, "When the Maitreya becomes the Buddha, a demon will set the office on fire. The Seven Jewel Tower collapsed in an instant.' These are truly flattering and preposterous words."

(明堂既災) 舍人逢敏奏稱，「當彌勒初成佛道時，有天魔燒宮，七寶臺須與散壞。斯實諂妄之邪言。」³⁷

In light of Yao Shu's advice, we can see that at the time, the grand officials accepted Wu Zhao to be the Maitreya incarnated, maintaining this title even in spite of the fire at the Mingtang.

Additionally, the "Wu hou zhuan" of the *Xin Tang shu* says:

At that time, Li Siwen 李思文 (d. 684) from the Spring Secretariat, pointed out that the "Wucheng" section of the "Zhou shu" chapter of

³⁶ *Jiu Tang shu*, 89.2902-3.

³⁷ *Jiu Tang shu*, 22.867.

the *Shangshu* says, "When one's robes hang down and the hands are folded, the empire is well-ordered," and it was considered to be a sign of receiving the [Heavenly] Mandate. The Empress was pleased, and it was proclaimed to all throughout the empire.

時春官尚書李思文詭言：「周書武成為篇，辭有『垂拱天下治』，為受命之符。」后喜，皆班示天下。³⁸

We can see that at this time, there were many claims about signs from Heaven, and the creation of the *Commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra* by followers of Wu Zhao represents only one case among many. However, there were also those who opposed utilizing the supernatural for the legitimization of power. The *Xin Tang shu*, "Cen Changqian shu" 岑長倩書, says:

The Buddhist monks of Hezhou put forward the *Commentary on the Great Cloud Sutra* and wrote of the imperial overthrowing. The empress was pleased and began to issue imperial edicts regarding the establishment of Great Cloud Temples.³⁹ Cen Changqian 岑長倩 (d. 691) argued that this was unacceptable, and thus placed himself among those who opposed Wu Zhao's machinations.

和州浮屠上大雲經，著革命事，后喜，始詔天下立大雲寺。長倩爭不可，繇是與諸武忤。⁴⁰

Cen Changqian, the nephew of Cen Wenben 岑文本 (595–645), rejected Wu Chengsi's position as Crown Prince, as well as the commissioning of the *Commentary to the Great Cloud Sutra*, and was subsequently beheaded in public. Although Cen was used as a scapegoat for this affair, he is nowadays commended for his actions. The *Jiu Tang shu* does not record this affair, while the *Xinjiu Tang shu hechao* 新舊唐書合鈔 fills the lacuna by quoting the *Xin Tang shu* as follows: "The Buddhist monks of Hezhou put forward the [commentary on the] *Great Cloud Sutra* 和州浮屠上《大雲經》."⁴¹

38 *Xin Tang shu*, 76.3481.

39 Note: Although Wu Zhao did commission the construction of multiple Great Cloud Temples throughout the empire, in this case, the referent is a single Great Cloud Temple.

40 *Xin Tang shu*, 102.3968.

41 We should note that all were Bhadanta from Luoyang, and so the location name, "Hezhou," is a mistake. The *Jiu Tang shu*, "Benji" also claims:

Xu Song 徐松 (1781–1848) in the *Liang jing cheng fang kao* 兩京城坊考 cited the Chang'an records and referenced a "Great Cloud Sutra Temple." Upon examination of stone inscriptions, however, we can notice several instances where its name there is simply "Great Cloud Temple," without the word "Sutra" included:

- 1) "During the second year of Tianshou (691), the *Dayun si mi le zhong ge* Stele (Stele of the Multistory Maitreya Pavilion of Great Cloud Temple) was commissioned. The stele inscription was composed by Du Deng 杜登 (d. unknown) 而積 (天授)二年，大雲寺彌勒重閣碑，杜登撰。⁴² There is also a line reading, "The Great Zhou Great Cloud Temple extols the Sagely, Divine, and August Lord by reverently creating a stele made by Wen Panbian 大周大雲寺奉為聖神皇帝敬造溫（涅）槃變碑像一區。⁴³ The inscription is located in the Renshou Temple, Yishi county 猗氏縣, Shanxi province.
- 2) "In the first year of the Dazu 大足 era (700), on *xinchou* day, the inscription celebrating the opening of the Great Cloud Temple was composed and written by Jia Yingfu 賈應福 (d. unknown). Wu Jinli, (a member of the family of Wu Zhao) wrote the inscription 大足元年辛醜建大雲寺之口文，賈應福撰書，太原武盡禮." On the head of the stele there is a line that reads, "The Great Cloud Temple Stele of the August and Supreme Ruler 大雲寺皇帝聖祚之碑." The inscription is more than 2000 characters long and has many fragmented, illegible areas.⁴⁴ The stele is located in Henei 河內, Henan province, and was originally in the Changshou Temple 長壽寺 from the Sui dynasty.

Towards the very end of the *Tianshou* Stele there is a line that reads as follows:

In the second year of Tianshou, on the 24th day of the second month (691), in accordance with the regulations, the Great Cloud Temple was

Upon the death of Li Dan, the Prince of Yuzhang, his father, Li Yuanming the Prince of Shu, was forced to move to Hezhou. There were ten monks who created the [commentary to the] *Great Cloud Sutra* and presented it to the empress.

殺豫章王亶，遷其父舒王元名於和州。有沙門十人偽撰大雲經，表上之。(Jiu Tang shu, 6.121)

The place name, "Hezhou," mentioned here is where the Prince of Shu was forced to move, but its proximity to the next sentence in turn led scholars in turn to treat Hezhou as the home of the ten monks. However, the "Dili zhi" 地理志 claims that Hezhou is an area of Huainan, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 40.1574. There is also a "Hezhou Liyang" prefecture, which is unrelated to Luoyang, *ibid*.

42 See *Shanyou shike congbian* 山右石刻叢編 *juan* 5.

43 *Shanyou shike congbian*, 5.6b, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 15: 424.

44 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 64.4b.

established. In the third year, first month of the lunar year, 18th day (692), in accordance with the regulations, the title shall be reverted to Renshou Temple.

天授二年二月二十四日准制置大雲寺，至三年正月十八日准制回換額為仁壽寺。

The Great Cloud Temple was renamed to its former title just one year after it was so named. The *Heart Sutra* (*Xin jing* 心經) stone pillar inscription at the Benyuan Temple 本願寺 of Huolu county 獲鹿縣 contains a line reading, “The Hengzhou Great Cloud Temple ... the wisdom of Daoist priests and Buddhist monks 恆州大雲寺口道僧慧.”⁴⁵ All of these stone inscriptions contain the title “Great Cloud Temple” rather than “Great Cloud Sutra Temple.” The *Tang huiyao* says:

On the 29th day of the 10th month of the first year (690) of the Tianshou era, [it was declared that] the two capitals and every prefecture under Heaven must establish a Great Cloud Temple. On the first day of the 6th month of the 26th year (741) of the Kaiyuan 開元 era (713–741), the title was to be changed instead to Kaiyuan Temple.

天授元年十月二十九日，兩京及天下諸州各置大雲寺一所。至開元二十六年六月一日並改為開元寺。⁴⁶

The Great Cloud Temples were thus renamed to “Kaiyuan Temples.” However, the title of the Great Cloud Temple of the Yi clan in Shanxi had already reverted to its original of Renshou Temple by the third year of Tianshou (ca. 692), and this episode was recorded on stone tablets.

The *Jigu lu* 集古錄 states, “In the second year of the *Chang'an* era, two steles, titled ‘Da jiaoji chi’ were erected at the Sixing Temple. [They were] inscribed by Yan Chaoyin 閻朝隱 (d. unknown) 長安二年司刑寺大脚迹敕並碑銘二，閻朝隱撰.”⁴⁷ Ouyang Xiu says, “From ancient times, rulers and ministers would serve the Buddha. Never has there been a time as prosperous as that of the Wu clan. We can recognize this by examining the [Sixing] Temple stele of

45 Shen Tao, *Changshan zhenshi zhi*, 7.2a–2b, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 12:565.

46 *Tang huiyao*, 48.850.

47 Ouyang xiu, *Jigu lu*, 6.6a, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 681: 83. The *Jinshi lu* 金石錄 claims that the second stele was inscribed by Fan Yuanzhe 范元愬. See Zhao Mingcheng, *Jinshi lu*, 5.3a, rpt. in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書, 681: 181.

Yan Chaoyin 自古君臣事佛，未有如武氏時之盛也，視朝隱寺碑銘可見矣。⁴⁸ Unfortunately, the original inscriptions are no longer extant.

When the Mingtang was completed, Wu Zhao commanded the monk Xue Huaiyi to create a lacquered Buddha statue housed within. He also was said to have created a massive image of the Maitreya delineated in ox blood on a silken sheet that hung down from Heaven's Ford Bridge. (Though it would later be rumored that the blood came from Huaiyi himself.) The image was allegedly so large that ten people could fit on the nail of its pinky finger and was displayed during a massive Buddhist festival commissioned by both Wu Zhao and Xue Huaiyi. Later on, Huaiyi secretly torched the Tiantang 天堂, and the fire spread to the Mingtang. A storm also shredded the silken image to pieces and dispersed the blood everywhere.⁴⁹

Wu Zhao also desired to construct a large Buddha in Baisimaban 白司馬坂 near Mt. Beimang 北邙山 in Luoyang.⁵⁰ At the time, Di Renjie 狄仁傑 (607–700), Li Qiao 李嶠 (644–713),⁵¹ Zhang Tinggui 張廷珪 (658–734)⁵² and others remonstrated with her,⁵³ which convinced her to halt its construction. Zhang Tinggui later on, during the Shenlong 神龍 period (705–707), criticized the construction of the large Buddha at Baisimaban, claiming in his second memorial (presented to Wu Zhao):

At the imperial court of the empress, Huaiyi oversaw the construction of the great Buddha while also constructing the Tiantang at a suitable location. He commanded Wang Hongyi and Li Zhaode to hack a great tree to pieces—this is an abuse of power.

天后朝，懷義營大像，並造天堂安置，令王宏義、李昭德等，分道採斫大木，虐用威勢。……

48 Ouyang Xiu, *Jigu lu*, 6.6a, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 681: 83.

49 Note: Jao's prose here is very terse I have taken some liberties to include some details in the account of this colorful story. For a discussion of these events in English and their significance for Wu Zhao, see N. Harry Rothschild *Wu Zhao*, 150–151, as well as his *Emperor Wu Zhao*, 224.

50 Matsumoto Bunzaburo has offered a detailed investigation of the construction of the large Buddha in Baisimaban. See Matsumoto Bunzaburo, "Sokutenbukō no Hakuba-zaka daizō ni Tsuite", 13–49.

51 *Xin Tang shu*, 123.4367.

52 *Jiu Tang Shu*, 101.3150.

53 *Tang huiyao*, 49.857.

The structures were burned to the ground. Huaiyi and his fellows were tried and executed. From then on, all the construction works ceased for ten years.

凡所營構，並為災火所焚。懷義之徒，相次伏法而死。自此之後，停寢十年。……⁵⁴

Ever since time of Xue Huaiyi's waning in favor and his eventual execution, Wu Zhao lost her former enthusiasm for the management and construction of Buddhist idols, and she moreover accepted remonstrance from her ministers. The *Xin Tang shu*, "Su Gui zhuan" 蘇瓌傳 says:

[Wu Zhao] cast many Buddhas and set them up in temples and pagodas, the laborers serving tirelessly. Su Gui 蘇瓌 (639–710) believed that the damage was great ... He asked to merge temples and register the numbers of monks and daily workers so as to count the vacancies and subsequently fill them. The Empress was pleased with these words.

武后鑄浮屠，立廟塔，役無虛歲。瓌以為糜損浩廣。……請併寺，著僧常員數，缺則補。后善其言。⁵⁵

In the first year of the Shengli 聖歷 era (697–698), first month of the lunar year, Wu Zhao decreed, "The two schools of Buddhism and Daoism both make their home in goodness; Non-action and the Ultimate are both derived from the same origin 佛道二教，同歸於善。無為究竟，皆是一宗."⁵⁶ Thus, she no longer recognized any significant difference between the two schools in terms of status. We can see that Wu Zhao's Buddhist convictions had waned later in life, and she was thus incapable of wholeheartedly implementing Buddhist policies. From all this, we can ascertain that Wu Zhao was not a true believer in Buddhism.

In the seventh month of the third year of the Chang'an 長安 era (703), Wu Zhao's Director of the Construction Bureau, Wang Xuan 王璿 (d. unknown), created a stone inscription shrine titled *E'mituo xiang ming* 阿弥陀像铭 (Inscription to the Image of Amitābha).⁵⁷ Yao Yuanzhi 姚元之 (651–721), in the ninth month of the third year of the Chang'an era, wrote the *Zao xiang ji*

54 *Wenyuan yinghua*, 621.2a–2b (3217).

55 *Xin Tang shu*, 125.4398.

56 *Quan Tang wen*, 95.9b (983).

57 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 65.4b.

造像記,⁵⁸ which recorded the construction of various Buddhist icons, although he would later fiercely oppose the practice.⁵⁹ The *Xin Tang shu*, “Yao Chong Zhuan” 姚崇傳, claims that he opposed Tang Xuanzong 唐玄宗 (r. 712–756) and requested him to cease the construction of Buddhist icons.⁶⁰ He also said:

Buddha nature is not located outside but is realized in the heart. Conduct oneself properly to bring about benefit; keep the common people steady and secure. This is what I call “Buddhist principles.” Why use evildoers to confuse the true teachings?

佛不在外，悟之於心。行事利益，使蒼生安穩，是謂佛理。烏用姦人，以汨真教。⁶¹

Yao also warned and instructed his descendants as follows:

How can copying texts and casting images be beneficial? Based on death and loss, texts and images created in the pursuit of blessing. But in all cases, death is a constant of life. The old did not fear it, but how could the creation of those texts and images bear this out? The young should be careful not to act in this way.

豈抄經鑄像力邪？緣死喪造經像，以為追福。夫死者生之常，古所不免，彼經與像何所施為？兒曹慎不得為此。⁶²

This appears to reflect a change in sentiments in light of the demise of the Wu clan.

3 Wu Zhao, Daoism, and the *feng* and *shan* Ceremonies

The *feng* 封 and *shan* 禪 ceremonies of paying homage to Heaven and Earth at Mt. Tai 泰山 had already been carried out during the time of Emperor Gaozong.⁶³ The *Jiu Tang shu* records as follows:

58 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 65.5a.

59 In the *Tang shu*, “Records of Yao Chong,” we find the name “Yuanzhi,” which he was called from the fourth year of the Chang’an era onward.

60 *Xin Tang shu*, 124.4383.

61 *Xin Tang shu*, 124.4384.

62 *Xin Tang Shu*, 124.4387.

63 Note: The *feng* and *shan* ceremonies were among the most illustrious that a Chinese emperor could carry out, having only occurred several times in Chinese history and served

In the second year of the Linde 麟德 era (664–666) under Emperor Gaozong's reign, on the *wuwu* day of the tenth month (665), the empress dowager asked to take part in the *feng* and *shan* ceremonies. The ritual overseer, Grand Executive Attendant Liu Xiangdao 劉祥道 (596–666), submitted a memorial to the emperor asking to perform the ceremony. In Spring of the third year, first month of the lunar year, on *wuchen* day (666), the emperor rode the carriage up to Mt. Tai and stopped there ... On *jisi* day, he ascended the mountain and carried out the *feng* and *shan* ceremonies. This ushered in the era of Qianfeng 乾封 (666–668). Within the boundaries of Yanzhou there are three Daoist temples: Ziyun, Xianhe, and Wansui; and there are three Buddhist temples: Fengluan, Feiyan, and Chonglun. Every town of the empire had to establish one Daoist temple and one Buddhist temple.

高宗麟德二年，十月戊午，皇后請封禪，司禮太常伯劉祥道上疏請封禪。⁶⁴三年春正月戊辰，車駕至泰山，……己巳，帝升山行封禪之禮。⁶⁵改元乾封。兗州界置紫雲、仙鶴、萬歲觀，封巒、非煙、重輪三寺。天下諸州置觀、寺一所。⁶⁶

The emperor thereafter arrived at Mt. Tai, and he in turn commanded the neighboring territories to also establish Daoist temples.

Gaozong indeed carried out the ceremony at Mt. Tai at Wu Zhao's request. The *Jinshi lu* 金石錄 references a *Baihe guan* Stele 白鶴觀碑,⁶⁷ which was erected during the time of emperor Zhongzong 中宗 (r. 684; 705–710) and is located in Zhangzi county 長子縣 in Shanxi. The stele inscription says, "The Baihe Temple was established in the second year of the Chuigong era (686) 白鶴觀者，垂拱二年所立也。"⁶⁸ It also reads as follows:

In the second year of Chuigong, the *chaosan dafu* Overseer of the Dismissal of Morning Court and magistrate of Zhangzi county, Gao Tong

as the grandest displays of an emperor's supremacy. The fact that they were so rare, and yet Gaozong was so inclined to perform them anyway, was an excellent opportunity for Wu Zhao to assert her prominence during his reign. Because the rituals were so seldom put into practice, however illustrious, she was able to successfully petition for her own involvement in them, much to the chagrin of conservative Confucians. See Rothschild, *Wu Zhao*, 59–60.

64 *Jiu Tang shu*, 4.87.

65 *Jiu Tang shu*, 5.89.

66 *Jiu Tang shu*, 5.90.

67 Zhao Mingcheng, *Jinshi lu*, 5.7a, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 681: 183.

68 *Shanyou shike congbian*, 5.3b, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 15: 423.

高同 (d. unknown), oversaw the establishment of the foundation [of the Baihe Temple]. They erected noble statues and set up this monument to officially honor the emperor's accomplishments and virtue.

垂拱二年，長子縣宰朝散大夫高同營創基宇，造立尊容，建此豐碑，旌以功德。⁶⁹

The stele was carved during Wu Zhao's regency and erected after the reign of Zhongzong.⁷⁰ Wu Zhao attempted to summon the Daoist master Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (647–735) from Tiantai 天台 Mountain. The *Jiu Tang shu*, “Chengzhen zhuan” 承禎傳 says:

Chengzhen was taught by Pan Shizheng 潘師正 (585–682), who passed down secret teachings of abstaining from eating grains and other arts and medicinal practices to achieve longevity ... He stopped at Tiantai Mountain. When Wu Zhao first learned of his reputation, she summoned him to her and issued an autographed edict to praise him. When he was about to leave, she commanded the Deputy Head of the Archival Bureau, Li Qiao 李嶠 (ca. 664–713), to offer a farewell feast to him to the East of the Luo River bridge.

(承禎) 事潘師正，傳其符籙及辟穀導引服餌之術。……止於天台山。則天聞其名，召至都，降手敕以讚美之。及將還，敕麟臺監李嶠餞之於洛橋之東。⁷¹

The Laojun Cave 老君洞 of Mt. Song contains an inscription with a preface by Wang Shi 王適 (d. 814), written by Sima Chengzhen, called the *Panzun shi* Stone Tablet 潘尊師碣, which contains the following lines:

[Pan's] student, the *Zhongyan daoshi*, Sima Ziwei⁷² wrote the calligraphy.⁷³ This *Panzun shi* Stone Tablet was established during the great Zhou

69 *Shanyou shike congbian*, 5.4a, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 15: 423.

70 *Shanyou shike congbian*, 5.4a, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 15: 423.

71 *Jiu Tang shu*, 12.5127.

72 Ziwei 子微 is the style name of Chengzhen, *Zhongyan daoshi* is the sobriquet of Chengzhen.

Note: Generally, *daoshi* 道士 is a term for “Daoist priest” or “Scholar of the Dao.”

73 The calligraphy has been restored from the *Biluo Wen* 碧落文.

period, in the *jihai* year, i.e., year two of the Shengli (699) era, second month.

弟子中岩道士司馬子微書此《潘尊師碣》，大周聖歷二年己亥二月立。⁷⁴

The *Jiu Tang shu*, “Yinyi zhuan” 隱逸傳 also says:

Pan Shizheng revered Wang Yuanzhi 王遠知 (528–635) as a teacher and served him, living in the Xiaoyao Valley of Mt. Song. Emperor Gaozong and Wu Zhao greatly respected him and therefore issued an order to establish the Chong Tang Temple at the site where Shizheng's house was situated.

潘師正師事王遠知，居於嵩山之逍遙谷，高宗與天后甚尊敬之，尋敕所司於師正所居造崇唐觀。⁷⁵

The *Jiu Tang shu*, “Gaozong ji” 高宗紀 says:

In the second year of the Tiaolu era (679–680), second month, on *dingsi* day, [the emperor] arrived at Mt. Shaoshi, bestowed honors upon the former master of the Yuqing Temple, Wang Yuanzhi, and conferred him a posthumous title of Genuine Master who has ascended to the Heavens. On *jiwei* day, Emperor Gaozong visited the Songyang Temple and Qimu Shrine and ordered to erect several steles there.⁷⁶ He moreover paid visit to the residence of Pan Shizheng who was the Daoist master of Xiaoyao Valley. In the first year of the Yongchun era (682), Autumn, during the seventh month, on *jihai* day, Gaozong established the Fengtian Temple to the south of Mt. Song. In the second year (683). On the first day of the first month, he visited Fengtian Temple and dispatched a messenger to offer sacrifices on the peak of Mt. Song, and on Mt. Shaoshi.

74 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian* 金石萃編, vol. 2, 62.7a–8b.

75 *Jiu Tang shu*, 192.5126. The *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 records the imperial order to construct the Fengtian Daoist Temple as well as for a gate to be built in the Xiaoyao Valley called the “Xianyou men” 仙遊門. See *Yunji qiqian*, 5.81.

76 This stele was composed by Cui Rong 崔融 (653–706). Juqu Zhilie 沮渠智烈 (fl. 685) was responsible for the calligraphy.

調露二年二月丁巳，至少室山，賜故玉清觀道士王遠知諡曰昇真先生。己未，幸嵩陽觀及啟母廟，並命立碑。又幸逍遙谷道士潘師正所居。⁷⁷ 永淳元年秋七月己亥，造奉天宮於嵩山之陽。二年正月朔，幸奉天宮，遣使祭嵩岳、少室。⁷⁸

This stele recorded that on *yíwei* day in the first month of the first year of the Yongchun era, the emperor travelled to the Fengtian Temple and paid visit to the Ye Kang Hall 謁康室.⁷⁹ It also recorded the reflections by Wu Zhao, using the title of “Heaven-conferred Golden Wheel Sagely, Divine, and August Lord 天冊金輪聖神皇帝” as follows:

The Divine Lord has the utmost admiration for the immortal sages and harbors deep affection for the esoteric teachings. Every time her heart stills, she inquires into the Way, pursuing its subtleties and seeking out its truth, strolling the scenic vistas in Qingyuan, and pondering the Banquet of Immortality in the Purple Mansion. She once composed a letter which said that she had already understood the broad outline of the Nine Palaces of the Divine Secrets; but as to the Great One of the Purple Chamber, she had not yet grasped its deeper meaning. The minute and profound words of the venerated teacher constitute a secret that none throughout the ages will hear.

神皇雅尚仙圖，永懷祕訣。每灑心咨道，探蹟求真，希步景於青元，想餐霞於紫府。嘗致書曰，九宮神祕，顧已通於大綱，太一紫房，猶未解其深旨。尊師微言答，祕世莫聞。⁸⁰

The “venerated teacher” here died in the first year of the Yongchun era at 89 years old, during which time Wu Zhao was still the wife of Emperor Gaozong.

The *Jiu Tang shu*, “Wu hou ji” says,

In the first year (695) of the Zhengsheng era, the phrase, “Heaven-conferred Golden Wheel of the Sagely, Divine, and August Lord” was added to [Wu Zhao’s] official title.⁸¹ The era was renamed to Tiance Wansui (695–696).

77 *Jiu Tang shu*, 5.106.

78 *Jiu Tang shu*, 5.110.

79 The event was originally recorded as taking place during the second year of the Yongchun era, but this is a mistake.

80 *Quan Tang wen*, 282.4a (2856).

81 The stele utilizes Wu Zhao’s title as well as the longer title.

In the first year of Wansui Dengfeng 萬歲登封 (696), 12th lunar month, on *jiashen* day, she scaled the peak of Mt. Song and offered sacrifices to Heaven and Earth. On *dinghai* day, she made sacrifices to the land and mountains at Mt. Shaoshi. On *guisi* day, she arrived at the summit of Mt. Song. During the first month, the reconstruction of the Ancestral Hall was complete, and the title of the era was changed to Wansui Tongtian 萬歲通天 (696–697).

證聖元年，加尊號天冊金輪聖神皇帝，……改元為天冊萬歲，……萬歲登封元年臘月甲申，上登封于嵩嶽，……丁亥，禪于少室山。……癸巳，至自嵩嶽。……春三月，重造明堂成。……改元為萬歲通天。⁸²

At the time, Wu Zhao frequently visited Mt. Song. Sima Chengzhen made a stele in honor of his late teacher, Pan Shizheng, who was acquainted with both Emperor Gaozong, and Wu Zhao, which can be observed in the previously mentioned sources.

From this point forward, Wu Zhao visited the surrounding area of Mt. Song even more often. The *Jiu Tang shu* “Zetian huanghou benji” says,

In the second year of Shengli (699), second month, on *wuzi* day, the Son of Heaven toured Mt. Song and passed by the shrine of Prince Jin. On *bingshen* day, she visited Mt. Gou. On *dingyou* day, she personally visited Mt. Song. In the third year, first month of the lunar year (699), the Sanyang Palace was erected at Mt. Song. On the *wushen* day of the fourth month, she visited the Sanyang Palace (700). On *guichou* day of the fifth month, [Wu Zhao] changed the era title to Jiushi, because she recovered from her illness. She also renounced the title of “Golden Wheel.” In the Dazu era, summer of the first year (701), fifth month, she toured the area around the Sanyang Palace, and in the seventh month, on *jiaxu* day, she personally visited it.

聖歷二年（二月）戊子，幸嵩山，過王子晉廟。丙申，幸緱山。丁酉，至自嵩山。三年正月造三陽宮于嵩山。夏四月戊申，幸三陽宮。五月癸丑，上以所疾康復，大赦天下，改元為久視，停金輪等尊號。大足元年夏五月，幸三陽宮。七月甲戌，至自三陽宮。⁸³

82 *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.124–5.

83 *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.128–30.

In recent years, a golden strip was found on the Junji 峻極 Peak of Mt. Song. It is 36.3 cm long and contains 63 characters of “double-hook 雙鉤” calligraphy, reading:

Submission: The Leader of the Great State of Zhou, Wu Zhao, is fond of the True Way, longevity, divinity, and immortals. She solemnly points to the doorway of the peak of Mt. Song and casts this metal object through it. She provides for the Three Offices and the Nine Precincts and removes the accusation levelled against Wu Qingkong 武晴空 (d. unknown). In the year of *Gengzi taisui* (third year of the Shengli era, 700), *jiashen*, the seventh month, on *jiayin*, the seventh day, this humble servant, Hu Chao 胡超 (d. unknown), bowed twice in subservience and reverently presented the report.

上言：大周國主武曌，好真道，長生神仙。謹指中嶽嵩高山門，投金簡一通，乞三官九府，除武晴空罪名。大歲庚子七匝（月）甲申朔七日甲寅小使忝（臣）胡超稽首再拜謹奏。⁸⁴

Gengzi taisui occurred during the third year of the Shengli era. During that time, Wu Zhao was infatuated with Daoist practices and ceased to use for herself the respected Buddhist title of “Golden Wheel” and utilized the *Daodejing*’s 道德經 idiom, *changsheng jiushi* 長生久視 (long life and far sight), as inspiration for the name of the Jiushi era. The *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 claims:

In the second year of Shengli, Wu Zhao had fallen ill and dispatched a secretary, Yan Chaoyin 閻朝隱 (d. unknown), to pray at Mt. Shaoshi. Chaoyin placed himself on the sacrificial altar, bathed, and prostrated himself over the stand which was used for cutting and presenting food at the sacrificial ceremony, in order to act as a sacrificial substitute for Wu Zhao’s own ailments.⁸⁵ After that, Chaoyin was heavily praised.

聖歷二年，后不豫，遣給事中閻朝隱禱少室山，朝隱身為犧牲，沐浴，伏俎上，請代太后命，太后厚賞之。⁸⁶

84 *Quan Tang wen xinbian*, part 1 vol. 2, 1125.

85 Note: To be clear, Yan performed the ritual so that his body could be a surrogate vessel for Wu Zhao’s ailments, thereby healing her. The ritual appeared to be successful, as Wu Zhao recovered, and so he was praised—at least by some.

86 *Zizhi tongjian*, 206.6539. See also *Jiu Tang shu*, 190B.5026.

Many laughed at him for his self-effacing attempt to flatter the empress. Wu Zhao was often ill in the final years of her reign, which caused her to embrace Daoism. It was no coincidence that she sought techniques to prolong her life.

In the *Xin Tang shu*, “Wu Sansi zhuan” 武三思傳 it says:

Xue [Huaiyi] and the two Zhangs (Zhang Yizhi 張易之 [d. 705] and Zhang Changzong 張昌宗 [d. 705]) were obscene and evil. Wu Sansi was bitter that he was demoted serve as Huaiyi's carriage driver, and so he proposed that Zhang Changzong was Prince Jin⁸⁷ reincarnated. He led high-ranking officials to sing obscene tunes, had a brazen appearance, and lacked any shame. The Empress was old and tired of the imperial palace, so Wu Sansi desired to peddle influence. Cajoling and coercing with the unworthy, he prompted the construction of the Sanyang Palace at Mt. Song and the Xingtai Palace at Mt. Wanshou before asking Wu Zhao to visit them each year. Wu Sansi, along with the two Zhangs, accompanied Wu Zhao, managing carriages for her. They abused others for the sake of their own private ends and benefits.

薛、二張方烝蠱，三思痛屈節，為懷義御馬，倡言昌宗為王子晉後身，引公卿歌咏淫汙，覷然如人而不恥也。后春秋高，厭居宮中，三思欲因此市權，誘脅羣不肖，即建營三陽宮於嵩山，興泰宮於萬壽山，請太后歲臨幸，己與二張扈侍馳騁，竊威福自私云。⁸⁸

The constructions at Mt. Song were nearly all the result of Wu Sansi's scheming. In the second year of Shengli, the Konghe Mansion 控鶴府 was established and Zhang Yizhi became its supervisor. In the first year of the Jiushi era, the Konghe Mansion was renamed to the Fengchen Mansion 奉宸府, remaining under the supervision of Yizhi. Yuan Banqian 員半千 (621–714) and his companions became the serving officers of the Fengchen Mansion, and all these flatterers claimed that Changzong was Prince Jin reincarnated. We should also note that the expression *konghe* 控鶴 (“riding the crane”) derives from narratives about immortals. Sun Deng's 孫登 (209–241) “Tiantai fu” 天台賦 says, “Wang Qiao (i.e., Prince Jin) rode a crane and soared through the Heavens 王喬控鶴以衝天.”⁸⁹ This is a term frequently used regarding alchemists in

87 Note: “Prince Jin” refers to the son of King Ling of Zhou (r. 571–545 BCE), who was later worshipped as a Daoist immortal. Wu Zhao believed her lover, Zhang Changzong, to be Prince Jin reincarnated.

88 *Xin Tang shu*, 206.5840.

89 *Wenxuan*, 11.499.

their pursuit of ascending to Heaven. The most important stone inscriptions from that period can be listed as follows:

- 1) Wansui Dengfeng, first year (696), first month, *Shengzhong shuzhi* Stele 升中述志碑 Wu Zhao personally composed it, and Emperor Ruizong of Tang 唐睿宗 (r. 684–690 and 710–712) recorded it, but it is no longer extant.
- 2) Wansui Dengfeng, first year, 12th month,⁹⁰ *Feng zhongyue* Stele 封中嶽碑. Xue Ji 薛稷 (649–713) wrote it in regular script. It can be seen in the *Jinshi lu*.
- 3) Wansui Dengfeng, first year, 12th month, *Fengsi tan* Stele 封祀壇碑. The Prince of Liang, i.e. Wu Sansi composed it, and Xue Yao 薛曜 (d. 704) made the inscription. It is in Dengfeng 登封 county, west of Wanyang Gang 萬羊岡. The lower part has been destroyed over time.
- 4) Shengli second year (699), sixth month, *Shengxian taizi* Stele 升仙太子碑. Its title reads, “The Great Zhou, Heaven-conferred Golden Wheel and August Empress personally crafted the contents of this stele 太周天冊金輪聖神皇帝御制御書.” It was created in the second year of Shengli, in *jihai*, the sixth month, on *jiashen* day. The reverse side of the stele has an inscription titled “Youxian Pian” 遊仙篇 which was also composed by the Empress. The calligraphy was written by Xue Yao and others of similar ranks and titles. Note that this is the same year that the *Panzun shi* Stone Tablet was erected, though the latter was created during the second month. The *Shengxian taizi* Stele is in Yanshi 偃師 county, about 6.2 miles south of the Xianjun Temple 仙君廟 on Mt. Goushi 緜氏山.
- 5) Jiushi, first year (700), fifth month, *Xiari you Shicong shi stele* 夏日遊石淙詩碑. It was composed by the Empress, and the calligraphy was written by Xue Yao. It is located on the northern cliff next to the Shicong 石淙 river.
- 6) Dazu, first year (701), fifth month, *Qiuri yan Shicong xu* 秋日宴石淙序. Gu Yanwu says that Zhang Yizhi composed it. It is located near a waterfall on the south side of Mt. Song.

The *Jiu Tang shu*, “Liyi zhi” says,

Emperor Gaozong completed the *feng* and *shan* ceremonies on Mt. Tai, and desired to do the same at all five of the sacred mountains. In the second year of the Yongchun era (683), during the seventh month, he issued

90 Note: The Wansui Dengfeng era only officially lasted for three months, so Jao is really talking about the 9th month of the Wansui Tiance era, which lasted for 17 months from 22 April 696–28 September 697.

an imperial edict saying that during the eleventh month of that lunar year, he would conduct the ceremonies at Mt. Song. He settled the details of the ceremony and thereupon discussed that the *feng* and *shan* sacrificial altars should be formed like a circular mound. Shortly thereafter, Gaozong fell ill and thereupon abrogated ritual. In the first year (695) of the Zhengsheng era, Wu Zetian went to Mt. Song. During the second year (696) of the Tiance Wansui era, twelfth month of the lunar year, on *jiashen* day, she desired to carry out the *feng* and *shan* ceremonies ... She ushered in the new era of Wansui Dengfeng. On the third day, *dinghai*, she worshiped Heaven and Earth at Mt. Shaoshi.

高宗既封泰山之後，又欲遍封五岳。……永淳二年七月，下詔將以其年十一月封禪於嵩岳，詳定儀注，於是議立封祀壇如圓丘之制。……尋屬高宗不豫，遂罷封禪之禮。則天證聖元年，將有事於嵩山。……至天冊萬歲二年臘月甲申，親行登封之禮。……改元萬歲登封。……三日丁亥，禪于少室山。⁹¹

Wu Zhao's *feng* and *shan* ceremonies at Mt. Song were based on Gaozong's unrealized ambitions, and she ended up following Gaozong's careful planning in the construction of the sacrificial altar structure and carrying out the ritual. The "Liyi zhi" records that after the ceremony was over, the *Shengzhong Shuzhi* Stele, with an inscription personally composed by Wu Zhao, was erected in the south-east corner of the sacrificial altar. The term *shengzhong* 升中, which means "rising from the center", is borrowed from the "Jin li" 覲禮 where it says: "to make sacrifices on the mountains by placing offerings on the raised mausoleums 祭山丘陵升,"⁹² and "honor the illustrious mountains raising from the center towards Heaven 因名山升中於天."⁹³ Mt. Song is located at the heart of China, and so the term in the stele's title, "*shengzhong*," was chosen for this reason. The stele thus expresses the will of the empress, which is something that was seldom observed before. From it, we can see Wu Zhao's harboring of great ambition. The *feng* and *shan* ceremonies planned by Gaozong were originally pursued at her behest and were eventually carried out by her years later, resulting in this stone tablet serving as a record of these events.

The *Jinshi lu* contains the *Daozang jing xu* Stele 道藏經序碑, composed by Gaozong and Wu Zhao. Wang Xuanhe 王懸河 (fl. 684) was responsible for the calligraphy in semi-cursive style. This occurred in the twelfth month of the

91 *Jiu Tang shu*, 23.889–91.

92 *Yili zhushu*, 27.616.

93 *Liji zhengyi*, 24.876.

first year of Hongdao 弘道 (683).⁹⁴ This famous preface to the *Daozang* clearly shows that she was always highly respectful of and reverent towards Daoism. Wu Zhao composed the *Shengxian Taizi Stele* 昇仙太子碑, and amidst its long text is written, “The standard of an assessor [of the ceremony] reverently set out an ornamental display, [I conduct] the ritual by sincerely performing the *yin* 禋 sacrifice for the ancestors 敬陳嚴配之典，用展禋宗之儀。”⁹⁵ This is indeed a reference to the ritual performed during the Dengfeng era. The *Jiu Tang shu*, “Liyi zhi” says,

On *dinghai* day, [Wu Zhao] worshiped the Heaven and Earth at Mt. Shaoshi. On *jichou* day, she gathered her ministers at the sacred altar ...⁹⁶ Wu Zetian believed that the day of the *feng* and *shan* ceremonies was blessed by the gods of Mt. Song and ordered that the title of King of Divine Ascendancy towards the Center of Heaven become Celestial Lord of Divine Ascendancy towards the Center of Heaven ... Prince Jin was also given the title of “Immortal Crown Prince.”

丁亥，禋于少室山。⁹⁷ 己丑，御朝覲壇，朝羣臣。……則天以封禪日為嵩岳神祇所祐，遂尊神岳天中王為神岳天中皇帝。……王子晉為昇仙太子。⁹⁸

Wang Chang 王昶 (1725–1806) said:

The ancestors of the Wu clan came from the Ji lineage that ruled the Zhou dynasty. Among the members of this lineage was Prince Jin who became revered for ascending to immortality. The stele says, “Phoenixes sing in the mountain, which is a good omen foretelling the receipt of the Mandate [of Heaven]. The Luo River brought forth a diagram, which is a sign foretelling the rise of the king.” This can be seen as evidence. The source of the claim that Zhang Changzong was Prince Jin reincarnated was Wu Sansi, and this claim was made only after the first year of the

94 *Liuyi zhi yi lu*, 63.20a, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 831: 484.

95 *Quan Tang wen*, 98.4a (1008).

96 Note that Wu Zhao had seen the *Qi mu miao* Stele writing by Cui Rong, commended it, and commanded Cui Rong to compose the *Chaojin tan* Stele 朝覲壇碑 by imperial edict. Wu Zhao conferred the title at the Mt. Song. Yuan Banqian 員半千 composed and presented the *Fengshan sitan* Stele 封禪四壇碑, which includes as many as twelve poems. See the *Jiu Tang shu*, “Wenyuan zhuan.”

97 *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.124–25.

98 *Jiu Tang shu*, 23.891.

Jiushi era (700–701). Therefore, it cannot be said that the construction of the temple was done considering the claim that Changzong was Prince Jin reincarnated.

武氏之先出自姬周，周家之昇化者有子晉，因而崇奉之。碑云：『山鳴鸞鸞，爰彰受命之祥，洛出圖書，式兆興王之運』，可證也。至于附會張昌宗事，以昌宗為王子晉後身，雖出武三思言，然為久視元年以後之事，升仙立廟不得謂因昌宗而作。⁹⁹

This is correct. The reverse side of the stele has an inscription, the “Youxian pian” that says:

The immortal heir was originally ... and was difficult to obtain. There were Holy signs, remarkable arts, and secretive and mysterious schemes. [Wu Zhao] desired ... cinnabar ... to bestow [upon her] a miracle elixir that would grant her the longevity required to oversee the magnificent Zhou dynasty well into the future.

仙儲本□諒難求，聖跡奇術秘玄猷，願□丹□賜靈藥，方期久視御隆周。¹⁰⁰

The desire for an elixir of long life captures Wu Zhao's mood at the time, which was substantially different from the period in which she gave herself the title of “Golden Wheel.” As a result, she later on used the term *jiushi* 久視 (“far sight”) as an era name. The preface of the poem “Xiari you shicong yuzhi shi bing xu” 夏日遊石淙御制詩並序 composed by Wu Zhao during the summer of the first year of the Jiushi era, contains the line, “The reclusive dwelling is unobstructed; the springs and rocks are not alone; it resembles the environment of Kunlang 幽栖無滯，泉石不孤，彷彿昆閬之境。”¹⁰¹ A total of sixteen people, including the crown prince, were ordered to collaborate in the production of such poems. Di Renjie wrote, “The old ministers formerly accompanied the empress to attend the banquet at Xianpu. In their final years, they would float with Master Red Pine 老臣預陪縣圃宴，餘年方共赤松遊。”¹⁰² All of them produced literature in honor of the immortals. We can see that in Wu Zhao's later

99 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 63.4a.

100 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 63.2b.

101 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 64.1a.

102 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 64.1a.

years, amid her tours and wanderings around Mt. Song, she was indeed infatuated with Daoism.

From Gaozong's ceremony on Mt. Tai and onward, the status of Mt. Tai dramatically increased. In both the sixth year (661) of the Xianqing 顯慶 era (656–661) and the third year (678) of the Yifeng 儀鳳 era (676–679), he conducted a memorial ceremony at the southeastern foot of Mt. Tai, at Daiyue Temple 岱岳觀 at Queen Mother Pond 王母池. We find later records of Daoist priests performing sacrificial ceremonies and erecting statues in the second year (691) of the Tianshou era, second year (697) of the Wansui Tongtian era, first year (698) of the Shengli era, second year (701) of the Jiushi era, and the first (701) and fourth years (704) of the Chang'an era. Until the time of the Jianzhong 建中 era (780–784) each generation inscribed records on the cliffs of the pond. Every second stele is covered with a stone lid to shut and fasten it. Their words are all written in four or five layers, and each layer has either one or two texts. For instance, an account from the fourth year of the Chang'an era (704) says:

A sacrifice was held, and a memorial was submitted to the emperor. Throw the bronze dragon and cast the jade annulus (into the legendary abode of immortals). By making use of the printed silk tailored according to Empress' birth year and other colorful decorative accessories, a stone statue of the celestial worthies was constructed and adorned with 10 decorations for Empress Wu ... A mural of celestial beings was painted and adorned with 13 decorations. We reverently wrote the *Benji Jing* and the ten scrolls of the *Duren Jing*, and it was hoped that such meritorious deeds and virtues could give blessings to the Empress.

設醮奏章，投龍薦璧，以本命鎮採物，奉為皇帝敬造石天尊皇上天尊一鋪十事口壁畫天尊一鋪十三事，敬寫《本際經》一部，《度人經》十卷，欲茲功德，奉福聖躬。¹⁰³

At this time, Wu Zhao's health was deteriorating, and so she commanded various Daoist priests to offer prayers in pursuit of longevity. Regarding the composition of the *Benji Jing* 本際經, fragments of a scroll from the work have been recovered from the Dunhuang caves. Many scraps from the time of Wu Zhao, which contain the era title of the Great Zhou period, are held in English and French archives.

103 *Liuyi zhiyi lu*, 89.20b, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 831: 890.

4 Wu Zhao and Nestorianism

At first, Wu Zhao had no connection to Nestorianism whatsoever. That being said, the epitaph for the Persian Tang dynasty official, Aluohan 阿羅憾 (615–710) says:

[Aluohan] summoned all the foreign lords for the Heaven-conforming Great Sage and August Empress to construct the Heavenly Pivot, along with the contribution made by the military at different levels, which are too numerous to be recounted all at once.

又為則天大聖皇后，召諸蕃王建造天樞。及諸軍立功，非其一也。¹⁰⁴

This occurred in the third year of the Changshou era (694), eighth month. In the fifth month of that year, the imperial reign title was changed to Yanzai 延載.¹⁰⁵

Recently, Mr. Luo Xianglin 羅香林 wrote an essay that investigates Aluohan's construction of the Heavenly Pivot on behalf of Empress Wu Zetian, which was included in the book, *Tang Yuan Erdai zhi Jingjiao* 唐元二代之景教.¹⁰⁶ He believes that the construction of the Heavenly Pivot was initiated by followers of Nestorianism.

The Tang dynasty acceptance of Persian missionaries into China had already begun during the time of Taizong's Zhen'guan 太宗貞觀 era (627–649), when the emperor allowed the Persian monk, Alopen (Aluoben 阿羅本, 7th century) to construct a monastery in the Yi'ning quarter 義寧坊 to house twenty-one monks.¹⁰⁷ This helped to promote the image that broad-mindedness constituted the founding spirit of the Tang dynasty and that its diverse people and religions were tolerated without exception in accordance with the will of Taizong. Another very important stone inscription regarding the Heavenly Pivot, which Mr. Luo had not cited, is the memorial inscription of Quan Xiancheng 泉獻誠 (651–692), which says, "In the second month of the second

¹⁰⁴ Duan Fang, *Tao zhai cang shi ji*, 21.9b, rpt. in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 905: 550.

¹⁰⁵ The *Jiu Tang shu* refers to the eighth month of this year (*Jiu Tang shu*, 6.124), while the *Xin Tang shu* claims it was in the fourth month of the first year (695) of the Zhengsheng era, the following year. See *Xin Tang shu*, 102.3980. It was completed around the time just following the Mingtang catastrophe, and the "Yaoshu zhuan" 姚壽傳 from the *Jiu Tang shu* attests to this.

¹⁰⁶ See also Luo Xianglin. "Jingjiaotu Aluohan deng wei Wu Zetian huanghou yingzao songde tianshu kao." *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, 1, no. 3 (1958): 13–22.

¹⁰⁷ *Tang huiyao*, 49.864. See also *Tang wen shiyi*, 1.3b, rpt. in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1651: 95.

year of the Tianshou era (691), he was commanded to take up the post of Inspector of the Heavenly Pivot and Come-as-sons commissioner 天授二年二月，奉敕充檢校天樞子來使。¹⁰⁸ Quan Xiancheng was the grandson of the Goryeo (i.e., Korean) general, Yeon Gaesomun (Gai Suwen 蓋蘇文, 603–666), son of Yeon Namsaeng (Quan Nansheng 泉男生, 634–679), who submitted to Tang rule during the time of Emperor Gaozong. The *Xin Tang shu* says, “Quan Xiancheng was appointed as Grand General of the Right Guard and Palace Guard during the Tianshou era 獻誠，天授中以右衛大將軍兼羽林衛。”¹⁰⁹ The title “come-as-sons commissioner 子來使” must have been a temporary post; “come-as-sons” refers to a ruler who wins the hearts and minds of his people so that his people love coming to their ruler just as children love approaching their parents. The construction of the Heavenly Pivot was to extol Wu Zhao’s deeds and virtue, and Wu Sansi led all non-Chinese subjects, all old and young alike, to work on it. At the time, Yaoshu 姚璿 (603–705), whose position was *nayan* 納言 (an official responsible for transmitting the ruler’s commands), was appointed to oversee the construction and to inscribe names of the myriad officials and the leaders of the four barbarian tribes on the pillar. Wu Sansi composed the inscription, while Wu Zhao personally wrote the heading of the inscription, saying, “The Heavenly Pivot extols the virtue of the Myriad States of the Great Zhou 大周萬國頌德天樞，”¹¹⁰ thereby demonstrating that all within the four seas near and far, as well as their respective schools of thought and religions, and all the people composed therein, were united with one heart and one mind to pay tribute to her. On the day the Heavenly Pivot was completed, the eastern Goryeo people all submitted to her, and even peoples as far to the west as those of the Roman Empire and Persia praised her and demonstrated their support. In this way, by assembling all the leading foreign tribes together to construct the Heavenly Pivot, she brought Buddhists and Nestorians alike under her rule. This affair was on par with the burial of Emperor Gaozong at Qianling 乾陵 in terms of having all the various leaders of the non-Chinese

108 Luo Zhenyu. *Tang dai haidong fanfa zhicun*, 19b. Also see Luo Zhenyu, *Hou Ding Wu Gao*, 45.

109 *Xin Tang shu*, 110.4124.

110 *Xin Tang shu*, 76.3483. The *Aluohan muzhi* is pictured in Luo Zhenyu, *Mangluo zhongmu yiyen*, B.4b–5a, in *Luo Xuetang xiansheng quanji*, series 7, vol. 11: 4090–91. See also Haneda Tōru 羽田亨, *Haneda Hakushi shigaku ronbunshū* 羽田博士史学論文集, Vol. B, 385. The *Quan Xiancheng muzhi* can also be seen in Luo Zhenyu, *Tangdai haidong fanfa zhicun*, 17a–23b. The Heavenly Pivot affair is also detailed in the *Taiping guangli* 太平廣記, 240.1850–51, which quoted *Da Tang xinyu* 大唐新語. See *Xu Tang shihua* 續唐詩話, under the entry of Li Xiulie 李休烈. The “Xiexue men” 諧謔門 entry in *Tangshi jishi* 唐詩紀事 and *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 are also worth consulting.

tribes come together to support it, and thus it cannot be attributed solely to Nestorians.

The *Shusheng ji* Stele 述聖記碑, which was composed by Wu Zhao and calligraphed by Zhongzong, recounts the sagacity and virtue of Gaozong. The stele was established in Qianling. Wang Chang, in his *Jinshi cuibian* 金石萃編 says:

Song Minqiu's "Chang'an zhi" says, "Qianling is located 5 *li* (about 1.5 miles) to the northwest of Fengtian county 奉天縣 (modern Liaoning), and has a blank slate presented by the Kingdom of Khotan, which is the stone stele that comes from Khotan mentioned in the *Laizhai jinshi kaolue* 來齋金石考略. The *Laizhai* also says, "This stele is full of gold fragments that illuminate the graveyard." According to the Song dynasty scholar Zhao Kai 趙楷 (1101–1130), the Qianling burial was supported by many people from the barbarian tribes, as Empress Wu desired a magnificent showing for future generations, and it is recorded that as many as 61 barbarian chiefs came to celebrate her. Each had a unique appearance, and so we can see the scope of Qianling at that time, which was very different from the usual state of affairs. It is fitting that this stone was full of gold fragments.

宋敏求《長安志》：乾陵在奉天縣西北五里，有于闐國所進無字碑，即《來齋金石考略》所稱碑石來自于闐者也。來齋又云：此碑填以金屬，照耀陵園。據宋趙楷記稱乾陵之葬，諸蕃來助者眾，武后欲張大誇示來世，於是錄其酋長六十一人，各有其形，可見當時乾陵規模，異乎常制。宜乎此碑之金屬照耀也。¹¹¹

A stone with its inscription titled "Shuzheng ji" 述政記 was erected before the graveyard, like a tombstone, resembling the stone inscription "Ruide ji" 睿德記 composed by Tang Gaozong and dedicated to Prince Li Hong 李弘 (652–675).

This affair resembled the act of engraving the Heavenly Pivot with the names of the leaders of the barbarian tribes. Wu Zhao's divinity and prestige was so great that she was able to govern over the myriad states as would a Khan.

5 Wu Zhao and the Mingtang

The *Jiu Tang shu*, "Zetian benji" says, "In the fourth year of the Chuigong era, Spring, second month (688), the Qianyuan Hall was destroyed, and in the very

¹¹¹ Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 60.3a.

same location, the Mingtang was constructed 四年春二月，毀乾元殿，就其地造明堂。”¹¹² The *Xin Tang shu*, “Wu hou zhuan” says, “[Wu Zhao] decreed that the Qianyuan Hall be destroyed and replaced with the Mingtang, with the Buddhist, Xue Huaiyi, serving as supervising director of the project 詔毀乾元殿為明堂，以浮屠薛懷義為使督作。”¹¹³ The Mingtang would later become the Tiantang. The *Jiu Tang shu* says, “After twelve months, [Wu Zhao] returned to the palace, and the Mingtang was completed 十二月還宮。明堂成。”¹¹⁴ The *Xin Tang shu* records the same thing, saying, “On *xinghai*, the Mingtang was renamed to the Wanxiang Spirit House 辛亥改明堂為萬象神宮。”¹¹⁵ “In the first month of the first year of the Zaichu era (690), the Divine Empress offered sacrifices to the Mingtang in person 載初元年春正月，神皇親享明堂。”¹¹⁶ For every spring that followed, Wu Zhao would personally offer sacrifices at the Mingtang. On *bingshen* day, first month of the first year of the Zhengsheng era (695), the Mingtang was destroyed in a fire. Regarding the construction of the Mingtang, from the Sui dynasty onward it was serially renovated, but Wu Zhao was the first to complete its construction. The *Sui shu* 隋書, “Yu Wenkai zhuan” 宇文愷傳, says:

From the Chaos of Yongjia 永嘉 (307–313) onward, the Mingtang was abandoned. When Sui possessed the empire, they tried to rebuild it. It was widely discussed and there were many different viewpoints, so no plan could be firmly settled. Yu Wenkai 宇文愷 (555–612) consulted many records and titles, and presented the *Mingtang yibiao*.

自永嘉之亂，明堂廢絕，隋有天下，將復古制，議者紛然，皆不能決。博考羣籍，奏明堂議表。¹¹⁷

The *Mingtang yibiao* 明堂議表 was both broad and very detailed. However, as the war in Liaodong broke out, the plan to resume Mingtang’s construction was again shelved. The *Jiu Tang shu* says:

In the third year of Linde era (668) under the Tang Emperor Gaozong, second month, *bingyin*, the construction of the Mingtang departed from the methods of previous dynasties. Since the Han and Wei dynasty periods,

¹¹² *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.118.

¹¹³ *Xin Tang shu*, 76.3479.

¹¹⁴ *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.118.

¹¹⁵ *Xin Tang shu*, 4.88.

¹¹⁶ *Xin Tang shu*, 6.120.

¹¹⁷ *Sui shu*, 68.1588.

there were wide-ranging and serious mistakes in the written transmission of instructions. To further augment the connection between ancient and modern, a revised shape for the temple must be constructed.

唐高宗麟德三年二月丙寅，以明堂制度歷代不同，漢、魏以還，彌更訛舛，遂增損古今，新制其圖。¹¹⁸

Thus, Gaozong already devised plans to construct a new version of the Mingtang. The *Jiu Tang shu*, "Liyi Zhi," is full of imperial orders laying out detailed directives for the construction of the temple.¹¹⁹ Moreover, it records that when Wu Zhao governed from the imperial throne, Ruists frequently requested her to complete the Mingtang.¹²⁰ Wu Zhao followed Gaozong's unfulfilled wish and went along with the Beimen 北門 scholars¹²¹ in developing and discussing its construction. She ultimately did not listen to the group's suggestions, and in the Spring of the third year of the Chuigong era (687), she destroyed the Qianyuan Hall in the eastern capital and used this area to construct the Mingtang. In the fifth month of the fourth year of the Chuigong era (688), the Mingtang was completed. It was 294 *chi* tall (about 321ft) and each side was about 300 *chi* (about 328ft) long. It was divided into three stories, with the upper level being designed in accordance with the 24 solar terms, the middle level being in accordance with the 12 celestial bodies, and the lower level resembling the four seasons. The Tiantang was constructed behind the Mingtang, and contained the sculpture of a Buddha that was more than 100 *chi* high (about 109 ft). Such was the scale of Wu Zhao's Mingtang.

The *Xin Tang shu*, "Liyue zhi" 禮樂志 says,

When during the reign of Gaozong, the era name was changed to Zongzhang 總章 (668–670), Wannian county was divided and part of it was renamed to Mingtang county in order to show strong determination to build the Mingtang. But there were many diverse opinions on this matter. Some believed a proper Mingtang to be five rooms, while others considered nine rooms to be appropriate, but Gaozong followed both suggestions, and used curtains to cover and separate them. He sent out an imperial edict to implement the system. The instructions became

118 *Jiu Tang shu*, 5.91.

119 *Jiu Tang shu*, 22.856–62.

120 *Jiu Tang shu*, 22.862. Yuan Banqian also composed the "Rituals of the Mingtang" in three volumes. See the *Jiu Tang shu*, "Wenyuan zhuan." See *Jiu Tang shu*, 190B.5015.

121 This refers to Yuan Wanqing's 元萬頃 (d. 690) faction.

increasingly absurd, including attempts to imitate a yellow octagonal jade badge, and the use of a crane's tailfeathers. Thus, the Mingtang could not be constructed. During the time of Wu Zetian, she began demolition of the Qianyuan Hall and used the area to set up the Mingtang. Later on, a fire destroyed it, but she reconstructed it soon after.

高宗時改元總章，分萬年置明堂縣，示欲必立之。而議者益紛然，或以為五室，或以為九室，而高宗依兩議，以帟幕為之。……乃下詔率意班其制度。至取象黃琮，上設鷗尾，其言益不經，而明堂亦不能立。至則天始毀東都乾元殿，以其地立明堂。……其後火焚之，既而又復立。¹²²

Gaozong had exhibited the utmost determination during the construction of the Mingtang, and during the Chang'an era when Wannian was subdivided, he established the two counties of Qianfeng 乾封 and Mingtang, with their corresponding offices being located in the capital city. Under Wu Zhao's reign, construction of the Mingtang precisely followed Gaozong's designs and was eventually completed. The *Tang Mingtangling Yu Dayou Stele* 唐明堂令于大猷碑 by Yu Dayou 于大猷 (643–699) is one of the extant inscriptions related to the construction of the Mingtang. It is located in the northern part of Sanyuan county 三原縣 in Shaanxi. Yu Dayou was the grandson of Yu Zhining 于志寧 (588–665) and the son of Yu Lizheng 于立政. The frontside of the stele reads, "Yea, verily Mingtang county magistrate Duke Yu of the Eastern Sea 其惟明堂縣令東海于公."¹²³ The back side reads, "In the second year (699) of the Shengli era, the appointment of the magistrate of the Mingtang county located in Yongzhou 雍州 was arranged 聖歷二年，制除雍州明堂縣令."¹²⁴ According to the "Dili zhi" of the *Xin Tang shu*, Mingtang county was disbanded and merged with Wannian county in the second year of the Chang'an era (702).¹²⁵ Yu Dayou was appointed as the magistrate of Mingtang county before Mingtang county was dissolved and merged with Wannian county. In the first year of the Zhengsheng era (695), first month, the Mingtang was reconstructed, and the era name was changed to Wansui Tongtian 萬歲通天. In the second year, fourth month (697), a catalog of nine *ding* 鼎 cauldrons was made, which were

122 *Xin Tang shu*, 13.338.

123 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 63.7a.

124 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 63.8b.

125 *Xin Tang shu*, 37.962. *Taiping huanyu ji* recorded the time as "the second year, sixth month", while the *Jiu Tang shu* recorded that Mingtang was disbanded in the third year. See *Taiping huanyu ji*, 25.521; *Jiu Tang shu*, 38.1396.

placed in the front of the main hall of the Mingtang. The *Xin Tang shu*, “Houfei zhuan” 后妃傳, says,

Huaiyi's favor was fading, and that of the imperial physician, Shen Nanqiu was increasing. Huaiyi fell into despair, and so he torched the Mingtang. Later on, the Mingtang became the Tongtian Palace and the creation of nine *ding* cauldrons was commissioned. Each was set up in its respective location and were arranged within the palace courtyard.

薛懷義寵稍衰，而御醫沈南璆進，懷義大望，因火明堂。……改明堂為通天宮，鑄九州鼎，各位其方，列廷中。¹²⁶

The *Tang huiyao*, says:

Empress Wu decided that the nine *ding* cauldrons should be painted, and Directorate for Imperial Manufactories Cao Yuankuo 曹元廓 (d. unknown) to design the decorations. Empress Wu personally composed the “Yeding” poem.

武后立九鼎，有圖畫，尚方署令曹元廓圖之。武后自制《曳鼎歌詞》。¹²⁷

The *Lidai minghua ji* says, “Empress Wu commanded that nine *ding* cauldrons be cast and that products from all over the empire be prepared. She ordered Cao Yuankuo to paint it and Zhong Shaojing 鍾紹京 (659–746) to write the calligraphy; it was hailed as a success at the time.”¹²⁸ The nine *ding* cauldrons of Wu Zhao are included within Mr. Feng's *Wenjian ji* 聞見記. They have a combined weight of 5,607,120,000 catties of bronze.¹²⁹ The Yuzhou 豫州 *ding* is the tallest measuring 18 *chi* (about 19 ft). (The others are 14 *chi* tall, or about 15 ft.) This is because the Yu prefecture was located at the center of the empire. On the whole, constructing the Mingtang and casting the nine *ding* cauldrons, all according to traditional ideas, were means of demonstrating her accomplishments and nothing else. Among Wu Zhao's literary works, the “Shicong shi” 石淙詩 was the most famous. The *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 contains more than forty poems composed by Wu Zhao, while the “Yinyue zhi” of the *Jiu*

126 *Xin Tang shu*, 76.3483–84.

127 *Tang huiyao*, 11.279–80.

128 Zhang Yanyuan, *Lidai minghua ji*, 9.182.

129 Feng Yan, *Fengshi wenjianji jiaozhu*, 4.35.

Tang shu contains “Da xiang haotian yuezhang” 大享昊天樂章 (12 poems), “Xiang Mingtang yuezhang” 享明堂樂章 (12 poems) and “Da xiang bailuo yuezhang” 大享拜洛樂章 (15 poems), half of which were written in honor of the Mingtang.¹³⁰

6 Wu Zhao's Works and Ruism

The *Jiu Tang shu* “Zetian huanghou benji” says,

The Empress once called together the scholars Zhou Simao 周思茂 (d. 688), Fan Lübing 范履冰 (d. 690), and Wei Jingye 衛敬業 (d. unknown) and commanded that they compose the following texts: *Xuanlan* and *Gujin neifan* (each of one hundred juan), *Qinggong jiyao* and *Shaoyang Zhengfan* (each thirty juan), *Weicheng dianxun*, *Fenglou xinjie*, *Xiaozhi*, and *Lienü zhuan* (each 20 juan), *Neigui yaolue* and *Yueshu yaolu* (each 10 juan), *Bailiao xinjie* and *Zhaoren benye* (each 5 juan), *Chengui* (2 juan), *Chuigong ge* (4 juan), and *Wenji* (120 juan). All of these were stored in the empress's private chambers.

太后嘗召文學之士周思茂、范履冰、衛敬業，令撰《玄覽》及《古今內範》各百卷，《青宮紀要》、《少陽政範》各三十卷，《維城典訓》、《鳳樓新誠》、《孝子》、《列女傳》各二十卷，《內範要略》、《樂書要錄》各十卷，《百僚新誠》、《兆人本業》各五卷，《臣軌》兩卷，《垂拱格》四卷，并文集一百二十卷，藏于秘閣。¹³¹

The Japanese work *Dongyu chuandeng lu* 東域傳燈錄 contains the *Zetian dasheng huanghou ji* 則天大聖皇后集 in 10 juan, and the single juan text, *Jinlun wansui ji* 金輪萬歲集.¹³²

The *Xin Tang shu*, “Wu hou ji” records that Gaozong in his final years shared the designation of “Sage” (*sheng* 聖) alongside Wu Zhao, reading as follows:

The Empress took over more often in the realm of statecraft and political affairs. A great gathering of Ru took place within the forbidden hall, wherein they composed the *Lienü zhuan*, *Chengui*, *Bailiao xinjie*, and the *Yue shu* which altogether exceeded a thousand pian.”

130 *Quan Tang shi*, 5.51–59. *Jiu Tang shu*, 30.1091–93, 1101–2, 1113–15.

131 *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.133.

132 *Taishō*, No. 2183, “Dongyu chuandeng lu,” 55: 1165.

后乃更為太平文治事，大集諸儒內禁殿，撰定列女傳、臣軌、百僚新誠、樂書等，大抵千餘篇。¹³³

We can see that Wu Zhao during Gaozong's final years was wholeheartedly interested in Ruism. Some of her original ideas can be found in her early works, which are identified in the "Jingji zhi" 經籍志 of the *Jiu Tang shu* and the "Yiwen zhi" 藝文志 of the *Xin Tang shu*. Therein, Wu Zhao's works appeared in the main categories, including the *zi* 子 ("masters") division and the *ji* 集 ("collections") division, among others, and many of her other Ruist works are not listed there.

Wu Zhao also composed the *Zihai* 字海 in 100 *juan*. The *Xin Tang shu* has a note that reads:

As for the scholars who composed Empress Wu's works, they included Yuan Wanqing 元萬頃 (d. 690) Fan Lübing, Miao Shenke 苗神客 (d. 690), Zhou Simao, Hu Chubin 胡楚賓 (d. unknown), and Wei Jingye.

凡武后所著書，皆元萬頃、范履冰、苗神客、周思茂、胡楚賓、衛敬業等撰。¹³⁴

We can note that these were all members of the so-called Beimen scholar group. The *Xin Tang shu*, "Wenyi" 文藝 contains a description of the episode, singling out Yuan Wanqing and Fan Lübing in particular:

Empress Wu advised Emperor Gaozong to summon Ru to the palace and to write compositions. Yuan Wanqing and the Left Scribe, Fan Lübing, as well as other scholars composed the *Lienü zhuan*, *Chengui*, *Bailiao xinjie*, and *Yueshu* etc., which altogether numbered in more than 9000 *pian*.

武后諷帝召諸儒論撰禁中，萬頃與左史范履冰等撰刊《列女傳》、《臣軌》、《百寮新誠》、《樂書》等九千餘篇。¹³⁵

Note that the aforementioned "more than 9000 *pian*" is written as "more than 1000 *pian*" in the "Hou zhuan" of the *Xin Tang shu* and 1000 *pian* indeed more likely to be correct.¹³⁶ Of the texts listed here, only the *Chengui* is still extant.

133 *Xin Tang shu*, 76.3476.

134 *Xin Tang shu*, 57.1450.

135 *Xin Tang shu*, 201.5744.

136 In the "Biography of Yuan Wanqing" recorded in the "Wenyuan" chapter of the *Jiu Tang shu*, we read *fan qian yu pian* 凡千餘篇 ("more than 1000 *pian* in total"), thereby showing

The *Tang huiyao* says, “In the second year of the Chuigong era, the Empress composed the *Bailiao xinjie* and the *Zhaoren benyeji* 垂拱二年，太后撰《百寮新誠》及《兆人本業記》。”¹³⁷ In the *Yuhai* 玉海, it says, “Empress Wu’s writings were all composed by Yuan Wanqing and others 凡武后書皆元萬頃等撰。”¹³⁸

Recently, a text was excavated from Dunhuang (P.5523), which was written during the time of Wu Zhao. Wang Zhongmin 王重民 has given it the title of “Tianxun” 天訓 but I suspect it is a passage taken from one of the 10 *juan* of the *Xunji zazai* 訓記雜載 authored by Wu Zhao.¹³⁹

From all this, we can see that Wu Zhao in the early stages of her political career was a firm believer of Ruism, and this is likely how she was able to win the general support of the scholars in her court.

7 The Significance of the Composition of the *Sanjiao zhuying* 三教珠英

The *Jiu Tang shu*, “Liyi zhi” reads as follows:

[In the first year of the Zaichu era (690)], Wu Zetian once again visited the Mingtang to proclaim the Three Doctrines. The court historian, Xing Wenwei 邢文偉 (d. 690) discussed the *Xiaojing* and was commanded to attend to court as an attendant alongside Daoist and Buddhist priests and debate their respective ideas.

則天又御明堂，大開三教。內史邢文偉講孝經，命侍臣及僧、道士等以次論議。¹⁴⁰

Other records indicate that at the beginning of Wu Zhao’s reign, an official discussion was held at the Mingtang between representatives of the Three Doctrines. The *Xin Tang shu*, “Zhang Changzong zhuan” 張昌宗傳 says,

[Wu Zhao] summoned Zhang Changzong 張昌宗 (d. 705) to submit a treatise to the Forbidden Hall, namely the *Sanjiao zhuying*, whose authors

that the character *jiu* 九 (“nine”) is a typo of *fan* 凡 (“in total”).

137 *Tang huiyao*, 36.657.

138 *Yuhai*, 129.7a (3: 2383).

139 The *Jiu Tang shu*, “Yiwenzhi” records Wu Zhao’s *Xunji zazai* in 10 *juan*. A note says that “Qinggong jiyao’, ‘Weicheng dianxun’, ‘Gujin neifan’, and ‘Neifan yaolie’ etc., were selected and collected to compile *Xunji zazai* 采《青宮紀要》、《維城典訓》、《古今內範》、《內範要略》等書為《雜載》云。” *Xin Tang shu*, 59.1513.

140 *Jiu Tang shu*, 22.864.

included Li Qiao 李嶠 (ca. 644–713), Song Zhiwen 宋之問 (ca. 656–712), Fu Jiamo 富嘉謨 (d. 706), Xu Yanbo 徐彥伯 (d. 714) and twenty-six lower ranking persons.

詔昌宗即禁中論著，引李嶠、張說、宋之問、富嘉謨、徐彥伯等二十有六人撰三教珠英。¹⁴¹

The *Ban tiao liu Fo Dao er jiao zhi* 頒條流佛道二教制 was issued in the first year of the first month of the Shengli era (698) and states the following:

The two schools of Buddhism and Daoism both are at home in goodness. Non-action and the Ultimate are both derived from the same origin. From now on, those who slander Daoism or Buddhism will be flogged, and will also be secularized if they are Buddhist monks or Daoist priests.

佛道二教，同歸於善，無為、究竟，皆是一宗。……自今僧及道士，敢毀謗佛道者，先決杖，即令還俗。¹⁴²

This directive treats Daoism and Buddhism as being of a single, unified school of thought, but it was only during the second year of the Jingyun 景雲 era (711) under Emperor Ruizong of Tang that Daoist and Buddhist priests became of commensurate ranks.

The *Tang huiyao* says:

In the first year of the Dazu era (701), on the twelfth day of the eleventh month, the Deputy Head of the Archival Bureau, Zhang Changzong, compiled the *Sanjiao zhuying*, which was 1300 *juan* in total, and submitted it [to Wu Zhao].

大足元年十一月十二日，麟臺監張昌宗。撰《三教珠英》一千三百卷成，上之。¹⁴³

A total of 28 people took part in producing the work,¹⁴⁴ and they eventually came to be known as the so-called “Zhuying scholars 珠英學士.” The Dunhuang

141 *Xin Tang shu*, 104.4014–15.

142 Song Minqiu comp. *Tang da zhaoling ji*, 113.587.

143 *Tang huiyao*, 36.657.

144 Note: Jao originally interpreted the number as 47 people based on the *si qi ren* 四七人 recorded in the *Tang huiyao*. However, in this context as in many other classical texts, the two number characters should be multiplied, in this case being 4 times 7 or 28 people.

fragment P.3771 from the Paris collection and fragment S.2714 from the British collection preserve 51 lines from the *Zhuying xueshi ji* 珠英學士集. The *Xin tang shu*, “Yi wen zhi” also says:

The *Zhuying xueshi ji* is 5 *juan*. Cui Rong 崔融 (653–706) compiled it, and Empress Wu ordered corrections to the *Sanjiao zhuying*. The scholars Li Qiao (Li Qiao), Zhang Shuo (Zhang Changzong), and others composed it.

《珠英學士集》五卷，崔融集武后時修《三教珠英》學士李嶠、張說等詩。

The *Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考 and *Jingji kao* 經籍考 both contain the 5 *juan Zhuying xueshi ji* by Cui Rong, which was still extant during the Yuan dynasty. The *Xin Tang shu*, “Wenyi,” “Li Shi zhuan” 李適傳 says, “Empress Wu corrected the *Sanjiao zhuying* text, employing Li Qiao and Zhang Changzong to lead the project 武后修三教珠英書，以李嶠、張昌宗為使。”¹⁴⁵ Moreover, in the “Fu Jiamo zhuan” 富嘉謨傳, it says, “Fu Jiamo prepared the *Sanjiao zhuying* along with Wu Shaowei 吳少微 (663–749), who was venerated as Wu Futi 與吳少微號「吳當體」。預修《三教珠英》。”¹⁴⁶ The *Xin Tang shu*, “Xu Yanbo zhuan” 徐彥伯傳 says, “Empress Wu composed the *Sanjiao zhuying*, selecting literary scholars from throughout the empire to work on it, but Xu Yanbo and Li Qiao ranked among the first 武后撰《三教珠英》，取文辭士，皆天下選，而彥伯、李嶠居首。”¹⁴⁷ Additionally, the “Zhu Jingze zhuan” 朱敬則傳 (also in the *Xin tang shu*) contains the following:

Zhang Yizhi assembled famous Ruists to compose the *Sanjiao zhuying*, and painted the portraits of Wu Sansi, Li Qiao, Su Weidao 蘇味道 (648–705), Li Jiongxiu 李迥秀 (663–712), and Wang Shaozong among others, totaling in 18 people. They also wanted to include Jingze but he declined to join them.

易之等集名儒撰《三教珠英》，又繪武三思、李嶠、蘇味道、李迥秀、王紹宗等十八人像以為圖，欲引敬則，固辭不與。¹⁴⁸

The *Sanjiao zhuying* is a brilliant and immense collection of 1300 *juan*. The *Tang huiyao* also records that 28 people took part in its creation, but only 26 of

145 *Xin Tang shu*, 202.5747.

146 *Xin Tang shu*, 202.5752.

147 *Xin Tang shu*, 114.4202.

148 *Xin Tang shu*, 115.4220.

them are considered the main architects.¹⁴⁹ Based on the reference in the title of the work to the *San jiao* 三教, the “Three Doctrines,” we can be sure that it was composed by drawing upon quotations from Ruist, Daoist, and Buddhist literature and poetry. Zhang Changzong was responsible for its compilation and used his thorough understanding of the Three Doctrines to complete it. We can therefore see that from beginning to end, Wu Zhao tended to mix the Three Doctrines together, not unlike Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty 梁武帝 (464–549). In this way, it makes sense that the book came to be named for the Three Doctrines. It's a pity that all editions of this work have been lost, as we have no way to assess its ideas and contents. Nevertheless, Wu Zhao's religious beliefs later in life became even more synthesized and multifaceted, and this monumental work is undoubtedly a great testament to that.

8 Stone Inscriptions Celebrating the Interregnum of Wu Zhao

During the Qing dynasty, some people were interested in the stone inscriptions from the interregnum of Wu Zhao, the most well-known documenter of such relics being Gu Yanwu. His *Jinshi wenzi ji* 金石文字記 records a number of steles related to Wu Zhao.¹⁵⁰ Gu's acumen and care for the items is clearly demonstrated in the 20 enlightening entries he includes, such as the *Tianhou yuzhi* Stele 天后御制石碑 from the second year of the Yongchun era (683), Wang Zhengjun's 王征君 (d. unknown) *Linzhong koushou* Stele 臨終口授碑 from the second year of the Chuigong era (686), and the *Shangqi duwei xiang jingrui* Stele 上騎都尉相景瑞碑.

Ye Changchi 葉昌熾 (1849–1917) in the *Yu shi* 語石 records his visit to the stone inscriptions from the interregnum as well, documenting no less than one hundred in all. Remote locations, cut off and isolated from culture and education, also contain stone inscriptions of dates whose calligraphy exactly matches that from the era of Wu Zhao.¹⁵¹ Ye visited Shaanxi during the late

149 *Tang huiyao*, 36.657.

150 “Tang Daiyueguan shuangbei” 唐岱嶽觀雙碑, “Da Zhou wushang Xiaoming Gao Huanghou beiming bingxu” 大周無上孝明高皇后碑銘並序. In Gu Yanwu, *Qiugu lu*, collected in *Gu Yanwu quanji*, 5: 527–35, 549–58. Additionally, the *Qiugu lu* 求古錄 contains the full text of both the *Daiyueguan shuangbei* 岱岳觀雙碑 and the *Dazhou wushang Xiaoming Gao Huanghou beiming* 大周無上孝明高皇后碑銘.

151 In western China, there is the *Zhuguo Ligongjiukan bei* 柱國李公舊龕碑 from Dunhuang, while in the south there is the *Zhicheng bei* 智城碑 at the Guangxi Shanglin Sanpan Ling 上林三畔嶺, which was composed by the Liaozhou provincial governor, Wei Jingbian 韋敬辨 (d. unknown). There is also the *Wang Renqiu bei* 王仁求碑 from Kunyang 昆陽 county of Yunnan province.

Qing dynasty and composed the *Binzhou shike lu* 邠州石刻錄, which contains records of stone inscriptions created during Wu Zhao's reign, numbering 14 in total. Moreover, Zhang Wei 張維 wrote the *Longyou shike lu* 隴右石刻錄, and Luo Shuyan 羅叔言 wrote the *Xichui shike lu* 西陲石刻錄, which contain three inscriptions from the relevant period and one from more recent times. Among them there are reengraved stone inscriptions such as the *Dayun si Stele* 大雲寺碑 at Wuwei 武威 city, the top line of which reads, “[This Stele] records the accomplishments and virtues at the old Buddhist monastery, Great Cloud Temple, located in the Liangzhou garrison 涼州衛大雲寺古剎功德碑,”¹⁵² surprisingly using the designation *wei* 衛 (“garrison”) that was common only during the Ming era.¹⁵³ Nowadays there are numerous unique memorial grave inscriptions that have been excavated, some of which are from the time of Wu Zhao and are recorded in the *Beiping tushuguan muzhi mu* 北平圖書館墓志目 as well as in Luo's work, both of which offer a general overview of these inscriptions. Among memorial inscriptions, those of the Zhang clan (particularly Zhang Jianzhi 張柬之; 625–706) are very important. The *Tang huiyao* says, “In the first year (695) of the *Zhengsheng* era, Zhang Yi 張漪 (d. unknown) passed the imperial examination 證聖元年張漪及第.”¹⁵⁴ Zhang Yi was the son of Zhang Jianzhi, which is detailed in the nine epitaphs of the Zhang family discovered in Xiangyang 襄陽.¹⁵⁵ The Crown Prince, Zhanghuai 章懷 (655–684), whose royal status was abrogated, died later in Bazhou 巴州, in the third month of the first year of Wu Zhao's *Sisheng* 嗣聖 era (684). The Prince of Shao 邵, i.e., Li Chongrun 李重潤 (682–701), and the husband of Princess Yongtai 永泰, i.e., Wu Yanji 武延基 (679–701; son of Chengsi 承嗣), were defamed by Zhang Yizhi and were ordered to kill themselves, which occurred during the ninth month of the first year of Wu Zhao's *Dazu* era (701). Over the past few years, the tomb of Zhanghuai, the tomb of Crown Prince Yide 懿德太子 (that is, Li Chongrun), and that of the Yongtai Princess have successively been unearthed, all three of which are subordinate to the tomb of the emperor. The tombs of Li Xian 李賢 (i.e., Zhanghuai) and his consort from the Fang clan each carry epitaphs. During the time of Wu Zhao, the practice of erecting stone burial tablets was restricted, as she ordered during the second year of the *Shengli* era (699) as follows: “Those among the village leaders who do not receive imperial

152 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 69.7b.

153 C.f., Zhang Wei, *Longyou jinshi lu*, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 17a (16:499).

154 *Tang huiyao*, 76.1387.

155 See Li Zonglian, “Xiangyang Zhangshi jiu muzhi ba” 襄陽張氏九墓志跋, in *Huaimin jingshe jinshi bawei* 懷岷精舍金石跋尾, 12a–13a. Luo Zhenyu has compiled a volume on these findings. See Luo Zhenyu, *Xiangyang zhongmu yiven* 襄陽冢墓遺文.

permission should not have any steles erected 州縣長吏非奉有敕旨，毋得擅立碑。¹⁵⁶ Thus, during the interregnum of Wu Zhao, steles in honor of benevolent governance became very scarce, and did not return until the middle Tang period when the practice began to flourish once again.

Historical records frequently mention the erection of steles and their corresponding inscriptions, yet hardly any of them recorded the inscriptions themselves. The Taiwan National Central Library collection includes an unpublished manuscript titled *Zhu shi bei ming lu* 諸史碑銘錄 composed by Lu Yapu 陸雅浦 from the Qing dynasty, though it only records portions of the *Jinshu* 晉書, “Yuanwei” 元魏 and of the *Xin jiu Wudai shi* 新舊五代史, which is disappointing. Because there are so few extant ancient steles, the bibliographical records of such steles are invaluable to historians and researchers.

Records of several steles from the area around Mt. Song during the time of Wu Zhao are found in the *Shuo Song* 說嵩 by Jing Rizhen 景日珍 (1661–1733), who was a native of Song during the reign of the Kangxi 康熙 emperor (1661–1722). Those that have not been mentioned here yet are listed as follows:

- 1) *Zhoufeng Zhongyue* Stele 周封中嶽碑, seen in Zheng Qiao's 鄭樵 (1104–1162) *Jinshi lue* 金石略. The calligraphy was by Li Dan 李旦 (662–716), the Prince of Xiang 相王.¹⁵⁷ Tu Long's 屠隆 (1543–1605) *Biantie jian* 辨帖箋 says, “Xue Ji was responsible for the calligraphy of the *Zhoufeng Zhongyue* Stele 《同封中岳碑》, 薛稷書.”¹⁵⁸
- 2) *Jiangchan* Stele 降禪碑. The *Songshan zhi* 嵩山志 says, “The *Dazhou jiangchan* Stele 大周降禪碑 was erected on the peak of Mt. Song and was composed by Li Qiao. Now it is lost 《大周降禪碑》, 立於嵩頂, 李嶠撰, 今亡.”
- 3) *Shi ji* 石記: Ouyang Xiu in his *Jigu lu* says, “At the place where Empress Wu paid homage to Heaven and Earth there is a stone inscription warning visitors of the Dragon Pool to never desecrate or laugh at the divine dragon 武后封禪處, 有《石記》, 戒人遊龍潭者, 勿妄語笑以黷神龍.”¹⁵⁹
- 4) *Chaojin tan ji* 朝覲壇記: The Empress commanded Cui Rong to erect this stele, but it has been lost, and its writings have also not been passed down.
- 5) *Zhongyue Ling Miao* Stele 中嶽靈廟碑, found in the Zhongyue Shrine 中岳廟. It says, “The Great Zhou Sage [Wu Zhao] commands ... dispatched the high priest of the Jintai Temple, Ma Yuanzhen 馬元貞 (d. unknown)

156 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 3, 104.1b.

157 Zheng Qiao, *Tong zhi*, 73.48b (374: 527).

158 Tu Long, *Kaopan yushi*, 1.19.

159 Ouyang xiu, *Jigu lu*, 8.12b, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 681: 114.

to visit the Five Mountains and the Four Rivers ... and to commemorate the achievements and virtue [of Wu Zhao] 大周聖命……遣金台觀主馬元貞往五嶽四瀆□□作功德。”¹⁶⁰

- 6) *You lin si* 幽林思 is a poem on a stone. Ouyang Xiu in the *Jinshi lu* says, “*You lin si*: It was established during the time of Empress Wu and was composed by a local of the Lushan Marshes named Han Tan 韓覃 (d. unknown) 《幽林思》, 武后時廬山林藪人韓覃撰。”¹⁶¹ Zheng Qiao in his *Tong zhi* says, “*You lin si*: it is a poem on Mt. Song composed by Han Tan 《幽林思》, 嵩山詩, 韓覃作。”¹⁶²

The above are supplementary notes for future studies.

Most of the important stone tablets of Wu Zhao's time had been destroyed both during and since the Tang and Song dynasties. The *Jiu Tang shu*, “Zetian ji” 則天紀 says, “[Wu Zhao] determined that the Luo River Goddess was the ‘Revealer of the Sage,’ promoted their rank to ‘Specially Advanced,’ and established a temple 封洛水神為顯聖, 加位特進, 並立廟。”¹⁶³ The *Xin Tang shu*, “Houfei zhuan” says:

[She] established a stone with an inscription on the left side of the altar of the Luo River which reads: “Manifestation of the Heaven-sent Sage Diagram.” Xuanzong, in the fifth year and fourth month of the Kaiyuan era (717), believed that Wu Zetian's establishments of the Luo River altar and stele, as well as the Shrine of the Marquise who Revealed the Sage, were based on lies fabricated by Tang Tongtai, who supposedly discovered the fake auspicious stone inscription. Xuanzong thereupon commanded to destroy them.

勒石洛壇左曰「天授聖圖之表」。¹⁶⁴ 及玄宗開元五年四月, 以則天拜洛受圖壇及碑文并顯聖侯廟, 初因唐同泰偽造瑞石文所建, 令即廢毀。¹⁶⁵

160 Lu Xinyuan, *Tang wen xushi*, 1.1a, rpt. in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1652: 294.

161 *Liyi zhi yi lu*, 88.1a (831: 863).

162 Zheng Qiao, *Tong zhi*, 73.28a (374: 517).

163 *Jiu Tang shu*, 6.119.

Note: Wu Zhao eventually “promoted” the Luo River Goddess to the rank of “Marquise who Revealed the Sage” due to the role of the Precious Diagram in securing her divine right to rule. See N. Harry Rothschild, *Emperor Wu Zhao*, 50–52.

164 *Xin Tang shu*, 76.3480.

165 *Jiu Tang shu*, 8.177. This item is also found in the *Jiu Tang shu* “Xuanzong ji.”

Other inscriptions such as the stele of Wu Shiyue 武士護 (577–635), (father of Wu Zhao) were deemed to have recorded achievements that were impossibly lofty for mere humans, and already during the Tang period, there were rumors that the character “Wu” had been wiped off of the stele.¹⁶⁶

Another stele, the *Shengzhong shuzhi* Stele, is recorded in the *Shuo Song* in a discussion of Wu Zhao's *Goushan* Stele 緱山碑. Quoting the *Xuanzheng zalu* 宣政雜錄, the stele is described as follows:

It was located at the foot of Mt. Song. In the middle of the Zhenghe era (ca. 1114), the governor of Henan requested that it be destroyed, and the emperor issued a command which granted his request. Now, the shattered pieces can be found in western Fudian, and some say they are authentic pieces of the stele.¹⁶⁷ The natives did not dare to relocate them. In year thirty-five of the Kangxi reign, (ca. 1696), the *bingwu* year, I travelled to the original place where the stele was erected, examined its form and structure, and discovered that it was similar to the *Ji shengde* Stele 紀聖德碑 of Songyang, as the height and general size of each were also similar. Its inscription was written using clerical script.

在嵩山下。政和中，河南尹上言請碎其碑，詔從之。今碎碑在府店西，或曰即《升中述志碑》，土人相誠不敢移動，予於康熙三十五年丙午歲，至碑所，觀其制度，與嵩陽《紀聖德碑》相類，其高大亦相仿，字為八分書。¹⁶⁸

Moreover, there is also Wu Zhao's *Shushengji* Stele 述聖紀碑, which Wu Zhao herself composed, and for which Zhongzong wrote the calligraphy in regular script. The stele was erected at Qianling, but it collapsed and broke into pieces during the Ming dynasty.¹⁶⁹ This inscription took seven large stone layers to complete and is commonly referred to as the *Qijie* Stele 七節碑. It has altogether 46 rows of 120 characters each, totaling 8000 characters. The stone itself

166 The stele was erected in the 12th month of the first year of the Chang'an era (702). Li Qiao composed it, and Li Dan did the calligraphy. Wu Zhao conferred Wu Shiyue the posthumous honorific of “Wushang Xiaoming Huangdi 無上孝明皇帝.” See Zhao Mingcheng, *Jinshi lu*, 25.7a, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 68i: 332.

167 This one was composed by Wu Zhao herself, and Li Dan wrote the calligraphy in regular script 正書.

168 Jing Rizhen, *Shuo Song*, 14.284. Wu Yi's 武億 *Yanshi Jinhi* 偃師金石 accords with this description. See Wu Yi, *Yanshi jinshi*, 4.1b, rpt. in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 913: 166.

169 Zhao Han, *Shimo juanhua*, 2.5a, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 683: 468.

came from Khotan and is full of gold fragments.¹⁷⁰ In 1957, the Shaanxi Cultural Collection completed a restoration of the stone, preserving its characters, and He Zicheng 賀梓城 published a detailed discussion of it.¹⁷¹ The *Shunling Stele* 順陵碑 was also destroyed during the Ming dynasty, but the stele's head characters read, "Peerless in filiality and clarity, the loftiest celestial Empress 無上孝明高皇后."¹⁷² The *Shimo juanhua* 石墨鐫華 says, "The stele fell down during the earthquake which happened in the *yimao* year during the reign of the Ming dynasty's Jiaping 嘉靖 emperor (1556). Its fragments were lost at the time when the county magistrate carried out a massive irrigation project at the river 碑已仆於乙卯之地震，而亡於縣令之修河."¹⁷³ Such are the disasters that befell the steles from the Zhou interregnum of Wu Zhao, constituting a tragic loss of Tang dynasty cultural history.¹⁷⁴

9 Concluding Remarks

Wu Zhao's personal conduct made it clear that she was exceptionally vigorous and was fond of grandiose displays. She attached great importance to auspicious happenings and prestige, e.g., to the *feng* and *shan* ceremonies, and greatly enjoyed altering her reign titles in a similar fashion to Emperor Wu of Han 漢武帝 (r. 141–87 BCE). She also invented many honorific titles (such as Sagely, Divine, and August Lord 聖神皇帝 and Golden Wheel who Vaulted over the Ancients 越古金輪)¹⁷⁵ and came up with a new calendar for her rule, placing

170 Lin Tong 林洞, *Lai zhai jinshi ke kaolue*, C.22b, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 684: 77.

171 He Zicheng 賀梓城, "Qianling Shu sheng ji bei he ta de xiancun wenzi" 乾陵《述聖記》碑和它的現存文字. *Wenwu* 文物 1961.3, 33–37.

172 Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, vol. 2, 64.7b.

173 Zhao Han, *Shimo juanhua*, 4.6b, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 683: 491.

174 Shaanxi sheng kaogu yanjiusuo, "Tang Shunling kanchaji", 34–39. Wu Sansi, *Shunling bei*.

175 Regarding the addition of her honorific title, see, *Feng shi wenjian ji* no. 4, which says:

Beyond the Qin and Han dynasties, the Son of Heaven was still called "Emperor" and wouldn't have a more lavished honorific title. [Empress Wu] Zetian in the 4th year of Chuigong (688) obtained an auspicious stone from the Luo River, with the writing on it, "The Holy Mother dwells among us; everlasting and prosperous will be the sovereign lineage." Thus, she gave the stone the title of "precious image." Ministers thereupon suggested an illustrious honorific title and requested Wu Zhao to confer upon herself the venerated title of "Holy Mother, Divine and August," later adding, "Maitreya, Sagely and Divine Emperor, Cakravartin of the Golden Wheel Transcending." Zetian ruled the empire as an Empress Dowager. She paid attention to the pleas of her ministers and was given a venerated title, from this point onward being known as the cause of such changes.

great importance on dates, very much like Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BCE–23 CE). She thereby combined the traits of both Emperor Wu and Wang Mang to craft a truly unique persona. The height of her talents in literature, calligraphy, and other forms of writing have been rarely surpassed even to this day.¹⁷⁶

On a personal level, she originally lacked any staunch religious beliefs other than considering herself to be divine. Later on, she compared herself to the Chakravartin King, the King of Kings, and thus, rather arrogantly, seized the title of Buddha for herself. In her early years she valued Ruism, but by the time she took the throne, she used Buddhist texts to fabricate prophecies from which she could politically benefit, although this plot was devised by Buddhist monks and Xue Huaiyi. Soon afterwards, the two words, “Golden Wheel,” were added to her title and served as the basis for chants in her honor. She had many illnesses during her later years, and so she shifted her focus towards those whose teachings related to extending one's life, regularly traversing Mt. Song and the Gou Mountain Range. When Wu Chengsi sought to be conferred the honor of crown prince, Wu Zhao declined, her heart remaining in the halls of Tang, and she instead handed the title to her son by Emperor Gaozong, Li Xian 李顯, who would go on to become Emperor Zhongzong of Tang. Wu Zhao committed herself to bringing Gaozong's unfulfilled wishes to fruition, including, for example, Gaozong's unfinished *feng* and *shan* ceremonies and the reconstruction of the Mingtang, as recorded in the inscription on the *Shusheng ji* Stele. Her *Shengzhong shuzhi* Stele, erected at the peak of Mt. Song, was regrettably destroyed during the Song period and in turn resulted in the loss of Wu Zhao's autobiography, which is a shame. Moreover, as for the many books written by Wu Zhao, such as the *Sanjiao zhuying*, all have been lost, and so it is unfortunately impossible to examine her ideas on the Three Doctrines. Wu Zhao's achievements are tremendous in scale, particularly the completion of the

秦漢以來，天子但稱皇帝，無別徽號。則天垂拱四年得瑞石于洛水，文曰：『聖母臨人，永昌帝業。』號其石為寶圖，於是羣臣上尊號，請稱『聖母神皇』，後稍加『慈氏越古天冊金輪聖神』等號……則天以女主臨朝，苟順臣子一時之請，受尊崇之號，自後因為故事 (Feng Yan, *Fengshi wenjianji jiaozhu*, 4.26).

176 Lu Jilu 陸繼輅 (1772–1834) from the Qing dynasty composed a poem “Wuhou zi shu yeyan shi moji” 武后自書夜宴詩墨跡 which says: “Glorious and long life with her majesty's sobriquet contains the sense of reaching the Heaven, what is the purpose of Heaven which bestows her long life. Considering the talents of discretion for administering the state's affairs, the small prince is indeed difficult to be entrusted with the throne 煌煌萬歲通天字，天假長年音何意，若論剖決萬機才，孱子誠難付神器。” That is indeed a very shrewd judgement. See Lu Jilu, *Chong baiyao zhai wenji*, 8.11a, rpt. in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, 1496: 628.

Mingtang, the completion of the *feng* and *shan* ceremonies, and the commissioning of the nine *ding* cauldrons (which followed the prescriptions of Ruist tradition). In this way, we cannot say that Wu Zhao's religious convictions were limited to a mere combination of Daoism and Buddhism. In her later years, she variously integrated the Three Doctrines (though often in accordance with her political interests), thereby indicating that she possessed a perspective that was truly vast and boundless.

PART 2

Daoist Studies



New Evidence on the Relationship between Daoism and Chu Customs: A New Understanding of Chu Culture

道教與楚俗關係新證——楚文化的新認識

1 Overview¹

Those who have studied the *Chuci* 楚辭 have always praised this “remarkable work both vigorous and refined 奇文鬱起” and “the many talents of the Chu people 楚人之多才.”² However, over the past couple of centuries, Chinese historians have grown skeptical of the received records from the ancient world. For the *Chuci* in particular, some scholars have wondered how such a gorgeous and moving literary work could have been produced by the inhabitants of the Xiang River 湘江 basin, which was at the time a remote land of savages and desolate streams. This is part of a broader trend in Chinese history, beginning with Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877–1927), wherein Chinese historians have tried to shrink the geographical distribution of ancient China as much as possible. Wang himself undertook his investigations into the Shang dynasty without going at all beyond the vicinity of the Yellow River. This kind of narrow-minded perspective has pervaded to this day and has led to even more needless assumptions that substantially underestimate early Chinese history. Nowadays, however, owing to the endless emergence of archaeological materials, we can be more confident in the transmitted ancient records, with recent discoveries geographically expanding the ancient Chinese world rather than shrinking it. Another example of a limited perspective comes from the early Qing author, Gu Donggao 顧棟高 (1679–1759), who writes in his *Chunqiu dashi biao* 春秋大事表 that, “the area of Chu during the Spring and Autumn period did not reach Hunan 春秋時楚地不到湖南論.”³ But of course, his conjecture has been

1 This article is based on a talk given in December of 1983 at the Fung Ping Shan Library of the University of Hong Kong for the “Golden Jubilee” academic forum, here revised and expanded to include the entirely new material on the “four-faced former ruler 四面先君.”

2 *Wenxin diaolong*, 45.

Note: Additionally, the latter idiom is often used in reference to Qu Yuan 屈原 (c. 340–278 BCE), the Chu statesman, poet, and putative author of the *Chuci*.

3 *Chunqiu Dashi Biao*, 555.

completely negated thanks to recent archaeological findings, including Shang dynasty artifacts discovered in Hunan and Hubei, and particularly those from the palaces at the Panlongcheng 盤龍城 site, in Huangpi 黃陂, Wuhan, Hubei province, which dates to the middle of the Shang period.⁴

We can thus utilize the phrase “Chu culture” to refer to an amalgamation of southern Chinese cultures. The ancient state of Chu absorbed many smaller states, with the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 recording, for example, that “Of the Ji clan domains to the north of the Han River, Chu absorbed all of them 漢陽諸姬，楚實兼之。”⁵ By absorbing the culture of the northern and central plains areas of China, as well as fusing together and augmenting the shamanistic religious and spiritual traditions of the peoples from various southern territories, Chu culture was able to form its own character, from which we can observe the grand and brilliant powers of imagination and creativity throughout the rich and abundant mythologies of the Chu territories—all of which is recorded within the *Chuci* anthology.

Additionally, based on newly excavated materials from the area of ancient Chu, we can understand even more about the cultural institutions of the different states of the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods, including their musical, divination, and calendrical practices. From the engravings on chimes and bells found at the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng 曾侯乙 (c. 433 BCE), we can recognize the names of the pitches utilized in Chu music, such as their use of *lüzhong* 呂鐘 instead of *huangzhong* 黃鐘 in their tonal system.⁶ Additionally, the six tones appear by four different names on each of the bells discovered in the tomb, thereby demonstrating that the tones of Chu constitute a system wholly distinct from that of the Zhou. The various engravings still recorded the musical systems of the Zhou 周, Zeng 曾, Qi 齊, and Jin 晉, but refer to the notes therein with different names. Additionally, one excavated

4 Gao Zhixi 高至喜 has written an article on this topic. See Gao Zhixi, “Shang wenhua buguo Changjiang bian,” 107–12.

5 *Zuozhuan*, 16.447.

6 Note: The *huangzhong* note was considered the fundamental note to which all other in a mode were tuned. In the case of the bells and chimes excavated from the tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng, the fundamental note was instead called *lüzhong*, and an entirely different set of mode names were used. This finding thereby represents an alternative to the Zhou musical system that is no less sophisticated. For a detailed discussion of these bells by Jao, see Chapter 6, “From Inscriptions on Bells Found in the Marquis Yi 乙 of Zeng’s Tomb, a Discussion of the Science of Bell Modes and Tunings in Ancient China 由曾侯鐘銘談古代的鐘律學,” of Volume 1 of this series, *Harmoniousness: Essays in Chinese Musicology*, translated by Colin Huehns. For a more recent discussion of these bells, see Scott Cook, “Technology in a New Key: Towards a Reexamination of Musical Theory and Practice in the Zeng Hou Yi 曾侯乙 Bells,” *T’oung Pao*, 106.3–4, 219–265.

text from Mawangdui 馬王堆, the “Tianwen qixiang zazhan” 天文氣象雜占, utilizes Chu astronomical and meteorological categories, and claims that a dozen or so states each possess different systems of naming cloud formations.⁷ Regarding the calendrical system, a Qin bamboo strip excavated from Yunmeng 雲夢, “Ri shu” 日書, contains a conversion table between Qin and Chu month names, the latter of which is also distinct from the twelve month names found in the *Erya* 爾雅. The *Shiji* 史記 “Taishi gong zixu” 太史公自序 says, “Qi, Chu, Qin, and Zhao each utilized its own customs regarding the [names of] days 齊、楚、秦、趙，為日者，各有俗所用.”⁸ Xu Shen 許慎 (d. 147 CE), in the *Shuowen* 說文, “Xu” 敘, says, “Their spoken language had different sounds, and their written words had different shapes 言語異聲，文字異形.”⁹ Indeed, we must also add that their music had different tones, and their stars and constellations yielded different divinations, among other such differences, all of which are confirmed by excavated materials.

Excavations from Mawangdui have also furnished us with new materials, such as a chapter titled “Zhao li” 昭力 found at the end of a hand-written version of the *Zhouyi*, as well as the lost ancient texts “Jing fa” 經法 and “Shi da jing” 十大經 appended to the front of the silk *Laozi* 老子 manuscript scrolls. The “Tianwen qixiang zazhan” also contains previously unknown chapters including “Ren shi” 任氏 and “Bei gong” 北宮. Some materials are also not yet public, while others have already been collated by scholars.

Based on these and other materials, we can safely say that Chu culture forms a complex amalgamation. However, if we want to conduct a careful analysis, we should simultaneously utilize both the newly discovered Chu materials as well as our knowledge of their general spirit. The most noteworthy developments from ancient Chu are those regarding metalworking and silk weaving techniques. An inventory from 1964 lists 186 Warring States grave sites in Changsha that produced 241 individual pieces of ironware of 30 different types. Among them are 31 steel swords, the longest of which is 106 cm. No wonder King

7 Note: The Mawangdui archaeological site was discovered in Changsha, Hunan province, which is located squarely in the territory of the ancient state of Chu. It consists primarily of two burial mounds containing the remains of three people: Marquis of Dai, Li Cang 利蒼 (d. 186 BCE), his wife, Xin Zhui 辛追 (d. 168 BCE), and a third person believed to be their son. The burials were conducted in accordance with Chu customs, utilizing, e.g., white clay along the outside of the caskets, which is significant because Chu as a political entity was destroyed by the state of Qin in 223 BCE, though their cultural practices persisted well into the Han period. For a general overview of the Mawangdui tomb sites, see David Buck, “Three Han Dynasty Tombs at Ma-Wang-Tui.”

8 *Shiji*, 130.3318.

9 *Shuowen jiezi*, 15A.2a (315).

Zhao of Qin 秦昭王 (325–251 BCE) exclaimed that, “The iron swords of Chu are indeed sharp 楚之鐵劍利.”¹⁰ The Mawangdui excavation has also revealed various kinds of dazzlingly patterned and uniquely textured silk ornaments of varying quality. Furthermore, they match their designations in the ancient records. Recently, both a woven silk-gauze garment decorated with an image of a tiger and an embroidered silk brocade decorated with an image of a rising phoenix were unearthed at Mashan 馬山, Jiangling county 江陵, Hubei province, both of which are incredibly detailed and have led to this tomb receiving the nickname of the “silk treasure-house 絲綢寶庫” of Chu.¹¹ Additionally, bronze casting in the state of Chu was exceedingly refined. For example, several great shank-mounted *nao* 鐃 bells were unearthed at Ningxiang 岳陽 and Yueyang 寧鄉, both in Hunan province, the largest of which weighing 154 kg, which was previously unattested in the North.¹² Other examples of Chu craftsmanship include bronze mirrors,¹³ opaque glass beads, and many other items.¹⁴

In this essay, I would like to focus on the overall spirit and essence of Chu culture, of which the *Chuci* is perhaps the most outstanding example, representing the pinnacle of Chu literary and artistic creativity. Owing to its mythological background and religious influences, it is furthermore a work by which Chu splendor can be known for eternity. But we can also notice the heights of Chu culture in the patterned lines and drawings found on various implements unearthed in Chu tombs. Silk paintings from Dashan 大山 in Chenjia 陳家 depict dragons and phoenixes and shamans.¹⁵ Some say the scene depicts the ascension of one's spirit to the heavens. Upon the lids of coffins unearthed at Mawangdui are funeral banners, at the top of which Heaven is depicted. The human world is in the middle, and below is the earthly realm. On the side, a dragon is depicted. All of this coincides with the Chu notion that “the [human] world narrates Heaven and Earth 世叙天地.”¹⁶ In 1973, a painting

10 *Shiji*, 79.2418.

11 For a discussion and photographs of the silk items uncovered at this site, see Teng Rensheng, “Jiangling faxian Zhanguo sichou baoku: Mashan zhuanwa chang yihao Chumu fajue jianji,” 10–11.

12 Note: For a comprehensive discussion of related excavated artifacts from southern China, including *nao* bells, see Gao Zhixi, “Shang and Zhou Period Bronze Musical Instruments from Southern China.”

13 470 bronze mirrors were unearthed from a Changsha Chu tomb excavation, with some saying that a quarter of all relics unearthed at Chu tomb are bronze mirrors.

14 Several representative photographs and explanations appear in Hunan sheng bowuguan ed., *Hunan sheng bowuguan*. The directors of the museum have also provided specialized lectures on such topics that I will not rehearse here.

15 The dragon is of the two-legged type, not the one-legged Kui 夔 of Chinese mythology.

16 *Guoyu jijie*, 516.

in Changsha was unearthed with a depiction of a celestial being wearing a high crown and holding a sword while riding a dragon atop the clouds, which attests to the description of consciousness ascending to immortality as “riding a flying dragon 駕飛龍” found in the *Chuci*.¹⁷ The tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng contains a painting upon a lacquer coffin containing scenes of the official combatants called *fangxiangshi* 方相氏 holding spears and expelling a pestilence. Depicted also are various spirits and demons: the *yuren* 羽人, whose spirits rise up to the immortals of Heaven, *yuqiang* 禺疆, which is a celestial being depicted with a human head, a bird’s body, and adorned with snakes, and *tubo* 土伯, a warden of hell, depicted with horns, and a bald eagle pecking at a serpent.¹⁸ A dance accompanied by drums is also depicted along with the ten suns that rose side-by-side. In Wangshan 望山, Jiangling county, patterned wood carvings on painted pedestals have been unearthed containing the shape of a bird pecking a snake. All these examples accord with the mythology of the *Chuci*.

Additionally, a decorated wooden *qin* instrument with ten strings was unearthed from a Warring States tomb in Wulipai 五里牌, Changsha. On its front side, we find depictions of 12 birds in flight (symbolizing the twelve tones), while on the reverse are people surrounded by two snakes. It is said that this is a depiction of the Xia sovereign Qi 啟 initiating his communication with the Heavens by means of his instrument.¹⁹ Prior generations have said that the *Chuci*, “uses clouds and dragons as metaphors to discuss wild and strange topics 託雲龍，說迂怪,” believing that the text is, “inflated to an incredible extent 夸誕.”²⁰ But now, all of its mythological contents can be seen clearly to accord with the designs and images on the implements from Chu period tombs, thereby providing strong reason to take the mythology of the *Chuci* as a sincere expression of the Chu people’s faculty of imagination and artistic accomplishments.

The foregoing discussion shows that strange and obscure gods and ghosts pervade the thoughts of the Chu people, rendering all their works full of incredible charm. Western scholars have often utilized interpretations of the *Chuci* that emphasized its shamanistic elements, but although it has a deep connection with witchcraft, from a broader perspective, the Chu people have their own religious consciousness that is very closely related to shamanism. We can see this based on the various documents unearthed in Mawangdui, including both the A and B editions of *Laozi* and other lost texts such as the “Shi

17 *Chuci buzhu*, 1.29 and 2.60.

18 See Gujin zhu *jiaojian*.

19 *Shanghai jing jianshu*, 16.289.

20 *Wenxin diaolong zhu*, 1.46–47.

da jing”, which is representative of the Huang-Lao School 黃老學 of the late Warring States period. Naturally, these are clearly Daoist works, but other bamboo annals, such as “Ri shu”, “Xingde” 刑德, “Daoyin tu” 導引圖, “Quegu shiqi (jing)” 卻穀食氣 (經), “Yangsheng fang” 養生方, and “Wushi'er bingfang” 五十二病方 touch on the arcane arts of divination, necromancy, astrology, and other related techniques also recorded in the “Yiwen zhi” 藝文志 of the *Han shu* 漢書. The contents of these manuscripts correspond with the most important parts of the *Daozang* 道藏, which was compiled much later.

The Chu people held deep faith in shamans and ghosts, such as a belief in the “Yellow Deity 黃神” and the efficacy of reciting incantations and performing the “Yu steps 禹步”²¹ to cure illnesses. For example, a rectangular *ding* 鼎 cauldron excavated in Ningxiang is decorated with human faces on its four sides, believed to depict Huangdi 黃帝, the “Yellow Emperor.” If this interpretation is correct, then it may be that the Huang-Lao school of thought had deep roots in the state of Chu that trace as far back as the Shang dynasty. One unique combination of new and old material appears in the silk manuscript, “Wushi'er bingfang” from the Eastern Han period, which recounts how the “Three Zhangs”²² established the “Way of Ghosts 鬼道” and prayed for their patients’ illnesses to be cured, which was a common practice in the Chu area during Qin and Han times. The Northern Zhou mathematician, Zhen Luan 甄鸞 (535–566 CE), chastised the Three Zhangs for their practice of “fabricating the Red Seal of the Yellow Deity 造黃神赤章” to kill demons.²³ However, based on the “Wushi'er bingfang,” we can say with confidence that the so-called “Yellow Deity” was not a recent fabrication by the Three Zhangs but rather had distant origins based in the shamanistic practices of the state of Chu. Likewise, many names and titles of other medicinal practices were inspired by them, including those used in communing with ghosts. Additionally, all kinds of

21 Note: The “Yu steps” is a kind of footwork movement utilized by shamans to promote wellness and even cure illness. Though the practice has been most commonly associated with the Daoist tradition, Jao’s point in this article is that its roots predate its Daoist appropriation and extend far back into ancient Chu culture. See the detailed discussion in section 2.

22 Note: The “Three Zhangs” refers to the first three generations of the Celestial Masters, Zhang Ling 張陵 (34–156 CE), Zhang Heng 張衡 (78–139 CE) and Zhang Lu 張魯 (d. 216 CE). For a helpful discussion of the legacy of the Three Zhangs in Daoism, see Livia Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao*, 51 N15, 109, and 115.

23 Livia Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao*, 115.

Note: The use of the Yellow Deity seal to ward off demons is attested in several Daoist texts including the *Baopuzi* 包朴子, as well as second century tomb inscriptions. Jao’s point is that the practice, or at least the The Yellow Deity symbolism, has much more ancient roots. See Livia Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao*, 115.

materials have been unearthed in Mawangdui relating to the propagation of sexual practices and maintaining one's health, which later became core Daoist practices. Although at the time, no school of thought claimed the title "Daoist," the practices persisted nonetheless, as they were in fact commonly used at the time and recorded in texts that even appeared as funerary objects in tombs. As a result, we can observe that during the Qin and Han periods, in the Huang-Lao school, theory and practice would come together and intermingle. The theory side of things would come to be known in intellectual history as (philosophical) "Daoist School 道家," while the practice side of things would come to be known as (religious) "Daoism 道教." Originally, they were closely coordinated with one another and concurrently developed over time. The establishment of religious Daoism is usually considered to be a result of the efforts of the Three Zhangs, but as the new archaeological materials presently tell us, the "Way of Ghosts" from the "Wushi'er bingfang" may represent a sort of precursor to it. The shamans of Chu culture were formerly only understood in a broad and vague sense, but, owing to newly excavated materials, we now know how their spiritual practices were intimately related with their medicinal practice and knowledge. In fact, we can improve our understanding of both the shamans and physicians of Chu culture based on concrete excavated materials. These materials in turn advance our knowledge of the particulars of Chu culture as well as the formation of religious Daoism, with which Chu shamans and witch doctors share a close relationship. In what follows, I will point out several examples to this effect. Whether or not my analyses are correct is a matter that I hope all experts will be able to comment upon.

2 Subdivided Discussions

1) A study of the Former King with Four Faces, the Yellow Ancestor with Four Faces, and the Yellow Deity.

In *Wenwu* 1984, No. 5, the Luoyang Museum of Ancient Art published the "Luoyang Wei Tang zaixiangbei zhishuo," 洛陽魏唐造像碑摭說 which offers an outline of an extremely important writing from religious history:

In modern Yao county, Shaanxi province, there is a stone inscription that reads in various places as follows: "In the second year of the Kaihuang 開皇 era (581–600), fourth month, the Buddhist and Daoist practitioner, Fan Kuang 范匡 (d. unknown) reverently established this stele to the Old Ruler, one piece in number." "In the sixth year of Kaihuang, first month, thirtieth day, it was established. The Daoist, Yuan Shen 袁神 reverently

established a portrait of a celestial worthy, one piece in number.” “In the eighth year of Kaihuang ... the Municipal Ruler of Transformation, [established] by the Kaifu-on-par-with-the Three Ducal Ministers, the Viscount of Fengqiu county, Xiahou Jin 夏侯董 (d. unknown).”²⁴ “In the eighth year of Kaihuang, the Daoist, Xu Jinghui 徐景暉, established a four-faced image as a memorial to his mother, one piece in number.” “In the nineteenth year of Kaihuang, second month, eighth day, the Daoist practitioner, Liu Zida 劉子達 reverently established the sculpture of the Former Ruler with Four Faces as a memorial to his late younger brother Ziyue 子嶽, one piece in number.”

The stele refers to a “Daoist and Buddhist practitioner,” “Daoist practitioner,” “Municipal Ruler of Transformation,” “portrait of the Celestial Worthy,” “stele to the Old Ruler,” and the “Former Ruler with Four Faces”—these and “the Daoist practitioner” and “Daoist Lady of the Royal Palace” from the inscription of the Northern Qi statue are all references to religious Daoism. This shows that from the time of the Northern Qi to the Sui dynasties, and within the area from Luoyang to Yao county, following the intermingling of Daoism and Buddhism, the style of stone memorials also blended to create something different from the easily identifiable Northern Wei style.

今陝西耀縣石刻中有「開皇二年四月佛道民范匡謹敬造石老君一區」、「開皇六年正月卅日造，道民袁神蔭敬造天尊像一區」、「開皇八年……大都化主、開府儀同三司、封丘縣開國子夏侯董口」、「開皇八年道民徐景暉為母造四面像一區」、「開皇十九年二月八日，道民劉子達為亡弟子嶽敬造四面先君一區」。其中「佛道民」、「道民」、「大都化主」，和「天尊像」、「石老君」、「四面先君」與北齊造像碑「道民大都宮主」都是道家的稱呼。說明北齊至隋，從洛陽到耀縣等地，隨著佛道合流，造像風格也混合在一起，不像北魏那樣易于區分了。……²⁵

24 Note: This translation follows the cited article and Prof. Jao's interpretation that the term *Dadu huazhu* 大都化主 alludes to Laozi who was depicted on the stele. *Huazhu* 化主, the “Ruler of Transformation,” was indeed a term used to describe both the Buddha and Laozi. In this case, however, *Dadu huazhu* is more likely to designate the position that the sponsor of the stele, Xiahou Jin, inhabited within the Buddhist commune of his county, i.e. that of a Great Provincial Exhortation Patron, see Hao Chunwen, “Dunhuang Non-governmental Organisations Specialising in Undertaking Buddhist Activities and Their Relationship with Buddhism,” 122.

25 Luoyang gudai yishuguan, “Luoyang Wei Tang zaoxiangbei zhishuo,” 53.

That in one case a “Daoist practitioner” is referred to as “Buddhist and Daoist practitioner,” shows that Daoism and Buddhism merged together for some people. We can also note the terms “Image of the Four Faces” and “Former Ruler with Four Faces,” and I suspect the “Former Ruler” is a simplified form of “Old Ruler” (i.e., Laozi). In the Northern dynasties, people customarily used the character *lao* 尠 to write *lao* 老 (“old”). The *Yanshi jiaxun* 顏氏家訓, “Za yi” 雜藝 chapter says, “The former people were old (*lao*) 先人為老,”²⁶ while on the *Zhang Menglong Stele* 張猛龍碑, *lao* 尠 is written *lao* 老. And according to Li Xiang 李詳 (1858–1931), the statue of Jiang Zuan 姜纂 of the Northern Qi dynasty writes *lao jun* 尠君 for *lao jun* 老君. Another possible connection is that the character *lao* 尠, by omitting the component *ren* 人 will become the character *xian* 先 (former). In any case, the “Former Ruler with Four Faces” is a reference to the “Old Ruler with Four Faces,” and the “Stele to the Old Ruler” similarly refers to the patriarch of religious Daoism, Laozi, the “Municipal Ruler of Transformation,” and so on. But how did Laozi, the Old Ruler, come to have four faces? In fact, this motif comes from the folklore about the “four-faced Yellow Emperor 黃帝四面.” In the Mawangdui silk manuscripts, the Yellow Emperor is sometimes referred to as the “Yellow Ancestor 黃宗,” and later peoples would further revise his title to “Yellow Deity.” Religious Daoists followed along and would use the seal of the Yellow Deity to dispel ghosts and demons. A detailed explanation follows.

Four-faced Yellow Ancestor 黃宗四面: Ancient texts refer to folklore of the four-faced Yellow Emperor. The *Shizi* 尸子 records Zigong 子貢 (520–456 BCE) as asking, “In ancient times, the Yellow Emperor had four faces—is it true? 《尸子》：「子貢曰：古者黃帝四面，信乎？」”²⁷

The Mawangdui silk text, “Shi da jing” says:

Formerly, the Yellow Ancestor regarded substance as the beginning of all things and treated integrity as a virtue, and so he took his own appearance as the model [of the myriad things]. He had four faces. Diverging from a single heart, they spread in all four directions. Forming a triad, including those on both the verso and the recto, and both the left and the right, he ascended to the throne and saluted the three directions according to ritual propriety, and can therefore be considered the ancestor of all under Heaven.

26 *Yanshi jiaxun jijie*, 7.695.

27 *Taiping yulan*, 79.6a (369).

昔者黃宗質始好信，作自為象（像），方四面，傳一心，四達自中，前參（三）後參，左參右參。踐立（位）履參，是以能為天下宗。（《立命篇》）²⁸

This writing contains clear proof that the Yellow Emperor was portrayed with four faces. It refers to the Yellow Emperor as The Yellow Ancestor and is derived from the Huang-Lao tradition of the Chu people.

A Shang dynasty rectangular *ding* cast has been excavated from the Huangcai 黃材 area of Ningxiang county, Hunan, containing likenesses of human faces on its four sides with a kind and amicable look about them. I consider this artifact to contain the likeness of the four-faced Yellow Ancestor. Shang dynasty divination inscriptions contain the terms “Yellow Overseer 黃尹,” “Yellow Ancestor,” as well as the phrase “Yellow *shi*” 黃 𠄎 such as in the following two instances:

The King, prognosticating, said: ... [he has] received protection by the Yellow *shi*.

王 𠄎 曰 …… 其 術 於 黃 𠄎²⁹

The King, prognosticating, said: ... his ... Yellow *shi*.

（王） 𠄎 曰 𠄎 𠄎 其 …… 黃 𠄎³⁰

The term “Yellow Overseer” most likely refers to the assistant of the Yellow Ancestor and is therefore the target of the sacrifice. The “Feng shan shu” 封禪書 claims that “The Yellow Emperor created three precious *ding* cauldrons, representing Heaven, Earth, and Humanity 黃帝作寶鼎三，象天、地、人。”³¹ It also claims that the Yellow Emperor, “cast the *ding* at the foot of Mt. Jing 鑄鼎於荆山下。”³² Mt. Jing is the birthplace of the Chu people, and thus, according to ancient legends, the Yellow Emperor commissioned the *ding* within the bounds of the Chu territory. This implement contains a two-character engraving reading *da he* 大禾 on the inside of the *ding* near the rim, which indicates a “year of reaping of great harvests 大受年.” The auspicious term *da you nian*

28 Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng, 4: 151.

29 Yinxi shuqi xubian, 5, 9, 2.

30 Zhanhou Jing Jin xinhuo jiagu ji, 639.

31 Shiji, 28.1392.

32 Shiji, 28.1394.

大有年 (“having great harvests”) is related to the later term *da he* 大和 that arose from it. The *Zhouyi* 周易, “Qian gua” 乾卦 divination says, “Protect the unity and great harmony—only then are there favorable divinations 保合大和，乃利貞.”³³ Ma Chengyuan 馬承源 reads the phrase from right to left instead as *he da* 禾大 and believes that the character *he* 禾 refers to the name of a state. Bronze inscriptions and oracle bone inscriptions resemble one another, and both readings, from left to right and that from right to left, are possible. The inscription on the Luanshu *fou* 欒書缶 is read from left to right, and this reading approach is the same as the abovementioned instance of *da he*, which is also read from left to right.³⁴ *He* 禾 is also a loan-word for *he* 和, such as that seen in an excavated jade *huang* 璜 ornament from Jincun 金村, which reads, “When there is a change above, there is stirring below; such is the mutual unity of the harmoniousness 上變下動，相龢禾同.” Here, *he tong* 禾同 is the same as *he tong* 和同.³⁵ Bronze bell inscriptions often contain the term *he zhong* 禾鐘, such as the Zhugong X *zhong* 邾公鉦鐘³⁶ and the Liu *bo* 留罇.³⁷ This would indicate that *he* 禾 is a loan-word for both *he* 和 and *he* 龢, and there are numerous other examples. Therefore, *da he* 大禾 in this instance should be read as *da he* 大和 or *da he* 大龢. The Yueshanpu 月山鋪 site at Ningxiang has produced a 58.5cm tall “four goat square *zun* 四羊方尊” indicating auspiciousness. This specimen along with the *ding* cauldron are immense instruments. Shang dynasty culture was deep in the territory to the south of the Xiang River, and people venerated the legend of the Yellow Emperor’s four faces as we can see in the *ding* cauldron. In this way, based

33 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 1.10.

34 Bronze inscriptions are often read from left to right, such as the Marquis of Yu *hu* 虞侯壺 (Shaanxi Province Museum):

In the royal second month, first quarter, on *renxu* day, Marquis Zheng of Yu made this precious *hu*.

May his children and grandchildren eternally treasure and use it for ten thousand years.

佳王二月初吉壬戌虞侯政乍寶壺其萬年子孫永寶用

There is also the *pen* 盆 (“lid”) of Deng Zizhong 鄧子仲盆蓋 (Hunan Province Museum):

In the eighth month, in the first quarter of the month, on *dinghai* day, Deng Zizhong selected his precious bronze in order to make this *pen*. Seeking grand longevity without end, may his sons and grandsons treasure and use this forever.

佳八月初吉丁亥鄧子仲擇其吉金自乍繆盆其眉壽無疆子孫永寶用之。

Other such implements include the Zhuang *fu yi* 卣父匜 (unearthed in Zhijiang county 枝江縣), and the Zeng Ziyuan *yi gai* 曾子原彝蓋 (unearthed at Lianyuzui 鱧魚咀 in Sui County 隨縣). Each of these is read from left to right.

35 Qiu Xigui, “Zhangguo yuhuang ming kaoshi,” 90.

36 *Jicheng*, 102. *Jicheng* is the abbreviation of *Yin Zhou jinwen jicheng* 殷周金文集成.

37 *Jicheng*, 15.

on the *ding* cauldron, we can be certain that the Yellow Emperor mythology within Huang-Lao thought originated in Chu, and from the *ding* we can be sure that the mythology can be traced back to remote antiquity in the Shang dynasty. The Yellow Ancestor later became the Yellow Deity, as I will go on to explain below.

The Yellow Deity 黃神:³⁸ In Yongzhou 永州 during the Tang dynasty, there was a Yellow Deity Shrine. Liu Zongyuan 柳宗元 (773–819 CE) in “You Huangxi ji” 游黃溪記 says, “From Dongtun village they walked six hundred steps to arrive at the Yellow Deity Shrine 由東屯南行六百步，至黃神祠。”³⁹ “In the beginning, when the Yellow Deity was a mortal, he resided at this location. The received tradition states, ‘The surname of the Yellow Deity is Wang.’ 始黃神為人時，居其地。傳者曰：黃神王姓。”⁴⁰ “Formerly, Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BCE–23 CE) said, ‘I am a descendent of the Yellow Emperor and Shun of Yu.’ Therefore, he named his daughter Princess Huanghuang 始莽嘗曰：予黃虞之後也；故號其女曰黃皇室主。”⁴¹ This explanation is first seen in the *Han shu*, “Wang Mang zhuan,” 王莽傳, which quotes a text, “Zi ben” 自本, written by Wang Mang, according to which he called himself a descendent of the Yellow Emperor.⁴² The “Xin jia liang” 新嘉量 says, “the Yellow Emperor is the original ancestor 黃帝初祖.” A clay seal from the Wang Mang era has been excavated in the Lelang 樂浪 area of the Korean peninsula (modern day North Korea), reading, “The Heavenly Lord, the Yellow Deity 天帝黃神.” Ban Gu 班固 (ca. 32–92 CE) in “You tong fu” 幽通賦 says, “The Yellow Deity is exalted, so it is impossible to question him; the only way is to rely on his bequeathed prophecies and respond with the heart 黃神邈而靡質兮，儀遺讖以臆對。”⁴³ Li Shan 李善 (630–689 CE) comments, “*huang* refers to the Yellow Emperor 黃，黃帝也。”⁴⁴ Thus, the name of the Yellow Deity did not originate with Wang Mang. The *Huainanzi* 淮南子, “Lanming xun” 覽冥訓 says, “The Queen Mother of the West breaks her tiara, and The Yellow Deity roars 西老折勝，黃神嘯吟。”⁴⁵ In this example, Gao You 高誘 (fl. 205 CE) also identifies the Yellow Deity with the

38 Note: In this section, Jao discusses uses of the Yellow Deity that solidify its position in pre-Han popular religion (which Jao associates specifically with Chu) as the preeminent deity figure identified with Huangdi, the Yellow Emperor. For a brief discussion, see Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 281 fn. 10.

39 Liu Zongyuan, “You Huangxi ji,” in *Quan Tang wen*, 581.10a (5869).

40 Liu Zongyuan, “You Huangxi ji,” in *Quan Tang wen*, 581.10b (5869).

41 Liu Zongyuan, “You Huangxi ji,” in *Quan Tang wen*, 581.10b (5869).

42 *Han shu*, 67B.4011.

43 *Wenxuan*, 14.637.

44 *Wenxuan*, 14.637.

45 *Huainanzi jishi*, 6.489.

Yellow Emperor. The Mawangdui manuscript, “Tianxia zhidao tan” 天下至道談 slip 2 says, “The Yellow Deity asked the deity to the left, ‘The Nine Openings and the Twelve Joints of Yin and Yang are produced all together, yet they are the first to die. Why is it so?’ 黃神問於左神曰：陰陽九微（竅）十二節俱產而獨先死，何也？”⁴⁶

The Mawangdui text, “Wushi'er bingfang” says,

When a burn occurs, utter this curse: “*xi qu xi qu!*”, come out of the stove and do not spread. The Yellow Deity is going to speak to. After chanting, spit on it thrice.

熱者，古曰：疥蛄疥蛄，從竈出。毋延。黃神且與言，即三唾之。⁴⁷

The chant goes, “*Qin qu qin qu*—worms! The Yellow Deity is in the kitchen stove ... Yellow Deity arise!

其祝曰：浸燐浸燐蟲，黃神在竈中。□□遠，黃神興□。⁴⁸

The “Wushi'er bingfang” is a work of Chu origins, and the prayers of the priest in the story repeatedly mention the Yellow Deity, such as when it claims that the Yellow Deity was in the kitchen stove. In ancient times, the priest would sacrifice to Goddess of the Earth 后土 in the “central impluvium 中霤.” The *Shiming* 釋名, “Shi gongshi” 釋宮室 says, “The center is called the central impluvium 中央曰中霤.”⁴⁹ The Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (ca. 127–200 CE) commentary of the *Liji* 禮記, “Yue ling” 月令, says, “The central impluvium resembles the central chamber. The earth occupies the center, and the deity resides in the chamber 中霤，猶中室也，土主中央，而神在室。”⁵⁰ In the stove at the center of the chamber, and the Yellow Emperor thus becomes Houtu and emerges from the stove.⁵¹ Ban Gu says that the Yellow Deity left behind a prophecy, and Han dynasty augury texts such as the *Xiaojing Zhonghuang chen* 孝經中黃讖 attest to this. During the late Han dynasty, there was also the concept of the so-called *Zhonghuang Dayi* 中黃大乙, “Central Yellow and the Great One,” as seen in the

46 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 163.

47 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 5: 271.

Note: My translation here follows Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 280–281.

48 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 5: 293.

49 *Shiming huijiao*, 5:284.

50 *Liji zhengyi*, 16.604.

51 This differs from the *Zhouli* 周禮 explanation which claims that the ancients use the kitchen stove to perform sacrifice to the God of Fire. See *Zhouli zhengyi*, 33.1324.

letter written by the Yellow Turbans 黃巾 to Cao Cao 曹操 (ca. 155–120 CE). The *Daozang* 道藏 furthermore contains a *Zhonghuang bazhu jing* 中黃八柱經, wherein the term *bazhu* 八柱 comes from the “Tian wen” 天問 chapter of the *Chuci*. Daoist practitioners used the Yellow Deity to control ghosts. The *Baopuzi* 抱朴子, “Deng she” 澄涉 says, “Ancient men who entered into the mountains all adorned themselves with the Seal of the All-Overcoming Yellow Deity 古之人入山者，皆佩「黃神越章」之印.”⁵² Many examples of this sort of seal have been passed down from ancient times. Eastern Han pottery unearthed from Baoji 寶雞 with vermilion inscriptions contain the phrase “the Big Dipper of the Yellow Deity 黃神北斗.”⁵³ Moreover, a tomb stone inscription reads, “The Yellow Deity gave birth to the Five Sacred Mountains and oversaw the records of the dead 黃神生五嶽，主死人錄.” Zhen Luan in *Xiao dao lun* 笑道論 and the Buddhist, Xuanguang 玄光 (d. unknown) in *Bianhuo lun* 辯惑論, both say, “One art of the Three Zhangs is called *Wei gui ke* (Observances to Scare off Demons) ... Moreover, they created the Vermillion Seals of the Yellow Deity to destroy ghosts 三張之術畏鬼科……又造黃神赤章殺鬼.”⁵⁴ Thus, the origins of the Yellow Deity are extremely remote, and did not arise from the Three Zhangs, lying instead with the shamans of the southern Chu people who prayed to deities and exorcised ghosts to cure illness—practices eventually adopted by the Daoists.

Yu steps 禹步: The Yu steps⁵⁵ technique is seen in the *Baopuzi*, “Xianyao” 仙藥 chapter, according to which the priest would first raise his left foot and

52 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 17.313. The meaning of the Seal of the All-Overcoming Yellow Deity has been recently explored in the article, “Zhenmu wen suo jian dao de Dong Han Dao, wu guanxi” 鎮墓文所見到的東漢道、巫關係 by Wu Rongzeng 吳榮曾, which contains an extremely detailed discussion, though it regrettably omits materials from Mawangdui. See Wu Rongzeng, “Zhenmu wen suo jian dao de Dong Han Dao, wu guanxi,” 56–63.

Note: See also Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao*, 115 fn. 15.

53 Wang Guangyong, “Baoji shi Hanmu faxian Guanghe yu Yongyuan nianjian zhushu taoqi,” 53.

54 *Guang Hongming ji*, 9.155.

Note: Xuanguang’s “Bianhuo lun” in fact does not contain the line quoted here, but it does occur in the *Xiao dao lun* 笑道論 by Zhen Luan. However, the *Xiao dao lun* is included in the section 2.5 of the chapter titled “Bianhuo pian” 辯惑篇 reprinted in the *Guang Hongming ji* 廣弘明集. Jao might have confused the Buddhist monk Xuanguang’s “Bian huo lun” with the chapter “Bian huo pian” from the *Guang Hongming ji*.

55 Note: Harper suggests that the “Yu steps” has its origins in folklore surrounding Yu’s physical deformities arising from the great physical efforts he exerted to control the floods and rule his people. He further suggests, following both Granet (and, as it turns out, Jao), that Yu steps and other religious Daoist practices like it originated in folk shamanistic practices. Jao further suggests, however, that they more precisely originated in Chu

go three paces, three times, performing nine steps in all. In the “Wushi'er bing-fang” 五十二病方, it says in multiple places that the Yu steps were employed in order to cure illness, some examples of which follow:

To treat lizard bites, [the shaman] would take three Yu steps in a northerly direction towards the patient. Then he asked the patient's name. Say, “So-and-so was ... [Have the person] drink half a cup and say, “Illness ... begone. Slowly leave, slowly desist.”...

蜺北鄉（向）人，禹步三。問其名，即曰某某年口，口飲半音（杯）。曰：病口口已，徐去徐已。……⁵⁶

As for warts, ... On the last night of a month, [the shaman] takes Yu steps thrice. Then starting from the southern quarter, pick up a clump of earth and say, “Today is the last day of the month; I grind the warts with this clump in a northerly direction.” ...

尤（疣）……以晦往之出（塊）所，禹步三。道南方始，取出言曰：今日月晦，靡（磨）尤北。……⁵⁷

To treat genital disease, take the cypress stick in your hand and take three Yu steps. Say ...

頽（癩）操柏杵，禹步三。曰……⁵⁸

For prostration,⁵⁹ on the sixteenth day of each month when the moon started to wane, take three Yu steps, saying, “The moon is matched with the sun,” and “the sun is matched with the moon,” three times each ...

shamanistic culture. For a brief discussion of “Yu steps,” see Donald Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 167–169.

56 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 414.

Note: See also Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 243.

57 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 420–21.

Note: See also Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 245.

58 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 474.

Note: See also Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 259.

59 Note: For this reading of *long* 癰, see Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 261 fn. 1.

癰以月十六日始毀，禹步三，曰：月與日相當，日與月相當·各三……⁶⁰

For carbuncles, take ... feather ... two ... two, take three Yu steps ... one cup.

癰取……羽……二口二，禹步三，□□一音（杯）。⁶¹

To deal with the Child Sprite,⁶² take three Yu steps. Take a branch from the east side of a peach tree ...

魘禹步三。取桃東枳（枝）……⁶³

All these shamanistic techniques to cure illnesses relied on Yu steps, a customary practice in Chu even before the Qin and Han times. For this reason, Yang Xiong 楊雄 (53 BCE–18 CE) in the *Fayan* 法言 says, “Shamanistic footwork practices frequently utilize Yu 巫步多禹.”⁶⁴ The Qin era bamboo text from Yunmeng, “*Ri shu*” also contains references to “Yu talismans 禹符” and Yu steps. The “Three Yu steps 三禹步” became a standard practice that would go on to be appropriated by the Daoists and was further developed to such a point that it allegedly utilized 90 additional footwork methods, each of which pertained to its own unique incantation.⁶⁵

Talismans and Registers 符籙: The “Yunmeng *ri shu*” describes the *Yu fu* is written from right to left. Mawangdui tomb no. 3 has produced an image of a kitchen stove and writings that include a collection of documents including talismans and registers. They have not yet been made public, but they demonstrate that the origins of the Daoist use of talismans and registers lie in Chu customs.

60 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 477.

Note: See also Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 261.

61 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 592.

62 Note: Based on several Han sources, the “Child Sprite” may refer to a single entity, the third of Zhuan Xu’s children, which harasses people in the home. Alternatively, as Jao seems to suggest in the discussion below, it may refer to a generic kind of child demon. See Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 302 fn. 1.

63 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 635.

64 *Fayan yishu*, 13.317.

65 See the *Daozang* 道藏, “Dongshen badi yuanbian jing” 洞神八帝元變經, “Yu bu zhi ling di si” 禹步致靈第四. Anonymous, *Dongshen badi yuanbian jing*, in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 28: 398.

Punishment and Virtue 刑德: *juan* 41 of the *Taiping jing* 太平經 discusses punishment and virtue in minute detail, and both the *Huainanzi*, “Binglüe xun” 兵略訓, and the *Han shu*, “Yiwen zhi” contain references to punishment and virtue that are especially useful for our purposes. Most interestingly, however, is a text unearthed from a Han dynasty tomb at Mawangdui is a three *juan* text entitled “Xingde” 刑德, which contains a Nine-Palace diagram 九宮圖 referencing punishment and virtue. The explanation therein was utilized by Daoist practitioners.

The legend of a four-faced Yellow Ancestor was well-known in pre-Qin times, and thus gave rise to the four-faced image of Laozi. The *Daodejing* contains the sentence, “the Spirit of the Valley is undying 谷神不死,”⁶⁶ which is taken from the *Huangdi shu* 黃帝書, and is quoted in the *Liezi* 列子, “Tianrui” 天瑞.⁶⁷ The *Han shu*, “Tianwen zhi” mentions the texts, *Huangdi si jing* 黃帝四經, *Huangdi junchen* 黃帝君臣, and *Za Huangdi* 雜黃帝.⁶⁸ Ban Gu’s commentary claims, “Arising during the time of the six states, they went along with Laozi and others like him 起六國時，與老相似也。”⁶⁹ The silk manuscript, “Shi da jing” can be considered a kind of *Huangdi shu*. Thus, portraying the Yellow Ancestor with four faces was widespread during the time of the six states (ca. 236–221 BCE). The teachings of Laozi were intertwined with those ascribed to the Yellow Emperor and called Huang-Lao thought during the Han period, and thus the idea of Laozi having four faces obviously originates in the idea of the Yellow Ancestor having four faces. Additionally, the four-faced *ding* from Ningxiang relates to the four faces of the Yellow Ancestor, whose origins we can trace back to the Shang dynasty. When looked at from this perspective, we can notice that the images on the four faces originally emerged from the ancestors of religious Daoism: the Yellow Emperor and Laozi.

Buddhist statues also contain four-faced images of Buddha, about which someone had asked me, though I was unable to reply. Now I see that during the time of the Six dynasties in the northwestern regions of China, Buddhism and Daoism intermingled to the point that Daoists could simultaneously be called, “Buddhist-Daoist followers.” The two schools absorbed ideas from one another, and the four-faced image of Buddha can indeed be considered a borrowing from Daoism. In Thailand, the four-faced Buddha is extremely widespread, and it perhaps has a separate origin, but I will not touch upon this issue here.

66 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 6.25.

67 *Liezi jishi*, 1.3–4.

68 *Han shu*, 30.1730–31.

69 *Han shu*, 30.1731.

2) Regarding the Child Sprite 魅—The descriptions of the Demon of the Chu People and the Way of the Demon from the “Wushi'er bingfang.”

Numerous examples in ancient records demonstrate that the Chu people had an affinity for ghosts and spirits.

The *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋, “Yi bao” 異寶 says, “In the land bordering between Chu and Yue, there is a burial mound that is named, ‘Excessive Evil’. The Jing (Chu) people were in awe of ghosts, while the Yue people believed in prayer 楚越之間有寢之丘者……名甚惡。荆人畏鬼，而越人信禱。”⁷⁰ Huan Tan 桓譚 (23 BCE–56 CE) in the *Xin lun* 新論 says, “King Ling of Chu believed in the ways of witchcraft and the shamans, personally stood up and danced before the shamanistic altar 楚靈王……信巫祝之道……起舞壇前。”⁷¹ Wang Yi 王逸 (89–158 CE) in *Chuci zhangju* 楚辭章句 says, “The people to the south of the capital of Chu, and those in between Yuan River and Xiang River, believe in spirits and revere their shrines 楚國南郢之邑，沅、湘之間，其俗信鬼而好祠。”⁷²

The *Shiji*, “Fengshan shu” 封禪書, says:

The two Yue territories (Nanyue and Dongyue) were completely destroyed. The people of Yue were courageous and said, “The Yue customarily revered ghosts, and their shrines have all hosted ghosts and are frequently efficacious.”

既滅兩越。越人勇之乃言「越人俗鬼，而其祠皆見鬼，數有效」。⁷³

The text also mentions an account of the King of Dong’ou 東甌 (i.e., Eastern Yue) seeing a ghost. The *Sui shu* 隋書, “Dili zhi” 地理志 says:

Overall, the people of the state of the Jing generally revere ghosts. They placed remarkable weight on sacrifices and ceremonial affairs. Long ago, Qu Yuan 屈原 (ca. 340–278 BCE) wrote the, “Jiu ge,” which follows this tendency.

70 *Lüshi Chunqiu jishi*, 10.230. The *Huainanzi*, “Renjian xun” 人間訓, says, “the Jing people believed in ghosts, while the Yue people had prayers 荆人鬼，越人禱.” *Huainanzi jishi*, 18.1243. See also *Liezi jishi*, 8.274.

71 *Taiping yulan*, 526.6a (2389).

72 *Chuci buzhu*, 2.55.

73 *Shiji*, 28.1399.

大抵荊州率敬鬼，尤重祠祀之事。昔屈原為制《九歌》，蓋由此也。⁷⁴

Liu Zongyuan in the “Yongzhou Longxing si xirang ji” 永州龍興寺息壤記 says, “Yongzhou is situated in between Chu and Yue. Their people revere ghosts and pray 永州居楚、越間，其人鬼且禱。”⁷⁵ The *Kuicheng tu jing* 夔城圖經 says, “The Yi barbarians serve the Way, while the Man people serve ghosts 夷事道，蠻事鬼。”⁷⁶

One poem of the “Jiu ge” is titled “Shan gui” 山鬼. An old commentary cites the *Huainanzi*, explaining that it concerns “apparitions that emerge from mountains 山出嘯陽.” Contemporaries would refer to the Yue people as barbarians, such as in the case of these strange beings of Shennongjia 神農架 Forest, Hubei, which we now know to refer to a kind of anthropomorphic ape resembling a baboon, though it is not often discussed nowadays. The Yue wilderness was annexed by Chu, and so Yue customs were altogether transformed and incorporated into Chu. When Emperor Wu of Han 漢武帝 (r. 141–87 BCE) conquered the two Yue territories, he commanded that the Yue shamans establish sacrificial shrines in accordance with their customs, as well as sacrifices to Heaven, the spirits, the Lord on High, and the hundred ghosts.⁷⁷

We can discuss the Yue shamans and Chu shamans together. At the time, shamans and doctors were not distinct from one another, and the two can be combined to form the term *wuyi* 巫醫 (shaman doctor) in ancient times. To this day, ethnic minorities such as the Miao 苗 and Yao 瑶 people utilize shamans to cure illnesses. During Qin and Han times, the minute details of how Chu shamans cure illnesses can be observed in the Mawangdui manuscript, “Wushi'er bingfang,” among them being methods involving the expulsion of evil spirits. For instance:

To deal with the Child Sprite,⁷⁸ take three Yu steps. Take a branch from the east side of a peach tree ... and place them above each of your doors.

74 *Sui shu*, 31.897.

75 *Quan Tang wen*, 581.4a (5866).

76 Quoted in the *Man shu* 蠻書. *Manshu jiaozhu*, 10.260.

77 *Shiji*, 28.1400.

78 Note: Based on several Han sources, the “Child Sprite” may refer to a single entity, the third of Zhuan Xu’s children, which harasses people in the home. Alternatively, as Jao seems to suggest in the discussion below, it may refer to a generic kind of child demon. See Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 302 fn. 1.

魘：禹步三，取桃東枳（枝），中別為□□□之倡而笄門戶上各一。79

Chant as follows: “Spouting. Child Sprite Father. Child Sprite Mother. There is nowhere to hide ... north ... the female shamans will seek and resolutely capture you ... she will break your four limbs, tie up your ten fingers, and cast you into water. Being human, being human—you join demons.” Every time you travel, take a calabash shell as a vehicle. Take a broad winnowing basket as a chassis. Harness it to the person’s black pig and travel through their home.”

祝曰：漬者魘父魘母，毋匿□□□北□巫婦求若固得。□若四體（體），編若十指，投若□水。人毆（也）而比鬼。每行□，以采蠱為車。以敝箕為輿。乘人黑豬。行人室家。80

This text discusses the way of chasing away evil spirits and records the complete text of the prayer, all of which is written in verse. The character for “evil spirit,” *ji* 魘, has two meanings: the first refers to a “ghost’s attire 鬼服,” while the second refers to a “ghost [in the form] of a child 小兒鬼.” The Xue Zong 薛綜 (208–243) commentary of the *Dongjing fu* 東京賦, “Qi yu” 魘蚺, says, “a ghost [in the form] of a child 小兒鬼,”⁸¹ The *Han jiu yi* 漢舊儀 says, “To drive out disease and spirits, set up peach wood effigy, make use of ropes and other items 逐疫鬼，立桃人、葦索等物.”⁸² It also says, “Take the eastward-growing branch of a peach tree 取桃東枳,” and, “Tie up the ghost’s ten fingers 編若（指鬼）十指,” all of which make specific reference to using twisted reed rope to do so. As for the “eastward-growing branch,” the *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記, “Zhenyi zhuan” 甄異傳 records an anecdote about Xiahou Wengui 夏侯文規 (fl. Eastern Jin dynasty), saying, “the branch is from the southeastern portion of the peach tree, and has a length of 2 *chi* and 8 *cun*. In ancient times, ghosts would hate it 桃之東南枝，長二尺八寸，向日者，鬼憎之.”⁸³ The reason for the emphasis on taking an eastern branch is that it receives the morning sunshine, and thus ghosts would be afraid of it, which is a practice that began in the early Han dynasty. Regarding the term “black pig 黑豬,” it appears in the

79 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 635.

80 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 636.

Note: Translation adapted from Harper *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 303.

81 *Wenxuan*, 3.124.

82 *Suishi guangji*, 5.59.

83 *Taiping guangji*, 325.2584.

Zhouyu as part of the “upper nine 上九” phrases from the *kui* 睽 hexagram: “He saw the hog covered in mud, a cart loading a gang of ghosts. First, he drew the bow, and later, he relaxed the bow 見豕負塗，載鬼一車，先張之弧，後說之弧。”⁸⁴ The bow mentioned here refers to peach wood bow. The *Zuozhuan* 左傳 says for the fourth year of Duke Zhao 昭公, “A bow made of peach wood and an arrow made from jujubes will eliminate disaster 桃弧棘矢，以除其災。”⁸⁵ The sentence from the *Zhouyi*, “a cart loading a gang of ghosts 載鬼一車。”⁸⁶ can be interpreted in light of the prayer.

The *Jjiu pian* 急就篇 says, “Shooting at evil spirits by warding them off with talismans can eliminate ill fortune 射魃辟邪除羣凶.”⁸⁷ The commentary reads, “Shooting at evil spirits refers to [the use of] a large *gangmao* talisman 射魃謂大剛卯也。”⁸⁸ The *Shuowen* 說文 says, “*Gai*: *gaigai*, also called *da gangmao*;⁸⁹ used to chase off evil spirits and demons. *Gai* is composed of *pu* 支 with *si* 巳 as phonetic 改，殺改，大剛卯，以逐鬼魃也，从支巳聲，讀若巳。”⁹⁰ The character *gai* 改 is also seen in the “Wushi’er bingfang:” “... *si*. Not *si*, chop and cut it thus. After praying, take a piece of cloth and wave it in the air to drive away ghosts and evil spirits. Do this 14 times 巳；不已，斧斬若。即操布改之二七。”⁹¹

The “Wushi’er bingfang” makes a substantial contribution to explaining the various methods of alleviating illness by communing with and expelling ghosts, utilizing prayer methods prefaced with phrases such as, “pray as follows,” “forcefully expel (i.e., spit) as follows,” and various others, a brief example of which follows:

As for lacquer dermatitis: Let the magician spit and pray as follows: “spit, lacquer.” Do this 3 times. And pray as follows: “The God of Heaven sent you to the world to paint bows and arrows, but now you make the people sick and suffer disasters. So [we will] apply pig feces all over you and beat you up with the soles of our shoes.”

84 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 4.191.

85 *Chunqiu zuozhuan zhengyi*, 42.1377. A detailed discussion is found in *Guisi leigao* 癸巳類稿, “Taolie taofu yi” 桃荊桃符義. See *Guisi leigao*, 10.7a–8b, rpt. in *Qingdai xueshu biji congkan*, 39: 332.

86 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 4.191.

87 *Jjiu pian jiaoli*, 3.258.

88 *Jjiu pian jiaoli*, 3.258.

89 The *dagangmao* is a tool for exorcising evil spirits made on the *mao* day of the first lunar month.

90 *Shuowen jiezi*, 3B.19a (69).

91 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 479.

鬚：唾曰：歎，黍三。即曰：天畜（帝）下若。以黍弓矢。今若為下民疔（瘍也）。涂（塗）若以豕矢（糞也）。以履下靡（磨）抵之。⁹²

Pray as follows: “God has five armaments. Will you flee or not? [We will] take out the flowing sword and kill you.” The magician will then spit. According to the above method, do it seven times for male patients and fourteen times for female patients.

祝曰：畜（帝）右（有）五兵。璽（爾）：亡？不亡？瀉刀為裝（戕）。即唾之。男子七，女子二七。⁹³

This is the method for curing “lacquer dermatitis 鬚,” which refers to ulcers and sores caused by lacquer exposure. As for the ceremonial use of saliva, it was believed that ghosts are afraid of spit. For example, the *Kui che zhi* 睽車志 says, “If you think you might have seen a ghost during the daytime, spit at it 疑白晝見鬼，唾之。”⁹⁴ Qian Zhongshu 錢鍾書 records a Tang dynasty story to this effect with a detailed explanation in the *Guan zhui bian* 管錐編.⁹⁵ Thus, considering the above-mentioned prescriptions in the “Wushi'er bingfang,” we can be sure that the practice of spitting at ghosts to cure illness in fact originates from Chu witchcraft. Additionally, we can say a bit more on the section where the prayer is said aloud. Taking the sentence “*si*; not *si*, chop and cut it thus” as an example, the part *wang bu wang* 亡不亡 should be punctuated as: *wang? bu wang? 亡? 不亡?*, thereby directly asking the ghost whether or not it will escape. Immediately prior, we find the character *xi* 璽, which is utilized as a single-word phrase, similar to other terms for exhalation such as *xu* 吁 and *jie* 嗟. The term *xi* here is synonymous with the later word *ni* 哂, which is not the *ni* of “you” (*ni* 你) and “I” (*wo* 我). Rather, this *ni* 哂 was written as *ni* 璽 in Chan Buddhist texts. For example, Huinan 慧南 (1002–1069), the founder of the Huanlong 黃龍 branch of the Linji 臨濟 Chan, said, “*Ni*, relax oneself while sitting down 璽，便下座.” The *Guangyun* 廣韻 includes *ni* 璽 in the rhyming category of *liu zhi* 六止, listed under *ni* 你. It is explained as “pointing to objects,” and pronounced as the combination of the pronunciation of the consonant of *nai* 乃 and the vowel of *li* 里. The word *ni* 璽 is composed of *er* 爾 and *tu* 土 components, and we can read it as *ni* 哂. In ancient times, it was customary to

92 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 600.

93 *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 602.

94 *Kui che zhi*, 1.8.

95 *Guan zhui bian*, 2: 778.

inscribe the term *ni* 𪔐 on the door in order to ward off ghosts, as seen in the *Youyang zazu* 酉陽雜俎, which says, “It is called, ‘the netherworld ghost; one can then expel the pestilence’ 謂：陰刀〈司〉鬼名，可息瘡瘍也。”⁹⁶

Additionally, the “Wushi’er bingfang” utilizes the expressions “flowing sword 瀉刀” as well as “chop and cut it thus 斧斬若,” which refer to severing the ghost, hinting towards the ancient superstition that all diseases resulted from ghosts being entangled within the body. If the ghost is severed and removed, then the disease will depart on its own. Thus, if my interpretation that *xi* 𪔐 is the same as *ni* 𪔐 is credible, then there is surely a relationship between the two ideas of “severing ghosts” and *ni* 𪔐 (𪔐), and both of their origins can be traced back to Chu customs. The *Guan zhui bian* says, “Dead ghosts are called *ni* 𪔐, I don’t know when it took shape 鬼死稱𪔐，不曉昉自何時。”⁹⁷ Thus, by examining the “Wushi’er bingfang,” we can make several important inferences on this topic.⁹⁸

As seen is the “Wushi’er bingfang,” one may cure lacquer dermatitis with pig feces, but there are also similar uses of chicken feces and horse feces. These types of prescriptions, utilizing the way of ghosts, are what ancients described as *zhuyou* 祝由, “prayer-based healing methods.” The “Su wen” 素問 says, “The Yellow Emperor said, ‘Regarding ancient ways of curing illness, it is a matter of healing by means of prayer, and the illness stops’ 黃帝曰：「古之治病……可祝由而已」.”⁹⁹ The *yi* 已 here is the same as that found in the “Wushi’er bingfang” referring to the cessation of disease. The term *zhuyou* 祝由 is also written as *zhuliu* 祝榴, and the “Wushi’er bingfang” always writes *zhuyou* 祝尤. During the Ming dynasty, Zhao Yiguang 趙宦光 (1559–1625) in the *Shuowen changjian* 說文長箋 says, “The great imperial physicians administer thirteen departments of medicine, the final of which was healing by means of prayer 太醫十三科，其最後曰祝由。”¹⁰⁰ He also says, “Healing by means of prayer was done in ancient times by Wu Xian 巫咸” 祝尤，古醫之巫咸也。”¹⁰¹ We can thus say that the art of healing by means of prayer arose from Wu Xian,¹⁰² and the “Li sao” 離騷 says, “Wu Xian thereupon descended into the twilight

96 *Youyang zazu*, xuji 4.1645. Mr. Yang Liansheng 楊聯陞 has recently written an article on the difference between the two characters, *ni* 𪔐 and *ni* 𪔐, which emphasizes that *ni* 𪔐 is pronounced like *ni* 𪔐. Yang Liansheng, “Chanzong yulu zhong zhi ni,” 299–306.

97 *Guan zhui bian*, 2: 675.

98 Within the Five Dynasties text, *Zutang ji* 祖堂集, there is concurrent usage of the two characters *ni* 尼 and *ni* 𪔐, utilizing them both as the modern word, *ne* 呢, which is an interrogative.

99 *Huangdi neijing suwen jizhu*, 2B.13.

100 *Shuowen jiezi yizheng*, 1.29b (15).

101 *Shuowen jiezi yizheng*, 1.29b (15).

102 Note: A legendary/mythical shaman with divine powers who was an associate of Huangdi.

巫咸將夕降兮,¹⁰³ indicating that this was part of Chu's cultural knowledge. The Three Zhangs used the way of ghosts and *fu shui* 符水 (a talisman or "rune water" spells) in order to heal illnesses, and this too is in fact a branch of Chu shamanistic rituals. The *Han jiu yi* recorded that the sons of Zhuanxu 顓頊 became demonic ghosts.¹⁰⁴ There are numerous names for ghosts and demons within the area of Chu, as can be seen in the "Ri shu" of Yunmeng, which await further research. The *Youyang zazu*, "Nuo gao ji" 諾皋記 records the names of ghosts in excruciating detail.¹⁰⁵ Similarly, the Bouyei 布依 minority group in Guizhou considers illness to be the result of offending certain ghosts and believes that illness can thus be cured by warding off ghosts, of which they catalog some 200 distinct names to be referenced in the remedy. All this just lends further credence to the adage that "the Chu people worship ghosts 楚人鬼." The Shuijia 水家 minority people to this day refer to the writings on Daoist and Buddhist rites as "ghost documents 鬼書," and their shamans are called "ghost teachers 鬼師." These are all manifestations of the "way of ghosts 鬼道."

Ghosts played a prominent role in the teachings of the Three Zhangs. Some say that they inherited and developed the way of devils, shamans, and ghosts from Ba-Shu 巴蜀.¹⁰⁶ But now, if we utilize newly excavated materials, such as those from Mawangdui, we can understand how Chu witch doctors cured illnesses, as well as the detailed prayers uttered in various circumstances, thereby solidifying the remote origins of the methods of the Three Zhangs, as well as the relationship between the origins of Daoism and the propagation of Chu witchcraft customs during the Qin and Han periods. Instead of referring them to as an appropriation of Sichuan customs, it would be better to trace them back to Jing and Chu healing practices.

3 Miscellaneous Investigations into Daoism

Jiao 醮: The Han dynasty inscription on the *Si Sangong shan* Stele 祀三公山碑 says, "The *jiao* sacrifice and worships are deficient 醮祠希罕."¹⁰⁷ A Han dynasty augury text, the *Yuan ming bao* 元命包 reads as follows:

103 *Chuci buzhu*, 1.36.

104 *Taiping yulan*, 26.6b (123).

105 *Youyang zazu jiaojian*, 14.971–15.1093.

106 Note: An ancient culture centered around modern-day Sichuan.

107 *Xu guwen yuan*, 15. 875.

Chu established Mister Tang as court historian and he observed that the Turquoise Cloud was like a rainbow, wrapping the chassis seven times ... and thereupon the righteous way of ritual was established. Pray and offer a *jiao* libation to the spirits in front of the Imperial Ancestral Temple.

楚立唐氏以為史官，蒼雲如蜺，圍軫七蟠。……於是立禮正，推禱醮于廟堂之前。¹⁰⁸

Shen Meisou 沈寐叟 (also named Shen Zengzhi 沈曾植 1850–1922) says, “The character *jiao* was first observed here 醮字始於此.”¹⁰⁹ Indeed, Song Yu 宋玉 (298–222 BCE) already says in the “Gao tang fu” 高唐賦, that, “*Jiao* libations are offered to all of the divinities; rituals are offered to the Great One 醮諸神，禮太一.”¹¹⁰ It is uncertain whether the person from the Tang clan of Chu is related to Tang Mei 唐昧 (d. 301 BCE), who excelled at astronomy. The Mawangdui texts mention that divination can be achieved through interpreting the clouds with their idea that, “turquoise cloud is like a rainbow 蒼雲如蜺.” The *jiao* libation ceremony thereupon arose from cloud divination and also has its origins in Chu customs.

Four Auxiliaries 四輔: Within the records of the *Daozang*, we find distinctive parts categorized as the Three Caverns 三洞 and the Four Auxiliaries 四輔. We can observe the term “four auxiliaries” also near the end of the Mawangdui silk manuscript of the *Zhouyi*, which references “The Yellow Emperor and the four auxiliaries 黃帝四輔.”¹¹¹ Moreover, the “Shi wen” 十問 bamboo slip text references, “what the four auxiliaries value 四輔所貴.”¹¹² The “Shi da jing”, “Guo tong” 果童 says, “The Yellow Emperor asked about the four auxiliaries 黃帝問於四輔.”¹¹³ The four auxiliaries originated in Huang-Lao writings, and the Chu people transmitted the theory. The *Liji* 禮記, “Wenwang shizi” 文王世子 also mentions the four auxiliaries, offering a later explanation of its origins.¹¹⁴

Celestial Masters 天師: The Mawangdui text, “Shi wen” says, “The Yellow Emperor asked the Celestial Master, ‘How do the myriad things come about and carry on ...’ 黃帝問於天師曰：萬勿（物）何得而行…….”¹¹⁵ This text comes from the Qin-Han period, wherein the title of Celestial Master had

108 *Beitang shuchao*, 55.3b (206).

109 *Shen Zengzhi lunxue ji*, 229.

110 *Wenxuan*, 19.881.

111 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 3: 56.

112 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 139.

113 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 158.

114 *Liji zhengyi*, 20.742.

115 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 139.

indeed already emerged. Recently, Wu Rongzeng 吳榮曾 has claimed that there is a Southern Song dynasty writing that references a stone from Sichuan that was engraved during the second year of the Eastern Han Xiping 熹平 period (172–178 CE), which records that a “rice shaman 米巫”¹¹⁶ named Zhang Pu 張普 (fl. 173 CE) served as libationer 祭酒. Therein, it says, “The Libationer performs the implementation of the way and standards of the Celestial Master 祭酒約施天師道法.” This led Wu to conclude, “In the final years of the Eastern Han dynasty, the phrase ‘Heavenly Lord and the Divine Teacher’ was simplified to become the ‘Celestial Master’ 東漢末年，把「天帝神師」簡化為天師。”¹¹⁷ However, Wu here does not acknowledge that the term “Celestial Master” has more remote origins and did not first arise during the Eastern Han period, but instead already occurs in e.g., the *Zhuangzi* 莊子.

Way of the Five Pecks of Rice 五斗米與五斗粥: The teachings of the Three Zhangs are referred to as the Way of the Five Pecks of Rice. In his *Hou Han shu*'s 後漢書 commentary, Li Xian 李賢 (655–684 CE), the Prince of Zhanghuai 章懷太子, cited Liu Ai's 劉艾 (fl. Late Eastern Han dynasty) *Han Ling Xian er di ji* 漢靈獻二帝紀, which reads as follows:

The shaman of Ba prefecture called Zhang Xiu has administered treatments for disease. The patients, upon recovering from their illnesses, offered five pecks of rice to Zhang Xiu as payment, and therefore Zhang Xiu is called the Master of the Five Pecks of Rice.

巴郡巫人張脩療病，愈者雇以米五斗，號曰「五斗米師」。¹¹⁸

Thus, the “five pecks of rice” was originally a form of payment for shamans who cured illnesses. The Mawangdui text, “Wushi'er bingfang” records as follows:

Use indigo foxtail millet to cook the porridge—fifteen counts of water for one count of grain. Once finished, there should be five pecks of porridge. Take the porridge out, let the heat evaporate, and let the steam depart. Serve it in a clean and fresh earthenware jar. Cover the opening on the top of the jar with a cloth of threefold wrap ... Apply two *cun* thick wet mud to the outside of the cloth, put the jar over the fire and burn it until the

116 Note: *míwū* 米巫 was a term describing adherents to the Way of the Five Pecks of Rice, an alternative name given to the teachings of the Celestial Masters branch of Daoism that emerged in the second century in Sichuan.

117 Wu Rongzeng, “Zhenmu wen zhong suo jiandao de Donghan Dao wu guanxi,” 61.

118 *Hou Han shu*, 8.349.

sealing mud is dried, and then take it out. Let it cool down and open it for drinking. In this way, the illness is cured.

以青梁米為糲，水十五而米一。成糲五斗，出，揚去氣，盛以新瓦甕，冥（幕）口以布三口，即封塗厚二寸，燔，令泥盡火而飲之，瘡已。¹¹⁹

Here, we can see that drinking this congee is a way to cure illness, and certainly the use of five pecks here is a reference to measurement. Recently, Shen Meisou has utilized the *Duren jing* 度人經 to explain that the term *wu dou* 五斗, instead of indicating “five pecks of rice,” refers to the five stars of the big dipper. Other contemporary scholars have followed Shen Meisou’s explanation, but I am afraid this explanation is incorrect.¹²⁰

The foregoing list of Daoist terms all appear in and are related to Chu documents and literature. We can see that in all respects Chu customs and Daoist teachings are intimately related, and the present article offers only a brief summary to be augmented by further research.

Postscript

This article originally appeared in the May 1985 edition of Mingpao Monthly 明報月刊, and was later included in my book with Peking University titled, Zhong guo zongjiao sixiang shi xinye 中國宗教思想史新頁, which is a collection of lectures. It has been slightly revised, in particular the material relating to the explanation of dahe 大禾 in terms of dahe 大和 and dahe 大穌.

119 Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi, 410.

120 See, for example, Wang Jiayou, “Zhang Ling wu dou mi dao yu Xinan minzu,” 151–166.

On Buddhism and Daoism's Concurrent Development and Laozi's Consecration as a Founder of Religious Daoism

釋、道並行與老子神化成爲教主的年代

Laozi is a pivotal figure in Chinese intellectual and religious history, and both foreign and domestic scholars alike have inquired deeply into both his biography and the history of his religious significance. On the first topic, Ping-ti Ho (何炳棣 (1917–2012)) has recently offered a novel theory worthy of further discussion.¹ As for the historical process of Laozi's ascent to divinity, we can learn much from archaeological findings, as I will attempt to show in what follows.

Records from the early Eastern Han period often consider Huang-Lao thought and Buddhism to be of the same nature. The most notable examples of this attitude include an imperial edict issued by Emperor Ming of Han 漢明帝 (28–75 CE) to the Prince of Chu, Liu Ying 劉英 (d. 71 CE), in 64 CE, as well as Xiang Kai's 襄楷 (fl. second century CE) memorandum submitted to Emperor Huan of Han 漢桓帝 (r. 146–168 CE) in 166 CE. Both documents treat the teachings of Huang-Lao thought and Buddhism as sharing a common substance.² When Buddhism first arrived in China, religious Daoism was in its infancy. At the stone carvings of Kongwang Mountain 孔望山, Lianyungang 連雲港, we find Buddhist images alongside those of Laozi both serving as objects of religious worship. This suggests that these two schools of thought were not in conflict with one another and attests to their harmonious coexistence within people's spiritual practices. Additionally, many excavated Buddhist relics from

1 The book *Laozi tong* 老子通 lists the numerous former research works on Laozi. Ho's view can be seen in "Sima Tan, Qian yu Laozi niandai" 司馬談、遷與老子年代, *Yanjing Xuebao*, 2000.9, 1–20.

2 The edict to King Ying of Chu says, "The King of Chu recited the subtle teachings of Huang-Lao and promoted Buddhist benevolence and mercy, purifying and cleansing himself for three months 楚王誦黃老之微言，尚浮屠之仁慈，繫齋三月." *Hou Han shu*, 42.1428. Xiang Kai's memorandum says, "Moreover I have heard that shrines to honor Huangdi, Laozi, and the Buddha have been erected within the imperial palace. This is the way of purity and emptiness, of valuing and promoting non-action 又聞宮中立黃、老、浮屠之祠。此道清虛，貴尚無為." *Hou Han shu*, 30B.1082.

Sichuan are also engraved with Daoist patterns, such as those of the Pengshan Cliff Tombs 彭山崖墓.³

During the early Eastern Han period, Laozi's position as a religious idol was not yet settled. In the "Gujin ren biao," 古今人表 from the *Han shu* 漢書 by Ban Gu 班固 (ca. 32–92 CE), Laozi is placed in the upper-middle ranks of ancient worthies, below Tanzi 鄴子 (fl. Spring and Autumn period) and above Nanrong Chou 南榮疇 (fl. Spring and Autumn period).⁴ When Bian Shao 邊韶 (c. 100–170 CE) wrote the *Inscription to Laozi* (*Laozi ming* 老子銘), he criticized the "Gujin ren biao" for demeaning Laozi by ranking him alongside Zixi 子西 (d. 479 BCE) from the state of Chu,⁵ a decision also condemned by Zhang Yan 張晏 (c. 300–400 CE).⁶ Ban Gu was contemporaneous with the aforementioned Prince Ying of Chu, who both "recited Laozi and revered Buddha 誦老子、尚浮屠."⁷ In his poems, as in, for example the *Dongdu fu* 東都賦, Ban delivered statements like:

[Nowadays, they establish palaces such as] the Jianzhang and the Ganquan, and pavilions for the emperor to invite and dine with transcendents rather than taking care of the harmony between Heaven and the people at the Numinous Terrace or the Mingtang?

建章、甘泉，館御列仙，孰與靈臺、明堂，統和天人？⁸

Ban Gu deeply opposed the "Way of Transcendence 仙道" and thus did not value the teachings of Laozi. Accordingly, unlike Feng Yan 馮衍 (20 BCE–60 CE) he left behind no writings in which he lauded both Kongzi and Laozi. To contrast, Feng's "Xianzhi fu" 顯誌賦, says: "Respect sages and worthies as the measure of ourselves. Rejoice in Kongzi's understanding of fate. Great was Lao Dan's valuing of mystery! 覽聖賢以自鎮，嘉孔丘之知命兮，大老聃之貴玄。"⁹ With all this in mind, we can interpret Ban Gu's treatment of Laozi as evidence that Laozi's reputation was not yet firmly established during the early Eastern Han dynasty.

3 Guo Liying 郭麗英, "Zhongguo Nanbei chao yiqian de Fojiao zaoxiang yu Jiangnan diqu Fojiao de chuanru," 中國南北朝以前的佛教造像與江南地區佛教的傳入, *Yuanwang ji* 遠望集, 782.

4 *Han shu*, 20.926.

5 Bian Shao, "Laozi ming," 3.2a, in Hong Kuo, *Li shi, Li xu*, 36.

6 *Han shu*, 20.862 note 13.

7 *Hou Han shu*, 42.1428.

8 *Wenxuan*, 1.39.

9 *Hou Han shu*, 28B.1001.

We now turn to the matter of Laozi's mother. During the Tang dynasty, in which there was an atmosphere of respect for Laozi, his mother was identified with the "Mysterious Jade Maiden 玄妙玉女." Zhang Shoujie's 張守節 (fl. 736 CE) *Shiji zhengyi* 史記正義 quotes the *Xuanmiao neipian* 玄妙內篇, writing, "The Mysterious Jade Maiden dreamed that a shooting star entered her mouth, and she became pregnant 玄妙玉女夢流星入口而有娠,"¹⁰ which appears to be the earliest extant account of this story. Duan Chengshi's 段成式 (803–863 CE) anthology, *Yuyang zazu* 酉陽雜俎, also references a "mysterious jade maiden."¹¹ In fact, the term "jade maiden" appeared earlier, and the term, "mysterious," was only added later on.¹² During the Chuyuan 初元 era (48–44 BCE) under the reign of the Emperor Yuan of Han 漢元帝 (r. 48–33 BCE), a nobleman from Julu 鉅鹿, the Marquis of Liaoyang 轅陽侯 from the Zhang family 張, utilized the name of "Jade Maiden of Heaven and Abyss 天淵玉女" in certain religious activities.¹³ A relatively early appearance of the term "jade maiden" is in the Mawangdui 馬王堆 manuscript, "Yinyang wuxing" 陰陽五行, which records the 28 constellations or lunar lodgings: "Ox, Horn and Gullet, Eastern Well, Carriage of the Spirits: the Jade Maiden's look-out (牽) 牛、角埂 (亢)、東井、輿鬼、玉女觀."¹⁴ We can thus ascertain that this term already existed during the early Western Han dynasty. A portrait discovered in 1973 at Cang Mountain 蒼山 in Shandong carries the phrase, "Jade Maiden [and] Transcendent 玉女與仙,"¹⁵ which indicates the close relationship between jade maidens and female Daoist transcendants. A legend from the late Tang era, for example, recounts how 12 jade maidens assisted the Celestial Master 天師 from Sichuan (i.e., Zhang Daoling 張道陵, 34–156 CE)

10 *Shiji*, 63.2139.

11 See Fang Nansheng's 方南生 version of the *Yuyang zazu* 酉陽雜俎, 16, which discusses Mother Li (Li mu 李母, i.e. Laozi's mother) as well as the conditions of Laozi's birth.

12 Shi Falin's 釋法琳 *Bian zheng lun* 辯正論 says, "Examining Daoist works shows that *Xuanmiao* 玄妙, *Zhongtai* 中台, *Zhu tao yu zha* 朱韜玉剖, and *Chu sai jing* 出塞經 claim that 'Laozi is Mother Li's offspring,' but they do not use the term 'mysterious jade maiden' 檢道家《玄妙》及《中台》、《朱韜玉机》等經、并《出塞記》云「老是李母所生」, 不云有「玄妙玉女」." See *Taishō*, no. 2110, "Bian zheng lun," 52: 525. Zhang Shoujie's *Shiji zhengyi* also cites *Zhu tao yu zha*. See *Shiji*, 63.2139. Though *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳 and *Shang yuan jing* 上元經 are no longer extant. Nevertheless, *Xuanmiao* does indeed mention the "Mysterious Jade Maiden," so Shi Falin's is mistaken on this point.

13 Jiang Sheng's 姜生 "Kandai dōkyō kyōten no shūmatsuron ni tsuite" 漢代道教經典の終末論について quotes as follows: "Gu Yong presented Emperor Cheng of Han with a memorandum," 谷永上漢成帝書.

14 Qiu Xigui et al., eds. *Changsha mawangdui hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 5:78.

15 Shandong sheng bowuguan, Cangshan xian wenhuaguan, "Shandong Cangshan Yuanjia yuannian huaxiang shi mu," *Kaogu*, 1975.2: 127.

in opening a salt well. How exactly jade maidens are related to “mysterious women 玄女” requires further study.¹⁶ Finally, it is worth briefly mentioning that Ge Hong’s 葛洪 (283–363 CE) “Xialan” 遐覽 chapter, claims that there was a book in one scroll, entitled, *Yunü yinwei* 玉女隱微,¹⁷ and Duan Chengshi also claims to have seen a document called, *Liu yin yunü jing* 六陰玉女經.¹⁸

During the Eastern Han period, there were already accounts of Laozi that identify him with the original pneuma of the primordial chaos that “predates the birth of Heaven and Earth 先天地生.” Bian Shao’s *Inscription to Laozi* is recorded in the *Li shi* 隸釋 as follows:

The book in two chapters [i.e. the *Daodejing*] states that Heaven and Earth are able to achieve longevity by not arising from themselves ... There are also sayings like, “The spirit of the valley is undying; it is called the mysterious female.” Those disciples of the Way in the current age grasp the categories and expand them, holding that Laozi both separates and unites with the *Qi* of the primordial chaos and has the longevity of the three luminaries. He observes Heaven to generate wisdom ... He ascends to the big dipper and descends from it. Following the sun, he undergoes nine transformations. He ebbs and flows along with the four seasons. He uses the compass and T-square to regulate the three luminaries, while the four numinosities are near to him. He concentrates on his Cinnabar Fields, and on the Grand Unity of the Purple Chamber.

其二篇之書，稱天地所以能長且久者，以不自生也。……或有浴神不死，是謂玄牝之言，由是世之好道者，觸類而長之，以老子離合於混沌之氣，與三光為終始。觀天作識，□降斗星，隨日九變，與時消息。規架三光，四靈在旁，存想丹田，大一紫房。¹⁹

16 See Xing Dongtian, “Xuannü de qi yuan, zhineng yu yanbian,” *Shijie zongjiao yanjiu*, 1997.3: 92–103. As far as I know, the term “mysterious woman” was first seen in the Han dynasty weft prophecy text, *He tu* 河圖. In the *Ju Song Guangyun* 鉅宋廣韻, under the character *fu* 符 which is listed under the rhyme group “10 *yu* 十虞,” there is a quotation of *He tu* as follows: “The mysterious woman showed the Commander’s tally in order to dispatch troops alongside Huangdi to fight against Chi You 玄女出兵符與黃帝戰蚩尤.” See *Ju Song Guangyun*, 1.41.

17 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 19:337.

18 *Youyang zazu*, 16.

Note: The same work is also listed in the “Xialan” chapter of the *Baopuzi* 抱朴子.

19 Bian Shao, “Laozi ming,” 3.1b–2a, in Hong Kuo, *Li shi, Li xu*, 36.

Bian Shao thus clearly demonstrates how Laozi's followers divinized him. We similarly find in the *Xiang'er zhu* 想爾注 commentary to the *Daodejing* 道德經 the idea that, “*Dao* (the Way) is *Qi*. It transforms to become the supreme apex 道，氣也，化為太上。”²⁰ Additionally, “*Da Daojia ling jie*” 大道家令戒 identifies Laozi with the Great Way 大道 itself.²¹ These examples all demonstrate that Zhang Daoling was not the first to treat Laozi in this way, as the origins of this attitude can be traced back to earlier sources.²² Bian further Shao expresses his dissatisfaction with Ban Gu's “*Gujin ren biao*” in the following line:

[Ban Gu's] ninefold classification [of great people]—how can he tarnish [Laozi's] reputation so? [Laozi] is like the Sun and Moon, uniting with the Dipper Star of the Heavens.

九等之敘，何足累（原作壘）名，同光日月，合之北辰星。²³

Another relevant text comes from the *Sheng Mu Stele* 聖母碑, the “Stele to the Sagely Mother,” by Wang Fu 王阜 (fl. Eastern Han), which is partially preserved in Li Daoyuan's 酈道元 (466–527 CE) *Shuijing zhu* 水經注, “*Gou shui zhu*” 溝水注. The relevant lines read as follows:

In front of the temple there is the tomb of Mother Li (Laozi's mother). To its east is a stele. In the first year of [Emperor Huan of Han's] Yongxing 永興 era (153 CE), the Qiao county magistrate from Changsha, Wang Fu, erected it. The stele says, “Laozi was born between Qu and Guo. The rivers of Guo go to the east of Qu and pass south through the old city of Xiang county, which is petty and small.” Bian Shao's Inscription to Laozi also says, “Laozi is from Xiang County in Chu. Xiang county is empty and desolate. Now it is under the jurisdiction of Ku County, and the old city still exists to the east of the village of Lai.”

廟前有李母冢。冢東有碑，是永興元年譙令長沙王阜所立，碑元「老子生於曲澗間。澗水又曲東，逕相縣故城

20 Jao Tsung-i, *Laozi Xiang'er zhu jiaozheng*, rpt. in *Rao Zongyi ershi shiji xueshu wenji*, 5:434.

21 “*Da Daojia ling jie*,” *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiaojie kejing*, rpt. in *Zhengtong daoang*, 18: 235–38.

22 Note: Zhang Daoling is the founder of the Way of the Celestial Masters 天師道, who substantially reformed Daoist practices he believed to be degenerate. For helpful discussions of Zhang's influence and the traditions associated with the Celestial Masters, see Livia Kohn, *Daoism Handbook*, 313, 417–418.

23 Bian Shao, “Laozi ming,” 3:3a, in Hong Kuo, *Li shi, Li xu*, 37.

南，其城卑小實中。」邊韶《老子碑》文云：「老子，楚相縣人也，相縣虛荒，今屬苦，故城猶存，在賴鄉之東」。²⁴

Wang Fu was from Changsha and was magistrate of Qiao county. His stele was actually erected in 153 CE, prior to the time of Bian Shao, and it has been long lost.

However, in addition to Li Daoyuan's quotation, the contents of Wang Fu's stele are preserved in two other sources:

1) The *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽, "Tai chu" 太初, cites Wang Fu's stele and refers to it as the, *Lao jun sheng mu* Stele 老君聖母碑, "Stele to the Sagely Mother of the Old Ruler." The relevant quote reads as follows:

Laozi is the Way. He was born before even formlessness existed. He arose before the Great Beginning. He enacted the origins of the Great Simplicity. Roaming the Six Vacuities, coming and going from the dim obscurity, observing the yet undivided chaos, peering upon the yet unseparated clearness and turbidity.

老子者，道也，乃生於無形之先，起於太初之前，行於太素之元，浮遊六虛，出入幽冥，觀混合之未別，窺清濁之未分。²⁵

The content here draws upon the *Qianzao du* 乾鑿度 in claiming that Laozi was "born before formlessness."²⁶ After this, he acquired the title of the "Chaotic Origin 混元."

2) Also in the chapter, "Ren shi" 人事 of the *Taiping yulan* quotes Cui Xuanshan's 崔玄山 (d. unknown) *Lai xiang ji* 瀨鄉記 as follows:

At the memorial temple for Laozi's mother, two *li* to the north of the temple to the great Laozi, there is a stele to the left of the temple's door which is titled, "Stele to Laozi's Sagely Mother, Li Furen." [It says:] Laozi is the Way's Ruler. He first arose riding on a white deer, entrusting himself to Lady Li's womb for 72 years. [He was] born in the state of Chu, Huaiyang, Ku County, Lai village, Quren neighborhood. Laozi's personal name was Er, the Celestial Essence. His sobriquet was Boyang, his pen name Dan.

24 *Shuijing zhushu*, 23.1945-46.

25 *Taiping yulan*, 1.4a.

26 *Taiping yulan*, 1.3b.

李母祠，在老君祠北二里，祠門左有碑文曰「老子聖母李夫人碑」。老子者，道君也。始起乘白鹿，下託於李氏胞中七十二年，產於楚國淮陽苦縣瀨鄉曲仁里。老子名耳，星精也，字伯陽，號曰聃。²⁷

We cannot consult the full text of Wang Fu's stele, as only these three quoted sections remain, but they show that Laozi's mother was already viewed as a saintly figure during the years of Emperor Huan's Yongxing era (153–154 CE).²⁸

The *Taiping Yulan* also quotes the *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳, which says:

Laozi's mother was pregnant with him for 70 years, only then was he born. When the time came, her left flank split open, and he was born. He was born with a white head [of hair]. So, they called him Laozi, "Old Child."

老子母懷之七十歲乃生，時割其左腋而生，生而白首，故謂之老子。²⁹

This is the source of the claim that Laozi was born from the left flank just like the Buddha.³⁰

Laozi's mother is also known as the "Mysterious Jade Maiden." The *Youyang zazu*, "Yu ge" 玉格 says:

The Old Ruler in his 81st year of gestation cut open [his mother's] left flank and was born with a white head [of hair]. It is also said that Laozi's mother was the Mistress of the Primal Origin. The Sun's essence entered her mouth. She swallowed it and became pregnant.

²⁷ *Taiping yulan*, 361.5b–6a.

²⁸ The volume by Yan Kejun 嚴可均, *Quan Hou Han wen* 全後漢文, only records the first excerpt from the *Taiping yulan*, and mistakenly claims this Wang Fu to be a different Wang Fu, prefect of Yizhou 益州, which would mistakenly suggest that Wang Fu is from the time of the Emperor Zhang of Han 漢章帝 (75–88 CE). Yang Shoujing's (1839–1915) *Shujing zhu* has pointed out this mistake, writing, "Mr. Yan mistakenly thinks Wang Fu is from Chengdu, which is an error 嚴氏誤以王阜為成都人，失考甚矣." See Yang Shoujie, *Shujing zhushu* 水經注疏 (Jiangsu guji chubanshe 江蘇古籍出版社), 1946.

²⁹ *Taiping yulan*, 361.7b.

³⁰ I have previously written an article which includes a discussion of Laozi alongside similar stories of Indra and the Buddha, though the investigation there is not exhaustive. See "Zhongguo gudai xiesheng de chuanshuo" 中國古代「脇生」的傳說, *Yanjing Xuebao*, 1997.3: 5–28.

老君在胎八十一年，剖左腋而生，生而白首。又：李母，本元君也，日精入口，吞而有孕。³¹

This is how Laozi's mother came to be known as a saintly figure. Bian Shao's *Inscription to Laozi* also says:

In the 8th year of the Yanxi 延熹 era (165 CE), 8th month, *jiazi* day, his majesty ... focused his heart-mind on his Yellow Highness, and, just like Gaozong, he saw Laozi in a dream. He thus honored Laozi with a sacrificial ceremony. At that time, [I,] Bian Shao, was Director of Rites in Chen state ... and I dare to proclaim [these events] and make this engraving.

延熹八年（一六五年）八月甲子，皇上……潛心黃軒，同符高宗，夢見老子，尊而祀之。于時陳相邊韶，典國之禮……敢演而銘之。³²

There are several different records concerning Emperor Huan's sacrifice to Laozi. The *Hou Han shu* 後漢書, "Huan Di ji" 桓帝紀, records that the Central Regular Attendant 中常侍, Guan Ba 管霸 (d. 168 CE), built a temple for Laozi in the eleventh month of the same year (165 CE).³³

The *Hou Han ji* 後漢紀 by Yuan Hong 袁宏 (328–376 CE) records that in the first month of the 8th year of Yanxi (165 CE), Zuo Guan 左館 (d. 165 CE), also a central regular attendant, was sent to Ku county to conduct a sacrifice to Laozi, as Emperor Huan was developing a fondness for the arcane arts of divine transcendents.³⁴ In the 12th month of the same year, he again sent Guan Ba to Ku county to conduct a sacrifice to Laozi.³⁵ In the 6th month of the 9th year of Yanxi (166 CE), *gengwu* day, Emperor Huan made a sacrifice in the Zhuolong Imperial Palace in honor of Laozi.³⁶

The *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑, "Han ji" 漢紀, says:

In the first month of the 8th year of Yanxi (165 CE): Emperor Huan sent the Central Regular Attendant, Zuo Guan, to Ku county to conduct a sacrifice to Laozi ... 9th year [of Huan's reign], 4th month, *gengwu* day: His Majesty personally performed a sacrificial ceremony in honor of Laozi in

31 *Youyang zazu*, 16.

32 Bian shao, "Laozi ming," 3.2a–2b, in Hong Kuo, *Li shi, Li xu*, 36.

33 *Hou Han shu*, 7.316.

34 *Hou Han ji*, 22.611.

35 *Hou Han ji*, 22.614.

36 *Hou Han ji*, 22.617.

the Zhuolong Palace; [he] used patterned felt to decorate the altar, along with gold and jade ornaments, and a buckle for the high platform, and utilized them in performing the Heavenly ceremonies and sacrifices.

(延熹)八年春正月。帝遣中常侍左悺之苦縣祠老子。……九年，夏四月庚午，上親祠老子於濯龍宮，以文闕為壇飾，淳金鈿器，設華蓋之坐，用郊天樂。³⁷

The *Shuijing*, “Guo shui zhu” 過水注, quotes the *Xianren Wang Ziqiao Stele* 仙人王子喬碑, saying:

In the 8th month of the 8th year of Yanxi (165 CE), his Majesty sent servants to sacrifice and pay tribute to the Zhuolong temple in a dignified manner. Prime Minister Donglai Wang Zhang (whose sobriquet is Boyi) believed that to follow the will of the sages and spirits, the palace must have stone inscriptions, so he and the adjutant Bian Qiansui established the mysterious stones.

延熹八年秋八月，皇帝遣使者奉犧牲致禮，祠濯（龍）之敬，肅如也。國相東萊王璋，字伯義，以為神聖所興，必有銘表，乃與長史邊乾遂樹之玄石。³⁸

Xiang Kai submitted a memorandum to the emperor in the 6th month of the 9th year of the Yanxi era (166 CE) after the sacrifice to Laozi in the Zhuolong Palace 濯龍宮. The memorandum contains the sentence, “Laozi entered the barbarian lands and became Buddha 老子入夷狄為浮屠.”³⁹ Ma Rong 馬融 (79–166 CE) in “Chupu fu” 樗蒲賦 says:

[When his] Way and virtue were already sufficient, he loved playing Chupu,⁴⁰ and so when Laozi entered the land of the barbarian tribes, he relieved his anguish by playing Chupu.

道德既備，好此樗蒲。伯陽入戎，以斯消憂。⁴¹

37 *Zizhi tongjian*, 55.1777, 1787.

38 *Shuijing zhushu*, 23.1975.

39 *Hou Han shu*, 30B.1082.

40 Note: *Chupu* 樗蒲 was a kind of chess game popular during the late Han dynasty and believed to have been invented by Laozi.

41 Ma Rong, “Chupu fu,” *Quan Hou Han wen*, 18.4b, rpt. in *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 566.

Ma Rong, serving as attendant 郎中, drafted a report on behalf of Liang Ji 梁冀 (d. 159 CE) to the imperial minister, Li Gu 李固 (94–147 CE), during the first year of the Jianhe era 建和 (147 CE) under Emperor Huan's reign.

The *Wei shu* 魏書, “Shi Lao zhi” 釋老志, claims that “Emperor Ling [of Han] 漢靈帝 (r. 168–189) installed the baldachin in Zhailong 靈帝置華蓋於翟龍,”⁴² mistaking Emperor Huan for Emperor Ling of Han. Hong Kuo's 洪适 (1117–1184) *Li shi* 隸釋 says, “Emperor Huan sought to cultivate the arcane arts, so at that time, the various prefectures competed to erect steles 威宗 (桓帝) 方脩神仙之事，故一時郡國競作碑表。”⁴³ Thus, during the reign of Emperor Huan, Laozi officially became part of the imperial court sacrifices during the suburban offerings to Heaven 郊天, just as Han Emperor Wu 漢武帝 (141–87 BCE) sacrificed to the Great One 太一 at the suburban offerings during his reign.

Based on the erection of the steles and the construction of the temple in honor of Laozi's mother, we can see how Laozi's birth was perceived to resemble that of the Buddha. Laozi's mother thus maintained a similarly exalted status to Queen Maya, the Buddha's mother. Laozi had already been considered divine before the time of Emperor Huan, and his own mythology eventually formed an amalgamation with that of the Buddha, thus leading him to gradually transform into a religious patriarch on par with the Buddha. We can also infer that the erection of the stele to Laozi's mother in 153 CE predates Emperor Huan's 165 CE sacrifice to Laozi by 12 years, which demonstrates that Laozi's consecration can be identified within a relatively fixed period of time.

The legend of Laozi civilizing the barbarians has always garnered much scholarly attention, largely relying upon the account in the *Xuanmiao neijie jing* 玄妙內解經. Zhang Shoujie in the *Shiji zhengyi* quotes this text, saying, “Laozi's mother was pregnant for 81 years. She wandered under a plum tree, and he was born from her left flank 李母懷胎八十一載，逍遙李樹下，乃割左腋而生。”⁴⁴ It also says, “The Mysterious Jade Maiden dreamed that a shooting star entered her mouth, and she became pregnant 玄妙玉女夢流星入口而有娠。”⁴⁵ Zhang Shoujie personally records that the text indeed contains the term “Mysterious Jade Maiden.” Many scholars, especially Japanese editors and textual critics, respect and employ the *Xuanmiao neijie jing* as important source regarding issues pertaining to the origin of religious Daoism. In recent years, domestic scholarship has risen to the occasion by carrying out related research and has achieved outstanding results, such as those observed in Hao

42 *Wei shu*, 114.3048.

43 Bian shao, “Laozi ming,” 3.3b, in Hong Kuo, *Li shi, Li xu*, 37.

44 *Shiji*, 63.2139.

45 *Shiji*, 63.2139.

Chunwen's 郝春文 edited collection, *Dunhuang wenxian lunji* 敦煌文獻論集, which contains three works on this issue. Liu Yi's 劉屹 *Xuanmiao neipian kao* 玄妙內篇 detailed discussions deserve special mention. They include a chronology of the different portions and versions of the text, making for especially incisive commentary.⁴⁶

The *Xuanmiao neipian* has been quoted in the Dunhuang manuscript, *Taiping jing* 太平經 (S. 4226), so it is possible that this text was already circulating during the Han dynasty. The title of "Mysterious Jade Maiden" appears to come from the *Xuanmiao neipian*, wherein the two-character combination "mysterious and wondrous 玄妙" was added to the term "jade maiden." Ming Sengshao's 明僧紹 *Zheng er jiao lun* 正二教論 quotes Gu Huan's 顧歡 (420–483 CE) *Yi xia lun* 夷夏論, and upon relaying the story of Laozi being born from his mother's left flank, he points out that "this [story] came from the *Xuanmiao neipian* 此出玄妙內篇."⁴⁷ Ming Sengshao then adds a note that says, "The event appears in the *Xuanmiao neipian*, a genuine text from Han, and is not a literary invention 事在《玄妙內篇》，是漢中真典，非穿鑿之書."⁴⁸ The so-called "genuine text from Han" likely refers to something transmitted through Zhang Lu's 張魯 (d. 216 CE) lineage, as the term "Han" here was not used to denote China in its entirety.⁴⁹ The *San tian nei jie jing* 三天內解經 records that Laozi came from the mutual emergence of the three *Qi* and the primordial chaos in a transformation culminating in his birth to the left flank of the Mysterious Jade Maiden. The *San tian nei jie jing* seems to have been composed after the *Xuanmiao neijing*.⁵⁰ We might speculate that the term "genuine Han text" refers to what was passed down by representatives of the Way of the Celestial Masters. Both the wording of the *Xiang'er* commentary, which appears to treat Laozi as equivalent to the Way, and Wang Fu's stele to Laozi's mother, which says that "Laozi is the Way," thereby have the same meaning. Additionally, the Chu bamboo strips of Guodian 郭店 read, "There is the Way, completed in chaos, born before the formation of Heaven and Earth 有道混成，先天地生," while the transmitted version of *Laozi* has the relevant

46 Liu Yi, "Xuanmiao neipian kao," *Dunhuang wenxian lunji*, 614–52.

47 Gu Huan, "Yi Xia lun," *Quan Qi wen*, 22.1b, rpt. in *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 2914.

48 Ming Sengshao, "Zheng er jiao lun," *Quan Qi wen*, 14.5b, rpt. in *Quan Shanggu Sandai Qin Han Sanguo Liuchao wen*, 2868.

49 Note: Hanzhong 漢中 was the name of a commandery on the border of modern-day Shaanxi and Sichuan provinces which Zhang Lu had conquered and renamed to Hanning 漢寧, ruling it as part of his theocracy.

50 As discussed in U Siang-u 吳相武 (우 시양우), "Laozi Xiang'er zhu zhi niandai he zuozhe kao," *Daojia wenhua yanjiu*, 15:247–64.

line as “there are things 有物” instead of “there is the Way 有道.” The character *dao* 道 (Way) is written here as 𡗗, which is a combination of the radicals, *qiang* 𠄎 and *shou* 𠄎. Elsewhere, the word “Way” is written as 術, but this is uncommon. All of this shows that by the time of the completion of the *Laozi*, the Way was already treated as the primal *Qi* before the completion of Heaven and Earth.⁵¹ The Way is thus a thing completed in chaos, born before the formation of Heaven and Earth. This accords with the view that Laozi is equal to the Way as he was also born from the realm of chaotic mixture that existed prior to Heaven and Earth. This suggests that Laozi’s metaphysical connection to the Way predates even the explanation from the *Xiang’er* commentary and was not merely fabricated at a later date. Prior to the time of the Eastern Han Emperor Huan, the story of Laozi’s mother giving birth to him from the left flank was already very much in vogue, and after Emperor Huan’s worship and sacrifice, Laozi’s status reached a level similar to Buddha’s. Wang Fu’s stele⁵² serves as marker for the period in which Laozi had just become divinized. With the support of the imperial court, Laozi was later officially promoted to divinity. Upon Laozi’s ascension to the throne as a religious leader, religious Daoism was established as a fixed entity.

51 This character is sometimes treated as *zhuang* 狀 based on its sound and writing. In my opinion, however, it’s best to treat it as *dao* 道.

52 Shi Zhecun’s 施鰲存 *Shuijing zhu beilu* 水經注碑錄, *juan* 5, no. 148, contains a textual investigation of another *Han Li mu Temple Stele*, honouring the Sagely Mother Li, that stems from the Tang dynasty. See Shi Zhecun, *Shuijing zhu beilu*, 5.212. This occurred after the Eastern Han period, and so we will not discuss it.

A Study of Zhonghuangzi, the “Master of Central Yellow”

中黃子考

The Earth has not been fond of its treasures for about a century now, with long-lost texts emerging from archaeological sites one after another. Some troves of recently excavated materials from Hunan are probably enough to impress even Shu Guangwei 束廣微 (261–300)¹ and Wang Sengqian 王僧虔 (426–485).² An incomplete version of the *Wenzi* 文子 unearthed from Ding County 定縣, Hebei 河北 province, has recently been published, leading to renewed scholarly interest in the text and the proliferation of new ideas. I recall a poem by Chen Liang 陳亮 (1143–1194), which reads, “it’s a cause for concern when everyone has new ideas 大家創見又成驚,”³ and, “the old scraps are full of clamoring for supremacy 故紙裏是爭雄處.”⁴ Recently, Wuhan University held a symposium on the Guodian 郭店 Chu bamboo manuscripts, and during the farewell banquet, I recited these sentences from Chen Liang as sincerely as I could.

Mr. Ding Yuanzhi 丁原植 has studied the various masters’ texts for years, with a particular focus on excavated manuscripts, and has written two books worth mentioning: *Wenzi ziliao tansuo* 《文子》資料探索 and *Huainanzi yu Wenzi kaobian* 《淮南子》與《文子》考辨.⁵ Both works bring together an abundance of meticulous analyses that have since been popular both domestically and abroad. Now, once again and with renewed vigor, he has composed another book, *Wenzi xinlun* 文子新論, for which Mr. Ding asked me to write the preface. I have received it, read it, and found impressive ideas throughout the book owed entirely to his careful study of the old texts. If Chen Liang were to come back to life, upon seeing this work, he would certainly be impressed.

1 Note: Jin dynasty scholar who was co-responsible for the collation of the *Zhushu jinian* 竹書紀年 and the *Mu Tianzi zhuan* 穆天子傳 that had been re-discovered in an excavation of the tomb of King Xiang of Wei 魏襄王 (r. 318–296 BCE) in 281 CE.

2 Note: Liu Song 劉宋 (420–479) to Southern Qi 南齊 (479–502) scholar who was renowned for his skills as calligrapher and his theoretical writings on this art.

3 Chen Liang, *Chen Liang ji*, 39.514.

4 Chen Liang, *Chen Liang ji*, 39.513.

5 Ding Yuanzhi 丁原植. *Huainanzi yu Wenzi kaobian* 《淮南子》與《文子》考辨, and Ding Yuanzhi 丁原植. *Wenzi ziliao tansuo* 《文子》資料探索.

For texts both old and new, once they are carefully investigated, very often new issues arise. To give an example, in the *Wenzi*, “Wei ming pian,” 微明篇 we find the title of “Master of Central Yellow 中黃子,”⁶ and in what follows, I shall conduct a brief investigation into the matter in the hopes of learning from Mr. Ding.⁷

Because the “Wei ming pian” does not appear in the *Huainanzi* 淮南子, Mr. Ding suggest that it possibly belongs to an ancient version of the *Wenzi*. The chapter discusses 25 individuals in groups of five, demonstrating in turn a characteristic emphasis on the number five. During the Tang dynasty, Chen Kuan 陳寬 (fl. 834) of Yingchuan 穎川 wrote, *Ershiwu deng ren tu* 二十五等人圖 (Portraits of 25 Individuals). The fragmentary text can be seen in the Paris Dunhuang manuscript P.2518, which consists of 98 columns that were previously only observed in the *Song mishusheng xu dao siku que shumu* 宋秘書省續到四庫闕書目.⁸ The *Wenzi* records the sequence of individuals from the highest class downwards as follows: Divine Person 神人, Genuine Person 真人, Person of the Way 道人, Utmost Person 至人, and Sagely Person 聖人.⁹ In Chen’s work, the sequence has been altered to read Divine Person, Sagely Person, Genuine Person, Person of the Way, and Utmost Person. Here, the “Sagely Person” ranks further above because Chen employed the list within a Ruist framework which had different values than the Daoist one. Jia Yi 賈誼 (200–168 BCE) in his “Funiao fu” 鵬鳥賦 also contains a ranking of persons. On its sentence, “The Genuine Person is indifferent and undisturbed 真人恬漠,”¹⁰ Li Shan’s 李善 (630–689 CE) commentary quotes the *Wenzi* as follows, “Obtaining the Way of Heaven and Earth, one can thereupon be called the Genuine Person 得天地之道，故謂之真人也.”¹¹ Li thus suggests that Jia Yi had seen the ancient *Wenzi*. The *Daozang* version of the *Wenzi zuanyi* 文子續義 says, “As for the Master of Central Yellow, he was the disciple of an ancient Genuine Person 中黃子者，古之真人弟子歟.”¹² The transmitted version of *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳 claims, “Sir White Rock is a follower of the Elder of Central Yellow 白石先生者，中黃丈人弟子也.”¹³ In ancient times, there was a

6 *Wenzi shuyi*, 7:337.

7 Note: For a brief, recent discussion of the “Central Yellow” figure and its eponymous writings in English, see Paul van Els, *The Wenzhi: Creativity and Intertextuality in Early Chinese Philosophy*, 146–147.

8 Ye Dehui, comp, *Mishusheng xubian dao siku que shumu*, 2:59a.

9 *Wenzi shuyi*, 7:337.

10 *Wenxuan*, 6.208.

11 *Wenxuan*, 6.208.

12 Du Daojian, *Wenzi zuanyi*, 7.18a. Rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 1058:437.

13 *Shenxian zhuan jiaoshi*, 1.34.

divine ruler named “White Rock”, and a stele commemorating him was erected in the sixth year of the Guanghe 光和 era (183 CE) during the reign of Emperor Ling of Han 漢靈帝 (r. 168–189) in Zhending 真定, Hebei province,¹⁴ but I am not certain whether “Sir White Rock” mentioned in the *Shenxian zhuan* is this divine ruler White Rock. During the Three Kingdoms period, Cao Cao 曹操 (155–220 CE) prohibited the sacrifice to the “Way of Central Yellow and the Great One 中黃太一道.” Shen Zengzhi 沈曾植 (1850–1922) in the *Hairi lou zhacong* 海日樓札叢 quotes the *Wei shu* 魏書, which recorded a memorandum written by the Yellow Turbans 黃巾 to Cao Cao. It reads as follows:

In the south of Ji province, you have destroyed the shrines and altars, showing that you accord with the Way of Central Yellow and the Great One. So, it appears that you knew the Way, but now again are confused. The spell of the Han is already over, the House of Yellow has been established. This is the great fate dictated by Heaven which cannot be retained even by your capabilities as a ruler.

昔在濟南，毀壞神壇，其道乃與中黃太乙同。似若知道，今更迷惑。漢行已盡，黃家當立，天之大運，非君才力所能存也。¹⁵

Shen also points out that the *Guishan yuanlu* 龜山元籙 mentioned the titles of the “Eastern Clarity 東明,” “Southern Brilliance 南光,” “Western Essence 西精,” “Northern Brilliance 北光,”¹⁶ and “Central Yellow 中黃.”¹⁷ The *Daozang* “Taiping bu” 太平部 contains a text called, *Taishang lingbao jingming zhonghuang bazhu jing* 太上靈寶淨明中黃八柱經 that further attests to the term “Central Yellow.”¹⁸

The concept of “Central Yellow” was also assimilated into divinatory weft texts 讖緯, including the Han era, *Xiao jing Zhonghuang chen* 孝經中黃讖,

14 The stele inscription was recorded in the *Li shi* 隸釋. “Baishi shenjun bei,” 3.22b–25a. In Hong Kuo, *Li shi, Li xu*, 46–48.

15 Shen Zengzhi, *Hairi lou zhacong*, 6.235.

16 Note: Jao cites here the “Northern Brilliance 北光,” but the original text refers to the “Northern Mystery/Darkness 北玄” instead.

17 *Shangqing yuanshi bianhua baozhen shangjing jiuling taimiao guishan xuanlu*, rpt. in *Zhengtong daozaogang*, 34:211.

18 *Taishang lingbao jingming zhonghuang bazhu jing*, rpt. in *Zhengtong daozaogang*, 24:618.

which had been lost for some time.¹⁹ Chen Pan'an 陳槃庵 in his work on the topic writes as follows:

As for the so-called “Central Yellow,” it was a celestial being relied upon by Daoist “method masters.”²⁰ The *Baopuzi*, “Ji yan pian” says, “(the Yellow Emperor) arrived at the east of Mt. Tai and revered Central Yellow.” It also quotes the, *Shenxian jinzhuo jing* as saying, “The highest are Central Yellow and the Great One who carry on the original essence.” The original annotation reads, “In former times, those who assisted in the celestial palace above, all were subordinate to the rule of the Elder of Central Yellow and the Great One. These two rulers were the leaders of the celestial beings.”

「所謂中黃者，方士依託之仙人。《抱朴子·極言篇》：（黃帝）適東岱而奉中黃。」又引《神仙金鈞經》曰：「上為中黃太一，承敘元精。」原注：昔上輔仙宮者，皆隸屬中黃丈人及太一君，此二君者，仙人之主也。²¹

According to the quote from the *Baopuzi*, “Xialan pian” 遐覽篇, there was a text called the *Zhonghuang jing* 中黃經 which may have been a creation by Daoist method masters in order to propagate the name of Central Yellow.²² The “Xianyao pian” 仙藥篇 also mentions a text titled *Zhonghuangzi fushi jieyao* 中黃子服食節要.²³ Additionally, the *Youyang zazu* 酉陽雜俎 offers a list of talismans and diagrams together comprising some 7000 titles in total, including a *Zhonghuang zhangren jing* 中黃丈人經.²⁴ Juan 13 of the *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤, contains a *Taiqing Zhonghuang zhen jing* 太清中黃真經.²⁵ In the *Wenxuan* 文選, we find the text, “Qi ming” 七命, by the Jin dynasty author Zhang Jingyang 張景陽 (also Zhang Xie 張協 d. 307 CE), which says, “Commence the *shaogong*

19 The *Weishu jicheng* 緯書集成 contains a revised compilation of the text assembled from various fragments. *Weishu jicheng*, 2:1029.

20 Note: *Fangshi* 方士, here rendered as “method masters,” were Daoist adepts who were skilled in numerous arcane techniques associated with but not limited to areas of alchemy, physiognomy, astrology, necromancy, divination, general occult matters.

21 Chen Pan, “Gu chenwei shulu jieti 3,” 61.

22 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 19:333.

23 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11:208.

Note: The original Chinese text ends with the character *du* 度 rather than *yao* 要 as cited by Jao.

24 *Youyang zazu*, 2:15.

25 *Yunji qiqian*, 13:321. Chen Pan, *Gu chenwei yantao ji qi shulu jieti*, 307.

melody of the Central Yellow; begin the altered *shang* mode of the Reaper of New Growths 啟中黃之少宮，發葶收之變商。²⁶ Li Shan comments as follows: “Central Yellow is the countenance of the ground 中黃，土色。”²⁷ In the *Wuchen wenxuan zhu* 五臣文選注, one of the titular “five ministers 五臣,” Lü Yanji 呂延濟 (fl. 720), says, “‘Central Yellow’ is the Yellow Emperor 中黃，黃帝也，”²⁸ thereby equating Central Yellow with the Yellow Emperor, but the aforementioned Daoist texts appear to suggest otherwise. Another text titled *Zhonghuang zhenren jing* 中黃真人經 authored by the “Ruler of the Nine Transcendents 九仙君” is collected in the *Daozang*, and the *Yunji qiqian* quotes it as follows:

The Yellow Emperor used the Way to rule the world for 120 years and went to Dinghu Mountain to ascend to Heaven in the daylight in order to ascend to the Palace of the Absolute. Thus, he was called the Genuine Person of Central Yellow.

黃帝以道治世一百二十年，於鼎湖山白日昇天，上登太極宮，號曰中黃真人。²⁹

This writing also considers the “Genuine Person of Central Yellow” to be the Yellow Emperor. The *Baopuzi*, “Di zhen pian” 地真篇, to contrast, says, “In ancient times, the Yellow Emperor looked west and saw the Master of Central Yellow, and he received a longevity elixir 昔者黃帝西見中黃子，受久加之方。”³⁰ In this case, the Master of Central Yellow and the Yellow Emperor are clearly two different people. The *Wenzi* quotes an explanation from the *Zhonghuangzi* 中黃子, the alleged eponymous work of the Master of Central Yellow, which demonstrates that the designation “Central Yellow” was well-known during the Warring States period and thus did not arise only during the Han period.

Yunji qiqian no. 18 and 19 contain the *Laozi zhong jing* 老子中經, which transmits the Central Yellow myth and mentions his disciples, calling them “Disciples of Central Yellow 中黃門子.”³¹ Kristofer M. Schipper in a recent article has argued that the Central Yellow myth propagated by the *Laozi zhong jing* is in conformity with the Yellow Turban rebels’ faith in the idea of the “Yellow

26 *Wenxuan*, 35.1598.

27 *Wenxuan*, 35.1598.

28 *Liuchen zhu wenxuan*, 35.653.

29 *Yunji qiqian*, 3.47.

30 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 18.324.

31 *Yunji qiqian*, 19.455.

Heaven 黃天” during the later Han period, from which we may infer the date of its composition.³² The *Lingbao wu fu xu* 靈寶五符序 also quotes the *Laozi zhong jing*. It thus appears that this text was already in circulation prior to the Three Kingdoms period.³³

The “Central Yellow” topic within the *Wenzi* has not yet been addressed in other studies. This is because in the past, the *Wenzi* was viewed with suspicion and was neglected. Currently, however, we can be certain that the figure of the “Master of Central Yellow” appeared prior to the creation of the *Wenzi* and was not a Han period invention by Daoist method masters. In fact, within Huang-Lao thought, the sayings of the Master of Central Yellow formed one of the mainstream doctrines and attracted substantial attention throughout history, as seen by Ge Hong’s 葛洪 (283–363) praise of his writings within the *Baopuzi*. The above discussion may not be wholly correct, so I still hope that Mr. Ding can enlighten me.³⁴

Postscript

The *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽, “Renshu bu” 人事部, offers a quote from the *Wenzi* allegedly stemming from the Master of Central Yellow himself, which reads as follows:

Heaven has five agents; Earth has five directions; sounds have five notes; things have five flavors; colors have five divisions; people have five groups of five. Five groups make twenty-five, and thus the space between Heaven and Earth has twenty-five classes of people. Among the members of the highest group is the Divine Person, the Genuine Person, the Person of the Way, the Utmost Person, and the Sagely Person. The next group of people includes the Virtuous Person, the Worthy Person, the Wise Person, the Good Person, and the Eloquent Person. The next group contains the Impartial Person, the Loyal Person, the Scrupulous Person, the Even-keeled Person, and the Settled Person. The next group contains the Common Person, the Enslaved Person, the Foolish Person, the Gluttonous Person, and the Petty Person. The difference between the highest group of five people and the lowest group of five people is similar to that between humans and hooved animals.

32 See Kristofer M. Schipper, “*Laozi zhong jing* chutan,” 204–16.

33 Note: There is no mention of *Laozi zhong jing* in the *Lingbao wu fu xu*, so perhaps Jao has a different text in mind that contains an excerpt.

34 Jao Tsung-i, “Zhonghuangzi kao,” *Yi fen ji*, 629.

天有五行，地有五方，聲有五音，物有五味，色有五章，人有五伍，五伍二十五，故天地之間有二十五等人。上伍有神人、真人、道人、至人、聖人，次伍有德人、賢人、智人、善人、辯人，中伍有公人、忠人、商人、平人、直人，下伍有眾人、奴人、愚人、視肉人、小人，上伍之與下伍猶人之與牛馬也。³⁵

The Early Han dynasty tomb of Wu Yang 吳陽 (d. 162 BCE), the Marquis Qing of Yuanling 沅陵頃侯, was excavated in 1999 from Mt. Huxi 虎溪山, Yuanling county, Xiangxi 湘西. From it, more than 170 fragmentary bamboo slips were excavated. They contain a culinary text that includes a “recipe for Zhonghuang (Central Yellow) rice 為中黃飯方,” which thus demonstrates a connection with the Master of Central Yellow. The *Baopuzi*, “Xianyao pian” also cites the *Zhonghuangzi fushi jieyao*,³⁶ further attesting to the Master of Central Yellow’s textual influence. See *Minshu* 閩書, *juan 1*, which quoted Yang Xi’s 楊羲 (330–386 CE) book, *Zhonghuang zhi hu bao fu* 中黃制虎豹符.

35 *Taiping yulan*, 360.1657.

36 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.208.

Note: See fn. 18.

A Discussion of the Dunhuang Fragment, *Dengzhen yinjue* (P.2732)

論敦煌殘本《登真隱訣》(P.2732)

Tao¹ Hongjing 陶弘景 (456–536 CE) at one point in his life retreated to the mountains to live and write in seclusion. His writings from this period total in 57 *juan*, the most important of which being the 24 *juan* text, *Dengzhen yinjue* 登真隱訣, and the 10 *juan* text, *Zhen'gao* 真誥.² An incomplete edition of the *Dengzhen yinjue* in a different format is now included in the *Zhengtong daoze* 正統道藏 under the *xun* 遜 category wherein only three *juan* are preserved.³ The book contains much commentary from the author himself, perhaps also written when he was living in seclusion,⁴ interwoven between the teachings of Yang Xi 楊羲 (330–386) and his patron, Xu Mi 許謐 (303–376). It also sometimes overlaps with material from the *Zhen'gao*.

Among the handwritten Dunhuang manuscripts collected in Paris is a Daoist scripture cataloged as Pelliot No. 2732.⁵ Wang Zhongmin 王重民 and Chen Guofu 陳國符 believe the text concerns, “the arts of breathing and *daoyin*

1 Note: A translation of the Dunhuang manuscript under discussion is included at the end of Jao's discussion, and the reader might benefit from familiarizing herself with its structure before engaging with the article itself.

2 See Jia Song, *Huayang Tao Yinju neizhuan*, rpt. in *Zhengtong daoze*, 5: 509.

Note: Both the *Dengzhen yinjue* and *Zhen'gao* represent attempts to recover, collate, and comment upon the founding revelations to Yang Xi 楊羲 that served as the basis for the Daoist Shangqing 上清 (“Highest Clarity”) teachings. Although Tao claims that Yang Xi's revelations are the basis for Shangqing, it was Tao himself who is responsible for systematizing and popularizing the school in these two works. The longer, *Dengzhen yinjue* was written first in 493 and served as a technical manual for Daoist adepts, while the shorter *Zhen'gao* was later written in 499 for a more popular audience and simplified the ideas therein. Both, however, are seen as founding documents of the Shangqing teachings. See Fabrizio Predagio, *The Encyclopedia of Taoism*, 968–970.

An excellent introduction to the *Zhen'gao*, its contents, protagonists, and textual issues can be found in Stephen R. Bokenkamp's, *A Fourth-Century Daoist Family*. Bokenkamp also provides a partial translation of the work, which the reader might want to consult in order to get a better understanding for the language and purpose of the text.

3 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong daoze*, 6: 606–626.

4 See Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 19, rpt. in *Zhengtong daoze*, 20: 603.

5 All citations of the text from P. 2732 in this chapter refer to the *Dunhuang baoze*, 123: 516–19.

呼吸導引之術。”⁶ In an early draft of the *Dunhuang daojing mulu bian* 敦煌道經目錄編 by Ōfuchi Ninji 大淵忍爾, this item was not yet included.⁷

The full fragment of the *juan* contains 127 lines, each of which contains fourteen to seventeen characters. The text occurs within silken column lines, and the characters therein are in excellent condition and well-written. The smaller characters are especially elegant, with its calligraphy even surpassing that of Zhong Shaojing 鍾紹京 (659–746). The characters *shi* 世 and *zhi* 治 do not miss any strokes, and they were not avoided like other Tang dynasty taboo words but instead were written just as they would have been in works from an earlier period. The text is fragmentary and lacks a title, but it begins with the following lines:

Preserve and keep oneself whole. Emit light and conceal darkness. The five numinosities transform and divide. Unite with clarity and approach emptiness. When the time comes, mount the Six Clouds.

保全。出景藏幽，五靈化分。合明扇虛，時乘六雲。

These are fragments from the section of the *Dengzhen yinjue* by Tao Hongjing that refer to seven rhymes utilized by Yang Xi for “Consuming the Mist 服霧。”⁸

Upon close examination of the end of the *juan*, we find three lines that draw upon the *Jingangtan guangda qingjing qieliuoni jing* 金剛檀廣大清淨陁羅尼經. The *juan* contains a transcription of the known *Dengzhen yinjue* up to the line, “black Qi within the Muddy Pellet⁹ 泥丸中有黑氣.” The phrase, “purple-colored rays 芒紫色,” that follows is not connected. The text was originally written on a single sheet that was cut off and added to later, so everything up to the phrase, “black Qi” can be treated as the first section written on the first sheet, while everything below it can be treated as the second section written on a second sheet. Regarding the first section, the entirety of its content in both the characters and their sequence can be found in *pian* 20 of the *Dengzhen yinjue*, save for the two words, “seven rhymes 七韻.”¹⁰ Thus, the first section of the fragment can thus be confidently deemed the *Dengzhen yinjue*.

6 See Chen Guofu, *Daozang yuanliu kao*, 219.

7 See *Dunhuang daojing mulu bian*.

8 Note: *Fuwu* 服霧 was a Daoist breathing practice to encourage longevity. On this topic, see also Jao’s article translated in the subsequent chapter of this volume.

9 Note: In Daoist texts, the term *niwan* 泥丸, lit. a “small clay ball,” is one of the “Nine Palaces 九宮” within the head. Located at the center of these palaces, it also represents them in their entirety, i.e., the brain.

10 *Yiwen* 藝文 8414.

The heading of the second section contains two lines of Tibetan script, which is recorded as follows:¹¹

Line 1:

nañ-rje-po-blon btsan-sum *gyis mchid stsald-pa-ḥa—mdo-gams bde-gams*
Kyi ris-La gtoqs-paḥi rnam.

*Neixiang*¹² Btsan-sum (name of a person)—came to write as follows: ...
people living in the nearby area.

內相（人名）來文謂地區所屬之人

Line 2:

bde-blon gyi ḥ..... tsaḥi nañ-rje-po-blon btsan-sum.

Xiang ... reply *neixiang* Btsan-sum (name of a person)

相答內相（人名）

Regarding this interior minister named Btsan-sum, the *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書, “*Tubo zhuan*” 吐蕃傳 says, “Shang Bibi 尚婢婢: his personal name was Zanzinya. He was from Yangtong¹³ and became prime minister of Tibet 尚婢婢名贊心牙，羊同國人，世為吐蕃貴相.”¹⁴ Pelliot translated and annotated the name, Zanxin 贊心, rendering it into (romanized) Tibetan script as *Bcan-gsan*.¹⁵ Shang Bibi, during the Huichang 會昌 and Dazhong 大中 eras (841–859) of Emperor Wuzong 唐武宗 (r. 840–846) and Emperor Xuanzong 唐宣宗 (r. 846–859) was the Military Commissioner 節度使 of Shan prefecture 鄯州 in Tibet. Thus, the interior minister mentioned in the *juan*, Btsan-sum,¹⁶ could

11 Following the interpretation of Dr. S.G. Karmay and the Das Latin transliteration style.

12 Note: The term *neixiang* 內相 most likely refers to a political title: “interior minister”.

13 Note: According to the *Tang huiyao* 唐會要, Yangtong 羊同 refers to Xiangxiong 象雄, an independent kingdom to the west of Tibet that was later integrated.

14 *Xin Tang shu*, 216B.6105.

15 Pelliot, *Histoire Ancienne du Tibet*, 134. Also consult P. Demiéville, *Le Concile de Lhasa*, 26–27. Chen Hongbao's 陳鴻寶 *Weiyuan xianzhi* 渭源縣志 recorded Shang Bibi won a battle at Mt. Nangu 南谷山]. See Chen Hongbao, *Minguo chuanguxiu Weiyuan xianzhi*, 2.6a–6b, rpt. in *Zhongguo difangzhi jicheng*, vol. 14, *Gansu fu xianzhi ji*, 14: 71–72.

16 Regarding Btsan-sum, see F.W. Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts and Documents Concerning Chinese Turkestan*, 3 parts, London, 1935, 1951, 1955. Part 4, indexes by Ed. Conze. London, 1963. C.f., part 2, pp. 376–377, part 3, pp. 98–99, as well as part 2, p. 407. This work also relates to Tibetan literary works from Xinjiang. Mdo-gams: The Northeast part of Tibet, a part of Mdo. C.f., Part 2 pp. 57–58, 61, 86, 99, 106, 108; part 3, p. 22, 31, 36, 46. Bde-gams: The administrative centre of Bde. Part 2, p. 10, 20; Part 3, pp. 4–5, 23, 25, 32. Regarding Councillors of Bde-gams, c.f. part 2, pp. 22, 57–58, 78, 79; part 3, pp. 22, 23, 25, 32, 35–36, and 38, etc. The preceding three items are Tibetan script reference materials offered by Wu Qiyu 吳其昱.

be Shang Bibi, referred to by his personal name, “Zanxin.” Upon examining the verso of the second section, we find “*Yuanmen lun*, one *juan* 《緣門論》一卷.” At the end, the text contains in black ink, “... the eminent Buddhist monks [...] A and Zhicheng, each took one book and finished collating it 阿、志澄闍梨，各執一本校勘訖.” There are additionally two lines written in vermilion. One reads, “Great Tang, in the tenth year of the Zhenyuan era (794), *jiayu* year, midwinter, eighth day, there was the Luofan¹⁷ monk Sengri of Xizhou’ 大唐貞元十年（794）歲甲戌仲冬八日，西州落蕃僧日。” The other line reads, “The second collation of the manuscript had been completed in the residence south of the Daning Temple in Gan prefecture 於甘州大寧寺南所居再校.” Thus, we can be sure that by the time of the Zhenyuan era (794), this Daoist scripture had already fallen into the hands of Tibetan monks, and furthermore, this had occurred prior to the time of Shang Bibi.

The rhyming scheme, meaning the number of rhyme groups, in this *juan* is consistently recorded, while they are sometimes omitted in the received *Dengzhen yinjue*.¹⁸ Regarding the sections on the writings of Yang Xi and Xu Mi, the sequence of ideas is very clear and largely identical to *juan* B of the received *Dengzhen yinjue*. I will now quote some excerpts from the original *juan* as well as indicate the places where it overlaps with the received *Zhen'gao*.

1 Method for Consuming Mist 服霧法

The main body of the text as well as the commentary are entirely identical to the corresponding section in the *Dengzhen yinjue*, save for the omission of the two characters, *qi yun* 七韻 within the commentary. The commentary in the Dunhuang *juan* says, “... and gold remains in the *qian* 肱 (i.e., the area between the ribs and the hips), just as the *Qi* is located within the five viscera 而金所存肱，猶是我五藏中氣.” The main body of the text says, “... *qian* for a long time, then one can scatter one’s physical form and enter into emptiness, forming a single body with the cloudy *Qi* 久肱之則能散形入空，與雲氣合體.” Now when we look at the received *Dengzhen yinjue*, we find that *qian* 肱 in fact

17 Note: The “Luofan monks” may refer to Chinese monks who had “fallen into the hands of the Tibetans” and remained in Dunhuang during the Tibetan occupation between 786 and 848. See Imre Galambos, *Dunhuang Manuscript Culture: End of the First Millennium*, 183.

18 For example, in *juan* A of the *Dengzhen yinjue*, the commentary to a section on the “prayer texts in nine modes 九宮祝辭” reads, “six rhymes 六韻.” In *juan* B, the “prayer for night sleep 夜臥祝辭” also contains a comment saying, “six rhymes.” However, such comments are omitted in other parts of the book. Some may have been deleted by later readers.

represents the character *fu* 服, and *jin* 金 (gold) is a loan character for *jin* 今 (now).¹⁹ The “Fuwu fa” 服霧法 of the *Zhen'gao* appears in *juan* 13, section 4.²⁰ It also appears in *juan* 10 of “Xie changqi” 協昌期,²¹ in the second section regarding the technique for consuming mist²² utilized by Zhang Weizi 張微子.²³

The text also refers to something called, “the announcement of the Left Central Lord 右中君告.” The “Left Central Lord” here refers to the Middle Lord Mao 中茅君, also known as Dinglu Zhongjun 定錄中君, the “Central Lord of Regulating the Registrars.”²⁴ The text also mentions the *Yang shu* 楊書, which refers to the writings by Yang Xi, below which the Dunhuang *juan* mentions a five-character title written in a disorderly manner: *Jingangtan guangda* 金剛檀廣大. This was written after the middle Tang period.

2 Art of Preserving Black and White 守玄白術

The main body text contains the following lines:

What Du Guangping 杜廣平 (fl. Three Kingdoms) received from Jie Yan 介琰 (d. unknown) was the Art of Black and White. It was also known as the “Inner Method of the Fetal Essence, Central Luminescence, and Black and White.” Each day at dawn, in sitting or lying, one shall at will actualize black *Qi* in the Muddy Pellet.

杜廣平所受分（介）琰玄白術，一名胎精中景玄白內法。常旦旦坐臥，任意存泥丸中有黑氣。

19 Note: The passage with the loan-words corrected would therefore read, “... and now what you actualize and consume is the *Qi* located within my five viscera 而金（今）所存於（服），猶是我五藏中氣。”

20 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 13, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 566.

21 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 10, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 545.

22 The same technique is also seen in *juan* 48, section 17, of the *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 (*Yi suo* 27646). See Zhang Junfang, *Yunji qiqian*, *juan* 48, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 22: 341.

23 Note: Zhang Weizi was an ancient Daoist immortal.

24 See Tao Hongjing, *Zhenling weiye tu* 真靈位業圖, 14b.

Note: Zhong Maojun 中茅君 was the middle brother of the three Mao brothers, Mao Ying 茅盈, Mao Zhong 茅衷, and Mao Gu 茅固, who according to tradition lived during the Later Han. Mt. Mao 茅山 in Jiangsu, where they achieved “immortality,” or “ascended as transcendents 仙,” is named after them. This is the mountain where Tao Hongjing retired to study the newly revealed scriptures under investigation in this article that then came to form the core of the Shangqing 上清 tradition, also known as Maoshan Daoism. The Mao brothers were also among the deities that communicated with Yang Xi.

The part that follows is badly damaged, but it concerns “actualizing white *Qi* within the heart and yellow *Qi* within the navel 存心中有白氣，存臍中有黃氣。”²⁵ Combined with the black *Qi* within the brain, this makes three kinds of *Qi*.

These paragraphs from the *Zhen'gao* appear in *juan* 13, section 14²⁶ and once again in *juan* 10, section 3.²⁷ In the *Zhen'gao* commentary to the line, “Hide yourself, conceal the form, and walk five-hundred *li* each day 匿身隱形，日行五百里，”²⁸ it says, “This was also known as the ‘Inner Method of the Fetal Essence, Central Luminescence, and Black and White’ 一名胎精中景玄白內法。”²⁹ The so-called “Central Luminescence 中景” is likely related to the concepts of “Inner Luminescence 內景” and “Outer Luminescence 外景,” which appear in the *Huangting* 黃庭. Du Guangping was the courtesy name of Du Qi 杜契 of the Du clan from Jingzhao 京兆 (modern day Xi'an, Shaanxi). During the second year of the Huangwu 黃武 era (223) under the reign of Sun Quan 孫權 (182–252), Du Qi met Jie yan 介琰 and was taught the “Art of Black and White” before then going to live in seclusion to the east of Mt. Mao 茅山. The commentary says that, “according to the *Jinshan fu*,³⁰ Yan transformed and disappeared because Sun Quan desired that he never be seen again 琰即《禁山符》云為孫權所殺化形而去者。”³¹

The above discussion pertains to the first section of the Dunhuang text.

3 The Method for Consuming Sunlight and Moonlight 服日月光法

The Dunhuang fragment discusses the “Theory of Preserving One’ Life 保命說,” which is an idea associated with youngest of the three Mao brothers.³² The commentary says, “the Minor Lord explained this method 小君說此法.” It allegedly offers a method for expelling evil spirits and healing illnesses. The *Dengzhen yinjue* says to “constantly actualize the Sun in your heart and the

25 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 616.

26 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 13, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 569–70.

27 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 10, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 545.

28 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 13, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 570.

29 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 13, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 570.

30 This refers to the “Xiyue gong jinshan fu” 西嶽公禁山符, the “Talisman of the Lord of the Western Sacred Peak [to] Prohibit Access to the Mountain,” mentioned in the *Baopuzi neipian* 抱朴子內篇, see *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 17.313.

31 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 13, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 569.

32 Note: The term *ming* 命 in this and related Daoist contexts can refer variously to “destiny”, “vital force”, or “essence” depending on the context. For a detailed discussion, see Fabrizio Predagio, “Destiny, Vital Force, or Existence? On the Meanings of Ming in Daoist Internal Alchemy and Its Relation to Xing or Human Nature,” 157–218.

Moon in your Muddy Pellet 恒存日在心，月在泥丸，³³ which comes from the *Da zhihui jing* 大智慧經. The *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤, *juan* 45, number 18, mentions “consuming the light of the Sun and Moon 服日月光.” The commentary says, “This comes from the *Zhen’gao*, no. 3 出《真誥》第三，”³⁴ referring to a section in an earlier edition, but in the modern version it is located in *juan* 10, number 15.³⁵ *Sandong zhu’nantang* 三洞珠囊, *juan* 1, number 11, quotes *Zhen’gao* number 5 in the same manner.³⁶ Wang Xuanhe 王懸河 has compiled an edition of the *Zhen’gao*, which contains the original ten *juan*.³⁷

In the beginning of the Dunhuang fragment, several sentences from “Lie down in the evening and actualize the Sun 夜臥覺存日” to “a long time 良久” that appear in the original text are omitted. It begins instead with the sentence, “The sunrays abruptly transform into fire 日芒忽變成火.” The above-mentioned omitted sentences can be restored based on the *Zhen’gao*, but the commentary recorded in the Dunhuang manuscript is missing from the received *Zhen’gao* and *Sandong zhu’nantang*. The main body text and the various discrepancies between them can be summarized as follows:

TABLE 9.1 Comparison of the Dunhuang manuscript, *Zhen’gao* and *Sandong zhu’nantang*

Dunhuang <i>juan</i> 敦煌卷	<i>Zhen’gao</i> 《真誥》	Cited by <i>Sandong</i> <i>zhu’nantang</i> 《三洞珠囊》引
<i>za</i> 帀—circle	<i>za</i> 匝—circle	<i>za</i> 帀—circle
<i>che</i> 徹—clear away	<i>che</i> 徹—clear away	<i>che</i> 徹—clear away
<i>shenda</i> 神大—divine greatness	<i>shenguang</i> 神光—divine light	<i>shenhuo</i> 神火—divine fire
<i>fanran</i> 燔然—set ablaze	<i>fanran</i> 燔然—set ablaze	<i>shaofan</i> 燒燔—set ablaze
<i>maoquan</i> 完全—appearance, whole	(<i>sizhi</i>) <i>wanquan</i> (四支) 完全 ^a —(four limbs) completeness	<i>wanquan</i> 完全—completeness
<i>guigui</i> 鬼鬼—ghosts	<i>kao gui</i> 考鬼—inquiring into ghosts	<i>kao gui</i> 考鬼—inquiring into ghosts

a Originally written *si zhi* 四支 by mistake.

33 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen’gao*, *juan* 9, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 544.

34 Zhang Junfang, *Yunji qiqian*, *juan* 48, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 22: 323.

35 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen’gao*, *juan* 10, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 552.

36 *Sandong zhu’nantang*, *juan* 1, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 25: 299.

37 The *Zhen’gao* originally had seven *juan*. During the Tang and Song dynasties, it was separated into ten *juan*. The Ming dynasty *Zhengtong Daozang* version further divided the text into twenty *juan*.

We can notice some graphical errors in the Dunhuang manuscript, such as writing *da* 大 (“great”) instead of *huo* 火 (“fire”), and the repetition of *gui* 鬼 (“ghosts and ghosts”) instead of *kao gui* 考鬼 (“inquiring into ghosts”).

The manuscript also refers to a “turning towards the sovereign / turning towards Wang to pray 向王而祝.” If we look in the *Dengzhen yinjue* where it discusses “turning towards the sovereign”, it also mentions, “On daybreak, turn towards the sovereign and write the script in vermilion 開日旦，向王朱書。”³⁸ The commentary reads, “At daybreak, follow along with the Month Indicator³⁹ and write in vermilion on white paper 平旦隨月建，朱書白紙上。”⁴⁰ It also says, “Lie down and rise, then moderate your *Qi*. Sit upright, follow in the direction of the Moon and the sovereign 臥起當平氣，正坐，隨月王向方面。”⁴¹ It also says, “cut the hair in the desire to face the sovereign’s territory 理髮欲向王地，”⁴² as well as “cut the hair and turn towards the sovereign 理髮向王。”⁴³ The commentary here reads as follows:

This refers to the aspects of the Month Indicator. Combing, brushing, and washing the hair should all be done in this way. Note that it is the celestial beings’ taboo to cut the hair when facing towards the north. In the eleventh *jianzi* month, it is similarly appropriate to turn towards *hai*. In this way the north cannot be offended.

謂月建之方面也。櫛髮、梳頭、沐髮皆爾。按仙忌忌北向理髮。今十一月既建子，宜當猶向亥，此正北不可犯也。⁴⁴

Thus, we can know that “turning towards the sovereign 向王” indicates turning towards the sovereign’s territory in accordance with the month indicator. The term “sovereign 王” refers to the sovereignly *Qi*. The *Dengzhen yinjue* also says, “upon eating food, do not speak of the affairs of the dead 臨食上勿道死事，”⁴⁵ on which the commentary reads, “during the time of eating, regularly turn towards the stem-branch of one’s birth-year and sovereignly *Qi* 食時欲

38 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 614.

39 Note: The “Month Indicator 月建” refers to the sector of the sky toward which the handle of the Big Dipper points, which thereby provides the name for each month.

40 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 614.

41 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 610.

42 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 611.

43 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 611.

44 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 611.

45 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 611.

常向本命及王氣。”⁴⁶ (“Affairs of the dead” violate the sovereignly *Qi*, and thus were to be avoided.)

We can note that the “Prayer of the Left Mystery and Right Mystery 左玄右玄祝辭” appears six times in the *Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing* 西王母寶神起居經⁴⁷ and the *Shangqing sanzhen zhiyao yujue* 上清三真旨要玉訣, number 8.⁴⁸ The same prayer appears in *juan* 9, number 4 of the *Zhen'gao*.⁴⁹ The *Sandong zhu'nang, juan* 10, number 4, claims that a passage on massage techniques in the *Taishang luchun fahua jing* 太上錄淳發華經 is identical.⁵⁰ But the relevant small-print commentary is preserved only in the Dunhuang manuscript.

The variants used in each text are as follows:

TABLE 9.2 Comparison of the Dunhuang manuscript, *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*, *Shangqing sanzhen zhiyao yujue* and *Zhen'gao*

Dunhuang <i>juan</i> 敦煌卷	<i>Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing</i> 《西王母寶 神起居經》	<i>Shangqing sanzhen zhiyao yujue</i> 《上清三真 旨要玉訣》	<i>Zhen'gao</i> 《真誥》
<i>e ji</i> 惡疾— malignant illness	<i>e ji</i> 惡疾— malignant illness	<i>e ji</i> 惡疾— malignant illness	<i>e yi</i> 惡疫—malignant pestilence
<i>fei xian</i> 飛仙— soaring transcendent			<i>shenxian</i> 神仙— divine transcendent
<i>xiu qiang</i> 休強— rest, strong	<i>xiu qiang</i> 休強— rest, strong	<i>xiu jiang</i> 休疆— rest, strong	<i>ti qiang</i> 體強—body, strong
<i>yan tuo</i> 咽唾— swallow and spit	<i>yan ye</i> 咽液— swallowing fluids	<i>yan ye</i> 咽液— swallowing fluids	<i>yan ye</i> 咽液— swallowing fluids
<i>sayi guo</i> 卅一過— thirty-one times	<i>sayi guo</i> 卅一過— thirty-one times	<i>nianyi guo</i> 廿一 過—twenty-one times	<i>nianyi guo</i> 廿一過— twenty-one times

46 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue, juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 611.

47 *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 33: 464.

48 *Shangqing sanzhen zhiyao yujue*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 628.

49 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao, juan* 9, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 538.

50 *Sandong zhu'nang, juan* 10, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 25: 361.

Dunhuang manuscript P.2576 quotes the first sentence of the *Shangqing sanzhen zhiyao yujue* except for the two characters *you xuan* 右玄 (“left mystery”). The *Daozang* edition of the *Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing* claims that this quote comes from the *Taishang mingting sanhua jing* 太上銘渟散華經, but the reference to *mingting* 銘渟 instead of *luting* 錄渟 is likely an error.

4 Massaging the Shoulder, Massaging the Forehead, and the General Art of Massages

The main text on this topic can be seen in the *Zhen'gao*, *juan 9*, number 6,⁵¹ and the *Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*,⁵² the latter being particularly detailed. The *Sandong zhu'nang*, *juan 10*, number 5 begins with, “The Way says 道曰,” and the content that follows is identical.⁵³ The Dunhuang manuscript contains certain characters such as *xi* 𠄎 (a variant of *xi* 喜), *nao* 𠄎 (a variant of *nao* 腦), and *xue* 𠄎 (a variant of *xue* 血), all of which resemble the script style common in the Six Dynasties period (220–589). The textual variations of each are as follows:⁵⁴

TABLE 9.3 Comparison of the Dunhuang manuscript, *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*, *Zhen'gao* and *Sandong zhu'nang*

Dunhuang <i>juan</i> 敦煌卷	<i>Xi wang mu</i> <i>baoshen qiju</i> <i>jing</i> 《西王母寶神 起居經》	<i>Zhen'gao</i> 《真誥》	<i>Sandong zhu'nang</i> 《三洞珠囊》
(Lacking the two characters, <i>dao yue</i> 道, “way says ...”) <i>heng yi shou</i> 恆以手—“constantly use hand”	<i>dao ri (yue) chang</i> 道日 (曰) 常以手—“way says, ‘regularly use hand”	<i>dao ri (yue) chang</i> 道日 常以手—“way says, ‘regularly use hand”	<i>dao yue heng</i> 道曰恆—“way says, ‘constantly”

51 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan 9*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 538–39.

52 *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 33: 461.

53 *Sandong zhu'nang*, *juan 10*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 25: 361.

54 Note: the translations offered in the table below are based on the characters received in each version of the text, so discrepancies are to be expected, just as in the Chinese originals.

TABLE 9.3 Comparison of the Dunhuang manuscript (*cont.*)

Dunhuang <i>juan</i> 敦煌卷	<i>Xiwang mu</i> <i>baoshen qiju</i> <i>jing</i> 《西王母寶神 起居經》	<i>Zhen'gao</i> 《真誥》	<i>Sandong zhu'nang</i> 《三洞珠囊》
<i>xiao kong</i> 小空— “small hole”	<i>xiao kong</i> 小 空—“small hole”	<i>xiao xue</i> 小穴— “small cavity”	<i>xiao xue</i> 小穴— “small cavity”
<i>you yi shou</i> 又以 手—“moreover, using the hands”	<i>you yi shou xin</i> 又以 手心—“moreover, using the palm”	<i>shou xin</i> 手心— “palm”	<i>shou xin</i> 手心— “palm”
<i>liang mu xia quan</i> <i>shang</i> 兩目下 擢上—“below the two eyes and above the cheekbone”	<i>quan shang</i> 權 上—“above the cheekbone”	<i>liang mu quan shang</i> 兩目權上—“the two eyes above the cheekbone”	<i>quan shang</i> 顛上—“upon the cheekbone”
<i>xuan er</i> 掄耳— “circle the ears”	<i>zhuo er</i> 捉耳— “grab the ears”	<i>xuan er</i> 旋耳— “circle the ears”	<i>xuan er</i> 旋耳— “circle the ears”
<i>nai shang xing</i> 乃 上行—“thereupon proceed upwards.”	<i>nai shang xing</i> 乃 上行—“thereupon proceed upwards.”	<i>shang xing</i> 上 行—“proceed upwards”	<i>nai shang xing</i> 乃 上行—“thereupon proceed upwards.”
<i>yan tuo</i> 咽唾— “swallow and spit”	<i>yan ye</i> 咽液— “swallow the fluid”	<i>yan ye</i> 咽液— “swallow the fluid”	<i>yan ye</i> 嚥液— “swallow the fluid”
<i>mu ri qing ming</i> 目日清明—“eyes, sun, clear and bright”	<i>mu ri qing ming</i> 目日清明—“eyes, sun, clear and bright”	<i>mu zi qing ming</i> 目 自清明—“eyes, by themselves clear and bright”	<i>yan mu qing ming</i> 眼目清明— “eyesight, eyes, clear and bright”
<i>cheng e</i> 乘額— “ride the forehead”	<i>cheng e shang</i> 乘額上—“ride over the forehead”	<i>cheng e shang</i> 乘額 上—“ride over the forehead”	<i>an e shang</i> 按額 上—“massage over the forehead”
<i>huan xi</i> 歡喜— “joyous and delightful”	<i>huan xi</i> 歡喜— “joyous and delightful”		
<i>shi mei</i> 始眉— “start at the eyebrow”	<i>shi zhou</i> 始周一 “start at the curve”		

TABLE 9.3 Comparison of the Dunhuang manuscript (*cont.*)

Dunhuang <i>juan</i> 敦煌卷	<i>Xiwang mu</i> <i>baoshen qiju</i> <i>jing</i> 《西王母寶神 起居經》	<i>Zhen'gao</i> 《真誥》	<i>Sandong zhu'nang</i> 《三洞珠囊》
<i>shun fa jie</i> 順髮結—“follow up to the hair knot”	<i>shun fa jiu jie</i> 順髮就結—“follow up to the hair and turn it into a knot”	<i>shun fa jiu jie</i> 順髮 就結—“follow up the hair and turn it into a knot”	<i>jiu ji</i> 就髻—“turn it into a chignon”
<i>jian yan</i> 檢眼— “check the eyes”	<i>yan yan</i> 驗眼— “examine the eyes”		
<i>de jian bai ling</i> 得 見百靈—“catch sight of the hun- dred numinosities”	<i>de jian bai ling</i> 得 見百靈—“catch sight of the hun- dred numinosities”	<i>de jian bai ling</i> 得見百靈—“catch sight of the hundred numinosities”	<i>de jian bai ling ye</i> 得見百靈也— “having caught sight of the hun- dred numinosities”

Below the sentence, “after one year he can write in the dark 一年可夜書,” in the *Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*, *Zhen'gao*, and *Sandong zhu'nang*, there is some shared text appearing before the sentence, “ride the hand over the forehead 以手乘額上.” The Dunhuang manuscript, however, omits it. The *Zhen'gao* commentary to the sentence, “catch sight of the hundred numinosities 得見百靈,”⁵⁵ reads as follows:

It is commonplace in spiritual development practices of this kind to find the sorts of miscellaneous matters discussed in this *juan*, and furthermore to have them divided up and organized in this way. All this, I have already recorded in the *Dengzhen yinjue*, and thus I will not make any further comments on the matter.

凡修行此道及卷中諸雜事，並甚有節度，悉以別撰在《登真隱訣》中，今不可備皆注釋。⁵⁶

55 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 9, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 539.

56 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 9, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 539.

We can see that the *Dengzhen yinjue* originally contained a commentary that is lost in the received version but is preserved in the Dunhuang manuscript.

The concluding lines of the Dunhuang manuscript furthermore say, “Pei Qingling’s explanations derive from the *Taishang baoshen jing* 裴清靈說出《太上寶神經》。” Pei Qingling is Pei Xuanren 裴玄仁 who ruled over Mt. Siming 四明山.⁵⁷ In another Dunhuang manuscript (P.2576) of the *Shangqing sanzhen zhiyao yujue*, a comment to the phrase, “at night, lie down and become aware 夜臥覺,”⁵⁸ says, “this is a method from the *Taishang Xiwang mu baoshen qiju yu jing*, which instructs people to make their ears and eyes clean and bright, and to make their memory prodigious 此《太上西王母寶神經起居玉經》上也，令人耳目聰明強識也。” It also says, “Qingling the Perfected, Lord Pei, revealed the *Shenbao jing* and the *Xiwang mu baosheng wusi yu jing* and the Lady of Purple Tenuity has produced their excerpts 清靈真人裴君說《神寶經》、《西王母寶生無死玉經》，紫微夫人抄出。” The same phrase can also be found in the *Zhengtong daoze* edition of the *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing* 洞真西王母寶神經起居經.⁵⁹ Thus, upon comparing both texts, we can be sure that when *juan* 9 of the *Zhen’gao* says, “Qingling the Perfected revealed the *Baoshen jing* and the *Taishang baoshen jing* 清靈真人說，《寶神經》及《太上寶神經》,”⁶⁰ it is in fact referring to the *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*.

The *Zhen’gao*, contains the entire text from “the Way says ...” to “catch sight of the hundred numinosities 得見百靈.”⁶¹ This surely was once included in the *Dengzhen yinjue*, and would have been edited, summarized, and annotated. This is why the commentary to the *Zhen’gao* says, “I have already recorded [this] in the *Dengzhen yinjue* 別撰在《登真隱訣》。” The Dunhuang manuscript contains some small-print commentary as well as omissions from the received *Zhen’gao*. Therefore, we can be confident that the Dunhuang manuscript is the *Dengzhen yinjue* rather than the *Zhen’gao*.

The Dunhuang manuscript also contains the term “the upper primal joy and delight 上元歡喜,” and the term, “upper primal 上元” can be found in the *Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*, which says, “the small hole behind the eyebrow is the Upper Primal 眉後小空中為上元.”⁶² It also says, “Below the eyes and above

57 See under the *Daoze* category of “sheng” 勝 which contains Ge Hong’s 葛洪 (283–363) *Yuanshi shangzhen zhongxian ji* 元始上真眾仙記.

Note: Pei Xuanren, also known as Lord Pei 裴君, is one of the “Perfected 真人” of the Shangqing tradition who appeared to Yang Xi and granted him revelations.

58 Note: “Lying down and becoming aware 臥覺” seems to refer to a practice of performing a facial massage followed by a prayer, which is detailed in the manuscript.

59 *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daoze*, 33: 460.

60 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen’gao*, *juan* 9, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daoze*, 20: 538.

61 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen’gao*, *juan* 9, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daoze*, 20: 539.

62 *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daoze*, 33: 461.

the cheekbone is the protected chamber where clarity bursts forth, clearing the path for the arriving infant 目下權上是決明保室歸嬰至道。”⁶³ We can only understand the meaning of the lines that follow with this explanation in mind. There are probably omissions in the Dunhuang version of the *Dengzhen yinjue* because the material already appeared in the *Zhen'gao*. This is circumstantial evidence that the first section of this Dunhuang manuscript is indeed the *Dengzhen yinjue*.

5 The Method of Massaging the Nose 按鼻法

In the first section of the *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*, the characters are more complex. *Juan* 9, number 8 of the *Zhen'gao* says, “the reason why it is called ‘comportment’ is because it should be performed regularly 所以名起居者，常行之故也。”⁶⁴ The description here explains why the term “comportment 起居” is in the title of what the Dunhuang manuscript refers to as the *Qiju baoshen (jing)* 起居宝神（經），but this is none other than the *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*. Thus, the manuscript likely dates to before the time of Tao Hongjing. Some further examples of the character variation between the texts are as follows:

TABLE 9.4 Comparison of the Dunhuang manuscript, *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*, *Zhen'gao* and *Sandong zhu'nang*

Dunhuang	<i>Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing</i>	<i>Zhen'gao</i>	<i>Sandong zhu'nang</i>
<i>juan</i> 敦煌卷	《洞真西王母寶神起居經》	《真誥》	《三洞珠囊》
	<i>dan jiang qi</i> 旦將起—“rise at dawn” ^a		

- a There is an additional sentence “reverse the tongue towards the center of the throat; turn one’s head back and forth seven times 反舌向喉中乃搖頭動項七過” the addition of “Upper Emperor of the Nine Heavens 九天上帝” in prayers, and other small differences to the *Zhen'gao* and the other texts that I will not mention here.

63 *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 33: 461.

64 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 9, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 539.

TABLE 9.4 Comparison of the Dunhuang manuscript (*cont.*)

Dunhuang <i>juan</i> 敦煌卷	<i>Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing</i> 《洞真西王母寶神起居經》	<i>Zhen'gao</i> 《真誥》	<i>Sandong zhu'nang</i> 《三洞珠囊》
<i>tian zhong zhi tai</i> 天中之臺— “platform of the heavenly center.”	<i>tian zhong zhi yue</i> 天中之岳— “mound of the heavenly center”	<i>xuan tai</i> 玄臺— “mysterious platform”	<i>zhi tai</i> 之臺— “platform of ...” (same as the Dunhuang manuscript)
<i>hua cong jiong lang</i> 華聰晃眼— “splendid perception, brilliant light”	<i>xuan chuang lang lang</i> 玄窓朗朗— “mysterious window, glorious light”	<i>huang lang</i> 晃朗— “dazzling light”	<i>jiong lang</i> 晃朗— “brilliant light” (same as the Dunhuang manuscript)
<i>bai du miao qing</i> 百度眇清— “hundred measurements, subtle clarity”	<i>bai xuan ling ling</i> 百軒零零— “hundred pavilions lonely scattered”	<i>miao qing</i> 眇清— “subtle clarity”	<i>miao jing</i> 眇精— “subtle essence”
<i>jiu cheng</i> 九城— “nine walls”	<i>jin ting</i> 金庭— “golden hall”		
<i>zhi gen</i> 植根— “take root”	<i>yao hua</i> 曜華— “luminous splendor”		
<i>zi sheng</i> 自生— “grow of itself”	<i>chang sheng</i> 常生— “grow constantly”		
<i>tian tai yu su</i> 天臺鬱素— “heavenly platform, refined yet unadorned” Missing the word, “not” (<i>bu</i> 不).	<i>shen tai yu zhi</i> 神臺鬱峙— “divine platform, refined and erect”		
<i>zao lian</i> 藻練— “elegant silk”	<i>bu qing</i> 不傾— “not poured out”		
<i>an ning</i> 安寧— “peace and tranquility”	<i>zao lian</i> 澡練— “cleansing silk”	<i>zao lian</i> 澡練— “cleansing silk”	<i>zao lian</i> 澡練— “cleansing silk”
	<i>huang ning</i> 黃寧— “yellow tranquility”		

TABLE 9.4 Comparison of the Dunhuang manuscript (*cont.*)

Dunhuang <i>juan</i> 敦煌卷	<i>Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing</i> 《洞真西王母寶神起居經》	<i>Zhen'gao</i> 《真誥》	<i>Sandong zhu'nang</i> 《三洞珠囊》
<i>chi zi xie ying</i> 赤子 攜景—“red infant, hold shadow”	<i>tai shang xie shou</i> 太上攜手—“upper supreme, hold hand”		
<i>zhe yu wo bing</i> 輒 於我并—“then, join with me”	<i>yu wo gong bing</i> 於我 共并—“join together with me”		

There are many additional cases that I will not list here.

6 Regarding the Method of the Heavenly Hall 天庭法⁶⁵

This section is also seen in the *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*, located in the chapter “Xi wang mu baosheng wusi yujing” 西王母寶生無死玉經. The section begins with the line “Heavenly Perfection lies between the eyebrows 天真在兩眉間.”⁶⁶ In the received *Zhen'gao*, we find it located in *juan* 9, section 10.⁶⁷ *Juan* 48, section 17 of the *Yunji qiqian* also mentions it under the topic of “the method of ‘Grasping the Heavenly Hall’ 拔天庭法,”⁶⁸ with the term “Heavenly Perfection 天真” being replaced by “Heavenly Hall 天庭.” The Dunhuang manuscript says, “Massage and pray as follows ... 按而祝曰,” but the writing that should follow is missing. We can, however, use the *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing* and the *Yunji qiqian* to recreate it. The Dunhuang manuscript preserves Tao Hongjing’s personal annotations. The *Yunji qiqian* selectively includes them, but the *Zhen'gao* omits them entirely. The differences between each of the texts on this topic appears as follows:

65 Note: In this context, the term “Heavenly Hall” refers to the area in the middle of the forehead.

66 *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 33: 460–61.

67 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 9, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 540.

68 Zhang Junfang, *Yunji qiqian*, *juan* 48, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 22: 341.

TABLE 9.5 Comparison of the Dunhuang manuscript, *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*, *Zhen'gao* and *Yunji qiqian*

Dunhuang <i>juan</i> 敦煌卷	<i>Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing</i> 《洞真西王母寶神起居經》	<i>Zhen'gao</i> 《真誥》	<i>Yunji qiqian</i> 《雲笈七籤》
<p><i>tian zhen</i> 天真— “heavenly perfection” Lacking the character <i>nei</i> 內. <i>hong ling</i> 弘靈— “expansive numinous essence”</p>	<p><i>tian zhen</i> 天真— “heavenly perfection” <i>Mei nei zhi liang jiao shang fang</i> 眉內之兩角上房—“the two corners within the eyebrows.” After this line we find, “the Heavenly Authenticity is located one <i>fen</i> below the ear,” 天真在一分下耳, which has been deleted in the <i>Zhen'gao</i>.</p>	<p><i>tian zhen</i> 天真— “heavenly perfection”</p>	<p><i>tian ting</i> 天庭— “heavenly hall”</p>
<p><i>yin ling</i> 引靈— “drawing out the numinous essence”</p>			<p>This text lacks the phrase, “The Heavenly Authenticity is the principal location for drawing out the numinous essence,” 天真是引靈之上房.</p>

There are yet further comparative differences that I am not going to fully record here.

We can note that the terms in this section of the *Zhen'gao* do not approach the level of detail found in the *Dongzhen Xi wang mu baoshen qiju jing*. Because the latter's writings were abridged and altered when the *Zhen'gao* was compiled, we can be sure that Tao Hongjing extracted its material from the *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*. The Dunhuang manuscript commentary is uniquely detailed in many ways lacking in the *Zhen'gao*. Therefore, it must certainly be from the *Dengzhen yinjue*.

The above discussion pertains to the second section of the Dunhuang text.

Tao Hongjing's *Dengzhen yinjue* and *Zhen'gao* were based on the writings of Yang Xi, Xu Mi, and Xu Hui 許翮 (341—ca. 370) with additional commentary by Tao Hongjing. The Dunhuang manuscript contains annotations that are not found in the *Zhengtong daoziang* version of the *Zhen'gao*, making it extremely valuable for further studies.

The first section of the Dunhuang manuscript belongs to the *Dengzhen yinjue*—of this we can be certain. The second section contains many similarities with the *Zhen'gao*, but the sequence of the shared material is completely different.⁶⁹ Thus, we cannot conclusively identify it as such. Instead, the greater part of the material appears to be adapted from the *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*.

The modern version of the *Dengzhen yinjue* is incomplete, only containing three *juan*. Jia Song 賈嵩 (fl. Tang), in the introduction of his biography of Tao Hongjing, the *Huayang Tao yinju neizhuan* 華陽陶隱居內傳, states that his work was compiled by adapting and taking reference from the *Dengzhen yinjue*, *Zhen'gao*, and the *Taiqing jing* 泰清經. The *Huayang Tao yinju neizhuan* often quotes the original edition of the *Dengzhen yinjue*. *Juan* 10 of the *Sandong zhu'nan*, “Kouchi yanye pin” 叩齒燕液品, also regularly quotes the *Dengzhen yinjue*. Of particular interest is its recounting of *Dengzhen yinjue* number 4 as follows:

Consume the bodily fluid of the Jade Maiden. Actualize the Sun and Moon within the mouth. The Sun is vermilion, and the Moon is yellow. The Sun exudes a purple brilliance of 9 rays, and the Moon a white brilliance of ten rays. The rays are straight like a bowstring. Let them enter your mouth and by swallowing consume the saliva of these brilliant rays. Frequently and secretly conduct this process countless times. Before, when consuming food, you would use the same terminology of “swallowing fluids.”

69 Compare the Dunhuang manuscript with *juan* 13 sections 4 and 14, *juan* 10 sections 2 and 3, *juan* 10 section 15, *juan* 9 section 4 and section 6, and *juan* 9 section 8 and section 10 of the *Zhen'gao*.

服玉女津液，存日月在口中，日色赤，月色黃，日有紫光九芒，月有白光十芒也。芒直如弦，以入於口，嚥服光芒之液，常密行之無數，前服食品，通有此嚥液語也。⁷⁰

This passage, providing a supplement to the notion of visualizing sunrays, is absent in the extant *Dengzhen yinjue*.

The main text of both sections of the Dunhuang manuscript were written by the same person. The first section is the *Dengzhen yinjue*, and we can surmise that the second is likewise. The *Zhen'gao* and the *Dengzhen yinjue* draw upon one another in many instances. The *Dengzhen yinjue* cites the *Zhen'gao*, such as in the section on combing and cutting hair (in *juan* 2 section 7),⁷¹ and the *Zhen'gao* cites the *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* 19, as follows:

Note that the characters handwritten by the Three Lords are unique, different from our age. ... I have already recorded all these similarities and differences in the *Dengzhen yinjue*.

又按三君手書字有異於今世者……此諸同異，悉已具載在《登真隱訣》中。⁷²

It appears that once the two works were completed, they were later revised and expanded to reference and quote one another. Thus, each ended up accumulating additions, deletions, and repetitions over time. The *Dengzhen yinjue* originally had 24 *juan*, and the *Sandong zhu'nang* moreover quotes *juan* 7 of the *Dengzhen yinjue*,⁷³ so we can be sure that much of the original text has been lost. Overall, the main body of this Dunhuang manuscript was originally drawn from the *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*. The first major section is in the received *Dengzhen yinjue*, while the second might come from its lost contents. The commentary therein that is missing from the *Zhen'gao* was surely written by the hand of Tao Hongjing.

Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) claimed that parts of the *Zhen'gao* are similar to the *Sishi'er zhang jing* 四十二章經, and Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962) shared the same view. The Japanese scholar, Masako Ishii 石井昌子, identified similarities between the *Wushang miyao* 無上秘要 quotations of the *Zhenji jing* 真跡

70 *Sandong zhu'nang*, *juan* 10, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 25: 361.

71 Tao Hongjing, *Dengzhen yinjue*, *juan* B, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 6: 613.

72 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 19, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 602–3.

73 *Sandong zhu'nang*, *juan* 3, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 25: 310, 311, 312.

經 and the *Daoji jing* 道跡經.⁷⁴ Recent research on the Maoshan revelations has also made considerable progress and has consequently demonstrated the importance of the Dunhuang manuscript in question.⁷⁵

Tao Hongjing organized the earlier work of Gu Huan 顧歡 (420–483) on Yang Xi's revelations.⁷⁶ Accordingly, in the *Zhen'gao*, he writes:

Note that the *Baoshen qiju* contains ten or more entries on the methods of the “Bright Hall,”⁷⁷ the “Incantation for Dreams,” and the “Discourse on [Eating] Atractylodes,”⁷⁸ which largely copy from the scriptures but have no proper beginnings or endings. For example, regarding the “Rays of the Sun,” the “Images of the Sun,” the “Black and White” and the “Consumption of Mist,” Gu Huan did not include them in this edition, which is why they are missing from the records. I will now therefore explicate and offer a record of each of the preceding items and arrange them accordingly.

又按《起居寶神》及明堂、夢祝述敘諸法，十有餘條，乃多是抄經而無正首尾。猶如日芒、日象、玄白、服霧之屬，而顧獨不撰用，致令遺逸，今並詮錄，各從其例。⁷⁹

Thus, we can see that Gu Huan originally did not discuss these techniques, but the Dunhuang manuscript under discussion has preserved descriptions of “Consuming the Mist,” the “Art of Black and White,” and the “Rays of the Sun.” It furthermore quoted the *Dongzhen Xiwang mu baoshen qiju jing*, and all of this serves as sufficient evidence that Tao Hongjing is responsible for the discussions of these topics in this text.

74 See Ishii Masako 石井昌子, “Shinkō no seiritsu ni kansuru ichi kōsatsu” 「真誥」の成立に関する一考察, in Yoshioka Yoshitoyo 吉岡義豊 and Soymié Michel ed. *Dōkyō kenkyū* 道教研究: Vol. 1, 215–69, and regarding the *Xuejin taoyuan* 學津討原 version of the *Zhen'gao*, Ishii Masako has a discussion of it.

75 See Michel Strickmann “The Mao Shan revelations: Taoism and the aristocracy,” 1–64.

76 Note: Gu Huan preceded Tao Hongjing in his attempt to collect and organize Yang Xi's revelations. His resulting work, *Zhen'ji* 真跡, “Traces of the Perfected,” just mentioned served as model for the *Zhen'gao*. Tao frequently mentions this lost text and discusses differences in their approaches.

77 Note: The term *mingtang* 明堂, the “Brilliant Hall,” in this context does not denote the building used for royal or imperial ceremonies mentioned throughout the earlier chapters, but one of the Nine Palaces located in the brain.

78 Note: Regarding this translation, see Stephen R. Bokenkamp, *A Fourth-Century Daoist Family*, 50n.63.

79 Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao*, *juan* 19, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 603.

Furthermore, authors from the Northern and Southern dynasties (420–589) were fond of interlinear, composite commentarial texts 合本子注.⁸⁰ The Dunhuang manuscripts regularly contain handwritten small-print annotations to discuss the Daoist scriptures. For example, the text *Ziwen xingshi jue* 紫文行事訣 from fragment P.2751 contains a double-line commentary, while the *Lingbao zhenyi wuchengjing* 靈寶真一五稱經 from fragment P.2440 has many examples of double-line commentary, although there are also some irregular occurrences of single line commentary. Like within the *Dengzhen yinjue*, the boundaries between lines are lightly traced, and the small print commentary is only written in small-print characters, appearing on only one side of the main body text in a single line. The number of rhymes is also recorded in the margins. Accordingly, the small print commentary on double lines in the extant versions of the *Dengzhen yinjue* and the *Zhen'gao* are vastly different, and we can now look back at the pre-Tang dynasty writings of Tao Hongjing and appreciate the original form of his “style of narrative interpretation and commentary 詮次敘注,” which very much resembles the practice of composite commentarial texts.⁸¹ Taking composite commentarial texts by Buddhist monks from the Northern and Southern dynasties as blueprint, Daoist works have also been recombined in this way, of which the fragmentary Dunhuang manuscript version of the *Dengzhen yinjue* is an example. Gu Qianli 顧千里 (1766–1835) says that Yang Xuanzhi's 楊銜之 (d. 555) *Luoyang qielan ji* originally differentiated the main text from the small-print commentary using different font sizes.⁸² In the extant version, the characters are written in the same font size, fusing the commentary with the main text. Later scholars followed Gu Qianli's explanations and devoted themselves to mastering the texts of Yang Xuanzhi through differentiating the commentary to the *Luoyang qielan ji* from its main text. In Wu Ruozhun's 吳若準 (fl. Qing) collection, all commentary is displayed in two small print lines,⁸³ because he was unaware of the way that authors of the Six dynasties period separated their annotations from the main text.

80 The *Luoyang qielan ji* 洛陽伽藍記 is one of such examples everyone is aware of. Further examples include those praised by Liu Zhiji 劉知幾 (661–721), such as the *Huai hai luanli zhi* 淮海亂離志 and the *Guandong fengsu zhuan* 關東風俗傳. Unfortunately, these texts are no longer extant.

81 Chen Yinke 陳寅恪 has discussed the format of *Luoyang qielan ji* which exemplifies this style, “Du *Luoyang qielan ji* shuhou,” 149–52. Note: *Heben zizhu* 合本子注 refers to a type of commentary in which new and old texts are combined to form composite scriptures.

82 See Gu Guangqi, *Sishi zhai ji*, 14.13a, rpt. in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 482: 749.

83 Wu Ruozhun, *Luoyang qielan ji jizhu*, (woodblock print edition prepared by Gushu congkan gushu liutong chu in 1922).

They originally did not use the double-line commentary style and would start writing without beginning a separate new line, but they would use small-print characters for the commentary. Thus, it was easy to confuse the commentary with the main body text. The Dunhuang text under investigation preserves this kind of appearance, and it is a pity that Wu Ruozhun was unable to consult it within his lifetime.

After this article was completed, I came across the masterpiece by Ōfuchi Ninji 大淵忍爾 titled *Tonkō dōkyō mokurokuhen* 敦煌道經目錄篇 that dedicates 185 pages to scriptures belonging to the Shangqing tradition. Doubtful is only his assessment of the *Zhenji jing*, regarding which he cites from the *Zhen'gao, juan 19*, as follows:

Note that the words and instructions of the multitude of Perfected persons all have significant and purposeful meaning. Sometimes they are written in form of poetry, other times they appear as admonitions, responding to each other. However, in Gu Huan's *Zhenji*, they are divided into classes and categories, and each forms different parts and scrolls. This distorts the contents and renders the work unintelligible for later generations. Now, I have order them according to the sequence of the events and simultaneously considered the dates given as well as the state of paper and ink to be able to annotate and interpret the records.

又按衆真辭旨，皆有義趣，或詩或戒，互相酬配，而顧所撰《真迹》，枝分類別，各為部卷，致語用乖越，不後可領。今並還依本事，並日月紙墨，相承貫者，以為詮訣。⁸⁴

On these grounds, Mr. Ōfuchi infers that the Dunhuang manuscript referenced here should be considered as a surviving section of Gu Huan's *Zhenji jing*. Moreover, he cites as evidence for his theory that the *Wushang miyao, juan 42*, no. 13, "Shi shi pin" 事師品 contains a passage about Qingling, the Perfected⁸⁵ revealing the *Baoshen jing* which is identical with the same reference in the manuscript.

Thus, we can see that Gu Huan's notes are still highly relevant for contemporary research. Both his *Zhouyi xici zhu* 周易繫辭注 and his *Lunyu zhu* 論語注 have been edited by Huang Shi 黃奭 (1809–1853) and Ma Guohan 馬國翰

84 The quotation appears in Tao Hongjing, *Zhen'gao, juan 19*, rpt. in *Zhengtong Daozang*, 20: 603.

85 Mr. Ōfuchi apparently mistyped the character *ling* 靈 as *lu* 露, referring to Pei Qingling as "Qinglu zhenren 清露真人."

(1794–1857) of the Qing dynasty. Ma Guohan praises Gu’s argument as “eloquent, convincing, and savory 清辨滔滔，其味雋永。”⁸⁶ Now we can think carefully about his *Zhenji jing*—the *Wushang miyao* is replete with quotations of it—and share his opinion. Compared with Tao Hongjing’s commentaries, which emphasized facts and detailed records, the style is completely different. Moreover, the *Zhen’gao*, “Xu lu” 敍錄 clearly explains the methods of the “Rays of the Sun,” “Black and White,” and “Consuming the Mist,” which were not included in Gu Huan’s works. And so, while Mr. Ōfuchi deemed this fragment to be Gu Huan’s *Zhenji jing*, this contradicts the *Zhen’gao*, “Xu lu,” making Mr. Ōfuchi’s claim tentative at best. Moreover, the manuscript is clearly divided into two major sections. Its first section is an authentic edition of the *Dengzhen yinjue*—of this there can be no doubt. Mr. Ōfuchi has not paid enough attention to the fact that the Dunhuang manuscript is so clearly divided into two main sections, which are not in fact connected to form a single text, and thus he is unable to clearly perceive the details of the text. This is even more proof that when it comes to understanding Dunhuang texts, if we don’t carefully examine the actual *juan* of the manuscripts as they were written, each of our simple mistakes will lead to a greater misunderstanding.

Appendix: Translation of the Main Body Text and Commentary of Section Two of Dunhuang Manuscript P.2732⁸⁷

... (Rays, purple color. They flow from amidst the bone and flesh in your upper arm, let them stream up to the eyebrow and armpit, and the Sun will be in your grasp.) **The sunrays suddenly transform into fire; with the flaming arm, disperse the flames and let the cavern be encircled by the flow from within and without for a long period of time.** (Actualize the entire arm in the shape of burning charcoal and keep swallowing.) **When finished, offer a *yin* prayer as follows:**

**At Mt. Siming, on the day of the utmost primordial,
the *Qi* of the Sun and Moon divide.
The astral light is iridescent and radiant,**

86 *Yuhan shanfang jiyi shu*, 1a (3: 1825).

87 Note: For the translation, I have largely followed Jao’s convention by indenting commentary text to distinguish it from the main body and leave interlinear commentary in parentheses. But given that some interlinear commentary is substantial, I have translated the original material in boldface.

as the watery fluid congeals into the *hun* soul.
 The spirit enlarges into scattered light,
 dispersing the dirt and purifying the haze.
 The cavern disperses breezing *Qi*,
 and a hundred evils are set ablaze.
 Use it to extend your life,
 and the shape of the four limbs becomes whole.
 Record the harmful demons,
 and hand them over to the Northern Star. (Six rhymes.)

After finishing, continue the actualization for a long period, then let the body rest and forgot yourself. (Actualize fire burning at the location of the ailment to the left and right and you will feel a hot sensation. Maintain the position for a long, long time, then without fixation, forget the physical self. Only then the treatment is complete. In ancient times, the adjutant (i.e. Xu Mi) worried about his ailing arms and hands, and thus the Minor Lord (i.e., the younger Lord Mao) offered this method, and nowadays those who have learned it use it to relieve themselves of all manner of pain and ailments. Moreover, it can be applied not only to the hands and arms but also to the head, face, and limbs. One must not focus on the location of the Sun and cling to it, but rather identify the location of the ailment and burn it and simultaneously moderate the court cases against the family and investigations into their *Qi*.)

(上缺) (芒，紫(色)，從臂骨肉及肉之中通，使流上至於眉腋，而日猶在握中。) 日芒忽變成火，以燒臂使內外通幣(匝)洞撒良久。(存一臂皆如火炭之狀，咽咽然也。) 畢，乃陰祝曰：四明上元，日月氣分。流光煥曜，灌液凝魂。神大散景，蕩穢練煙。洞撒(徹)風炁(氣)，百耶(邪)燔然。使得長生，四支(支)兒(貌)全。注害(害)鬼鬼，收付北辰。(六韻)畢，存思良久，放身自忘。(存火燒疾處左右覺令有熱勢。久久乃悅焉忘身。於此乃畢。昔長史患手臂不佳，故小君說此法耳。令學者脫有諸風孿疾痛，可施用之。亦不但手臂，若頭面四支，皆當如此。日之所在，不必把握，唯令是所疾之處而燒之也，亦兼制卻家訟考炁(氣)矣。)

The above is a theory of preserving one's life. It tells of the method of the massage and a prayer of utmost secrecy. (The so-called method of "alleviating illness through massages".) Use it during the time of living *Qi* [i.e., between midnight and midday] (After that, he wrote, "turn towards the sovereign and pray," indicating that was appropriate that he first sat level towards Wang and noted the prayer down.) I swallowed the saliva for 27 cycles to completion, then pressed the painful area of the body. (After that, he wrote, "press for 31 cycles." This refers to the location of the

ailment. Use the hand to rapidly press down on it, and the *Qi* will pass through it substantially. Raise and lower the hand in small motions and press it repeatedly. Repeat this for 31 cycles. Even if at that moment there is no place that ails, one should perform the massage regularly as a precaution. Once complete, one should lower the body and say the prayer, but there is no limit to the count.) **Turn towards the sovereign and say the prayer** (using appropriately faint and quiet words):

Left mystery, right mystery, the three spirits unite in perfection.

Left yellow deity, right yellow deity, the six splendors mutually balance.

The blowing *Qi* and the severe illness are concealing in the four directions.

The jade liquid flows into the pool, above and below, perfusing into everything.

The inner emits water and fire, the outer expels the inauspicious.

Long-lived, soaring transcendents, their body is constantly at ease yet vigorous. (Six rhymes.)

When finished, swallow the saliva for 27 cycles. Practice this method regularly to avoid illness. If it reappears, swiftly press or massage the location of the ailment for 31 cycles.

右保命說。此云案消摩上秘祝法。(此蓋所謂消摩之愈疾者也。)常以生氣時(後云向王而祝,則亦宜先向王平坐案之)。咽唾二七過畢,案體所痛處。(後云案卅一過,此謂的有痛處,則以手急案之,氣極通之,小舉手複案,此卅一過。雖無正疾處,亦常先摩。將案,抑身體(體)而祝之,但不復限其數耳。)向王而祝曰:(亦當微言)左玄右玄,三神合真。左黃右黃,六華相當。風氣惡疾,伏匿四方。玉液流澤,上下宣通。內遣水火,外辟不祥。長生飛仙,身常休強。(六韻)畢又咽唾二七過,常如此則無疾。又當急案所痛處卅一過。

The foregoing are massage techniques as recorded in the *Taishang luting fahua jing, juan one*, transmitted by Lady Right Blossom at the Palace of Cloud Forest in Mt. Canglang. It also mentions the expelling of bad *Qi*.

(From the foregoing line “the wind would bring sickness” up to here, there are four entries, all of which constitute announcements of the multitude of the perfected to the adjutant. They are written as extemporaneous records.)

Written by the adjutant.

右滄浪雲林宮右英王夫人所出云出太上錄淳發華經上案摩法。亦云辟惡氣。

(从前风病来，至此凡四条，皆众真令告长史，即事为言耳。) 長史書。

Constantly use the hands to press down on the small space behind the eyebrows for 39 cycles. (Perform each cycle using the third finger to press down on the small space behind the eyebrows where there are small natural concavities. These are located at places where one can hear clicks when moving the teeth. They are also called “Repositories of the Six Directions.”) **Use the fingers of the hand to press down on the area below the two eyes and above the cheekbone.** (In each case move the third finger and the center of the palm to horizontally rub upwards to the eyes and downwards to the concave area below the cheekbone. Use both hands together to rub in the direction of the eyes and repeat for 39 cycles.) **Moreover, use the hands to make swivel movements on the ears for thirty cycles.** (In each case use the thumb-index web to tack the earlobes and move them upwards. At the end of the range, continue to move the hands upward to arrive at the crown of the head.)

恆以手案兩眉後小空中三九過。(各以手第三指案眉後空空中中自有小穴，叩齒聞四動處是也。一名六合之府。)又以手及指摩兩目下擽上。(又各以第三指及掌心橫摩擽上目下凹中，向目門兩手相隨，俱將之，亦應三九過。)又以手掄耳，行卅過。(又各以手大指肅(虎)口俠掄耳，向上將之，手上行至於頭頂。)

Perform the massage in this way regardless of the seasons. After completing the cycles, use the hands in a retrograde movement along the forehead for 39 cycles. Begin at the middle of the eyebrows and continue upwards into the edge of the hairline. (For this, place both thumbs above the ears and leave them there, have the hand straightened and let the two small fingers touch, then move them from the eyebrows upwards along the forehead into the hairline and up towards the crown.) **In the mouth, swallow the saliva for several uncounted cycles.** (Be sure to practice swallowing throughout the process from the beginning when the hands cover the forehead to the end.) **Constantly practice this and the eyes will gradually become clear and bright. After one year, one will be able to write in the dark. When the hands touch the forehead, internally visualize the newborn infant, the sun and moon forming a brilliant pair, the utmost primordial welcoming magnificence and joyfulness. For 39 counts, begin with the eyebrows. Stop when the count is complete. This is the way to use the hands to massage the three primordials**

to render the head enduring and the hair strong. (When the hands arrive at the eyes when moving up towards the forehead, with the heart visualize the name of the upper primordial infant of the mud pellet within the nine palaces. Keep a kind and affable countenance. On the left side of the bright hall is the sun, and on the right is the moon, shining upon all the palaces within the head.) **Use both hands to massage the head on all four sides. Arrange the hair in a knot of distinguished abundance. Herein the blood of the head will scatter and drift, and the rheumatism does not concentrate.** (When the massage of the forehead is complete, but the pain remains, use the hands once again by moving up towards the hair of the head and proceed to comb the hair in a manner without any fixed count. Continue repeatedly in circles until some heat is generated and then stop.) **When the process is complete, use the hands to press the four corners of the two eyes for 29 counts. Awakening from the massage, one is able to have the distinguished sight of brilliant clarity. This is the way of gathering up divinity within the eyes. When performed for a long time, one will catch sight of the hundred numinous spirits.** (Use the second and third fingers of each hand for the pressing. A dignified sight of purple, blue, and red colored light will form a brilliant and glorious image. All of the aforementioned steps must be carried out one after the other, and with full focus on each act. One must not rush the treatment.) **It only works if one can carry it out in a diligent manner by maintaining one's hands on the face. Even after becoming a perfected person, one will not stop the practice.** (Cultivate this practice when one has free time and one can do it at their convenience. It does not depend upon the seasons, and this helps the practitioners easily develop a regular habit.)

摩唯令數無時節也。畢。輒以手逆（逆）乘額三九過，從眉中始，乃上行入髮（髮）際中。（又以兩手大指扶耳上真手令兩小指並合，從眉上而將額上入髮際出頂上也。）口傍咽唾多少無數也。（始乘額時，便就咽唾至畢。）如此常行，目日清明，一年可夜書。以手乘額，內存赤子，日月雙明，上元歡恚（喜）。三九始眉，數畢乃止。此謂手朝三元固腦（腦）堅髮之道也。（乘額時，當臨目心存泥九宮上元赤子名字，容色和悅，及明堂中左日右月映照頭內諸宮也。）頭四面以兩手乘之。順髮結唯令多也。於是頭而（血）流散，風濕不凝（乘額竟，又痛，以手更牙（互）上將頭髮，亦可徐櫛無定數，覺通巾（匝）小熱而止）。都畢，以手案目四皆二九。覺令見光分明，是檢眼神之道。久為之得見百靈。（兩手各以第二第三指案之，令見紫青赤之色光圖曜分明也。此前諸事皆各各以次為之，每欲凝之，勿速略矣。）慙而行之，使手不離面乃佳。已成真人，猶不廢也。（脩事有閒，便可為之，不待時節，益易恆耳。）

The above is Pei Qingling's explanation. This method is derived from the *Taishang baoshen jing*. In the beginning, this text was not revealed

to the world. Only when he became a perfected person, he attained it. (Note that the preface says, “The notes and the main text inform each other, which indicates that their explanations stem from the same source. The southern perfection says, “The *Baoshen jing* is among the items of Pei Qingling’s works in silk brocade, and it was carried by his attendants. He received this book from the Lady of Purple Tenuity. I also similarly wrote the final version of the *Xi gong ben*. The *Baoshen jing* contains a large *juan* that discusses the essential points of caring for the body. One who has already become a completed person can thereupon receive it.”)

Written by the adjutant.

右裴清靈說，此道出太上寶神經中。此經初不下傳於世也。當來為真人者時有得者。（案前序云：鈔徑相示者，是指說此一事出耳。南真云：寶神經是裴清靈錦囊中書，侍者常所帶。昔從紫微夫人受此書。吾亦俱如此寫西宮本定本如此。寶神經別有大弓（卷）當並是治身之要法。已成真人者，乃得受之也。）

長史書

Upon waking up in the middle of the night, repeatedly close the eyes. (In one night, it may happen a few times. Do it each time you wake up. Do not forget.)
Click the teeth for nine cycles. Swallow saliva for nine cycles to completion.
Press down on the edge of the nose with the hands. Press left and right, up and down, for ten cycles. (In all cases use the second and third finger of both hands to massage from below the nose to where the eyebrow raises, for 39 cycles.) **Pray in a soft tone as follows:**

In the upper supreme, at Mt. Siming, the nine gateways emit their essence.

The obscurity of the ears and eyes is pierced through; pass through the perfected and penetrate the numinous spirit.

On the heavenly platform, the circulating *Qi* flows evenly.

The young woman has beautiful hair, her eyes are brilliant and wise.

Having splendid hearing and keen eyesight, she is both subtle and clear.

Safeguard the harmony of the utmost primordial; pace up and down the nine walls.

The five viscera take root; the ears and eyes are born of themselves.

The heavenly platform is rich and pure; the pillars and beams are not off kilter.

The seven mortal forms are refined and softened; the three immortal souls are at peace and tranquil.

The infant is led to the sunlight, and thereupon goes side by side with me.

Whatever dares to hide from my ears and eyes, the utmost will overwhelm it with a sounding bell.

The myriad ailments will pass away, and the wishes will surely be fulfilled.

The sun and moon keep watch over the gate, while the heart is stored within the five stars.

For this authentic and illustrious prayer, the many sounds are reverently heard. (14 rhymes).

When complete, thereupon swallow the saliva for 9 cycles. Rub and wipe the face, thereby generating a little heat. Consider constancy with respect to all desires. Upon waking up in the middle of the night, immediately massage yourself and pray in this way without forgetting a single time that you lie down. When the perfected way is complete, we can thereby constantly follow it and no longer lie down and fall asleep of our own volition. (This concerns the appropriate conduct for when one wakes up in the middle of the night out of concern that people are uncertain about how the perfected person gets back to sleep. The text here offers the above explanation, which is not restricted to usage only when one wakes up in the middle of the night.)

夜臥覺常更急閉（閉）兩目（一夜數過，覺便皆為之，勿得遺忘）。叩齒九通。咽唾九過畢，以手案鼻之邊，左右上下數十過。（俱以兩手第二三指摩案從鼻下起至眉間可三九過也。）微祝曰：太上四明，九門發精。耳目玄徹（徹），通真達靈。天中之臺（臺），流悉（氣）調平。驕女雲儀，眼童英明。華聰見眼，百度眇清。保和上元，徘徊九城。五藏植根。耳目自生。天臺鬱素，柱梁〔不〕傾。七魄藻練，三魂安寧。赤子攜景，輒與我并。有敢掩我耳目，太上當摧以流鈴。萬凶消滅，所願必成。日月守門，心藏五星。真皇所祝，群嚮（響）敬聽（十四韻）。畢，又咽唾九過，摩拭面目，令小熱，以為常，每欲也。臥覺輒案祝如此勿失一臥也。真道雖成如我輩故常行之，但不復臥自生為之耳。（此法既臥覺所行，恐人疑真人亦復眠寐，故發生為之言以明之，則不必以臥覺用也。）

Above are the words of Lady of Purple Tenuity. Within the *Taishang baoshen jing* these are words of prayer for the highest way. This prayer causes people's ears and eyes to become clear and bright, their memory and knowledge to become broad and vigorous. It makes the nose harmonious and even so that saliva and nasal mucus do not drip down. There are four echoes and eight dispersions. The face has a youthful and rosy complexion like a child that regulates the *hun* soul and directs the *po* soul. Expel the thousand evil spirits as the seven openings burst

forth. Its color should be an unadorned brilliance. This is the magnificent way of the perfected comportment. The reason why it is called comportment is because it should be performed regularly. (This is also recorded in the *Baoshen jing*. He mentions this because the explanations of Lord Pei and the Lady of Purple Tenuity ultimately derive from the *Baoshen jing*. This method is not limited to waking up in the middle of the night. It can also be practiced while sitting up, or while lying during daytime. The introduction and the prayer also contain good explanations—how could one fail to be diligent?)

Written by the adjutant.

右紫微夫人言：此太上寶神經中祝辭（辭）上道也。令人耳目聰明，強識豁眼。鼻中調平，不垂津洩，四響八撤，面有童顏制魂錄魄，卻辟千摩（魔），七孔分流，色如素華。真起居之妙道也。所以名之為起居者，常行之故也。（此亦應是寶神經中事。夫人裴君說竟，仍復及此，故亦云寶神經中祝辭（辭）也。如此亦不必止在夜臥覺，坐起及晝臥並可恆用耳。序祝皆有佳說，何可不勲。）

長史書

The heavenly perfected is the space between the two eyebrows, the triangle of the eyebrow. (This relates that at the triangle in between the two eyebrows in the front of the head one should use the third finger of each hand to massage it.) **The source of the mountain goes below the nose down to the philtrum.** **And the area within the small valley goes down the side of the nose.** (This refers to the inner part of the center of the nose that separates the two soft outer parts of the nose which form indents on either side. Next, take the third finger of each hand and begin at the ... and steadfastly massage it.) **The flowered court lies just below the eyebrows. It is the bridge one must pass to achieve clear sight.** (In the low-lying area under the eyebrows and above the eye socket, horizontally use the third finger of each hand to massage it.) **The heavenly perfected draws upon the highest office of numinous spirit.** (This sentence also relates to the explanation of the meaning of the eyebrow triangle previously.) **[Do this] at dan, zhong, and mu.** (*Dan* means daybreak or sunrise, within the period of *chou* and *yin* [i.e., between approximately 1AM–5AM]. *Zhong* means noontime. *Mu* refers to the beginning of dusk or sunset, between roughly *xu* and *hai* time [i.e., between approximately 7PM–11PM].) **Swallow the saliva for 39 cycles.** (Perform the massage only after swallowing the saliva.) **Urgently use the hands to perform a yin massage for 39 cycles and make this a regular habit.** (Move on to the next location in turn and perform the

massage. Then, immediately do the 39 cycles. When complete, move on to the next location.) **This causes people to arrive at a numinous spiritual experience and gain penetrating sight. This is the way to block the path of the myriad irregularities. Say:** (When all the massages are complete according to the remaining methods, one prays. Those who massage and pray tend to pray during the process of massage. This causes the location of the massage to ...) **Pray after the final massage of the flowered court and remain looking at it, causing ... sky of the open day.**

Altogether, massage the locations to get the ear with ...

The Heavenly Perfected, fourth finger, the sun and mountain ...

天真是兩眉之間，眉之角也（此則眉內角兩頭先各以手第三指案之）。山源是鼻下人中之本側在鼻下小入谷中也。（此對鼻中隔內際宛宛凹中，次以兩手第三指端口俠案之。）華庭在兩眉之下，是撒視之津梁。（眉下目匡上骨凹中次各橫第三指案之。）天真是引（引）靈之上房（此一句猶在說前眉角之義耳）。旦中暮（旦，平旦，丑寅時也。中，午時也，暮則初夕戌亥時也）。咽唾三九（先咽唾畢乃案之）。急以手三九陰案之以為常。（以次各案一處，輒三九道，畢乃次一處也。）令人致靈撒見，杜過萬耶（邪）之道也。一曰（餘法皆案畢乃祝。此云案而祝者，似是於案中便祝。今案之處遑牙（下殘缺）祝當以最後案華庭時臨目仍視之故……開日天

俱案之處之得耳以第…

天真第四指日山…

The Way of Self-care and Medicinal Practices Gleaned from Excavated Materials

從出土資料談古代養生與服食之道

In order to enhance their longevity, scholars and officials of the ancient world diligently attended to both “self-care 養生” and medicinal practices, which have always been among the most important teachings of the “School of the Divine and the Transcendent 神仙家.”¹ An old poem reads, “In food and medicine, they seek to become divine transcendants, but many are impaired by the medicine 服食求神仙，多為藥所誤。”² (It was, for example, well known for a long time that “five stone powder 五石散” is toxic.)³ The great scholar, Wang Chong 王充 (27 BCE–97 CE) composed a work of 96 *pian* late in life on the topic of self-care that advocates preserving one’s vital energies and protecting the self, but, sadly, this book has not survived. In his *Li huo lun* 理惑論, composed near the end of the Han dynasty, Mou Rong 牟融 (d. 79 CE) says, “The various ways are both convoluted and deficient; in all, there are 96 categories 眾道叢殘，凡有九十六種。”⁴ These are just a few illustrative examples regarding the myriad ancient works on this topic. Ji Kang 嵇康 (223–262) and Xiang Xiu 向秀 (227–272) from the Wei dynasty corresponded about attaining longevity by “preserving it with unity and nourishing it with harmony 守之以一，養之以和。”⁵ After the kingdom of Jin moved to the south of the Yangtze River, Wang Dao 王導 (276–339) promoted “dark” or “mysterious sayings 玄言” (associated with *Xuanxue* 玄學 literature), and self-care was one of the three bodies of knowledge prevalent in the areas surrounding the lower reaches of

1 Note: *shen xian jia* 神仙家 is listed as one of the “Hundred Schools 百家” in the *Han shu* 漢書. There it refers to individuals and groups during the Warring States and Qin-Han periods who sought longevity and communion with the dead through alchemical and heterodox methods.

2 See Yu Jiayi, “Hanshisan kao,” 186.

3 See Yu Jiayi, “Hanshisan kao,” 181–226.

Note: “Five stone powder 五石散,” also known as “Cold-food powder 寒食散” is a toxic mixture of five minerals (typically fluorite, quartz, red bole clay, stalactite, and sulfur) in powdered form that was consumed for medicinal purposes so as to promote longevity in the second century BCE and eventually was used recreationally for its psychoactive effects.

4 *Mouzi li huo lun*, 99.

5 Ji Kang, “Yangsheng lun,” *Wenxuan*, 53, 2293.

the Yangtze River.⁶ Later on, Ge Hong 葛洪 (283–363) and Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456–536) would develop even more teachings on self-care, in turn informing the Daoist system known as “Internal Alchemy 內丹.”

In recent years, the Earth has not been stingy about its treasures on this topic, with Mawangdui 馬王堆 and Mt. Zhangjia 張家山 bamboo and silk manuscripts being unearthed one after another. New material concerning the origins and nature of the ancient methods of the seekers of “transcendence” or “immortality 仙” continues to emerge in an endless stream. This article will utilize these materials to offer an inclusive account of pre-Qin Daoist and medical works in a single essay.

- 1) The texts under investigation can be summarized as follows:
 - a. The Mt. Zhangjia bamboo slips include the works *Mai shu* 脈書 and *Yin shu* 引書. The *Mai shu* is equivalent to the *Mai jing* 脈經 that appears before the “Wushi'er bingfang” 五十二病方. The *Yin shu* is similar to the *Daoyin tu* 導引圖. The *Mai shu*'s discussion begins with the “Way of the four seasons of Peng Zu 彭祖四時之道,” which can be explored alongside the concept of “Following the *Qi* to divide the four seasons 順氣分四時” from the *Lingshu jing* 靈樞經.⁷
 - b. *Lingyang Ziming jing* 陵陽子明經 discusses “consuming *Qi* 食氣,” which is related to the ideas of consuming the “evening mist 沆瀣” and the “clouds of dawn 朝霞” that first appear in the *Chuci* 楚辭.
 - c. The Mawangdui text, “Yangsheng fang” 養生方 teaches the notions of “ordering the center 治中,” “benefiting the center 利中,” “augmenting the interior and benefit the center 益內利中,” “ordering one's strength 治力,” and “lightening the body 輕身.”
 - d. The “Shi wen” 十問 records the “Celestial Master's method for ingesting *Qi* 天師食氣之法,” “Rongcheng's method for deep respiration and avoiding the Four Calamities 容成深息與避四咎.” It also discusses methods for attuning one's breath to the morning, evening, and night times.
 - e. The *Za liao fang* 雜療方 discusses “consuming curatives 服餌,” which is also attested in the *Liexian zhuan* 列仙傳, *Yi xin fang* 醫心方, and *Yannian fang* 延年方.⁸
 - f. Tao Hongjing's *Dengzhen yinjue* 登真隱訣 discusses the origins of practices including the “method of consuming mist 服霧法,” the

6 *Shishuo xinyu* 世說新語 “Wenxue” 文學. See *Shishuo xinyu jianshu*, 1B.249.

7 *Lingshu jing*, 7.4a.

8 A table regarding medicinal consumption based on the *Liexian zhuan* is attached in this article.

“art of preserving Black and White 守玄白術,” and “consuming the light of the Sun and Moon 服日月光.”

- 2) The topics discussed regarding these materials are as follows:
 - a. The way to “extending one’s life and having enduring vision 長生久視:” Here, I will investigate the origins of the idea of “prolonging life 永命”⁹ and “extending one’s years 延年.”
 - b. The notion and pursuit of immortality.
 - c. Topics pertaining to the “mysterious repositories 玄府,” the “mysterious doorway 玄門,” the “doorway of the mysterious female 玄牝之門,” and the “solemn doorway 繆門.”
 - d. The proverb that, “the same *Qi* seeks one another 同氣相求” and the unity of humankind and Heaven.
 - e. The distinction between “life-generating *Qi* 生氣” and “turbid *Qi* 濁氣.”
 - f. “Infant and embryonic breathing 嬰兒與胎息.”
 - g. The concepts of “arriving at flexibility 致柔,” “protecting oneness 守一,” “being unmixed and harmonious 醇與和,” and the “Grand Compliance 大順.”
 - h. The prospect of reaching Peng Zu’s 彭祖 longevity.

The *Mai shu* and *Yin shu* of the Mt. Zhangjia Han bamboo manuscripts resemble the *Mai jing* that precedes the “Wushi’er bingfang” *juan*. The *Yin shu* is similar the *Daoyin tu*, the two different types of “guiding,” that is *dao* 導 and *yin* 引, being treated separately. The Jin dynasty Prime Minister and Military Adviser 丞相參軍 and *Xuanxue* author Li Yi 李頤 (482–520) said, “Guide the *Qi* to attain harmoniousness; stretch the body to render it flexible 導氣令和, 引體令柔.”¹⁰ The word *yin* in the title of the *Yin shu* means “to extend” or “stretch,” and it appears originally in the context of *yin ti* 引體 or “stretching the body.” It refers specifically to body movements and poses, such as the “Stretching of the Chicken 雞伸,” “Draconic Excitement 龍興,” “Tiger Stretch 虎引,” “Stroll of a Wolf 躩狼,” and others, which Hua Tuo 華佗 (ca. 140–208 CE) would later refer to as the “Amusements of the Five Creatures 五禽之戲.” They resemble modern-day bodybuilding exercises. One section of the text discusses the practice of “applying stretches to inner ailments 引內癰,” which utilizes the arts of stretching to treat illness. It prescribes a course of “sitting straight 正坐,” “bending at the waist 彎腰,” “lowering the head to the limit 俯極,” and then slowly

9 Note: The concept of *ming* in Daoist alchemical and medicinal practices, here translated as “life,” encompasses the English concepts of, “life,” “destiny,” “fate,” “vital force,” or “lifepan.” For a detailed discussion, see Predagio, “Destiny, Vital Force, or Existence?”

10 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6A. 537.

relaxing oneself and little by little expel warm vapors as minute particles in the steam of the breath. It then prescribes one to look upward and stand still. One would then repeat the process five times, and then another ten times on the left and right sides respectively before stopping. Other techniques include “stretching the throat 引|喉,” “stretching the congested nose 引|鼻,” “stretching an aching mouth 引|口痛,” “stretching an aching elbow 引|肘痛,” “stretching for an earache 引|耳痛,” and each has a fixed method based on the same principles as therapeutic massages. The Mt. Zhangjia *Yin shu* and the Mawangdui silk manuscript *Daoyin tu* contain only minor differences. Regarding the *Yin shu*'s idea of the “stretching of eight meridian channels 八經之引” and the *Daoyin tu*'s “seated stretching into the eight directions 坐引八維,” the meanings of “eight meridian channels” and “eight directions” must be the same—although one came from Jiangling, the other from Changsha. Thus, they can be said to share a common origin in teachings stemming from Chu.¹¹

1 The *Yin shu* and Peng Zu

The *Yin shu* begins by stating the basic theory of self-care as follows:

Springtime gives birth; the summer extends; the autumn harvests; the winter stores. This is the way of Peng Zu.

春產夏長秋收冬藏，此彭祖之道也。¹²

Below is a more detailed explanation of the art of using the four seasons as a guide for life, and it is evident that text builds upon the legend of Peng Zu (Ancestor Peng) who is venerated for his longevity.

In the Mawangdui text, “Shi wen,” the sixth question portrays Wangzi Qiaofu 王子喬父 asking Peng Zu as follows:

11 See Li Xueqin 李學勤, “Ershi shiji chutu Zhongguo gu yishu jicheng daoyan” 二十世紀出土中國古醫書集成, in *Mawangdui Hanmu yishu jiaoshi*, 1–5. Peng Hao 彭浩, “Zhangjia shan Hanjian *Yin shu* chutan” 張家山漢簡引書初探, 90–91. Gao Dalun 高大倫, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu* 張家山漢簡引書研究, introduction, 1–5. For related material, see also Ma Jixing 馬繼興, *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi* 馬王堆古醫書考釋, and Li Ling 李零, *Zhongguo fangshu gaiguan* 中國方術概觀, specifically the *juan* on what is here translated as “medicinal practice” (*fushi* 服食), *daoyin xingqi* 導引行氣, and *fang zhong* 房中.

12 Gao Dalun, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu*, 90.

“Which part of people’s *Qi* is the most essential?” Peng Zu replied, “As for people’s *Qi*, nothing is as essential as male’s genitals. If the genitals are blocked and shut off, then the hundred ailments will spring up. If the genitals are not fully developed, then one will be unable to reproduce. Therefore, longevity in every respect lies in male’s genitals.”

人氣何是為精乎？彭祖答曰：人氣莫如媵精，媵氣鬱閉，百病生矣；媵氣不成，不能繁生，故壽盡在媵。¹³

Correspondingly, the *Yin shu* says,

People are born from essence,¹⁴ but do not know how to care for their *Qi*. Therefore, many get sick and die. That by which people are inclined to lose consciousness and are early to have their genital functions diminish is because of their inability to regulate their *Qi*. Therefore, being good at regulating one’s *Qi* and enriching one’s genitals will benefit one’s body.

人生於清（精），不知愛其氣，故多病而易死。人之所以善蹶，蚤衰於陰（陰），以其不能節其氣也。故善節其氣而實其陰（陰），則利其身矣。¹⁵

In this passage, the idea of “caring for one’s *Qi* 愛其氣” surely refers to the “*Qi* of the genitalia 媵氣,” and the term *yin* 陰 in *shi qi yin* 實其陰 here must also point to the male outer sex organ. The *Laozi* 老子, chapter 55 says, “(An infant) does not yet know of the union of male and female and yet its genitals get excited 未知牝牡之合而媵作.”¹⁶ The *Shuowen* says, “*Zui* is the *yin* of an infant 媵，赤子陰也,” indicating that “*Qi* of the genitalia” refers to the function of the male genitals. This proposition from *Laozi* is likely based on the teachings of Peng Zu, who considered protecting and caring for the vital essence of his genitals to be an important element of caring for life. The discussion of self-care from the *Yulan* 御覽, “Fang shu bu” 方術部 quotes the *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳 as follows:

13 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 146–47.

Note: See also Harper, *Early Chinese Medical Literature*, 400.

14 Note: *jing* 精, for the sake of uniformity rendered as “essence,” in these examples specifically denotes the male semen.

15 Gao Dalun, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu*, 167.

16 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 55.221. The Heshang gong 河上公 version has *jun* 峻 instead.

Peng Zu said: The way of nurturing longevity is merely that nothing harms them and that's it. They stay warm in the winter and cold during the summer and would not neglect the harmony of the four seasons. This is his means of satisfying the body.

彭祖云：養壽之道，但莫傷之而已。夫冬溫夏涼，不失四時之和，所以適身也。¹⁷

Not departing from the harmony of the four seasons, one would therefore grow in the spring, thrive in the summer, harvest in the fall, and store in the winter, being in accordance with the natural tendencies of things and adapting to them, not worrying about having any disease or malady. The *qian* 乾 hexagram from the *Zhouyi* 周易 talks about the relationship between the “Four Virtues 四德” and says that “original prosperity brings about beneficial divinations 元亨利貞.”¹⁸ Qi Jiang 齊姜 (c. Spring and Autumn period) had already utilized this idea, and Kong Yinda (574–648 CE) in the *Yi zheng yi* 易正義 also referred to the four virtues when he expounded upon the four seasons.¹⁹ Now with the help of the *Yin shu*, we know these figures also drew upon the teachings of Peng Zu.

2 The *Yin shu* and Laozi

The *Yin shu* says,

Caring for the body should be performed in accordance with Heaven and Earth in mutual seeking, which is just like a great bellows. It is empty but unyielding; it moves and even more is expelled. Shut the mysterious repositories, unfasten the solemn doorway, close up the five viscera, encounter the nine orifices, improve the openings and closures of the fine lines and wrinkles of the skin—this is the way that benefits the body.

治身欲與天地相求，猶橐籥也。虛而不屈，動而愈出。閉玄府，啓繆門，闔五臟，逢□九竅（竅），利啟闔奏理，此利身之道也。²⁰

17 *Taiping yulan*, 720.7a (3190).

18 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 1.1.

19 *Zhouyi zhengyi*, 1.1–2.

20 Gao Dalun, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu*, 171.

This passage cites *Laozi* chapter 5, which says, “The space between Heaven and Earth is like a great bellows. Empty but unyielding; it moves, and even more is expelled 天地之間，其猶橐籥，虛而不屈，動而愈出。”²¹ Bellows were used to produce flowing air. The inside was hollow and not cramped, and as its movement grew more intense, the bulge would expel even more air. The *li* 利 (“improve” or “benefit”) in “benefitting the body 利身” resembles the use of *li* found in the teaching from the Mawangdui text, “Yangsheng fang”, of “augmenting the interior and benefitting the center 益內利中。”²²

The *Yin shu* says, “Inhale the pure *Qi* of Heaven and Earth, fill out your *yin*, and you will become unafflicted 吸天地之精氣，實其陰，故能無病。”²³ It also says:

Shut the mysterious repositories and unfasten the solemn doorway, close the five viscera and penetrate through the nine orifices, improve the opening and closure of the fine lines and wrinkles of the skin.

閉玄府，融繆門，合五藏，透九竅，利融闔腠理。²⁴

The *Shiji* 史記, “Bianque zhuan” 扁鵲傳 says, “The ruler had an illness in the fine lines and wrinkles of the skin 君有疾在腠理。”²⁵ The *Suwen* 素問, “Ju tong lun” 舉痛論 says, “In the cold, the fine lines and wrinkles of the skin should be closed-off 寒則腠理閉。”²⁶ The annotation reads, “bodily fluids would converge and leak out of such places 津液湊泄之所。”²⁷ The *Huainanzi* 淮南子, “Binglüe xun” 兵略訓 says, “unraveling necessarily hits the mark of *zou* 解必中揆,”²⁸ upon which Gao You 高誘 (fl. 205 CE) comments, “*zou* 揆 means ‘pattern’ (*li* 理).”²⁹ The word *cou* 腠 is here written as *zou*.

As for the “mysterious repositories 玄府” or “black pores,” the *Suwen*, “Shui re xue lun” 水熱穴論, says:

21 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 5.23–24.

22 Wei Qipeng and Hu Xianghua, *Mawangdui Hanmu yishu jiaoshi*, 72.

23 Gao Dalun, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu*, 170.

24 As an aside, the *Yi li* 儀禮, “Xiang she li” 鄉射禮, mentions “*jin cou* 進腠,” to which Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200 CE) provides the annotation, “patterns of the skin 膚理也.” See *Yili zhushu*, 10.193.

25 *Shiji*, 105.2793.

26 *Huangdi neijing suwen*, 11.222.

27 *Huangdi neijing suwen*, 11.222.

28 *Huainanzi jishi*, 15.1092.

29 *Huainanzi jishi*, 15.1092.

As for what is referred to as the “mysterious repositories,” they are the holes for sweat. When sweat and perspiration appears, the dark sweat will empty out and be expelled. When sweat is collected inside a pore, it is called a dark repository.

所謂玄府者，汗空也。汗液色玄從空而出，以汗聚於裡，故謂之玄府。³⁰

As for the “solemn doorway 繆門,” one theory is that it is the “gateway of life 命門,” which points to the lower *dantian* 丹田 area (i.e., the adomen). The *Kongzi Jiayu* 孔子家語, “Bian yue” 辨樂, says, “A solemn appearance implies there is thinking therein 繆然思焉,”³¹ to which the annotation reads, “[there is] an appearance of deep thinking 深思貌.”³² The “solemn doorway” might thus be identified with the “mysterious” or “dark doorway 玄門.” The Mawangdui text, “He yin yang” 合陰陽, says:

Enter into the dark doorway, hold sway over the crisscrossing tendons. Inhale essence and spirit above and thereupon you are able to possess enduring vision and go along with Heaven and Earth, matching their endurance. As for holding sway over the crisscrossing tendons, the dark doorway holds sway over the arteries from the central position.

入玄門，御交筋，上欲精神，乃能久視而與天地侔存。交筋者，玄門中交脈也。³³

The Yang Liang 楊涼 (fl. Tang dynasty) annotation of the *Xunzi* 荀子, “Zheng ming” 正名 says, “Dark’ refers to what is deeply concealed 玄謂深隱.”³⁴

As for “enduring vision 久視,” chapter 59 of the *Laozi* says, “This is called the way of having deep roots and firm stalks to lengthen one’s life and possess enduring vision 是謂深根固柢長生久視之道.”³⁵ The *Lingshu jing* 靈樞經, “Ben shen” 本神 says:

³⁰ *Huangdi neijing suwen*, 16.327.

³¹ *Kongzi jiayu shuzheng*, 8.204.

³² *Kongzi jiayu tongjie*, 8.399.

³³ *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 153.

³⁴ For the significance of the term *xuan* 玄 (“mysterious” or “dark”), consult the *Baopuzi* 抱朴子, inner chapters, “Chang xuan” 暢玄. See *Xunzi jijie*, 16.491. *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 1.1–11.

³⁵ *Laozi jiaoshi*, 59.242.

Regarding the way of the wise man who practices self-care, certainly he follows the four seasons and accords with hot and cold, harmonizing delight and anger, being at peace wherever he resides, moderating his *yin* and *yang*, and shifting between hard and soft. If one is like this, then remote diseases will not arrive. He will lengthen his life and have enduring vision.

故智者之養生也，必順四時而適寒暑，和喜怒而安居處，節陰陽而調剛柔，如是，則僻邪不至，長生久視。³⁶

The meaning of the phrase, “enduring vision,” is the same as in the *Laozi* and was indeed lifted from the *Laozi* by the *Yin shu*.

In so far as the *Zhouyi* is one of the Three Mysteries,³⁷ certain sentences therein also relate to *daoyin* breathing exercises, such as, “the same *Qi* seeks one another 同氣相求.” The *Yin shu* has two corresponding statements regarding this “mutual seeking 相求.” One refers to, “going along with mutual seeking 以與相求,” and the other says, “ordering the body should be performed in accordance with Heaven and Earth in mutual seeking 治身與天地相求.” Additionally, the Mawangdui text “Shiliu jing” says, “With respect to the masculine and feminine ... the male and female engage in mutual seeking, uniting the rigid and the soft 稽之男女，……牝牡相求，合剛與柔.” “Mutual seeking” additionally used to refer to the practice of regulating *Qi* with inhaling 吹 and exhaling 响 breaths in concert with one another, as certainly was a customary saying of the time.

3 A discussion of Normalizing *Qi*

Huxi 呼吸, “inhalation and exhalation,” and *tuna* 吐納, “expunging the impure and receiving the clean,” are the most important techniques of *daoyin* breathing exercises. The *Zhuangzi* 莊子, “Ke yi pian” 刻意篇 says:

Utilize *chui* and *xu*, *hu* and *xi*, expunging the old and receiving the new ...
... people who nurture the form, that is what those who investigate the longevity of Peng Zu were fond of.”

³⁶ *Lingshu jing*, 2.8a.

³⁷ Note: The “Three Mysteries” refers to the three texts, *Laozi*, *Zhuangzi*, and the *Changes*, which served as the canonical foundation for Wei-Jin *Xuanxue* literature.

吹响、呼吸，吐故納新……養形之人，彭祖壽考者之所好也。³⁸

The four terms, *chui*, *xu*, *hu*, and *xi*, have been carefully studied, and I will here offer a brief analysis of their respective meanings.

Chui 吹: The *Shuowen* 說文 says, “*chui* is *xu*, it is composed of *kou* and *qian* 吹，噓也，从口从欠。”³⁹ We can note that here, *chui* is glossed as *xu* 噓, “sighing.” The *Shuowen* further states, “*chui* is when *Qi* comes out 吹，出气也。”⁴⁰ The *Sheng lei* 聲類 says, “*Qi* coming out hurriedly is called *chui*. *Qi* coming out relaxedly is called *xu* 出氣急曰吹，緩曰噓。”⁴¹ The *Yin shu* writes the character as *chui* 炊.⁴²

Xu 响: The *Shuowen*, “*Qian bu*” says, “*xu* is *chui* 响，吹也。”⁴³ *Xu* 响 and *xu* 响 are the same. A Tang dynasty version of the *Zhuangzi* writes *xu* 响 as *xu* 煦,⁴⁴ adding in the fire radical. The Heshang gong 河上公 commentary to the *Laozi* says, “*xu* is warm; *chui* is cold 响，溫也。吹，寒也。”⁴⁵ *Xu* belongs to warm *Qi*, and *chui* belongs to cold *Qi*. Thus, the Song dynasty text, *Jiyun* 集韻, says, “*xu*: heat it using the *Qi* 响，氣以溫之也。”⁴⁶ The *Yin shu* in every instance mistakenly writes *xu* 响.

Hu 呼: The *Shuowen* says, “*hu* is exhalation 呼，外息也。”⁴⁷ The word is also written *hu* 獻, of which the *Shuowen* says, “*hu* is to blow out warm air 獻，溫吹也。”⁴⁸

Xi 吸: The *Shuowen* says, “*Xi* is inhalation 吸，內息也。”⁴⁹

Of these four terms, we can identify three as referring differing types of exhalation, namely, *chui*, *xu*, and *hu*. Only *xi* signifies inhalation. Moreover, *chui* and *xu* are not the same, each having unique explanations: *chui* is distinguished according to the force of the breathing as shown in Li Deng's 李登 (fl. Three

38 *Zhuangzi jijie*, 4.162.

39 *Shuowen jiezi*, 2A.8b (31).

40 *Shuowen jiezi*, 8B.8a (179).

41 *Kangxi zidian*, 194.

42 Gao Dalun, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu*, 121.

43 *Shuowen jiezi*, 8B.8a (179).

44 Jao Tsung-i, *Facang Dunhuang shuyuan jinghua*, 8: 54.

45 *Laozi Daode jing Heshang gong zhangju*, 29.119.

46 *Jiyun*, 7.18b (494).

47 *Shuowen jiezi*, 2A.8a (31).

48 *Shuowen jiezi*, 8B.8a (179).

49 *Shuowen jiezi*, 2A.8b (31).

Kingdoms), *Sheng Lei Xu*, on the other hand, is differentiated according to its temperature, as is the case in the Heshang gong commentary.

Chapter 29 of the *Laozi* says,

“All under Heaven” is a spirit-like thing and cannot be gotten by action. ... Thus, for things, in some cases they act, while in others they follow. In some cases, they *xu*, and in others they *chui*.

天下神器不可為……故物或行或隨，或响或吹。⁵⁰

The Mawangdui A version of the *Laozi* says, “In some cases, they are hot, and in others they *chui* (blow) 或炅（熱）或〔吹〕，”⁵¹ and the B version says, “In some cases, they are hot, and in others they are harmed 或熱，或砒，”⁵² neither of which talk about the *Qi* being either warm or cold.

The *Yin shu* also offers teachings on relieving *dan bing* 癰病,⁵³ saying, “At this time, to swiftly perform the stretching of the eight meridian channels, there should be urgent *hu* breathing and urgent *xu* breathing, both of which extend the *yin* 當此之時，急治八經之引，急瘉，急响（响），引陰。”⁵⁴ It also mentions abdominal bloating:

Both day and night, lie down on the bed and *chui* 30 times. If there is no effect, then *hu* for an additional 10 times. If there is no improvement, *xu* for 30 times. If there is no effect, rise and treat the illness by performing the stretching of the eight meridian channels.

夜日談（偃）臥而精炊之三十，無益；精瘉之十，無益；精响之十，無益；復精炊之三十，無益；起，治八經之引。……⁵⁵

In this practice, *chui* and *xu* alternate but have no effect. Thus, one must manage by “stretching the eight meridian channels,” which the *Daoyin tu* 導引圖, no. 37, refers to as “seated stretching into the eight directions 坐引八維。”⁵⁶ One would take a certain shape while naked and exposed, without any lower

50 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 29.115–16.

51 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 42.

52 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 4: 207.

53 Note: *Dan* 癰 refers to a kind of illness based in the presence of too much heat in the body, including overexertion, “jaundice 疸” or “fever 瘧.”

54 Gao Dalun, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu*, 119.

55 Gao Dalun, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu*, 148.

56 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 16.

garments, barefoot, with both knees being bent, both hands pointing forward, and the lower part of the legs being stretched apart. Dongfang Shuo 東方朔 (ca. 160–93 BCE) in *Qi jian* 七諫, “Zi bei” 自悲 says, “Guide yourself by stretching in the eight directions. Unite with the evening mist to extend one’s life 引八維以自道兮，含沆瀣以長生.”⁵⁷ Thus, the “eight meridian channels” resemble the “eight directions.”

The *Yin shu* states that people become sick because they are not in harmony with the climate of the four seasons:

Thus, one must necessarily treat the illness with the stretching of the eight meridian channels (directions), to *chui*, *xu*, *hu*, and *xi* the pure *Qi* of Heaven and Earth. Extend the abdomen and straighten the waist, and one’s strength extends into hand and foot. Press into the heels and bend the fingers. Wear loose clothes when you sleep and wake up. Lie on your back and perform a giant stretch, thereby according with the “mutual seeking.” In this way one can be without sickness. Lying supine, *chui* and *xu*, and this will extend the *yin*.

是以必治八經（維）之引，炊、晌、摩、吸天地之精氣。信（伸）腹直要（腰），力信手足，輒踵曲指，去起寬寬（坦），偃治巨引，以與相求也，故能無病。偃臥炊、晌，引陰（陰）。

On a Spring Day, *xu* twice, *hu* once, and *chui* once.

春日再晌，壹摩、壹炊（吹）。

On a Summer Day, *hu* twice, *xu* once, and *chui* once.

夏日摩、壹晌壹炊。

On a Winter Day, *chui* twice, *xu* once, and *hu* once ...

冬日再炊，壹晌壹摩。⁵⁸

To follow the *Qi* of the four seasons, one regulates their *chui*, *xu*, and *hu* breathing distinctively:

57 *Chuci buzhu*, 13.250.

58 Gao Dalun, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu*, 167.

Spring: *xu*, (twice), one *hu*, one *chui*.

春 响（二次） 一虚一炊。

Summer: *hu*, one *xu*, one *chui*.

夏 虚 一响一炊。

Winter: *chui* (twice), one *xu*, one *hu*.

冬 吹（二次） 一响一虚。

The *Yin shu* also says:

If dry, exhale (*hu*) gently and lie down gently. If warm, gently *chui* and do not lie down. To make full one's *yin*, in the heat, *xu* vigorously and repeatedly. In the cold, exercise the body strenuously. This is the way of going along with the mutual responses of dry and warm, cold and hot.

燥則婁虚（呼）婁臥，溫則婁炊（吹）毋臥；實陰（陰），暑則精婁（屢）响（响），寒則勞身，此與燥濕寒暑相應之道也。⁵⁹

We can note that the *Suwen*, “Shengqi tongtian lun” 生氣通天論 says:

Therefore, during the day, *yang Qi* resides outside. At daybreak, people's *Qi* emerges. At midday, *yang Qi* is prominent. Late in the day, *yang Qi* is already empty, and the gateway of *Qi* is then blocked off.

故陽氣者一日而主外，平旦人氣生，日中而陽氣隆，日西而陽氣已虛，氣門乃閉。⁶⁰

Within the space of a day, the *Qi* of *yin* and *yang* are not the same:

Daybreak: the *Qi* arises.

平旦——氣生

Midday: the *yang Qi* is at its apex.

59 Gao Dalun, *Zhangjia shan Hanjian Yin shu yanjiu*, 171–72.

60 *Wangdi neijing suwen*, 19.

日中——陽氣最隆

Late day: the *yang Qi* is empty, and the gateway of *Qi* is blocked.

日西——陽氣虛，是時氣門乃閉

This is the transformation of *yin* and *yang* throughout the day.

Just as there is also a difference of hot and cold and dry and warm throughout the year, there is a method for moderating the breath to comply with the changing climate. We can arrange these ideas as follows:

Dry: it is fitting to *hu* and lie down. (Exhaling warm *Qi*.)

燥——宜呼而臥（吹出溫氣）

Warm: it is fitting to *chui* but not to lie down. (Frequently expel cold *Qi*.)

溫——宜吹毋臥（頻吐涼氣）

Hot: it is fitting to *xu*. (Expel hot *Qi* little by little.)

暑——宜呶（小口吐出熱氣）

Cold: exercise the body strenuously.

寒——勞身

The lightness and heaviness as well as the moderation of breathing are in accordance with the climate.

According to the *Yin shu*, the three kinds of exhalations accord with the differences of the four seasons. The *Lingshu jing* 靈樞經 says, “The wise practice self-care; they necessarily accord with the four seasons and are adapted to cold and heat 智者之養生也，必順四時而適寒暑。”⁶¹

Wang Bao 王褒 (513–576) in his “Shengzhu de xianchen song” 聖主得賢臣頌 says, “Why does one lower, raise, curl and extend oneself like Peng Zu, and engage in *xu* 呶 and *xu* 噓 breathing like Wang Ziqiao and Master Red Pine? 何必偃仰詘信若彭祖，呶噓呼吸如喬、松？”⁶² Yan Shigu 顏師古 (581–645) comments, “*xu* 呶 and *xu* 噓 are both the expulsion of *Qi* from an

61 *Lingshu jing*, 2.8a.

62 *Wenxuan*, 47.2093.

open mouth 响、嘘，皆開口出氣也。”⁶³ He groups *chui* and *xu* with the techniques of Wang Qiao and Red Pine but considers raising and lowering oneself to be grouped with those of Peng Zu. *Chui*, *xu*, and *hu* are all methods of outwardly exhaling *Qi*. The *Huainanzi*, “Jingshen xun” 精神訓 says the same.⁶⁴ The *Zhuangzi*, “Ke yi,” says, “The genuine person roams by utilizing *chui* and *xu*, *hu* and *xi*, expunging the old and receiving the new 真人所游，若吹响呼吸，吐故納新。”⁶⁵ Additionally, “Qisu xun” 齊俗訓 writes, “*chui*, *xu*, *hu*, *xi* 吹嘔呼吸，”⁶⁶ using *xu* 嘔 as a loan-character for *xu* 响.

Dongfang Shuo writes, “ingest the evening mist to lengthen one’s life 食沆瀣以長生.”⁶⁷ We can now turn to the Mawangdui text, “Que gu shi qi” 卻谷食氣 for an explanation, which reads as follows:

In consuming *Qi* one carries out *xu* and *chui* and employs it when one begins lying down and getting up. For anyone who exhales *xu* from the center and emits *chui*: For a twenty-year old, perform it twenty times in the morning, twenty in the evenings, and two hundred times in the evening every two days. For a thirty-year old, perform it thirty times in the morning, thirty times in the evenings, and three hundred times per evening every three days. Use these amounts to extrapolate the rest.

食氣者為响（响）、吹，則以始臥與始興。凡响中息而吹，年二十者朝二十，暮二十，二日之暮二百；年三十者，朝三十，暮三十，三日之暮三百，以此數推之。⁶⁸

The ingestion of *Qi* differs from the ingestion of rays in that there must be strict regulations on the number of times one performs the exercise that vary with one’s age. Whenever one engages in *xu* and *chui*, it must be either before they sleep or just after they wake up. At the halfway point of expelling warm *Qi* by exhaling *xu*, one should perform the *chui* exercise and blow. (The explanation says that one should change into the closed mouth *chui* exhalation to blow out the remaining *Qi*.) The number of times can be rendered as follows:

Twenty years old: Twenty times in the evening, every two days change it to two-hundred times in the evening.

63 *Han shu*, 64B.2828.

64 *Huainanzi*, 7.527.

65 *Zhuangzi jijie*, 15.162.

66 *Huainanzi jishi*, 11.797.

67 *Chuci buzhu*, 13.250.

68 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 2.

二十歲暮二十每隔二日改為晚上二百次

Thirty years old: Thirty times in the evening. Every three days change it to three-hundred times in the evening.

三十歲暮三十每隔三日改為晚上三百次

This *xu* and *chui* method of consuming *Qi* must match the four seasons, and because there are different situations and taboos, there are correspondingly the so-called, “Four Calamities 四咎.” In the Mawangdui text, “Shi wen,” Duke Rongcheng 容成公 responds to the Yellow Emperor’s 黃帝 inquiry as follows:

Ingesting *Qi* has its prohibitions: In the springtime avoid turbid sunlight. In the summer, avoid hot winds. In the autumn, avoid frost and fog. In the winter, avoid ice and shade. You must expel these four calamities, and moreover consider deep exhalation as [the key to] longevity. In the principle of morning breathing, the exhalation of breath also must tally with Heaven ... and then the day’s old *Qi* will be exhausted, and the day’s new *Qi* will be plentiful. In the principle of daytime breathing, you must be subtle ...

In the principle of nighttime breathing, deeply exhale in a lengthened and slow manner; employ the ears without hearing; and, moreover, sleep in a peaceful manner ... In this way you will be able to lengthen life.

Regarding breathing at midnight, very gently and slowly exhale your breath; let the six repositories emit forth; bring the length to its extremity; aim towards longevity and divinity; and be sure to breathe with the fine lines and wrinkles of the skin.

食氣有禁：春避濁陽，夏避湯風，秋避霜霧，冬避凌陰，必去四咎，乃深息以為壽，朝息之志，其出也務合於天……則陳氣日盡，而新氣日盈。……晝息之志，呼吸必微……暮息之志，深息長徐，使耳勿聞，且以安寢。……故能長生。夜半之息也……深徐去勢，六府皆發，以長為極，將欲壽神，必以腠理息。⁶⁹

The *Chuci*, “Yuan you” 遠遊 says:

Ingest the six *Qi*, drink the evening mist, rinse the mouth with the *Qi* of the midday sun and keep the early morning clouds in your mouth;

69 *Mawangdui Hanmu yishu jiaoshi*, 6:143.

protect the clarity of the divine brilliance; allow pure *Qi* to enter and coarse filth to be removed.

餐六氣而飲沆瀣兮，漱正陽而含朝霞：保神明之清澄兮，精氣入而羶穢除。⁷⁰

Wang Yi's 王逸 (fl. Eastern Han) commentary quotes the *Lingyang Ziming jing* 陵陽子明經 as follows:

In the Spring, ingest the morning clouds. The morning clouds are the red and yellow *Qi* from when the sun has nearly risen.

In the autumn, ingest the sinking *yin*. The sinking *yin* is the red and yellow *Qi* from when the sun has just set.

In the winter, drink the cold fog. The cold fog is the *Qi* of the northern midnight.

In the summer, ingest the rectified *yang*. The rectified *yang* is the southern midday *Qi*.

Together with the dark and yellow *Qi* of Heaven and Earth, these constitute the engagement of the six *Qi*.

春食朝霞，朝霞者，日始欲出赤黃氣也。

秋食淪陰，淪陰者，日沒以後赤黃氣也。

冬飲沆瀣，沆瀣者，北方夜半氣也。

夏食正陽，正陽者，南方日中氣也。

并天地玄黃之氣，是爲六氣也。⁷¹

The “Que gu” 卻谷 chapter says,

Springtime ingestion: Expel the turbid *yang*, harmonize with rectified light and the morning clouds—can be done both at night and during the day.

Summer ingestion: expel the hot wind, harmonize with the morning clouds and evening mist—can be done both at night and during the day.

Autumn ingestion: Expel ... hoarfrost and fog, harmonize with the shifting *yang* (sinking *yin*), and rectified light—can be done both at night and during the day.

⁷⁰ *Chuci buzhu*, 5.166.

⁷¹ *Chuci buzhu*, 5.166.

Winter ingestion: Expel the icy *yin*, harmonize with the *qi* of noon sun, the rectified light, the shifting *yang*, and the shifting *yin*—can be done both at night and during the day.

春食：去濁陽，和以匡光、朝霞，昏清可。

夏食：去湯風，和以朝霞、沆瀣，昏清可。

秋食：去□□霜霧，和以輸陽（淪陰）、匡光，昏清可。

冬食：去凌陰，和以正陽、匡光、輸陽、輸陰，昏清可。⁷²

Based on the “Shi wen,” we know that Duke Rongcheng had already added the theory of “Four Calamities” upon the absorption practices. *Lingyang Ziming jing* also employs it to explain the six *Qi*. In the “Shi wen,” Duke Rongcheng says:

One who is good at ordering the *Qi* and holding onto the essence, can accumulate it without traces. Essence and spirit overflow like a fountain. Accumulate it by inhaling the sweet dew, let it circulate by drinking from the chalcedony fountain, moistening from the numinous vessel (i.e., both refer to saliva).

善治氣搏精者，以无徵為積；精神泉溢，翕甘露以為積，飲瑤泉靈尊以為經。⁷³

This indeed is the same as the notion of, “condensing the *Qi* to bring about flexibility 專氣致柔”⁷⁴ from the *Laozi*.⁷⁵

Later, Tao Hongjing in his *Dengzhen yinjue* talked about the “Method of Consuming Mist 服霧法,” the “Art of Preserving Black and White 守玄白術,” and “consuming the light of the Sun and Moon 服日月光.” Each of these develops and extends the ideas from the *Lingyang Ziming jing*.⁷⁶ The “Shi wen” also says:

As for the way to draw in *Qi*, one must arrive at the end. The essence will be formed without defect, above and below all being essence, how could the coldness and heat enter the body and generate illness? The breathing

72 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 3.

73 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 143.

74 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 10.39.

75 See my, “(Chuan Laozi shi) Rongcheng yishuo gouchen—xian Laoxue chutan,” 63–68.

76 See my, “Lun Dunhuang canben *Dengzhen yinjue*,” 12–13.

must be deep and long; the new *Qi* can then be easier to preserve; the *Qi* dwelling within us makes us become old, and the new *Qi* gives rise to longevity. As for one who is good at ordering *Qi*, he scatters the dwelling *Qi* at midnight, and gathers the new *Qi* in the morning.

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，新氣朝最。⁷⁷

This is similar to the notion we find in the *Zhuangzi*, “Da zongshi” 大宗師, that “the genuine person breathes deeply 真人其息深深,”⁷⁸ of which Wang Shuzhi 王叔之 (fl. Song) writes, “Rise up and breathe from the heels, and the whole body will be deeply affected 起息於踵，遍體而深.”⁷⁹

The practices relating to the exhalation of *Qi* during the pre-Qin period contained *chui*, *xu*, and *hu* breaths, which were to be performed in accordance with the four seasons and the morning and evening hours. Later, there were six methods of exhalation, the earliest record of which can be seen in Tao Hongjing's *Yangxing yanming lu* 養性延命錄, wherein the terms, *chui* 吹, *hu* 呼, *xi* 唏, *he* 呵, *xu* 噓, and *xi* 呬, became the names of six methods that would unite the five viscera 五臟. He writes as follows:

In people's breathing, they will do one *hu*, one *xi*, but without knowing the appropriate count for each. If one desires the method to lengthen the breath and expel *Qi*, when the season is cold, one can *chui*. When the season is warm, they can *hu* (namely, *xu*). In the meticulous treatment of diseases, one can use *chui* to expel wind, use *hu* to expel heat, use *xi* to expel vexation, use *he* to bring down the *Qi*, use *xu* to scatter the stagnant, and use *xi* to unfasten the extremity. In all those cases where people occupy extremities, there is too much *xu* and *xi*. Those of the Way normalize the flow of *Qi* and so follow the method of not desiring to *xu* and *xi*. As for *xu* and *xi*, they inhibit lengthening the breath.

凡人之息，一呼一吸，無有此數。欲為長息吐氣之法，時寒可吹，時溫可呼（即响）。委曲治病，吹以去風，呼以去熱，唏以去

77 *Changsha Mawangdui Hanmu jianbo jicheng*, 6: 143.

78 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 3A.228.

79 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 3A.228.

煩，呵以下氣，噓以散滯，呬以解極。凡人極者，則多噓呬。道家行氣，率不欲噓呬。噓呬者，長息之忌也。⁸⁰

It also says:

All cases of disease arising, they do not leave the five viscera. ... In diseases of the heart, the body possesses cold and heat; *hu* and *chui* emit the two corresponding types of *Qi*. In diseases of the lungs, there is a fluid buildup within the chest; the *xu* expels the corresponding *Qi*. In diseases of the spleen, blowing breezes wander along the torso, and the body itches, is in pain, and is distressed; *xi* expels the corresponding *Qi*. In diseases of the liver, the eyes are in pain, sad, anxious, and unhappy; *he* expels the corresponding *Qi*.

凡病之來，不離於五臟。……心臟病者，體有冷熱，呼吹二氣出之；肺臟病者，胸背脹滿，噓氣出之；脾臟病者，體上游風習習，身癢疼悶，唏氣出之；肝臟病者，眼疼，愁憂不樂，呵氣出之。⁸¹

So, there are six ways of expelling *Qi*, though there are only five viscera. This discrepancy caused later authors to relocate the *xi* 呬 exhalation among breaths dealing with the three truncal cavities. The *Shuowen* says, “*Xi*: The Eastern Barbarians say that breathing is *xi* 呬，東夷謂息為呬。”⁸² The *Fangyan* 方言 claims, “the eastern Qi people call it *xi* 東齊曰呬。”⁸³ Besides these two books, the extant *Daozang* further contains other works that pass down these six methods to expel sicknesses and lengthen one’s years. There is the *Taiqing daoyin yangsheng fa* 太清導引養生法, the *Taishang yangsheng tai xi qi jing* 太上養生胎息氣經, and the *Taishang laojun yangsheng jue* 太上老君養生訣 among others. Regarding the therapy for normalizing *Qi*, one may refer to the details found in *juan* 18 of the *Daozang*, where there are as many as 20 references, each of which builds upon the work of its predecessors in ways that I cannot sufficiently express here.

80 *Yangxing yanming lu jiaozhu*, C.157.

81 *Yangxing yanming lu jiaozhu*, C.161.

82 *Shuowen jiezi*, 2A.8a (31). See also the *Taiqing tiaoci jing* 太清調氣經 in *Zhengtong dao-zang*, 18: 405–6.

83 *Fangyan jiaojian*, 2.15.

4 A Discussion of Medicine

Turning now to medicine in particular, we can look to the testimony in the *Liexian zhuan*, which lists and categorizes figures associated with the production and consumption of certain medicines as follows:

- Master Red Pine 赤松子—He took *shui yu* 水玉 (pinellia).⁸⁴
 Ma Shi 馬師—He drank *gancao tang* 甘草湯 (licorice soup).
 Chijiang Ziyu 赤將子與—He ate *bai cao hua* 百草華 (the hundred grasses/flowers).
 Wo Quan 偃佺—He ate *song shi* 松實 (pine nuts).
 Fang Hui 方回—He repeatedly ate *yun mu* 雲母 (mica).
 Guanling Yin 關令尹—He took *ju sheng shi* 苽勝實.⁸⁵
 Juanzi 涓子—He was fond of taking herbal medicine 餌術.
 Lü Shang 呂尚—He took *ze zhi di* 澤芝地 (stone marrow/chalcedony).
 Shi Men 師門—He ate *tao li pa* 桃李葩 (the petals of peach and plum blossoms).
 Wu Guang 務光—He took *pu jiu gen* 蒲韭根 (calamus herb root).
 Chou Sheng 仇生—He ate *song zhi* 松脂 (pine resin).
 Peng Zu 彭祖—He ate *gui zhi* 桂芝 (a type of *Ganoderma lucidum* i.e., *lingzhi*).
 Qiong Shu 邛疏—He steamed *shi sui* 石髓 (stone marrow or chalcedony) and consumed the resulting “milk”.
 Lu Tong 陸通—He ate the fruit of *tuo lu* tree 橐廬木 and *wu jing zi* 蕪菁子 (turnip seeds).
 Jiangfei er nü 江妃二女 (the two ladies of Yangtze River and Han River)—They subsisted on mushrooms.
 Fan Li 范蠡—He ate cinnamon and drank water.
 Kou Xian 寇先—He cultivated lychee plants.
 Guifu 桂父—He took cinnamon and mallow and combined it with turtle brains.
 Xiuyang gong 修羊公—He ate *huang jing* 黃精 (rhizomes).
 Cuiwenzi 崔文子—He made yellow powder and red pills.
 Chixuzi 赤須子—He ate pine nuts, *tian men dong* 天門冬 (*Asparagus cochinchinensis*), and *shi zhi* 石脂 (stone ester).

84 *Shui yu* 水玉 is *shui jing* 水精. See the *Shanhai jing* 山海經, Guo Pu's commentary (*Shanhai jing jianshu*, 1.3).

85 The *Guangya* 廣雅, “Shi cao” 釋草 says, “*ju sheng* 巨勝 is flaxseed.” *Guangya shuzheng*, 10A.804.

Duzi 犢子—He ate pine nuts and *fuling* 茯苓 (pine truffle).

Lupi Gong 鹿皮公—He ate *zhi cao* 芝草 (turmeric).

Chang Rong 昌容—He ate *peng lei gen* 蓬蘽根 (Penglong root).

Xi Fu 谿父—He ate cinnamon, *fu zi* 附子 (aconite), *zhi shi* 芷實 (angelica fruit).

Shan Tu 山圖—He took *di huang* 地黃 (rehmannia), *dang gui* 當歸 (angelica), *qiang huo* 羌活 (Notopterygium incisum), *du huo* 獨活 (Angelica pubescens), and *ku shen* 苦參 (Sophora flavescens) powder.

Mao nü 毛女—She ate pine needles.

Wen Bin 文賓—He took *ju hua* 菊花 (chrysanthemum flowers), *di fu* 地膚 (Bassia scoparia), *sang ji sheng* 桑寄生 (Taxillus sutchuenensis), and pine nuts.

Shangqiu Zixu 商邱子胥—He ate *zhu* 朮 (Atractylodes macrocephala), *chang pu* 菖蒲 (Acorus calamus) root, and drank water.

Linyang Ziming 陵陽子明—He took *wu shi zhi* 五石脂 (Five Stone resin).

We can also note that the *Baopuzi* 抱朴子, “Xianyao pian” 仙藥篇 says, “Jade is also a panacea 玉亦仙藥,”⁸⁶ and goes on to cite the *Yu jing* 玉經, which says:

Those who ingest the Dark Truth, their fated lifespan is not at its end. As for the Dark Truth, it is another name for jade, and it causes people’s bodies to become buoyant, light, and elevated.

服玄真者，其命不極。玄真者，玉之別名也，令人身飛輕舉。⁸⁷

An ancient text, *Fu yu fang shu* 服玉方書, is mentioned in the *Sui shu*, “Jing ji zhi” 經籍志.⁸⁸ The *Zhouli* 周禮, “Yu fu” 玉府 says, “When the king observes a fast, offer to consume the jade 王齊，則共食玉。”⁸⁹ Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (ca. 127–200) comments, “Consume it to control dampness 食之以禦水氣,”⁹⁰ and Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (ca. 574–648) says, “Jade fragments were ground up to be consumed 玉屑研之乃可食.”⁹¹ We can therefore be certain that ancient people did indeed consume jade. The *Wenxuan* 文選 includes Mu Hua’s 木華 (fl.

86 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.204.

87 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.204.

88 *Sui shu*, 34.1045.

89 *Zhouli zhushu*, 6.185.

90 *Zhouli zhushu*, 6.185.

91 *Zhouli zhushu*, 6.185.

Western Jin) “Hai fu” 海賦, which says, “The transcendents gather together like mist, supping on jade freely at the water’s edge 羣仙縹渺，餐玉清涯。”⁹² Ge Hong 葛洪 (283–363) himself writes:

Acquiring the white jade of Khotan is best. The second best is the jade from the border of Xu Shanting precinct in Nanyang. Jade from the Lurong River in Rinan (present-day Vietnam) is also exquisite. Master Red Pine mixed cicadas’ blood with jade and water and consumed it, and thus was able to ride the mists up and down.⁹³

得于闐國白玉尤善。其次有南陽徐善亭部界中玉，及日南盧容水中玉亦佳。赤松子以玄蟲血漬玉為水而服之，故能乘煙上下也。⁹⁴

This quote shows that Ge Hong was able to distinguish the different locations in which to find jade of various quality, which in turn suggests that he had paid visit to both the Jiao 交 and Guang 廣 provinces⁹⁵ which made him aware of the jade from Lurong 盧容. The *Shujing* 水經, “Wen shui zhu” 溫水注 quotes the *Funan zhuan* 扶南傳 as follows: “From Linyi to Rinan and Pukou, Lurong, is two hundred *li* or more 林邑至日南、盧容浦口，可二百餘里。”⁹⁶

The *Baopuzi*, “Xianyao pian”, quotes the *Xiao jing wei* 孝經緯, “Yuan shen qi” 援神契, saying:

Pepper and ginger defend against dampness; acorus calamus improves hearing, and flaxseed extends one’s years; the *weixi* mushroom keeps one distant from warfare.

椒薑禦濕，菖蒲益聰，巨勝延年，威喜（即木芝）辟兵。⁹⁷

The *Liexian zhuan* records the medicinal practices of the various and legendary long-lived individuals, and many such instances can be verified with this chapter. *Junzhi* 菌芝 was a commodity used daily by the people during Han times. The *Han shu* 漢書, “Yi wen zhi” 藝文志 mentions a text called *Huangdi zazi zhijun* 黃帝雜子芝菌, which is 18 *juan* long, commenting that it contains the method for taking medicine made of *zhijun* 菌芝.⁹⁸ In modern-day Sichuan,

92 *Wenxuan*, 12.551.

93 *Baopuzi*, “Xianyao.”


94 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.204.

95 See Feng Hanyong, “Ge Hong qu Yinzhi kao,” in *Wenshi* 文史, 1994.39: 59–69.

96 *Shujing zhushu*, 36.3000.

97 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.196.

98 *Han shu*, 30.1779.

there is a Han dynasty stone carving that many believe to depict a *lingzhi* 靈芝 (“magic mushroom”) being held up by a supernatural being, which takes on the following shape: .⁹⁹ We can also note the practice of consuming *lingzhi*, of which there are a hundred distinct species that have been meticulously detailed in Ge Hong’s writings.

The Mawangdui text, “Yangsheng fang” contains medicinal records in the “Lao bu qi” 老不起 section, which records “a recipe for making *dian ji* broth 以顛棘為漿方.”¹⁰⁰ *Dian ji* is *tianmen dong* 天門冬, which is something that was consumed by Chi Xuzi 赤須子. Ge Hong writes:

As for *tianmen dong*, some call it *yanmen dong*; some call it *dian ji* ... and some call it *guansong*. Its roots are long, and its taste is very bitter. Take it for 100 days, and your robustness and health will swiftly be augmented even more so than that gained by taking *zhu* (*Atractylodes macrocephala*) and *huangjing* (rhizomes).

天門冬，或名筵門冬，或名顛棘……或名管松……根長而味多苦……服之百日，皆丁壯倍駛於朮及黃精也。¹⁰¹

Recipe no. 4 of the “Yansheng fang” says, “moreover grind the solid white pine resin into a powder 又冶白松脂”¹⁰² with pine resin being something consumed by Qiu Sheng 仇生. Pine resin removes heat and, when taken for a long time, makes the body light and extends one’s years. Recipe no. 11, reads:

The recipe for “Yi gan”: Boil the *fuling* and then release its sediments. Use the juice to feed piglets and let women consume the dishes made of the piglets ... dried ginger, and cinnamon.

益甘，茯苓去滓，以汁肥豕。……乾薑、菌桂。¹⁰³

This is what Duzi 犢子 took. *Fuling* 茯苓 cures the adverse *Qi* arising in the chest and flank and benefits the urinary tract. Cinnamon 菌桂 tastes hot and pungent flavors and nourishes the spirit. Ge Hong’s “Xianyao” says, “Cinnamon can be combined and steamed with onion juice in order to make a tonic that can then be mixed with bamboo droplets and consumed 桂可以葱涕合蒸

99 See Wang Renxiang, “Han hua zhicao xiaoshi,” 201.

100 Ma Jixing, *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 655.

101 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.196–97.

102 Ma Jixing, *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 662.

103 Ma Jixing, *Mawangdui gu yishu kaoshi*, 680.

作水，可以竹瀝合餌之。”¹⁰⁴ Guanling Yin 關令尹 (also called Yin Xi 尹喜) took *ju sheng* 苧勝 (“*Sesamum indicum*”). Shi Men 師門 ate peach petals. Ge Hong says, “*Ju sheng*: one name for it is *hu ma*. Take it ... can help combat rheumatism in order to improve the aging process 巨勝，一名胡麻，餌服之……耐風濕，補衰老也。”¹⁰⁵ He also writes:

As for high-quality sesame, take an amount of it about the weight of one *shi*. Steam it as though to cook it, then sieve it and mix with the white honey and roll it into balls. Take two daily ... On the fifth year of consuming it in this way, you can enter fire and not be burned. On the sixth year, you can rise and gallop like a horse.

胡麻好者，一石，蒸之如炊……細篩白蜜丸如雞子，日二枚……五年，入火不焦；六年，走及奔馬。¹⁰⁶

Soak peach resin in mulberry wood ash juice. Consuming it will cure the hundred ailments and taking it for a long time will render the body light and bright.

桃膠以桑灰汁漬，服之百病愈，久服之身輕有光明。¹⁰⁷

The following are ways of taking five kinds of mica: Some use osmanthus flowers, onion, and crystal, and dissolve them in water to make a tonic. ... Others seek out honey to make a fermented drink. Others yet immerse it in autumn dew for 100 days and break it into powder by crushing it in leather sacks ... and then eat it ... Consumed thus, the hundred ailments will not arise.

服五雲之法，或以桂葱水玉化之以為水……或以蜜搜為酪，或以秋露漬之百日，韋囊挺以為粉……餌之……則百病除。¹⁰⁸

This is what Fang Hui 方回 had taken.

Lü Shang 呂尚 (Western Zhou) and Qiong Shu 邛疏 took “earth marrow 地髓” (i.e., foxglove) but some call it “stone marrow 石鐘乳 / 鐘乳石” (i.e., ground

104 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.205.

105 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.205.

106 *Taiping yulan*, 989.5b–6a (4377).

107 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.173.

108 *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 11.203.

up stalactite). “Five stone powder 五石散” used ground up stalactite as the principal ingredient,¹⁰⁹ and Tang dynasty emperors would give it their ministers. The *Tang ben cao* 唐本草 says, “if it is not taken from one’s homeland, one cannot consume the stone powder; otherwise, it will cause ulcers 非其土地，不可輕服，多發淋渴。”¹¹⁰ Sun Simiao 孫思邈 (ca. 581–682) already mentioned this ailment, and Zhang Hongzhao 章鴻釗 (1877–1951) in the *Shi ya* 石雅, *juan* 6, “Yao shi” 藥石 discusses it in detail.¹¹¹

Thus, the methods for taking medicine have always had detailed regulations. The “Xianyao pian” also cites the *Zhonghuangzi fushi jiedu* 中黃子服食節度, which discusses these ideas in broad strokes.

5 “Yangsheng lun” 養生論 and Zhuangzian Philosophy

Ji Kang’s 嵇康 (ca. 223–263) “Yangsheng lun” 養生論, the “Discourse on Nourishing Life,” concludes as follows:

External things are not preserved because they rack one’s heart. The spirit and *Qi* through their pure whiteness are made distinct. Being liberal-minded without anxiety, being silent without thought or contemplation—in this way, one can preserve it with unity and nourish it with harmony. Maintaining harmony and principle in daily progress is the same with respect to the Great Following-along. Afterwards, steam the *lingzhi*, wet it with the sweet spring-water liquor, dry it in the morning sun, hang it with five cords. Without action and self-attained, the body is magnificent, and the heart is mysterious. Forget delight and then one’s joy will be sufficient. Set life aside and then the body will be preserved. Proceeding in this way, one can almost be compared with Xian Men in longevity and contend with Wang Qiao in age—why would anyone not have this!

外物以累心不存，神氣以醇白獨著。曠然無憂患，寂然無思慮。又守之以「一」，養之以「和」，「和」、「理」日濟，同乎大順。然後蒸以靈芝，潤以醴泉，晞以朝陽，綏以五絃，無為自得，體妙心玄，

109 See Shen Kuo 沈括 (ca. 1031–1095 CE), *Mengxi Bitan* 夢溪筆談, 18.177.

110 Su Jing et al, *Xinxiu bencao*, 3.50.

111 Zhang Hongzhao, *Shi ya*, 220–28.

忘歡而後樂足，遺生而後身存。若此以往，恕可與羨門比壽，王喬爭年，何為其無有哉！¹¹²

The commentary by Li Shan 李善 (d. 689) says, “Wenzi says, ‘as for the ancient means of enacting the Way, they preserved it with harmony and held on to it with propriety.’ 文子曰：古之為道者，養以和，持以適。”¹¹³ The *Zhuangzi* says:

As for the ancients’ approach to cultivating the Way, they used placidity to nourish “knowing”. They knew life without using “knowing” to do so and called it using “knowing” to nourish “placidity”. “Knowing” and “placidity” mutually nourish one another, and “harmony” and “regularity” both come out from nature.

古之治道者，以恬養「知」，知生而无以「知」為也，謂之以「知」養「恬」，「知」與「恬」交相養，而和「理」出其性。¹¹⁴

We can note that Li Shan drew his ideas from the *Zhuangzi*’s “Shan xing” 繕性 chapter. The *Zhuangzi* also says:

As for virtue, it is harmony. As for the Way, it is regularity. When virtue contains everything, it is benevolence. When the Way regulates everything, it is righteousness.

夫德，和也；道，理也。德无不容，仁也；道无不理，義也。¹¹⁵

Thus, we can be sure that harmony going along with regularity is like virtue going along with the Way. Virtue approaches benevolence and the Way resembles righteousness. Ji Kang calls it, “Harmony and regularity mutually assisting one other 和理相濟.” This is no different from saying that virtue and the Way mutually benefit each other. Ji Kang treats harmony and regularity as two different things, and this notion originally came from Zhuangzi. There is also a quote from “De chong fu” 德充符 exploring Zhuangzi’s notion of harmony, which reads:

¹¹² *Wenxuan*, 53.2292–93.

¹¹³ *Wenxuan*, 53.2293.

¹¹⁴ *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6A.548.

¹¹⁵ *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6A.548.

The heart wanders in the harmony of virtue. What is it called when virtue has no appearance? Respond: Evenness, like when water is at the pinnacle of stillness. Internally one is protected, and externally one does not shake. As for virtue, it completes the cultivation of harmony.

游心乎德之和。……何謂德不形？曰：平者，水停之盛也……內保之而外不蕩也。德者，成和之修也。¹¹⁶

The state of harmony is found in the “utmost virtue 至德,” which resembles the tranquility of water. The interior is protected, and external things are unable to disturb them.

The “Tian dao” 天道 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* says, “And so being empty, unified, and still is the origin of things 夫虛靜恬漠，物之本也。”¹¹⁷ It also says:

As for the complete understanding of the virtue of Heaven and Earth, it is called the great origin and the great ancestor. As for going along with the Heavenly harmony, it moderates all things under Heaven and harmonizes with the people.

夫明白於天地之德者，此之謂大本大宗，與天和者也，所以均調天下，與人和者也。¹¹⁸

Herein lies the idea of the Heavenly harmony, which is also referred to as the Heavenly joy. Human harmony and human joy are also part of it.

The chapter, “Zai you” 在宥, says:

Guangchengzi says, “I preserve its unity by dwelling in its harmony, and thus I have been cultivating this body for as many as 1200 years.”

廣成子曰：我守其一，以處其和，故我修身千二百歲矣。¹¹⁹

Ji Kang says, “Preserve it with unity; nourish it with harmony 守之以一，養之以和。”¹²⁰ The original source of this quote is also the *Zhuangzi*. Laozi says, “Qi

¹¹⁶ *Zhuangzi jishi*, 2B.191, 215–16.

¹¹⁷ *Zhuangzi jishi*, 5B.457.

¹¹⁸ *Zhuangzi jishi*, 5B.458.

¹¹⁹ *Zhuangzi jishi*, 4B.381.

¹²⁰ *Wenxuan*, 53.2293.

gushing forth is harmony 冲氣以為和。¹²¹ Wenzhi says, “Nourish it with harmony 養以和,” which means the same thing.

Regarding what Zhuangzi calls, “using placidity to nourish knowing 以恬養知,”¹²² the *Shuowen* says, “Placidity is peace 恬，安也。”¹²³ Regarding the concept of placidity in the *Zhuangzi*, “Qu qie” 祛箠 says:

In general, being excessively fond of knowing brings chaos to all under Heaven. From the Three Dynasties onward, it has been like this ... By eliminating placidity, blandness, and inaction, people take pleasure in noisy and annoying ideas, and through being noisy and annoying, they bring chaos to all under Heaven.

甚矣夫好「知」之亂天下也，自三代以下者是已。……釋夫恬淡無為，而悅夫嗶嗶之意，嗶嗶已亂天下矣。¹²⁴

“Placidity” is here juxtaposed with “blandness 淡,” and there are further instances of “blandness” and “indifference 漠” elsewhere in the *Zhuangzi*. The “Ying di wang” 應帝王 chapter says, “A nameless man once said, ‘Your heart wanders in blandness, while the *Qi* unites in indifference.’” 无名人曰：汝游心於淡，合氣於漠。¹²⁵

There is also the compound term, “apathy 淡漠.” The chapter, “Shan xing” says:

Ancient people, amid the unformed muddle, for their entire lives achieved apathy ... Even though people had knowledge, they had no way to use it. This is called the “utmost unity.”

古之人在混芒之中，與一世而得澹漠焉。……人雖有知，無所用之，此之謂「至一」。¹²⁶

Only by rejecting “knowledge” can one achieve the “utmost unity 至一.” By using placidity to nourish knowledge, one can arrive at the knowledge of achieving placidity and being at peace, which in turn amounts to understanding the Way

121 *Laozi jiaoshi*, 42.175.

122 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6A.548.

123 *Shuowen jiezi*, 10B.12a (218).

124 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 4B.359–60.

125 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 3B.294.

126 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6A.550.

and allowing one's heart to roam in knowing the harmony of virtue. Moreover, one can use this to achieve knowledge of the Way and being at once placid and engaging in nourishing oneself. In this way, both harmony and regularity come out from one's nature. This is Zhuangzi's conception of nature in "Shan xing", wherein placidity and apathy unify within the nature of Heavenly virtue. The chapter, "Ke yi" describes this unified state as follows:

In all cases, placidity, blandness, silence, and indifference represent the tranquility of Heaven and Earth, the substance of the Way and virtue ... If one is tranquil and easygoing, then placidity and contentedness will arise. When one is tranquil, easygoing, placid, and bland, then misery and hardship will be unable to enter, and the turbid *Qi* will be unable to assail him. Thus, if one's virtue is complete then one's spirit cannot be diminished ... Reject knowledge and reasons, follow the regularities of Heaven and one will thereupon be without Heavenly disasters and burdensome things ... When one is empty, nothing, placid, and content, then one will unite with Heavenly virtue.

夫恬淡寂寞，此天地之平而道德之質也。……平易則恬淡矣，平易恬淡則憂患不能入，邪氣不能襲，故其德全而神不虧。……去知與故，循天之理，故无天災无物累。……虛无恬淡，乃合天德。¹²⁷

The *Huangdi Neijing* 黃帝內經 teaches that the prevention of disease has its origins in people's hearts being placid and bland. This too draws upon Zhuangzi's philosophy, but there is no need to discuss it in detail here.¹²⁸

"Ke yi" mentions, "not practicing *daoyin* but achieving longevity 不道引而壽，"¹²⁹ which ridicules those who attempt to achieve longevity with *chui*, *xu*, *hu*, and *xi* breathing techniques. Instead, according to the passage, those who are genuinely able to go along with Heaven and Earth and unite with virtue need not admire the study of longevity adopted by the cultists, and they need not adhere to the legendary teachings of Peng Zu. They have no reason to engage in *daoyin* practices and can increase their longevity by other means. "Being tranquil and calm lacks an ending point, and the numerous beauties follow it 澹然无極而眾美從之."¹³⁰ Thus, Zhuangzi does not advocate *daoyin*,

127 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6A.538–39.

128 See Wang Buxiong and Zhou Shirong, *Zhongguo qigong yangsheng xue*, vol. 1, *Zhongyi qigong xueshu fazhan shi*, 83.

129 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6A.537.

130 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 6A.537.

as we can see from these writings. The highest ideal of self-care lies in a single word: harmony. *Daoyin* is merely a method, but it is not the goal. Ji Kang extended Zhuangzi's thought, and it is still highly significant today and remains worthy of attention.

With the above-mentioned lost texts having been rediscovered, we can now see how the ancient "method masters 方士" offered various methods for gathering the essences of the Sun and Moon. Additionally, they sought to improve the mind with essential supplements, and we can find various teachings regarding the Way of Heaven and the human body being in accordance with it in texts such as the *Huangdi Neijing* and *Ling shu* 靈樞. By understanding the general features of these ideas, we can promote even the remotest wisdom from the Warring States period and further supplement the specialized study of the Three Mysteries texts by utilizing these materials. We can also more effectively consult the rich material in Ji Kang's "Yangsheng lun," from which modern people may reap enormous benefits.

PART 3

Buddhism



On the Buddhist Stories of Kunlun

論釋氏之崑崙說

Qian Qianyi's 錢謙益 (1618–1664) “Zeng Yushanzi xu” 贈愚山子序 offers a grandiose account of world geography containing the following impressive statement:

The waters of the Anavatapta Lake¹ flow from the southern lands of Xiang Mountain to the northern lands of Daxue Mountain and eventually into the Four Rivers.

阿耨達池之水，自香山南大雪北，流為四河。²

In his “Shijia fang zhi er bian” 釋迦方志二辨，³ Qian focuses both on correcting Xun Ji's 荀濟 (d. 547) absurd arguments and on critiquing Wu Lai's 吳萊 (1297–1340) strained analogies, and in so doing he lamented that these scholars' knowledge about Buddhism was so thoroughly confused.

“Jade comes from Kungang (i.e., “the ridge of Kunlun”) 玉出崑岡，⁴ as goes the saying from the *Qian wen* 千文 that today is commonplace even among children. The *Guanzi* 管子, “Qing zhong” 輕重 says:

If those from the Kunlun Mountains do not come to court, I suggest using lapis lazuli and *langgan*⁵ as currency! ... These can be used to make hairpins and earrings and are of comparable value to a thousand cattles of gold. Upon offering these things, the people of the Kunlun Mountains from eight thousand *li* away will come to court.

1 Note: I will directly translate *anouda* 阿耨達 as “Anavatapta” throughout the article except in cases where Jao is making a linguistic point about variations in its name.

2 Qian Qianyi, *Muzhai you xue ji*, 22.901.

3 Qian Qianyi, *Muzhai you xue ji*, 43. 1465–69.

4 *Qianziwen shiyi*.7b.

5 Note: *langgan* 琅玕 refers to an enigmatic blue-green gemstone highly sought after in ancient China. It has been variously identified with several known minerals, including malachite, blue or white coral, or red jade, although it is perennially unclear which mineralogical kind *langgan* refers to.

崑崙之虛不朝，請以璆琳琅玕為幣乎！……簪珥而辟千金者，璆琳琅玕也。然後八千里之崑崙之虛可得而朝也。⁶

The *Yi lin* 意林 quotes *Shizi* 尸子 as follows:

Procuring jade is extremely difficult. [One must] pass the three rivers and the five lakes to arrive at the foot of the Kunlun Mountains. If a thousand men leave, only a hundred will return. If a hundred men leave, only ten⁷ will return. But bring [the jade from Kunlun] to the Central Kingdoms and [its value covers the cost to] restore an army of ten thousand or relieve a siege of three thousand.

取玉甚難，越三江五湖，至崑崙之山，千人往，百人反，百人往，十人反。至中國覆十萬之師，解三千之圍。⁸

The *Yan tie lun* 鹽鐵論, “Li geng” 力耕 says:

Beautiful jade and coral jewelry come from Kunlun Mountain. Pearls, rhinoceros' horns, and ivory come from Guilin. Both locations are separated from Han by some ten thousand *li*.

美玉珊瑚，出於昆山，珠璣犀象，出於桂林，此距漢萬有餘里。⁹

Although the language is a bit extravagant, that Kunlun produced jade riches is also attested in the *Erya* 爾雅, which mentions both lapis lazuli and *langgan*.¹⁰ The “Xi shan jing” 西山經 refers to “jade paste 玉膏,”¹¹ while the *Mu zhuan* 穆傳 mentions “jade flowers 玉榮.”¹² And the “Shejiang” 涉江 section of the “Jiuzhang” 九章 says, “Ascend the Kunlun Mountains and eat the jade flower petals 登崑崙兮食玉英.”¹³

6 *Guanzi jiaozhu*, 23.1440.

7 Note: The original character here was *qian* 千, but Jao suggests correcting this to *shi* 十. I have translated Jao's corrected version.

8 *Yilin jiaoshi*, 1.114.

9 *Yan tie lun jiaozhu*, 1.30.

10 *Erya zhushu*, 7.215.

11 *Shanghai jing jianshu*, 2.42.

12 *Mu tianzi zhuan huijiao jishi*, 2.102.

13 *Chuci buzhu*, 4.129.

From the Warring States period onward, people yearned for the Kunlun Mountains, the treasures of Mt. Chong 春山¹⁴ have bedazzled them for eons. The “Yu gong” 禹貢 chapter of the *Shangshu* 尚書 refers to, “woven items and hides from Kunlun 織皮崑崙.”¹⁵ These were given by members of the Xirong 西戎 tribes Xizhi 析支 and Qusou 渠搜 who concurrently occupied the Kunlun area. The *Yi Zhou shu* 逸周書, “Wang hui” 王會 says, “go due west to Kunlun 正西崑崙,” which shows that this placename really existed in antiquity. However, posterity has been unable to successfully determine its location. In the *Han shu* 漢書, “Dili zhi” 地理志, there is a reference to a gemstone room of the Queen Mother of the West 西王母 in the Jincheng commandery 金城郡, Linqiang 臨羌. It also mentions that to the west of this room, situated near the Ruo 弱 river, there is a Kunlun Mountain Shrine and that northwest to Guangzhi county 廣至縣, Dunhuang 敦煌, there is a hill called Kunlunzhang 昆侖障 (“Kunlun Barrier”). Zhang Dang 張璠 (fl. 120 CE), the governor of Dunhuang during the Eastern Han dynasty’s Yanguang 延光 era (122–125 CE), submitted a written statement requesting that more than 2,000 officials from the state of Jiuquan 酒泉 (“Alcohol Fountains”) gather in Kunlun and attack King Huyan 呼衍王.¹⁶ Li Xian’s 李賢 (655–684) commentary quotes the previously mentioned record of Kunlunzhang to attest to this.¹⁷ The *Jinshu* 晉書, “Zhang Jun zhuan” 張駿傳 records:

The governor of Jiuquan, Ma Di 馬岌 (d. 354) said, “The southern mountains of Jiuquan constitute the body of Kunlun. King Mu of Zhou 周穆王 (r. 976–922 BCE or 956–918 BCE) visited the Queen Mother of the West and enjoyed himself so much that he forgot to return, and he named the mountain thus. This mountain has gemstone rooms and jade halls, filled with precious pearls and ornaments that shine brilliantly like a divine palace. It was thus fitting to have a temple dedicated to the Queen Mother of the West.”

酒泉太守馬岌上言：酒泉南山，即崑崙之體也。周穆王見西王母，樂而忘歸，即謂此山。此山有石室玉堂，珠璣鏤飾，煥若神宮。宜立西王母祠。¹⁸

14 Note: The name of another mythical mountain sometimes identified as Kunlun itself.

15 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 6.187.

16 “Xiyu zhuan” 西域傳, see *Hou Han shu*, 88.2911.

17 *Hou Han shu*, 88.2913.

18 *Jin shu*, 86.2240.

We can draw a parallel here with the longing for Kunlun found in the “Yu gong,” which in turn can be used to further elucidate the mythological records found in the *Shanhai jing* 山海經,¹⁹ *Mu tianzi zhuan* 穆天子傳,²⁰ *Chuci* 楚辭,²¹ and *Huainanzi* 淮南子.²²

Han dynasty scholars were also able to consult the *Yu benji* 禹本紀, which makes even more fantastical references to Kunlun. Sima Qian 司馬遷 (b. 145 BCE) in the “Dayuan zhuan” 大宛傳, drawing on the *Yu benji*, describes it as follows:

The *Yu benji* says that a river flows out from Kunlun, and the height of Kunlun is 2500 *li* or more. The light of the Sun and Moon are remote from it. At its peak lies the spring of sweet wine, the Jade Lake. But nowadays, since Zhang Qian 張騫 (d. 114 BCE) went to Daxia, and since the source of the Yellow River has been located, how could one regard this as the *Yu benji*'s so-called Kunlun?

《禹本紀》言「河出崑崙，崑崙其高二千五百餘里，日月所相避隱為光明也。其上有醴泉、瑤池。」今自張騫使大夏之後也，窮河源，惡睹本紀所謂崑崙者乎？²³

Sima Qian was extremely cautious and thereupon refused to rely upon records whose language was neither refined nor verified.²⁴

Since Buddhism had travelled to the East, ancient people had dramatically improved their understanding of Kunlun. The most important relevant records are those of the navigator from the state of Wu during the Three Kingdoms period, Kang Tai 康泰 (ca. 3rd century), and the records of Jin dynasty scholar Shi Dao'an 釋道安 (312–385). Their explanations are both quoted in Li Daoyuan's 酈道元 (466–527) *Shuijing* 水經, “He shui zhu” 河水注.

19 *Shanhai jing jianshu*, 2.58.

20 *Mu tianzi zhuan huijiao jishi*, 1.50.

21 *Chuci buzhu*, 1.43.

22 *Huainanzi jishi*, 4.328.

23 *Shiji*, 123.3179.

24 Sima Qian's discussion suggests that the discovery of the source of the Yellow River took place after Zhang Qian went to Daxia rather than that Zhang Qian himself discovered the source. Sima Zhen's 司馬貞 (679–732) *Shiji suoyin* 史記索隱 misunderstood the *Shiji* and took Zhang Qian as the one who located the source of the Yellow River. The Qing dynasty scholar, Huang Chengji 黃承吉 (1771–1842), has already corrected Zhang Qian's misinterpretation. Huang Chengji, “Zhang Qian qiong he yuan bian,” *Menggai tang wenji*, 2.3a–8b, rpt. in *Qingdai shiwen ji huibian*, 502: 632–34.

In the *Funan zhuan* 扶南傳 Kang Tai says:

The source of the Ganges River lies in the remote northwest amidst the Kunlun Mountains, wherein there are five great wellsprings. All the waters variously split off from these Five Wellsprings, the great river Zhihuli flows out of the mountains. From the northwest they flow south-east to the great seas. The “great river Zhihuli” is the Ganges.

康泰《扶南傳》曰：「恆水之源，乃極西北，出崑崙山中，有五大源，諸水分流，皆由此五大源，枝扈黎大江出山，西北流，東南注大海。枝扈黎即恆水也。」²⁵

He thus considers the Kunlun Mountains to be the wellspring of the Ganges River in India and furthermore recounts the mythology of the “Five Wellsprings 五大源.” His geographical knowledge of India at the time came from *Funan 扶南*.²⁶

Shi Dao’an in the *Shi shi Xiyu ji* 釋氏西域記 says:

The great mountaintop of Anavatapta contains a giant whirlpool, and the palace structure there is extremely large. The mountain is Kunlun Mountain. The *Mu tianzi zhuan* says, “The Son of Heaven ascended Kunlun Mountain, observed the palace of the Yellow Emperor, and put soil on the grave of Fenglong. Fenglong is Lei Gong, the Duke of Thunder. The palace of the Yellow Emperor is the Anavatapta Palace, and the mountain upon which it sits is the source of the six great waters. West of the mountain is a great river called Xintou River.

釋道安《釋氏西域記》曰：「阿耨達大山，其上有大淵水，宮殿樓觀甚大焉。山即崑崙山也。《穆天子傳》曰：『天子升于崑崙之丘，以觀黃帝之宮，而封豐隆之葬。』豐隆，雷公也，黃帝宮即阿耨達宮也。其山出六大水。山西有大水，曰新頭河。」²⁷.....

25 *Shuijing zhushu*, 1.22.

26 Note: “Funan” is the name given by Chinese scholars to the group of Indianized states centered around the Mekong delta that flourished from the first to sixth centuries CE. The territory incorporated much of modern Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. In the third century CE, Kang Tai, along with his contemporary, Zhu Ying 朱應, personally toured Funan, and their experience serves as the source for Kang Tai’s writings on the topic.

27 *Shuijing zhushu*, 1.13–15.

The Xintou River passes through Kashmir and the various states such as Gandhāra and Maharashtra, and it subsequently enters the southern seas. To the southwest of Anavatapta Mountain, there is a body of water named Yaonu. From the southwest of the mountain and moving a little eastward, there is another body of water called Sahan. To the east of that body of water is another called Hengjia. These three bodies of water all emerge from a single mountain and eventually join in the Ganges.

新頭河經罽賓，犍越、摩訶刺諸國，而入南海是也。阿耨達山西南有水名遙奴，山西南小東，有水名薩罕，小東，有水名恆伽，此三水同出一山，俱入恆水。²⁸

Shi Dao'an here offers a detailed account of Anavatapta regarding it as the source of the Ganges and furthermore identifying it as Kunlun Mountain. However, Li Daoyuan went on to doubt Shi Dao'an, who did not personally visit India, and claims that, "Shi Dao'an's writings are not reliable evidence 釋氏之言，未為佳證."²⁹ He also says:

Regarding the six waters of the Anavatapta, the delineation of the two bodies of water found in Khotan and the Pamir high plateau are completely different from what is recorded in the historical records and various books.

阿耨達六水，蔥嶺、于闐二水之限，與經史諸書，全相乖異。³⁰

In fact, nobody accepted Shi Dao'an's account even during Six-Dynasties period. However, the "He shui zhu" records that the Kunlun Mountain mentioned in the *Shanhai jing* referred to Anavatapta Mountain.³¹ Moreover, Shi Dao'an also writes that foreign Buddhist monks arrived at China, and he relied upon the *Funan zhuan* to substantiate that the Kunlun Mountain is the same as Anavatapta Mountain. Shi Dao'an then composed the *Xiyu tu* 西域圖 and discussed the issue with Zhu Fatai 竺法汰 (320–387), who held that scholars even from the time of the Han dynasty did not know the location of Kunlun, which is a bit surprising.³² When Chinese and Indian people first came into contact,

28 *Shujing zhushu*, 1.21.

29 *Shujing zhushu*, 1.59.

30 *Shujing zhushu*, 1.61.

31 *Shujing zhushu*, 1.57.

32 *Shujing zhushu*, 1.57–58.

they were able to corroborate one another's geographical knowledge, and the recordings by Li Daoyuan were indeed of immense help for later research into antique geography.

Anavatapta is the Sanskrit original for the transliteration *anouda* 阿耨達. During the Tang dynasty, it was also translated as *wurenao* 無熱惱 (the Unheated). Vasubandhu (fl. 4th to 5th century CE) in the *Abhidharmakośa-śāstra* (*Jushe lun* 俱舍論)³³ says it is located to the north of Mt. Daxue 大雪山 (lit. "Great Snowy Mountain"), near Mt. Xiangzui 香醉山 (Intoxicatingly Fragrant Mountain). We can note that the Xiangzui Mountain (also known as Mt. Gandhamadana) is in the Kailash range of the Himalayas. Based on his field studies, Sven Anders Hedin believes that Anavatapta is Lake Manasarovar.³⁴

The *Fanyi mingyi da ji* 翻譯名義大集 says:

The Sanskrit name is "Kailāsa" (Kailash). The Tibetan name is "Ti-se-hi Gans" or "Ganstise" The Chinese name is "Kunlun Mountain" or "Snowy Mountain."

梵：Kailāsa；藏：Ti-Se-hi Gans, Ganstise；漢：崑崙山，雪山。³⁵

These names are extremely important, and we can use them to clarify the origin of the claim that Kunlun Mountain is Mt. Gangdisi (Gans ti-se). *Gangdisi* is a transcription of the Tibetan word *gans ti-se*, meaning "snowy country." Wei Yuan 魏源 (1794–1857) mentions that the language of the western people snow is pronounced as *gang* 岡. In the *Da Qing yitong zhi* 大清一統志, it says:

In Tibet there is Mt. Gangdisi, 310 *li* northeast of Dakela city in Ali (i.e., Ngari prefecture in Tibet) ... [Mt. Gangdisi] is the Anavatapta Mountain.

西藏有岡底斯山，在阿里之達克喇城東北三百十里……即阿耨達山也。³⁶

33 *Taishō*, no. 1558, "Abhidharmakośa-śāstra," 29: 58. *Taishō*, no. 1559, "Apidamo jushe shilun," 29: 215.

34 Hedin, Sven Anders, *Southern Tibet: discoveries in former times compared with my own research in 1906–08*, vol. 1, 113.

35 Sakaki Ryōzaburō, *Bon-Zō-Kan-Wa yon'yaku taikō Hon'yaku myōgi taishū*, rpt. in *Shijie Foxue mingzhu yicong*, 13: 281, no. 4153.

36 Mujangga, *Da Qing yitong zhi*, 413.10a–11b, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 483:559–60. The *Weizang tongzhi* 衛藏通志, *juan* 3, under the entry of Mt. Gangdisi, further suggests that Mt. Gangdisi is identified as Anavatapta Mountain in ancient Hindu texts. See *Xizang zhi*, *Weizang tongzhi hekan*, 3.204.

In fact, Gangdisi represents the Tibetan Plateau, where numerous mountains originate.

The *Nan shi* 南史, “Zhong Tianzhu guo zhuan” 中天竺國傳, says:

The state overlooks a great river named the Xintao. Its source is in Kunlun, which divides into five rivers. Together they make up the river called the Ganges.

國臨大江，名新陶，源出崑崙，分為五江，總名恒水。³⁷

Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664) in the *Da Tang Xiyu ji* 大唐西域記, says, “The many ponds of Anavatapta are located within the territory of Jambudvīpa (Greater India) 瞻部洲之中地者，阿那婆答多池也。”³⁸ “It is located to the south of Mt. Xiang and to the north of Mt. Daxue 在香山之南，大雪山之北。”³⁹ He also says:

Anavatapta Lake drains into four bodies of water named as follows: Jingqie River (*Gangā*), Xindu River (Sindhū), Fuchu River (*Vakṣu*), and Xiduo River (Sītā). But some say the Xiduo River flows underground, emerging only at Mt. Jishi. The flow of the Xiduo River is the fountain-head of the rivers of China.

阿那婆答多池，流出四水，為：殞伽河、信度河、縛芻河、徙多河。而徙多河或曰潛流地下，出積石山。徙多河之流，為中國之河源云。⁴⁰

Xuanzang’s descriptions go back to the *Dirghāgama* (*Chang ahan* 長阿含) and *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā-śāstra* (*Dapiposha lun* 大毘婆沙論). *Chang ahan*, “Shi ji jing” 世記經 says that the Anavatapta Lake flows out in four directions to four rivers. The main points of the description of the four rivers that flow from Anavatapta are as follows:

East: *Hengjia* River 恆伽河 (Ganges): the Mouth of an Ox.

South: *Xintou* River 新頭河 (Sindhū): the Mouth of a Lion.

West: *Poyi* River 婆義河 (*Vakṣu* or Amu Darya): the Mouth of a Horse.

North: *Situo* River 斯陀河 (Sītā or Seetha): the Mouth of an Elephant.

37 *Nan shi*, 78.1961.

38 *Da Tang Xiyu ji huijiao*, 1.8. The original commentary says “the Tang falsely believed that Wurenao 無熱惱 was an old name for Anouda.”

39 *Da Tang Xiyu ji huijiao*, 1.8.

40 *Da Tang Xiyu ji huijiao*, 1.8–9.

The *Dapiposha lun* says:

The Honored Ones professed their knowledge and wisdom at that time. As they were residing in the east, they drew upon eastern peoples' shared experience of the five rivers for an analogy. But in fact, within Jambudvīpa, there are only four great rivers, forming a family of four, flowing in their respective directions and eventually reaching the sea. They say that within Jambudvīpa, there is a great lake called the Wurenao (Anavatapta), and it is the single source of the four great rivers.

尊者造此發智論時，住在東方，故引東方共所現見五河為喻。而實於此瞻部洲中有四大河，眷屬各四，隨其方面，流趣大海。謂即於此瞻部洲中，有一大池名無熱惱，初但從彼出四大河。⁴¹

It further says:

When this sutra was being composed, it was in the east, wherein there are five great rivers. Thus, it used the five rivers as an analogy. Once again, there are four great rivers that flow out from the Anavatapta and eventually flow into the sea.

造此經時在於東方，此五大河在於東方，故以為喻。復有四大河從阿耨達池出，流趣大海。⁴²

Xuanzang himself translated the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā-śāstra* (*Dapiposha lun*) and thereupon integrated these descriptions in the beginning of his *Xiyu ji*.

Within Indian Buddhist scriptures, there are two distinct narratives, i.e., the four rivers and the five rivers. The four rivers each correspond to four beasts. Scriptures such as the *Chang ahan's*, "Shi ji jing", the *Dalou tan jing* 大樓炭經, *Qishi jing* 起世經, and *Qishi yinben jing* 起世因本經, each adopt the four-river narrative. Conversely, in Sarvāstivāda texts, such as the *Madhyama Āgama's* (*Zhong ahan jing* 中阿含經) "Shijian fu jing" 世間福經 and "Qiri jing" 七日經, the *Samyukta Āgama* (*Za ahan jing* 雜阿含經), and the *Dharmagupta-vinaya* (*Sifen lü* 四分律), we find the four-river narrative.⁴³ The main differences between the two models can be seen in the tables below:

41 *Taishō*, no. 1545, "Abhidharma Mahāvibhāṣā-śāstra," 27: 21–22.

42 *Taishō*, no. 1546, "Abhidharmavibhāṣā-śāstra," 28: 14.

43 *Taishō*, no. 26, "Madhyama Āgama," 1: 428. *Taishō*, no. 99, "Samyukta Āgama," 2: 113. *Taishō*, no. 1428, "Dharmagupta-vinaya," 22: 824.

TABLE 11.1 The four-river explanation

Four Rivers:			
Direction	English Name(s)	Sanskrit-Chinese Transliteration	Animal
East	Ganges (Gangā, Gangas)	<i>Jingqie</i> 殞伽	Ox
South	Indus (Sindū, Sindhu)	<i>Xintou</i> 新頭	Lion
West	Amu Darya (Oxus, Vakṣu, Varsū)	<i>Fuchu</i> 縛芻, <i>bo yi</i> 博義	Horse
North	Seetha, Sītā (Tarim)	<i>Situo</i> 斯陀, <i>Xiduo</i> 徙多	Elephant

TABLE 11.2 The five-river explanation

Five Rivers:

English Name(s)	Chinese Name(s)
Gangā	<i>Jingqie</i> 殞伽
Yamunā	<i>Yemona</i> 夜魔那, <i>Yanmuna</i> 閻母那
Aciravatī (Rāpti)	<i>Ashiluofadi</i> 阿氏羅筏底, <i>Eshiluofadi</i> 頰氏羅筏底
Sarabhū	<i>Salao</i> 薩牢, <i>Saluoyou</i> 薩羅由, <i>Salayu</i> 薩刺諭
Mahī	<i>Moxi</i> 莫醯, <i>Moxi</i> 莫吧

The Japanese scholars, Kazutaka Unno 海野一隆⁴⁴ and Shinya Kasugai 春日井真也⁴⁵ have discussed this topic at length and I will not repeat their findings here. Qian Qianyi draws from the received tradition in calling the Indians to the south “masters of elephants 象主,” people in the eastern borderlands “masters of people 人主,” Persians in the west “masters of treasures 寶主,” and the nomadic Xianyun 獫狁 people to the north “masters of horses 馬主,” but draws conclusions from the references to these four animals that are wide of the mark.

44 Kazutaka Unno, “Konron shi Mizu-setsu no chiri shisō-shi-teki kōsatsu,” 379–93.

45 Shinya Kasugai, “Shitō shishi zō kan chiyuu shoku shishuu ni arawaretaru shijuu ni tsuite,” 291–304.

Thus are the historical origins of the traditional Indian stories about the four-rivers emerging from the Anavatapta Lake. We also know of Kang Tai's theory about the original division of the five great wellsprings. However, Shi Dao'an said that six great bodies of water came out from Anavatapta Mountain, and some Jain sources mention seven rivers. Each of these various narratives gradually emerged over time.

Prior to Xuanzang, the *Chang ahan* was first translated by Buddhayaśas (Fotuo Yeshe 佛陀耶舍; ca. 5th century) during the Jin dynasty.⁴⁶ Now when we consider the evidence provided by Kang Tai's works, people were already aware of stories about five rivers emerging from Kunlun during the Kingdom of Wu (222–280). Jin dynasty Buddhist monks had settled the identification of Kunlun with Anavatapta Mountain. I thus suspect that the introduction and transmission of the identification of Kunlun and Anavatapta Mountain must have taken place earlier. The *Yilin* 意林 quotes Wang Ying's 王嬰 (fl. Jin dynasty) *Gujin tonglun* 古今通論, which reads as follows:

The area five thousand *li* to the southeast of Kunlun is called the Divine Land (i.e., a poetic name for China). In the midst of the territory there is Hegeng county, with an area of three thousand *li*, including the area of the Five Mountains, the residence of the Great Monarchs, and the place where the sages were born.

崑崙東南方五千里，謂之神州，州中有和羹鄉，方三千里，五嶽之域，帝王之宅，聖人所生也。⁴⁷

We do not know where these sayings originated, but the *Hetu kuodi xiang* 河圖括地象 (quoted in the *Yulan*) also contains an analogous line.⁴⁸ The *Kuodi xiang* says, "The center of the world is called Kunlun 地中央曰崑崙."⁴⁹ It also says, "Kunlun is the center of the world 崑崙，地之中也."⁵⁰ The *Shujing*, "He

46 Sengyou 僧祐 (445–518) in the *Chu Sanzang ji ji* 出三藏記集, "zhuan shi si" 傳十四, "Fotuo Yeshe zhuan" 佛陀耶舍傳, says, "It was in the twelfth year of the Hongshi era (410) of the Hou Qin regime ... and also produced the *Chang a han jing* 即以〔後秦〕弘始十二年……並出《長阿含經》."

47 *Yilin jiaoshi*, 5.571. The *Yulan* 御覽, *juan* 156, "Jing du" 京都 also quotes this line. See *Taiping yulan*, 156.5a–5b (759).

48 *Taiping yulan*, 38.5a (182).

49 *Liji zhengyi*, 5.179.

Note: The citation comes from the *Liji zhengyi* because the *Kuo di xiang* is no longer extant. The same is true of the next reference, which is quoted from the *Taiping yulan*.

50 *Taiping yulan*, 36.5a (171).

shui zhu” says, “Kunlun Mountain lies in the northwest, 50,000 *li* from Mt. Song, located in the center of the world 崑崙墟在西北，去嵩高五萬里，地之中也。”⁵¹ The idea that Kunlun was the center of the world approximates the Indian myth that Mt. Meru is the center of the universe. Buddhist scriptures such as the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (*Huayan jing* 華嚴經), *Lokasthāna-sūtra* (*Daloutan jing* 大樓炭經), and *Saddharmasmṛty-upasthāna-sūtra* (*Zhengfa nianchu jing* 正法念處經), all have detailed records of Mt. Meru well-known throughout the ancient world. Examining the ancient Indian scriptures, we find that the name of Mt. Meru (also Mahāmeru) originated in the Vedic text, *Taittiriya Aranyaka*.⁵² The mythology surrounding Mt. Meru spread widely throughout China. The *Sui shu* 隋書, “Yinyue zhi” 音樂志 incorporates Mt. Meru, Mt. Huang, and the Three Gorges.⁵³ Ancient peoples created vivid illustrations of these places as well. For example, the Dunhuang scroll no. 3538 records the interior design of a temple as follows: “There is also among the drawings in the four corners of the room one of Mt. Meru, as well as drawings of the four great seas 又於四角各畫一寶須彌山，畫四大海水。”⁵⁴ Additionally, the Tang dynasty painter, “Wang Tuozi 王陀子 (fl. 650–755), painted a scene of Mt. Meru and the sea at the outer wall of a temple for the monk Sengqie 僧伽 (d. 710) 王陀子須彌山，海水，在僧伽和尚外壁。”⁵⁵ It was thus that Mt. Meru became famous through paintings. During the time of Wu Zhao 武曩 (624–705; r. 690–705), the *śramaṇa*, Mingquan 明佺 (d. unknown), composed the *Weijing mulu* 偽經目錄, which contained a text called the *Xumi xiang tu shan jing* 須彌像圖山經. The *Zhenyuan Shijiao mulu* 貞元釋教目錄 conjectures that this text is in fact the *Xumi siyu jing* 須彌四域經, stating that their text is identical and only their titles differ.⁵⁶ Buddhist scriptures kept on embellishing these stories as they spread them further, mostly accepting the notion that Mt. Meru was the center of Heaven and Earth. This geographical notion is especially prevalent in the Indianized countries of Southeast Asia (i.e., the abovementioned so-called Funan area). The structure of the Pnohm Bakheng temple near Angkor Wat in Cambodia, for example, imitates the Thirty-three Heavens 三十三天, on which J. Filliozat has made a detailed investigation.⁵⁷ The word *meru* describes

51 *Shujing zhushu*, 1.1–3.

52 Weber, Albrecht, *Indische Studien* vol. 1, 78, 3, 123.

53 *Sui shu*, 13.303.

54 *Taishō*, no. 1058, “Nilakanta(ka)-sutra,” 20: 100.

55 Zhang Yanyuan, *Lidai minghua ji*, 3.73.

56 *Taishō*, no. 2157, “Zhenyuan xinding Shijiao mulu,” 55: 1022.

57 See his “Le symbolisme du monument du Phnom Bakhèn,” 527.

Note: Pnohm Bakheng is a symbolic representation of Mt. Meru that itself is said to be the seat of thirty-three gods dwelling atop.

a wondrously tall mountain, and the meaning of *su* in its alternative name “Sumeru” in Sanskrit is “beautiful.” Therefore, the loftiest mountain peaks in any regions can be named “Meru.” When one flies above the island of Bali in Indonesia, one cannot fail to notice its own Mt. Semeru, which is the highest mountain within the Indonesian border. It is called “Semeru” in the Indonesian language, but the title is surely fashioned after the name of Mt. Sumeru.

In Indian records, Mt. Kailāsa is said to be located in the center of the Indian territory, its name being originally recorded in the *Mahābhārata*.⁵⁸ Monier-Williams’ *A Sanskrit English Dictionary* explains it as follows:

Name of a mountain (fabulous residence of Kubera and paradise of Siva; placed in the Himalaya range and regarded as one of the loftiest peaks to the north of the Mānasa lake).⁵⁹

This mountain is in the Himalayas. In Sanskrit, *Hima-laya* means “snow-capped mountains,” and is also the paradise of the deity Shiva and the dwelling place of the god of wealth, Kubera. Therefore, the *Hima-laya* mountains are the *Kubera-giri* (Kubera mountains), with *Kubera* originally referring to the chief of the evil being or the Spirit of Darkness. (Later on, it came to refer to the god of riches and treasure.) Kailāsa has an extremely important position in Southeast Asian legends,⁶⁰ and is identified with both Mt. Gangdisi as well as the “Snowy Mountain.” It is the mountain the Chinese people refer to as Kunlun.

In Chinese mythology, Mt. Kunlun is the highest and most venerated peak, and below it sits the Jade Lake. We can therefore draw a most suitable parallel to Mt. Gangdisi and the Anavatapta Lake. Daoxuan 道宣 (ca. 596–667) of the Tang dynasty in his *Shijia fangzhi* 釋迦方志, “Zhong bian” 中邊, discusses the establishment of the five relations. In the fourth sequence about water, it says, “Within the center of this territory is a great pool called Anavatapta. The Tang people call it ‘Unheated,’ whereas the sutras call it Anavatapta 此洲中心有大池名阿那陀答多，唐言無熱惱，即經所謂阿耨達池。”⁶¹ He also relies on the sutras’ zoological categorization of the four rivers of the ox, elephant, horse,

The building is structured in a manner that out of its more than one hundred towers, only thirty-three can be seen from the center of any given side.

58 van Buitenen, J.A.B trans. and ed., “The Book of the Forest” (Vana Parva), in *Mahābhārata* III, 49, 305.

59 Sir Monier, Monier-williams and M.A. K.C.L.E., *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, 311.

60 Jean Filliozat, “Kailāsaparamkarā,” in *Felicitation Volumes of Southeast-Asian Studies*, 241–47.

61 *Taishō*, no. 2088, “Shijia fangzhi,” 51: 949.

and lion, and states, “I look for the rivers’ origins based on the records. I trace to the location of the ‘Unheated’, which is located at the most remote points of the rivers 案此實錄，以尋河源；窮至無熱池所，方為討極。”⁶² Following this idea of the central starting point, we can see the implication that this lake is in the center of the world. Daoxuan and his disciples disseminated this idea beginning with this very explanation. Zhang Shoujie 張守節 (ca. 736), in his *Shiji zhengyi* 史記正義, “Dayuan zhuan” 大宛傳, “Ruo shui xia” 弱水下 says:

Talking about the Ruo River, the early scholars frequently quoted the “Dahuangxi jing” (of the *Shanhai jing*). It says that its two sources come out from Nüguo⁶³ to the north of Anavatapta Mountain ... Anavatapta Mountain is Mt. Kunlun.

先儒多引《大荒西經》云弱水，云有二源，俱出女國北阿耨達山……阿耨達山即崑崙山也。⁶⁴

Moreover, under the entry “Yuandu guo xia” 身毒國下, it quotes the *Kuodi zhi* 括地志, which says:

Anavatapta Mountain is also called Jianmoda Mountain, as well as Mt. Kunlun. Of the waters that flow forth from it, one is named Bahuli, while the other is the Hengjia.

阿耨達山亦名建末達山。亦名崑崙山。水出，一名拔扈利水，一名恆伽河。⁶⁵

This reiterates the stories of the Buddhist monks.

The Qing dynasty author from Tongcheng 桐城, Song Qianxu 宋潛虛 (alias of Dai Mingshi 戴名世; ca. 1653–1713) writes in his *Qiong Heyuan kao* 窮河源考 that during the 43rd year of the Kangxi 康熙 reign (ca. 1704), an envoy was dispatched to seek out the source of the rivers. At the time, Dai Mingshi discovered some detailed records of the river source in the capital, stating that,

62 *Taishō*, no. 2088, “Shijia fangzhi,” 51: 950.

63 Note: Nüguo 女國 was the name of a mythical nomadic state in Central Asia comprised entirely of women.

64 *Shiji*, 123.3164.

65 *Shiji*, 63.3165.

The local name for the area surrounding the mountains in all four directions is *kuergun*, namely, Kunlun.

羣山四周土番名曰庫而棍，即崑崙也。⁶⁶

In the 58th year of Kangxi (ca. 1719), the *Huangyu quanlan tu* 皇輿全覽圖 was completed, and the emperor ordered the scholars of the palace halls and the Nine Ministers to examine it in precise detail. The ministers reported to the emperor that the *Huangyu quanlan tu* traces the sources of historical events, recording all the details from southwest to northwest, including narration of the capitals of the barbarian lands and that of the Jade Lake and Anavatapta.⁶⁷ Upon subduing Tibet on *xinsi* day, 11th month, 59th year of Kangxi (ca. 1720), the emperor issued a decree to the various scholars and the Nine Ministers as follows:

Now the great army has taken control of Tibet. The territory of Mnga' ris (Ngari prefecture) is within the domain of China. The local names for its mountains and rivers differ from the Chinese. Thus, it is appropriate to make a detailed investigation of the differences to pass down the factual information to posterity.

今大兵得藏……三藏阿里之地，俱入版圖，其山川名號，番、漢異同，當於此時考證明核，庶可傳信於後。⁶⁸

The directive also contains a lengthy description of the fountainhead of the rivers, an excerpt of which reads as follows:

... Moreover, on the Yunnan frontier, there is the Binglang River, which flows from its source east of Mt. Gangdisi⁶⁹ in Ngari prefecture of Tibet. It passes through the forests of Rta mchog kha 'bab (Brahmaputra),⁷⁰ which translates to "Mouth of a Horse" ... To the south of Mt. Gangdisi there is a mountain called Glang chen kha 'bab, which translates to "Mouth of an Elephant." To the north of Mt. Gangdisi, there is a mountain

66 Dai Mingshi, *Qianxu xiansheng wenji*, in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian* vol. 185, 11.205.

67 *Qing shi lu*, 283.7a–8a (6:5709).

68 *Qing shi lu*, 290.2b–3a (5763–64).

69 Note: The text here refers to Gangdisi or Kailash, the mountain, but only uses the term Gangdisi 岡底斯, which typically refers to the mountain range.

70 Note: For Tibetan terms, I am utilizing the standard Wylie transliteration instead of a romanization of the medieval Chinese transliteration used in the text Jao is citing.

called Seng ge kha 'bab, which translates to "Mouth of a Lion." There is a stream that goes to the west as well as one that arrives at Sangnan. The two rivers unite and flow south, though one branch flows east to Nakelasumuduodi, following along the Rma bya kha 'bab river wellspring, where the waters gather to the west of Mt. Gangdisi. As for Rma bya kha 'bab, it translates to "Mouth of the Peacock." Its waters flow south, arriving at Nakelasumudu, which is where it meets the river that flows eastward. It flows to the southeast and arrives at Korchak ('khor zhags), where it becomes the Gangga Wulun River, which the Buddhists refer to as the Ganges ... The Sanskrit texts say the four great rivers flow out from Anavatapta Mountain, and below it there is the Anavatapta Lake. Using current terminology, it indeed refers to Gangdisi. The ancient Tang people called it Gangdisi, the wellspring of the various mountain-fed rivers, thus verifying the descriptions of the Buddhist scriptures. In front of Gangdisi, there are two conjoined lakes, which local tradition refers to as the Jade Lake of the Queen Mother of the West. It also is the Anavatapta Lake ...⁷¹

……又雲南邊境有檳榔江者，其源發自阿里之岡底斯東，達木朱喀巴卜山，譯言馬口也。……而岡底斯之南有山名郎千喀巴卜，譯言象口也。……岡底斯之北，有山名僧格喀巴卜，譯言獅子口也。有泉流出西行，亦至桑南地，二水合而南行，又折東行，至那克拉蘇母多地，與岡底斯西，馬卜家喀巴卜山所出之水會。馬卜家喀巴卜者，譯言孔雀口也。其水南行，至那克拉蘇母多地，會東行之水，東南流至厄納忒可克國，為岡噶母倫江，即佛法所謂恒河也。……梵書言四大水出於阿耨達山，下有阿耨達池。以今考之，意即岡底斯是。唐古特稱岡底斯者，猶云衆山水之根，與釋典之言相合。岡底斯之前，有二湖連接，土人相傳為西王母瑤池，意即阿耨達池。……⁷²

Here, the four rivers of the "Horse's Mouth," "Elephant's Mouth," "Lion's Mouth," and "Peacock's Mouth" are all the names of locations reflecting the stories from the *Chang ahan*, the only difference being that the "Mouth of an Ox" has been replaced with the "Mouth of a Peacock." Kunlun has thus been identified as Mt. Gangdisi as well as Anavatapta Mountain from the time of

71 Qing dynasty *Shengzu Shilu* 聖祖實錄, juan 290. *Weizang tongzhi* 衛藏通志, juan 3 quotes the full text, which relates it to during the 60th year of Kangxi (ca. 1721). It also provides translation of the four mountaintop "mouths" in Chinese and Tibetan and so can also be consulted. See *Weizang tongzhi*, in *Xizang zhi*, *Weizang tongzhi hekan*, 3:199–202.

72 *Qing shi lu*, 290.4a–5a (5764–65).

Shi Dao'an onward, and later these stories about Kunlun deriving from the Buddhists gained support even from the upper echelons of government. The contents of Kangxi's edict coincide with the Buddhist scriptures but does not examine their sources. Nowadays we have the *Fanyi mingyi daji* 翻譯名義大集, and we can see that the origins of these stories are quite remote.⁷³ Xie Jishi 謝濟世 (ca. 1689–1755), who came from Quanzhou 全州, in his *Xibei yu ji* 西北域記 recounts:

Two thousand *li* to the southwest of Tibet there is the Anavatapta Mountain. (Nowadays it is called Mt. Gangdisi.) It has perilous cliffs and precipices, frozen snow and ice, and its peak is the wellspring for the hundred channels (of water) ... From all four sides its posterity spreads out and multiplies, some like a lion, some like an elephant, some like a horse, some like fowl, and some like human beings ... If this is not Kunlun, then what could possibly be Kunlun? Its breadth is unbroken for two hundred *li*, and its height raises as far as five hundred *zhang*. It has been claimed to exceed ten thousand *li* or several thousand *li*—all this is a mere speculation.

烏思藏（吐蕃）西南二千里，有阿耨達山（今名岡底斯山），懸崖峭壁，積雪凝冰，山之顛，清泉百道。……四面兒孫羅列，如獅，如象，如馬，如禽，如人……此非崑崙，孰為崑崙者？然廣袤不二百里，高才五百丈，舊稱萬餘里及數千里者，臆說也。⁷⁴

Zhou Ailian 周藹聯 (1757–1828) in his *Zhuguo jiyou* 竺國紀遊 says:

I was in Tibet, and I saw a map of Gangdisi. It indeed contained the shapes of a lion, a horse, an elephant, and a phoenix, and it is located to the west of Ngari prefecture ... There was a Kashmiri merchant that came from Gangdisi carrying with him a bit of water from Anavatapta Lake ... Moreover, in the upper reaches of the river in Qüxü (Chu shur rdzong in Lhasa), Gangdisi begins its ascent, and foreigners who pass through there in fact bathe themselves in this water, which is something said to be most auspicious.

73 According to the *Fanyi mingyi da ji*, the Kunlun referred to in the Han sources is identical with the Tibetan Gangdisi. See Sakaki Ryōzaburō, *Bon-Zō-Kan-Wa yon'yaku taikō Hon'yaku myōgi taishū*, rpt. in *Shijie Foxue mingzhu yicong*, 13: 281, no. 4153.

74 Xie Jishi, *Meizhuang zazhu*, 333.

余在西藏，見岡底斯圖，實有獅馬象孔雀之形，其地在阿里之西……有卡契自岡底斯來，攜得阿耨達池水少許……又西藏曲水之上流，即岡底斯發源，番人渡者必以水沐頂，云最吉祥也。⁷⁵

This sort of superstition is just like the Indian beliefs regarding bathing in the Ganges River.

Among the emperors who looked out for to the fountainhead of the mythical rivers and Kunlun, before Kangxi, there was Yuan dynasty progenitor, Kublai Khan (1215–1294), who established the prefecture of Heyuan and composed the *Heyuan zhi* 河源志.⁷⁶ Even earlier there was Emperor Wu of Han 漢武帝 (r. 141–87 BCE). The *Shiji* 史記, “Dayuan zhuan” 大宛傳, says, “Based on the ancient maps and books, the Son of Heaven refers to the mountain source from which the Yellow River flows as Kunlun 天子案古圖書，名河所出山曰崑崙云。”⁷⁷ The *Han shu*, “Gouxu zhi” 溝洫志 says:

A native of Qi whose name was Yannian submitted a memorandum which said that the Yellow River flowed from Kunlun. It passes through the central states and pours into the Bohai. The topography is such that the land is of high altitude in the northwest and of low altitude in the southeast. We can take note of various maps and books in order to observe their topography.

齊人延年上書言：河出昆侖，經中國，注勃海，是其地勢西北高而東南下也。可案圖書，觀地形。⁷⁸

Yannian submitted the memorandum during the final years of Emperor Wu of Han, but according to this account, the maps and books that attest to this were themselves ancient. The grand historian Sima Qian cited the *Yu benji* as evidence, which is a text that has been cited by numerous books in later generations and has been variously referred to by different titles including *Yu dazhuan* 禹大傳, *Yu shou di ji* 禹受地記, and the *Yu shou di tongshu* 禹受地統書:

75 Zhou Ailian, *Zhuguo jiyou*, 3,9b (168).

76 *Chuogeng lu* 輟耕錄, 22 says that Ke Jiushi 柯九思 (1290–1343 CE) in the first year of Yuantong wrote the “Heyuan zhi xu” 河源志序. Tao Zongyi, *Nancun chuogeng lu*, 22,269.

77 *Shiji*, 123,3173.

78 *Han shu*, 29,1686.

Yu benji—Quoted in the *Shiji*, “Dayuan zhuanzan” 大宛傳贊 and *Shuijing*, “He shui zhu.”⁷⁹

Yu dazhuan—Quoted in *Li Sao Wang Yi zhu* 離騷王逸注 in a section about the Wei Pan River.⁸⁰

Yu shou di ji—Quoted in the *Shang shu yi ji shu* 尚書益稷疏 below a phrase which reads, “assisting the formation of kinship 弼成五服.”⁸¹ Cui Ling'en 崔靈恩 (fl. Qing dynasty) also quotes it in *Sanli yizong* 三禮義宗.⁸²

Yu shou di tongshu—Du You's 杜佑 (735–812) commentary on the *Tongdian* 通典 quotes it.⁸³

Each of these texts borrows the name of the legendary ruler Yu 禹 for their titles. The *Han shu* “Yiwen zhi” 藝文志 references a text called *Da Yu* 大禹 (禹) of 37 *pian*. The *Shanhai jing* claims that Yu gave names to the five mountains of Tibet. A commentary to the *Erya*, “Shi shui” 釋水 chapter, says, “From the ‘Shidi’ chapter to the nine rivers, everything has received its name from Yu 從《釋地》已下至九河，皆禹所名也。”⁸⁴ The *Shangshu*, “Yu gong,” records that Yu subdued the water and earth and took the lead in naming the mountains and rivers of the landscape. A story in the “Lü xing” 呂刑 accords with this. Ancient geographical writings from the Warring States period to the Han dynasty all embellish their interpretations by referencing Yu. *Xunzi* 荀子, “Da lüe” 大略 says that Yu received his education from the western (i.e., Central Asian) kingdoms, and so the introduction of the name of Kunlun into China is because Yu and his proto-Tibetan clansmen served as intermediaries. Zhang Taiyan 章太炎 (1869–1936) in his *Yu miao bei* 禹廟碑 says, “He had studied in the western kingdoms, and thus he gained knowledge from beyond the Taklamakan desert 學於西王國，故識流沙之外。”⁸⁵ This is not an unfounded argument. In *juan* 57, the *Yuhai* 玉海 quotes the *Yu shou di ji*, saying, “The area five thousand *li* southeast of Kunlun is the Divine Land 崑崙東南五千里之地謂之神州。”⁸⁶ A commentary to the *Liji* 禮記, “Qu li” 曲禮 cites *Kuodi xiang* 括地象,⁸⁷ which contains identical passage with the *Yu shou di ji*. This explains why

79 *Shiji*, 123.3179. *Shuijing zhushu*, 1.3.

80 *Chuci buzhu*, 1.32.

81 *Shangshu zhengyi*, 5.150.

82 *Yuhai*, 57.27b (2:1088).

83 *Tongdian*, 12.1256.

84 *Erya zhushu*, 7.253.

85 *Zhang Taiyan quanji*, 5:201.

86 *Yuhai*, 57.27b (2:1088).

87 *Liji zhengyi*, 5.179.

the *Kuodi xiang* and the *Yu shou di ji* are believed to refer to the same book.⁸⁸ Daoxuan in his *Shijia fangzhi* says in a note that the *Hetu* 河圖 claims that, “the territory five thousand *li* to the east of Kunlun Mountain is called the Divine Land 崑崙山東方五千里名曰神州,”⁸⁹ which also corroborates this. The *Kuodi xiang* was originally titled the *Hetu kodi xiang*, and contains a discussion of Kunlun, a sample of which follows:

Mt. Kunlun is one of the pillars that supports Heaven. Its *Qi* passes directly through Heaven. Kunlun is the center of the world, and the earth below it has eight pillars, each of which is as wide as ten thousand *li* and is supported by 3,600 axes that support one another, comprising the famous mountains and great rivers. The cavities interlink with one another.

崑崙山為天柱，氣上通天。崑崙者，地之中也，地下有八柱，柱廣十萬里，有三千六百軸，互相牽制，名山大川，孔穴相通。⁹⁰

The mountains of Kunlun constitute the apex of the earth. Above them is the celestial realm. They fill out the Four Rivers and horizontally form the Earth's axis. Above them also lies the Heavenly Stronghold. They are held up by the eight pillars.

崑崙之山為地首，上為握契，滿為四瀆，橫為地軸，上為天鎮，立為八柱。⁹¹

Thus, we might wonder if the *Hetu kuodi xiang* and *Yu shou di ji* were the same kind of maps and documents that Emperor Wu of Han viewed. Among those quotations in reference books were usually embellishments by later generations. As for Kunlun being the center of the world, we can look to the “Dixing xun” 地形訓 chapter of the *Huainanzi*, which says, “Kunlun Mountain ... rises from the center of the world 崑崙之丘……蓋天地之中也.”⁹² This shows that this idea was put forward already during the Western Han period. Also, the “Dixing xun” says that “the White River comes out from Mt. Kunlun 白水出

88 Wang Mo, “Yu shou di ji,” in *Han Tang dili shuchao*, 2a (88).

89 *Taishō*, no. 2088, “Shijia fangzhi,” 51: 950.

90 *Chuxue ji*, 5.87.

91 *Taiping yulan*, 38.5a (182).

92 *Huainanzi jishi*, 4.328–29.

崑崙之山。”⁹³ The poem, “Li sao” 離騷, says, “In the morning I cross the White River, tether my horse, and ascend Langfeng Mountain 朝吾將濟於白水兮，登閬風而縹馬。”⁹⁴ Hong Xingzu 洪興祖 (1090–1155) in his commentary quotes the *Hetu*, saying:

Kunlun Mountain emits the five colors of flowing water. Its white waters enter China and thus constitute what is known as the Yellow River.

崑山出五色流水，其白水入中國，名為河也。⁹⁵

In accordance with the testimony of Kang Tai, the ever-flowing waters that come out from Kunlun Mountain have five great currents.⁹⁶ In the *Shan jing* 山經, “Xi ci san jing” 西次三經, Kunlun Mountain is said to have four rivers: the Yellow River, Red River, Yang River, and Black River, which in turn accord with the four rivers of China and with the five rivers of Buddhist tradition. The *Kuodi xiang* says, “The fountainhead of Kunlun Mountain fills the Four Rivers 崑山滿為四瀆.”⁹⁷ The “Four Rivers” here accord with and resemble the Indian notion of “Four Rivers.” But what we must pay most attention to is the idea of Kunlun Mountain being the pillar that supports Heaven. A similar description is also found in the *Chang ahan*, “Shi ji jing”, which says that Mt. Sumeru is the pillar that supports Heaven.⁹⁸ If we recall its distant origins, we can suppose that the text came from the *Atharva Veda*. Thus, we know that there is no shortage of Indian mythology within ancient maps and documents referencing Kunlun. But we do not yet know for sure how the proto-Tibetan peoples disseminated these ideas to China from the northwestern territories. Its origins lie well before the advent of Buddhism in China.

Tang people claimed that there are two different Kunlun Mountains: the Great Kunlun Mountain and the Small Kunlun Mountain. The *Shiji*, “Sima Xiangru zhuan,” 司馬相如傳, “Da ren fu” 大人賦, says, “Gaze westward to the

93 *Chuci buzhu*, 1.30.

Note: This quotation comes from Wang Yi’s 王逸 commentary to the *Chuci* 楚辭 in which Wang Yi quoted the *Huainanzi* as thus. The extant *Huainanzi* does not contain this sentence.

94 *Chuci buzhu*, 1.30.

95 *Chuci buzhu*, 1.30.

96 *Shujing zhushu*, 1.22.

97 *Taiping yulan*, 38.5a (182).

98 *Taishō*, no. 1, “Dirghagama-sutra,” *juan* 18, 1: 115.

bold and profound, the sublime yet faintly discernible Kunlun 西望崑崙之軌
 沕沕忽兮。”⁹⁹ Under this line, Zhang Shoujie in his *Zhengyi* says the following:

The *Kuodi zhi* says, “Anavatapta Mountain is also called Jianmoda Mountain, and is also called Kunlun Mountain. The Ganges flows out from it, and the Lion’s Mouth erupts from its south!... This is called the Great Kunlun Mountain. In Suzhou (Jiuquan Nanshan), there is another called the Small Kunlun Mountain.”

《括地志》云：「又阿儻達山亦名建末達山，亦名崑崙山，恆河出，其南吐師子口。」……此謂大崑崙；肅州（酒泉南山）謂小崑崙也。¹⁰⁰

Thus, this explanation here represents a compromise between the two mythologies.

Contemporary scholars have discussed the riddle of Kunlun at length. The present article merely examines some selections from Buddhist stories, such as the location of the four rivers of the Anavatapta and its associated mythology and dissected their particularities to see the whole sequence of events that contributed to the development of the idea that Kunlun Mountain should be identified with Mt. Gangdisi. From this we know that the Tibetans’ account is taken from Buddhist canons and modeled upon their stories about Mt. Sumeru, which in turn ended up constituting their own geographical notions.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that Joseph Needham in his *Science and Civilization in China*, Vol. III, cites the Babylonian Map of the World, acknowledging therein the relation between Mt. Sumeru and Kunlun, writing “Mt. Meru (Khun-lun).”¹⁰¹ The implications here are rather broad, and I only briefly mention it here, withholding judgment, and have no further plans to discuss it.

Postscript

After this article was completed, I read that Zhang Mu 張穆 (fl. Qing dynasty) wrote in the first *juan* of his *Yinzhai wenji* 扃齋文集, “Kunlun xu yitong kao” 崑崙虛異同考 that there are in total five narratives regarding the location of Kunlun in both ancient and modern times, the five potential locations being 1) Khotan, 2) Suzhou 肅州, 3) Dahuang 大荒, 4) Qinghai 青海, and 5) Gangdisi

99 *Shiji*, 117.3060.

100 *Shiji*, 117.3061–62.

101 Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, Vol. III, 589.

of Tibet.¹⁰² He penetrates both ancient and modern ideas, drawing on a wide array of sources, and decisively argues against the theory put forth in Qi Zhaonan's 齊召南 (1703–1768) *Shuidao tigang* 水道提綱 that Kunlun is located in Qinghai.¹⁰³ He also says that Emperor Wu of Han indeed referred to the Khotan mountain as Kunlun, which demonstrates that at the time, Emperor Wu already knew that Kunlun was located to the southwest of China, and that the Tibetan kingdoms held that Kunlun was in the southwestern territories. Thus, they certainly knew that Kunlun was in modern day Tibet. This is a compromise between his own explanation and the one by Kangxi that Kunlun should be identified with Gangdisi. Pei Jingfu 裴景福 (1854–1924) in *juan 4* of his *Hehai Kunlun lu* 河海崑崙錄, still supports Wei Yuan's 魏源 (1794–1857) suggestion that the Gandisi is not Kunlun.¹⁰⁴ It is a pity that Pei Jingfu did not notice the essay by Zhang Mu. In the forty-seventh year of the Qianlong era, Ji Yun 紀昀 (1724–1805) was commanded to write the *Heyuan jilue* 河源紀略, which disputes mistaken ideas about Kunlun recorded in both ancient and modern writings, and Wang Niansun 王念孫 (1744–1832) composed the relevant sections. He also levies substantial criticisms in his discussions of the writings of earlier authors, such as Yu Anqi's 俞安期 (ca. 1596) “Kunlun Jishi er shan bian” 崑崙積石二山辨¹⁰⁵ and Wan Sitong's 萬斯同 (1638–1702) “Kunlun bian” 崑崙辨.¹⁰⁶ His book offers a reevaluation of the source of the Yellow River that would be valuable for the interested reader to consult.

Wang Yinuan 王沂暖 translated the first chapter of the *Xizang wangtong ji* 西藏王統記 on the creation of the world, which suggests the constant and recurring theme in Tibetan geography that Mt. Sumeru resides in the center of the universe and has four great continents.¹⁰⁷ Fang Yizhi 方以智 (1611–1671) in his *Dong xi jun* 東西均 says, “The mountain's foundation is but one, but its roots are divided. Kunlun thereby enters China, dividing first into three and then into ten million branches 山則根一而枝分，崑崙入中國，分三枝以千萬枝。”¹⁰⁸ He also says, “There is always Mt. Sumeru to the north. This is indeed the northernmost apex 總須彌迤北，是其應北極之頂也。”¹⁰⁹ He also says:

102 Zhang Mu, “Kunlun xu yitong kao,” *Yinzhai wenji*, 1.6b–10a, rpt. in *Qingdai shiwenji huibian*, 616: 323–25.

103 Qi Zhaonan, “*Shuidao tigang yuanxu*,” 3a, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 583: 4.

104 Pei Jingfu, *Hehai Kunlun lu*, 4.411.

105 Ji Yun and Lu Xixiong et al., *Heyuan jilue*, 25.1a–5b, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 579: 187–89.

106 Ji Yun and Lu Xixiong et al., *Heyuan jilue*, 25.5b–8b, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 579: 189–90.

107 Wang Yinuan trans. *Xizang wangtong ji*, 1–2.

108 *Dong xi jun zhushi*, 273.

109 *Dong xi jun zhushi*, 274.

Each of the seas draws upon the center of the Earth, which in turn shifts throughout the different channels and ascends upwards. Each is sucked up by the various illustrious mountains, but the peak of Mt. Sumeru is also the single greatest peak. As for the source and that which flows from it, that which flows from it also returns to the source. This is the unified cycle.


各海皆吸入地心，地心轉經絡而上升，各沁于各山之頂，而總須彌之頂，亦一頂也。源而流，流復為源，乃一輪也。¹¹⁰

Collectanea from Ming dynasty authors also touch upon Kunlun. You Qian 遊潛 (fl. ca. 1501) from Fengcheng 豐城 discusses it in his *Mengjiao cuncao* 夢蕉存稿 and his third book, *Bowu zhi bu* 博物志補.¹¹¹ His *Mengjiao shihua* 夢蕉詩話 likewise briefly discusses the idea of Kunlun and the source of the various rivers.¹¹²

Paintings of Mt. Sumeru have very remote origins, as demonstrated by the inscription on the statue of the eleventh cave of Yungang from the seventh year of Taihe 雲岡第十一窟太和七年題記, and Sima Jinlong's 司馬金龍 (d. 484) tombstone coffin sculpture.¹¹³ Li Bai 李白 (701–762) in his “Jin yin ni hua xifang jingtu bianxiang zan” 金銀泥畫西方淨土變相讚 offers another example:

White hair between the eyebrows meanders towards the right, like five Mt. Sumerus, one's sight is pure and innocent, like the water of the four great seas.

眉間白毫，向右宛轉，如五須彌山；目光清白，若四大海水。¹¹⁴

In the writings of the Nakhi (also known as Moxie 麼些) peoples, Kunlun Mountain is referred to as Junaruluo Mountain (巨那茹羅山), wherein *ndo* means “mountain” and *na* means “big.” *Zwa rwat* is the mountain's name. This graphic form appears in three layers using the pictographic representation: .

110 *Dong xi jun zhushi*, 274.

111 You Qian, *Bowu zhi bu*, A.7a–7b, *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu*, zibu xiaoshuojia lei, 251: 53.

112 You Qian, *Mengjiao shihua*, 1a, rpt. in *Zhongguo shihua zhenben congshu*, 783.

113 Shanxi sheng Datong shi bowuguan, Shanxi sheng wenwu gongzuo weiyuanhui comp., “Shanxi Datong Shijiazhai Beiwei Sima Jinlong mu,” 20–33.

114 *Li Taibai wenji*, 27:3b, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 1066: 413.

The *Xiyu tongwen zhi* 西域同文志, “Xi fan shan ming er,” 西番山名二, below the entry for Mt. Gangdisi, reads as follows:

The western barbarians refer to snow by calling it *gang*. *Disi* is the equivalent for the Sanskrit *dese*, both words refer to “snow.” In this way, the name of the mountain (Gangdisi) incorporates both Sanskrit and the western barbarian languages of these terms to form its name, and so in Chinese we refer to it as Xueshan (“Snowy Mountain”). Where the mountain is great, the terrain is also jagged and sheer. The mountains and rivers of all the barbarian territories originate from here. The *Shuijing zhu* and *Xiyu zhi* both refer to Anavatapta Mountain and mention that at its summit lies a deep pool of water as well as a grand, multistory palace. We can note that today, in the territory in front of Gangdisi, there are two conjoined lakes, both of which are referred to by local tradition as the Jade Lake of the Xi Wang Mu. It also is the Anavatapta Lake. Above it is Anavatapta Mountain.

西番語雪謂之岡，底斯即梵語「得色」，亦指雪而言也。蓋合梵語西番語而名之者，在漢語則雪山也。山體大，地勢亦絕高，番地山川皆發脉于此。《水經注》、《西域志》曰阿耨達太山，其上有大淵水，宮殿樓觀甚大焉。按今岡底斯里之前，有二湖相連，土人相傳為西王母瑤池，意即阿耨達池，其上為阿耨達山也。¹¹⁵

In Tibetan script, Gangdisi is written, ཀཱཱི་ཨ་ཨ་ཨ་ཨ་.

115 *Qinding Xiyu tongwen zhi*, 20.43a–44b, rpt. in *Siku quanshu*, 235: 373–74.

A Discussion of the Issues of Translating Scriptures Based on Shi Yancong's *Bianzheng Lun*

從釋彥琮《辯正論》談譯經問題

Translation is difficult because the translated text and the translation itself each have fundamentally different structures. In a translation's general communication of the information, we grapple with issues of sincerity or accuracy as well as with issues of beauty or aesthetics. Laozi says, "Sincere words are not beautiful, and beautiful words are not sincere 信言不美，美言不信."¹ Thus, these two elements constitute a fundamental contradiction, and we are left wondering how to expunge and resolve the tension and thereupon utilize both accuracy and beauty in translation. Balancing these two concerns has constituted the shared vocation of all translators throughout the ages, and it is indeed a difficult thing to master. Translation projects between Chinese and Indian texts have occurred since the Tang and Song dynasties, with key translators having proposed remarkably original and forceful theories of translation along the way. Dao'an 道安 (312–389) explained that translating foreign writings of the Hu 胡 (i.e., the tribes of the northern and western territories) into language of the Qin 秦 (i.e., Classical Chinese) requires an understanding of the "five kinds of losses to the original and three kinds of essential preservations 五失本三不易." Xuanzang 玄奘 (629–645) described five kinds of untranslatable things, and Zanning 贊寧 (919–1001) offered six categories for translation. These approaches have all garnered universal praise, and literary critics and historians alike have made at least brief mention of their achievements. A system for translating scriptures and sacred texts was already established by the time of the Tang dynasty, and at the time, the *Bianzheng lun* 辯正論 by Shi Yancong 釋彥琮 (549–638) was viewed as an incredibly important piece of writing on this topic. The entire text is included in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 by Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) and is generally regarded as the standard translations can be modelled after.

Yancong's experience with translation included working with an exquisite body of Sanskrit writings. Even in his old age he said:

1 Laozi *Dadejing jiaoshi*, 81.191.

When reading aloud the four thousand or more hymns of the Sanskrit sutras of 130,000 words, it takes seven days for one cycle; one must be constantly occupied with it.

以所誦梵經四千餘偈十三萬言，七日一遍，用為常業。²

This is an example of learning the new by reliving the old, of studying vigorously and tirelessly. The main two theses of the *Bianzheng lun* are as follows:

- 1) “Interrelated summaries and generalizations 相關要訓,” which include: Phrases and rhymes, questions and answers, names and their meanings, classics and explanations, hymns and eulogies, incantations and their effects, the appraisal, the main area of focus, the different sources, and the arrangement and interconnectedness of each. Each of these is then related to the issues of literary style, literary collation, and doctrines.
- 2) “Eight preparations 八備,” which are as follows: Do not be afraid of taking a long time. Do not sully or mock the ugly parts of the text. Do not criticize an obscure or dull text. Do not blame the rough sections. Do not be preferential or grasp on to certain portions of the text. Do not desire the loftiest content in the text. Do not disparage Indian schools of thought (referring to direct transliterations from Sanskrit). Do not be ignorant of native or localized scripts (referring to the myriad commonly used Chinese scripts sourced from the *Cangyu pian* 蒼頡篇 and *Erya* 爾雅).

Yancong’s ideas here are broad in scope and generally not much different from the basic attitudes and methods of his contemporaries. Points seven and eight are a thread that still visibly runs through Chinese-Sanskrit text editions as they are considered fundamental in the training of translators. The idea is that dealing Sanskrit texts one must “grasp thoroughly the *Tripitaka*, while the meaning has to remain in line with both vehicles 筌曉三藏，義貫二乘。” Conversely, with respect to Chinese texts, one must “dive into the histories and classics in order to learn how to make use of canonical phrases 旁涉墳史、工綴典詞。”³ In other words, both kinds of texts have vastly different literary and cultural backgrounds, requiring a corresponding level of scholarly mastery and cultivation. Yancong apparently had a very deep and foundational knowledge of the Chinese literary and cultural background. He was a member of the so-called “Mysterious Friends Beyond Literature 文外玄友” circle during the Northern Zhou dynasty (557–581), and he was considered alongside Xue Daoheng 薛道衡 (540–609) and Lu Shanqing 陸善經 (d. 744) to be

² *Taishō*, No. 2060, “Xu Gaoseng zhuan,” 50: 438.

³ Huang Xiaopeng, *Quanzhu quanyi Sui Shi Yancong Bianzhenglun*, 150–51.

an outstanding literary figure of the time, and the three authors demonstrate awareness of one another in their writings. Moreover, he wrote the *Neidian wenhui ji* 內典文會集, through which he has earned his position among the most distinctive and eminent writers and indeed demonstrated his value as one of the most talented and outstanding Buddhist monks. Thus, Yancong can be called a translator who was able to achieve the combination of both accuracy and beauty in his works. He discusses the principle of, “getting to the foundation and preserving the substance while honing one’s craft in the pursuit of literary grace and refinement 得本開質，斲巧由文.”⁴ He not only valued the substance of texts but also their literary refinement. From the beginning, the interpreting world has regularly emphasized understanding the original meaning of the text, but it has simultaneously overlooked the supposed results of a complete translation, namely, whether the translation is successful. This is not only a matter of providing a faithful and communicable summary of the main ideas but rather refers to whether the translation is itself something enjoyable to read, which is a very important matter. The vast majority of Chinese-Indian translations tend to value substance over literary refinement, with some being completely “wooden and without any refinement 質木無文.” The Sanskrit versions of Buddhist scriptures do not place a very high premium on literary refinement, and, when translated, they sometimes become even more unseemly. Numerous translators were originally Buddhist monks from India, and their Chinese skills were altogether lacking, so when translations were produced, although the writing style might possess a “literary character 文學性,” it was rarely the case that they contained both literary refinement and an accurate representation of the material. The translations then needed to be polished by the literati, which became a part of the procedure of translating the scriptures.

When I was first learning Sanskrit, I read the *Bhagavad-gītā*, 2.23, which contained the following two lines:

naīnaṁ dahati pāvakaḥ—“fire cannot burn (the soul) 火不能燒”

(*na enam*)

na caiṅnaṁ kledayanty āpo—“water cannot wet (it) 水不能濕”

(*na ca enam*)

I immediately associated these lines with the “Da zong shi” 大宗師 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子, which claims that the Genuine Person can “enter into fire

4 Huang Xiaopeng, *Quanzhu quanyi Sui Shi Yancong Bianzhenglun*, 127.

without burning 入火不熱” and “can enter into water without getting wet 入水不濡.” The literary contents of these two lines completely correspond with each other. In ancient times, nobody had translated the *Bhagavad-gītā* into Chinese, but recently, several new translations have arisen. Within Chinese writings, and particularly the *Zhuangzi*, there is no shortage of echoes of Sanskrit writings. It is thus no surprise that the *Xuanxue* 玄學 authors from the Jin dynasty sought materials required to “match the meaning 格義” within these works.

Yancong said:

Liuzhi 留支 (Bodhiruci; ca. 6th century) arrived in Luoyi (Luoyang) and made few new additions to the meaning. Zhendi 真諦 (Paramārtha; 499–569) would use language to polish away the discrepancies.

留支洛邑，義少加新；真諦陳時，語多飾異。⁵

Liuzhi is Bodhiruci, also known as Daoxi 道希, who lived in the Yongning Temple during the Northern Wei period (386–534) and was the first to translate the *Daśabhūmikāsūtra-sāstra* (*Shi di jing lun* 十地經論).⁶ He was from northern India, but for the moment we won't discuss him any further. Zhendi or Paramārtha was a translator from western India. He translated the *Golden Light Sutra* (*Jin guangming jing* 金光明經) in 64 sections. He also produced the *Jin qishi lun* 金七十論, the *Commentary on Samkhya Karika*, which is the only extant Chinese translation of this Brahman scripture. The *Cheng weishi-lun shuji* 成唯識論述記 says:

There was an outsider entering the Gauda Kingdom ... They slandered the monks and insisted they were inferior. They eventually wrote a eulogy of seventy lines to expand upon their Samkhya religion, and the king bestowed gold upon them ... It is called the *Jin qishi lun*.

有外道，入金耳國……謗僧不如外道，遂造七十行頌，申數論宗，王以金賜之……名金七十論。⁷

Regarding the extant Samkhya teachings written in Sanskrit, there are the Samkhya verses (Sāṃkhya-kārikā) by the fourth century scholar Isvara Krishna (Zi Zaihei 自在黑; fl. 350), which contain 70 two-line poems. Japanese scholars

5 Huang Xiaopeng, *Quanzhu quanyi Sui Shi Yancong Bianzhenglun*, 135–37.

6 *Taishō*, No. 2060, “Xu Gaoseng zhuan,” 50: 428.

7 *Taishō*, No. 1830, “Cheng weishilun shuji,” 43: 252.

have compared it with Zhendi's translation and claimed that Zhendi had forgotten to translate one of the poems into Chinese. Yancong says that Zhendi, "used language to polish away the discrepancies," 語多飾異, and we can see this kind of approach at work in the first line of the section heading 41 as follows:

citram yathā'srayam rte sthānvādibhyo
Picture—is like—wall—separate—ferry⁸

畫如壁離杭

Vinā yathā cchayā
Separate—is like—shadow

離如影

Zhendi translates this as follows: "Like a drawing is not separate from the wall where it is hanging upon, like leaving the stool there will be no shadow," 如畫不離壁·離杭〈杙〉等無影.⁹ Upon a careful inspection of the original writing, we see the word for *ru* 如, "is like," (*yathā*) appears twice, but the word *li* 離, "separate," is a translation of both "*rte*" and "*vinā*," the former of which means "without." These two words share a similar connotation but are used together for the effect of deliberate word choice variation instead of repeating the same word, thereby enabling us to observe the authors' literary skills. The general tone of the Chinese translation is not smooth, since it combines five words into a single sentence, and cannot avoid adding in redundancies. Zhendi then translates *sthānvādibhyo* as "*hang deng* 杙等," which has an awkward feel to it. The word "*adī*" can be understood as "row line", while "*bhyo*" is the dative or sampradāna case of the plural noun, "bhyas". Zhendi might possibly be reading *hang* 杭 as *hang* 行, giving an extremely obscure impression. Perhaps this is an example of Zhendi "covering up discrepancies."

Every word, regardless of its type, has an aesthetic component to its "tonal pronunciation" (*sheng wen* 聲文), but the formation of the tone surely results from the unique structure and characteristics of the script itself. In Liu Xie's 劉勰 (b. 465) discussion of language, he says that apart from the graphical form of the words, there is the "tonal pronunciation," which he discussed at length

8 Note: Jao first offers a word-for-word translation of the Sanskrit, which I have done my best to approximate, before then reflecting on Zhendi's full translation.

9 *Taishō*, No. 2137, "Jin qishi lun," 54: 1255.

Note: Zhendi's original reads 離杙, not 離杭, so I have added the correct character.

in the “Sheng lü” 聲律. Both Chinese and Sanskrit words have this characteristic. Recently, Mei Tsu-lin 梅祖麟 has claimed that the idea of “regular verse” emerged from the theory of pronunciation tones and defects (*sheng bing shuo* 聲病說),¹⁰ which, under the influence of the śloka poetic meter of classical Sanskrit literature, eventually gave rise to regular poetic verses. Śloka means “meter,” it can be traced back to the ancient Hindu Vedas, which contain both simple and complicated phrases in couplets. At times, the texts are written in groups of three sentences (triplets), which have a completely different structure from Chinese writing. The monk, Kumārajīva 鳩摩羅什 (ca. 334–413) offers an extremely apt explanation of it as follows:

It is customary in the Indian subcontinent to lay great stress upon the regulation of culture, education, ritual, and music. In their system of musical rhythm, they consider it good to utilize string instruments. Overall, when performing for the various ancient Indian kings, there were surely those who praise virtue and outwardly manifest the form of Buddha, relying heavily on songs and chants. In the classic texts are found hymns and odes, each having their own styles. Nevertheless, in translating Sanskrit into Chinese, the literary color and embellishments are lost even if the meaning is preserved, leaving the translation severed from the original text, similar to people chewing food and then feeding the chewed food to others. Not only is the flavor lost, but it also causes nausea.

天竺國俗甚重文制，其宮商體韻，以入弦為善。凡觀國王，必有贊德，見佛之儀，以歌歎為貴。經中偈頌，皆其式也。但改梵為秦，失其藻蔚，雖得大意，殊隔文體，有似嚼飯與人，非徒失味，乃令嘔噦也。¹¹

Kumārajīva is said to have “extensively studied the Four Vedas and all the treatises related to the five subjects of learning,” 博覽四圍陀典及五明諸論,¹² and thus paid special attention to the tonal pronunciation and syllables of hymns and odes. But when texts undergo the process of translation, there is an unavoidable loss of the original beauty of the poetic and prosodic structure

10 Note: This refers to the general poetic and prosodic theory of the “four tones and eight defects 四聲八病,” believed to have originated with Shen Yue 沈約 (441–513), who was in turn influenced by Sanskrit prosodic theory. See Zhang, Hongming, “On the Origin of Chinese Tonal Prosody: Argumentation from a Case Study of Shen Yue’s Poems.” 347–79.

11 *Taishō*, No. 2059, “Gaoseng zhuan,” 50: 332.

12 *Taishō*, No. 2059, “Gaoseng zhuan,” 50: 330.

TABLE 12.1 Examples of Kumārajīva's translation of *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* by Nāgārjuna

Sanskrit	Kumārajīva's translation
<i>Śūnyesu sarva--dharmeṣu</i>	The principal cause of everything is emptiness. 一切法空故
<i>Kim anataṃ kim antavat/</i>	What has a limit but is boundless? 何有邊無邊
<i>Kim anataṃ antavac ca</i>	It is at once the limit and the boundless. 亦邊亦無邊
<i>na—anataṃ na-antavac ca kim//</i>	There is no having and no lacking boundary. 非有非無邊

that simply can't be helped. Chinese translations of Buddhist hymns and odes, for example, are forced to follow rigid formations of pentasyllabic verse, which is sometimes akin to trying to cut one's feet to fit the shoes. One example comes from Kumārajīva's translation of *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (*Zhonglun* 中論) by Nāgārjuna (ca. 150–250):¹³

The original text uses the word “Kim” four times in different locations, but the translation only includes the word “what” (*he* 何) once. The original text twice uses the word “ca”, and the translation uses the corresponding word “also” or “at once” (*yi* 亦) twice for effect in the third line. However, it differs from the original in terms of the location of the third and fourth sentence, which is a result of the limited number of words in the Chinese verse, making it difficult to faithfully render this hymn into Chinese.

Chinese also has its own system of verses and meters. Zhong Hao 鍾皓 (88–157) of the Later Han dynasty lived in seclusion in Mt. Mi 密山 and instructed thousands of disciples in the art of meters and forms of versification. Zhong Hao's prosodic teachings appear in 300 *pian*, and the teachings are distinct from Wang Li's 王力 idea of “versification,” and again is further different from the Indian concept of *śloka*. Nevertheless, classical Chinese verses and *Yuefu* 樂府 poetry also possess a meter that enables the verse to be paired with music. Ancient sovereigns without exception held ceremonial sacrifices and courts with accompanying music in order to make the guests feel at ease and to please faraway visitors. India shared a similar tradition wherein the *śloka* were utilized, but did one tradition learn from the other? The Indian notion of *gāthā*

13 *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, on Nirvana, position 25. See *Taishō*, No. 1564, “*Zhonglun*,” 30: 36.

has transformed into pentasyllabic verses in Chinese and is thereby incapable of maintaining the beauty of its original tonal pronunciation. Kumārajīva was well aware of this, but nevertheless found it difficult to implement. Overall, these issues generally cause linguistic discrepancies between the original text and the translation.

Yancong's theory of translation emphasizes not only seeking authenticity within the substance of the work but also paying close attention to the literary and aesthetic qualities of the language, in turn seeking to preserve its beauty in translation. In particular, he stressed that when translating, one must preserve the readability of a text. Because he sought both the goodness and beauty of language in his translations, he accelerated later developments in the translation of Buddhist scriptures, his *Bianzheng lun* being an important contribution to this field. When we examine the notes and prefaces of translations of classical scriptures produced from the northern Wei to the Sui dynasties, we can see that there are no records containing the titles of *bishou* 筆受 (the person who transliterates Sanskrit into Chinese), *zhengfanyu* 證梵語 (the person who collates the Sanskrit text with the Chinese translation) or *zhengwen* 證文 (the person who checks and reviews the correctness and accuracy of the Sanskrit texts read by the translator). It is important that from the Tang dynasty onward, officials were more conscientious about signing their names on their work and claim responsibility for the works they supervised. Xuanzang personally signed the cover of his translation of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (*Da bore boluomiduo jing* 大般若波羅蜜多經) in the first year of the Longshuo 龍朔 era (661) and offered the accompanying comment: "Xu Jingzong has polished, supervised, and reviewed this text," 許敬宗等潤色監閱. This demonstrates the importance of "polishing" a translation at that time. With all this in mind, we cannot deny that Yancong's attempts to improve the standard of translation were extremely influential.

Notes on the Pagoda Brick Referring to the Third Chan Patriarch of the Sui Period

隋禪宗三祖塔磚銘

Among¹ the various traces and remains left throughout the history of Chan Buddhism that can be investigated, there are the early landing shore for Master Bodhidharma 達摩祖師 who arrived from the west in Guangzhou, the pagoda erected in honor of the Sixth Chan Patriarch at the Guangxiao Temple 光孝寺, and the legacy handed down by the Sixth Chan Patriarch as preserved in the Nanhua Temple 南華寺—everyone is familiar with these. Previously, the cousin of Hu Hanmin 胡漢民 (1879–1936), Hu Yisheng 胡毅生 (1883–1957)² and raised a plaque in his residence titled, “Suizhai” 隋齋. This precious item (hereafter referred to as “Brick A 甲磚”) now belongs to the Bei Shan Tang Foundation 北山堂基金 (founded by Mr. Lee Jung Sen 利榮森). The Foundation eventually obtained a contemporary duplicate of another item created at the same time with similar qualities (hereafter referred to as “Brick B 乙磚”) that was then put into storage by the Chairman of the (pre-1949) National Government, Mr. Lin Sen 林森. With the help Mr. Lee Jung Sen, I was able to personally observe both artifacts and will here offer a description of them as a contribution to the study of the history of Chan Buddhism.

1 A Description of the Brick Inscription

The original item is 15.5 m long, 11.4 cm wide, and 3.6 cm thick. The engraving on the left site contains eight characters which read as follows, “This was carved in the twelfth year of Kaihuang (592) of the Great Sui dynasty 大隋開皇十二年作.” The Bei Shan Tang Foundation collected two items. One is the old storage plaque of the Suizhai, which was subjected to repeated rubbings.³

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- 1 This article is indebted to Mr. Lee Jung Sen 利榮森, who provided the original artifact and has related many useful materials, to which I am thoroughly grateful.
 - 2 Note: The Third Patriarch of Chan Buddhism is Jianzhi Sengcan 鑑智僧璨, who died in 606. Some scholars believe the stone inscription that is the topic of this chapter contradicts this date, but Jao's discussion in Section 2 reaffirms the canonical date of death.
 - 3 See Zhang Guchu 張谷雛 (Shenzhai 申齋), recorded engraving article no. 6.

The writing below the character *er* 二 (“two”) on the first line is lost and damaged. The other contains ink handwriting, which is comparatively clear and robust, but appears not to have gone through the process of reapplying the ink. The first character of the fifth line, *gong* 供 (“offering”), is somewhat damaged. In April 1982, another temple pagoda brick was unearthed in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, but it is unknown how the brick entered into Hangzhou from Anhui province. A reproduction of the brick appears in *Wenwu* 1985, No. 4, as well as a postscript by Cao Jinyan 曹錦炎 from the Zhejiang Museum in *Shufa* 1982, No. 2.⁴

The engraving on the first brick is accurately recorded in *juan* 15 of the *Taozhai cangshi ji* 匏齋藏石記, examining the pattern designed on the top of the stone. Style and shape of the engraving are not the same as those collected by Mr. Lee Jung Sen. Thus, we can be certain that many such items have been passed down.

The brick engraving is five lines long, each containing six characters, and the lines are divided by thin columns. It reads as follows:

In the seventh month of the twelfth year of the Kaihuang era (592) of the Great Sui dynasty, the scholar Sengcan “secretly transformed”⁵ at Mt. Huangong in Shu, and this temple pagoda was constructed. Offerings were made therein. [Da Yi] Daoxin (大鑿道信; 580–651)⁶ recorded it.

大隋開皇十二年七月，僧璨大士隱化於舒之皖公山岫，結塔供養。道信為記。⁷

On the back of the brick is a circular shape, which is intended to represent the turn of the Dharma wheel. The engraving is formed in relief. The *Dongtian qing lu ji* 洞天清錄集 says, “Regarding ancient utensils, those for exterior inscriptions are engraved in relief; interior inscriptions are engraved intaglio 古器款居外而凸，識居內而凹.”⁸ The bas-relief inscription on Brick A is of the *kuan* raised style.

4 Chen Hao, “Sui Chanzong Sanzu Sengcan ta mingzhuan,” 8. Cao Jinyan, “Sui Sengcan dashi ta zhuanming ba,” 46; collected in *Shufa wenku shishang fengcai*, 161–62.

5 Note: Exactly what is meant by “secretly transformed 隱化” is at issue in this article. Jao will ultimately conclude, against several interpreters of the stone inscription, that it does *not* mean that Sengcan died.

6 Note: Da Yi Daoxin was the Fourth Patriarch of Chan Buddhism and successor to Jianzhi Sengcan.

7 *Taozhai cangshi ji*, 15.6b, rpt. in *Shike shiliao xinbian*, 1.11: 8121.

8 *Dongtian qinglu*, rpt. in *Quan Song biji*, 7.2: 21.

2 The Year of Sengcan's Death

The brick engraving says that Sengcan “secretly transformed” in the seventh month of the twelfth year of the Kaihuang era, or 592. Both the *Wenwu* bulletin and the Cao postscript to the *Shufa* article state that the inscription describing him as having “secretly transformed 隱化” refers to a monk passing away and, thus, Sengcan's death. However, this is inconsistent with the account in Sengcan's received biography. For example, the *Zutang ji* 祖堂集⁹ says:

The Thirtieth Patriarch, Sengcan, who is also the Third Patriarch from the Great Sui ... The Teacher died during the reign of the second Sui ruler, Emperor Yang (r. 604–618), in the second year of the Daye era (606), the *bingyin* year. It is currently the tenth year of the Baoda era (953) of the (Southern) Tang dynasty, the *renzi* year, some 340 years had elapsed.

第三十祖僧璨者即是大隋三祖。……師自隋第二主煬帝大業二年丙寅歲遷化，迄今唐保大十年壬子歲，得三百四十年矣。¹⁰

The *Zutang ji* is the earliest extant work on the history of Chan Buddhism and offers a most trustworthy account. The *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄, in the third narrative relates the following:

Regarding the Thirtieth Patriarch, the Great Teacher, Sengcan, we do not know where he came from. In the beginning, he donned white clothes and visited the Second Patriarch of Chan Buddhism, from whom he received the dharma. He then secluded himself in Mt. Huangong in Shuzhou ... At the time of the Kaihuang era of the Sui dynasty, during the twelfth year, *renzi*, he met the monk, Daoxin, who was fourteen at the time and came to Sengcan to begin his training with the Great Teacher. He said, “I wish for the honorable monk to show benevolence and beg to receive the dharma of liberation.” Sengcan said, “Who binds you?” Daoxin responded, “No human binds me.” Sengcan said, “What more do you seek to be unbound from?” Daoxin, upon hearing these words, suddenly achieved enlightenment. After serving for nine years, he was ordained as a monk in Jizhou and since then served Sengcan with attentiveness to detail. He

9 This text was compiled by two Chan Buddhist monks, Jing 靜 (d. unknown) and Yun 筠 (d. unknown), of the Zhaoqing Temple 招慶寺 in Quanzhou 全州 during the Southern Tang dynasty.

10 *Zutang ji jiaozhu*, 69–70.

was repeatedly tested by Sengcan with profound and subtle teachings. Upon being certain of his development, Sengcan thereupon presented to him his robes and the dharma ... Once Sengcan arrived at Mt. Luofu, he lived an easy life for two years before returning to Mt. Huangong. For more than one month, officers and laypeople rushed to visit Sengcan, setting up sandalwood offerings. Sengcan held great congregations for the Fourfold Assembly (including all four *varga*: *bhikṣu*, *bhikṣuṇī*, *upāsaka* and *upāsikā*, i.e., monks, nuns, male, and female devotees) where he shared widely on the essentials of the mind. When he finished, he stood under a great tree with his palms clasped and immediately died. This was during the second year of the Daye era (606) during the reign of Emperor Yang of Sui, the *bingyin* year, on the fifteenth day of the tenth month.

第三十祖僧璨大師者，不知何許人也。初以白衣謁二祖，既受度傳法，隱于舒州之皖公山。……至隋開皇十二年壬子歲有沙彌道信，年始十四，來禮師，曰願和尚慈悲，乞與解脫法門。師曰：誰縛汝？曰：無人縛。師曰：何更求解脫乎？信於言下大悟。服勞九載，後于吉州受戒，侍奉尤謹，師屢試以玄微，知其緣熟，乃付衣法。……即適羅浮山，優游二載卻旋舊址，逾月士民奔趨，大設檀供，師為四眾廣宣心要，訖于法會，大樹下合掌立終，即隋煬帝大業二年丙寅十月十五日也。¹¹

The *Wudeng huiyuan* 五燈會元 of Pu Ji 普濟 (1179–1253) contains the exact same account in the chapter “Dongtu zushi” 東土祖師.¹²

Although the details of each account differ slightly, the quotations above agree that Sengcan died during the second year of the Daye era (606). The *Shishi yinian lu* 釋氏疑年錄 by Chen Yuan 陳垣 (1880–1971) also draws upon the *Jingde chuandeng lu* to fix the year of Sengcan's death as 606.¹³ However, Chen Yuan was not able to consult the *Zutangji*, which retained Southern Tang records that could have been further used as a source. Neither the article in *Wenwu* nor Cao's postscript refer to this text, and both of them hastily and mistakenly conclude that the year in which his “secret transformation” occurred (592) is his actual year of death. Alternatively, Gong Xiling 龔錫齡 reads *yinhua* 隱化 as *xinghua* 行化. The *Wudeng huiyuan* reads as follows:

¹¹ *Jingde chuandeng lu*, 3.12b.

¹² *Wudeng huiyuan*, 1.48–49.

¹³ *Shishi yinian lu*, 56.

The Patriarch also said, “Formerly, the Great Teacher passed down to me the dharma and later went to Yecheng to embark upon his journey to convert the people. He died there thirty years later.”

祖又曰：「昔可大師付吾法，後往鄴都行化，三十年方終。」¹⁴

In this way, we can be sure that the “secret transformation,” from the stone inscription refers to both “living in seclusion 隱居” and “traveling and converting 行化.” Additionally, the *Zutang ji* says, “There was a change and transformation in the second year of the Daye era 遷化於大業二年.” The *Shuowen* 說文 says, “*Qian* means *deng* (“ascend”) 遷，登也。”¹⁵ *Qianhua* also means *dengxia* 登遐, which refers to the death of an important person, normally the monarch. The root of the term, *bianhua* 變化 (“transform”) is *bi* 匕. The *Shuowen* says, “*bi* is *bian* (“change”). It comes from an upturned *ren* (“person”) 匕，變也，從到人。”¹⁶ It also says, “*Hua* means instructing one’s conduct. It is composed of *bi* and *ren*. *Bi* also provides the phonetics 化，教行也，從匕人，匕亦聲。”¹⁷ The character *hua* 化 was originally explained in terms of *jiaohua* 教化, i.e. a “transformation through teaching.” Accordingly, Duan Yucai’s 段玉裁 (1735–1815) comments on this gloss: “if proper conduct is instructed from above, then transformations will be accomplished below 教行於上則化成於下。”¹⁸ *Bi* 匕 and *hua* 化 were originally two separate characters, but later combined into one. The *hua* 化 of *qianhua* 遷化 is the same as that of *bianhua* 變化 (*hua* 匕). On the other hand, the *hua* 化 of *yinhua* 隱化 is the same as that of *jiaohua* 教化, and thus has a different meaning. Thus, we should explain *yinhua* 隱化 in terms of *xinghua* 行化, that is “traveling and converting,” rather than in terms of *qianhua* 遷化 or “dying.” We can also see from biographical materials relating to the Third Patriarch that his living in seclusion at Mt. Huangong happened far earlier than the Daye era. Thus, the pagoda brick agrees with the claim that, “in the twelfth year of the Kaihuang era, Sengcan, passed down the dharma to Daoxin 開皇十二年付法與道信.”

3 Mt. Huangong 皖公

Mt. Huangong 皖公 is in modern Qianshan county 潛山縣, Anhui province. According to the *Han shu* 漢書, “*Dili zhi*” 地理志, the Lujiang prefecture 廬江郡

14 *Wudeng huiyuan*, 1.49.

15 *Shuowen jiezi*, 2B.4a (40).

16 *Shuowen jiezi*, 8A.15a (168).

17 *Shuowen jiezi*, 8A.15a (168).

18 *Shuowen jiezi zhu*, 8A.40b (384).

had two counties, Dan 澹 and Huan 皖. It later says that Qian 潛 “is to the south of Mt. Tianzhu 天柱山在南.”¹⁹ The *Tongdian* 通典 says, “Modern Shuzhou is the Huanguo of ancient times 舒州，古皖國也.”²⁰ The *Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記 says, “In the Spring and Autumn period, the state of Huan was under the domain of the Yan lineage ... Chu destroyed it 春秋時皖國，偃姓……楚滅之.”²¹ Luo Mi 羅泌 (1139–1189) in the *Lu shi* 路史, “Guo ming ji” 國名紀, writes, “Huaining county in Shu contains the ancient site of Huan 舒之懷寧有皖故城.”²² *Huan* 皖 is a loan for *wan* 皖. And the character in “Mt. Huangong” as referenced in the brick engraving is written with the *ri* 日 (“sun”) radical, which was a variant during the Sui dynasty. According to the *Han shu*, *huan* 皖 should be composed of the *mu* 目 (“eye”) radical.²³ The Song era *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽, in the section on Mt. Huan 皖山 says:

The *Han shu*, “Dili zhi”, says, “Mt. Huan is located among the Qian Mountains and connected to Tianzhu peak. These tripartite peaks form a steep and sheer mountain range, resisting the clouds and magnifying the sun, making it impossible to ascend. The *Shan jing* says, “Rapids emerge to the east of Mt. Huan ...”

《漢書·地理志》曰：皖山在灂山，天柱峰相連。其山三峰鼎峙，疊嶂重巒，拒雲概日，登涉無由。山經曰：皖山東面有激水。²⁴

Wang Xiangzhi 王象之 (1163–1230) in the *Yudi jisheng* 輿地紀勝 quotes the *Tu jing* 圖經, which says:

If we use its position to refer to it, it is called Mt. Qian based on the territory of Qian. If we use the state to name it, then we call it Mt. Wan, as it was called thus for being the place where the Earl of Wan was granted a fiefdom. If we use the peak to refer to it, then we call it Tianzhu, whereby we use the highest peak to give it its name.

以地言之，則曰潛山，以其皆潛也；以國言之，則曰皖山，以皖伯所封之國而言之也；以峰言之，則曰天柱，以其峰之最高而名之也。²⁵

19 *Han shu*, 28A.1569.

20 *Tongdian*, 181.4810.

21 *Taiping huanyu ji*, 125.2472.

22 *Lushi*, 25.11b, rpt. in *Siku congshu*, 383:276.

23 *Han shu*, 28A.1569.

24 *Taiping yulan*, 43.7a (208).

25 *Yudi jisheng*, 46.5b (1862).

The *Fangyu jiyao* 方輿紀要 says, “Although it has three names, they all refer to one mountain. Some call the south of the mountain Wan, while the north of the mountain was called Qian 名雖有三，實一山耳。或又謂「山南為皖，山北為潛」。”²⁶ According to this explanation, Sengcan secluded himself at Mt. Huangong, which in fact is Mt. Tianzhu.

4 The Inscription and the Tomb

Emperor Xuanzong of Tang 唐玄宗 (r. 712–756) commemorated the Third Patriarch, Sengcan, by dedicating the Pagoda of the Chan Master Mirror Wisdom’s Awakened Serenity 禪師鑒智覺寂之塔 to him. Several engravings were made during the Tang period that are recorded in the Song dynasty text, *Yudi bei jimū* 輿地碑記目, by Wang Xiangzhi. The engravings read as follows:

Stele Inscription to the Great Teacher Sengcan at the Shangu Temple

Created in the first year of the Baoying 寶應 era (762). Fang Guan 房琯 (697–763) composed it, while Xu Hao 徐浩 (703–782) did the calligraphy.

山谷寺璨大師碑銘

寶應元年，房琯文，徐浩書。²⁷

Verso of the Stele Inscription to the Third Patriarch and Great Teacher

In the second year of the Xiantong era 咸通 (861), Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (815–877 CE) composed it.

三祖大師碑陰記

咸通二年，張彥遠撰。²⁸

Hymn to the Third Patriarch and Great Teacher at the Shangu Temple

It was established in the third year of Jianzhong (872). The Imperial Censor, Cheng Baoji 承包佶 (d. unknown) composed it.²⁹

山谷寺三祖大師偈

建中三年立，御史中丞佶撰。³⁰

26 *Dushi fangyu jiyao*, 26.1308.

27 *Yudi bei jimū*, 2.12b, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 2:22.

28 *Yudi bei jimū*, 2.13a, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 2:23.

29 The inscription’s contents are entirely contained in the Anqing Fu tablet recording.

30 *Yudi bei jimū*, 2.13a, rpt. in *Lidai beizhi congshu*, 2:23.

Zhang Yanyuan 張彥遠 (815–907), also named Zhang Aibin 張愛賓, the author of *Lidai minghua ji* 歷代名畫記, mentions the Third Patriarch within one of his descriptions of famous paintings. Regrettably, the above-listed examples contents can no longer be consulted.

To provide another simple anecdote, the *Jingde chuandeng lu* says:

Li Chang 李常 (c. 766–842), the magistrate of Henan ... was demoted to the position of Attendant Officer in Shuzhou. He asked a question at Shangu Temple to a crowd of monks as follows: “Is the tomb of the Third Patriarch behind the temple?”, at which time the highest-ranking monk, Huiguan 慧觀 (d. unknown) responded, “Yes, it is there.” Li Chang was satisfied, and together with his colleagues and assistants, they went up to pay homage to Third Patriarch’s tomb. They opened the tomb ... And counted 300 five-color Buddhist relics. They used 100 of them to construct the pagoda. They gave 100 to Heze Shenhui 荷澤神會 (668–760), and they kept the remaining 100.

河南尹李常……謫為舒州別駕，因詢問山谷寺衆僧曰：「聞寺後有三祖墓，是否？」時上坐慧觀對曰：「有之。」常欣然與僚佐同往瞻禮。又啓墳……得五色舍利三百粒，以百粒出已俸建塔焉；百粒寄荷澤神會，以徵前言；百粒隨身。³¹

5 The Fingerprints on the Brick Engraving and Other Matters

The Suizhai Brick A contains four fingerprint lines, which we note on the left side, at the location of the second ring. Brick B also contains four fingerprint lines, but we note that these lines are pressed upon the lines of latitude and longitude within rims at the periphery of a dharma wheel 法輪. Thus, we can be sure that someone grabbed the brick at the time it was made and when the clay was not yet dry, which led the brick to adopt a strange shape. On another pagoda brick collected by Duan Fang 端方 (1861–1911), Gong Xiling writes as follows:

The top of the brick is of the Quan style with two inscriptions of the number five and circular patterns of banana leaves. The type of engraving on

³¹ *Jingde chuandeng lu*, 3.13a.

the right side was created with Buddhist implements, but it is not very clear and cannot be recognized.

磚頂刻五五泉式及回紋蕉葉紋，右側所刻屬鍵椎道具之類，不甚晰不可識。³²

The Quan style stone with a “five” inscribed in it was recorded in Li Zuoxian’s 李佐賢 (1807–1876) *Guquan hui*, in which it is listed as having an unknown date of composition. Thus, according to this record of the pagoda, we know that it was in use during the Kaihuang era.

五五泉李佐賢《古泉匯》列不知時代品，據此塔記，知開皇時行用矣。³³

The *Guquan hui* says that, “it is an artifact produced during the Northern Wei period 此其北魏遺制歟,”³⁴ and its style appears to have bridged over into the Sui dynasty.

This brick engraving is evidence that the Great Teacher of Chan Buddhism (namely, the Third Patriarch) passed down his dharma, and eventually a temple pagoda was constructed in order to consecrate and make offerings to it, and a stele inscription was erected to record the event. Owing to the molds for the clay bricks being created by hand, the designs upon and structures of the bricks varied substantially.

6 Calligraphy

The calligraphy on this brick is exceptionally fine. Cao’s postscript reads as follows:

Although only containing some 30 characters, the inscription can be seen to closely follow the *Dong meiren zhi*. On these grounds we can be certain of Daoxin’s grounding in basic calligraphic skills. The numbers on the periphery do not approach Daoxin’s vigor of strokes in his calligraphy, but also do not constitute an inferior form of calligraphy.

32 *Taozhai cangshi ji*, 15.6b, rpt. in *Shike shiliao xinbian*, 1.11: 8121.

33 *Taozhai cangshi ji*, 15.7a, rpt. in *Shike shiliao xinbian*, 1.11: 8122.

34 *Guquan hui*, 7.13b (1156).

雖寥寥三十字，然可直追《董美人志》。由此可見道信功底。邊側數字雖不及道信筆力，然亦不入下乘之列。³⁵

The discussion of the Third Patriarch in the *Wudeng huiyuan* says:

During the twelfth year of the Sui dynasty's Kaihuang era (592), the *renzi* year, there was a Buddhist novice, Daoxin, who began his studies at age fourteen. He came to study under the Great Teacher, saying, "I wish the honorable monk can show benevolence and beg to receive the dharma of liberation."

至隋開皇十二年王子歲，有沙彌道信，年始十四，來禮祖曰：「願和尚慈悲，乞與解脫法門」。³⁶

If this is trustworthy, we can settle the date to the twelfth year of Kaihuang, in which Daoxin would have only been fourteen years old, suggesting that the calligraphy on the brick perhaps did not come from his hand, but we will leave this question open.

The brick engraving records the year on the one side, which is clearly the twelfth year of the Kaihuang era (592). This must have been during the early years of Sengcan's seclusion at Mt. Huangong and his journey to convert people who constructed the pagoda and made offerings therein. Daoxin was surely very young when he began to follow the Third Patriarch and study under him. Therefore, if he was commanded to make the engraving, then its author would be none other than Sengcan himself. Conversely, if Daoxin created the engraving after Sengcan's death, then he would not have written down his teacher's name directly in this fashion. Thus, an explanation like this certainly stands to reason.

35 Cao Jinyan, "Sui Sengcan dashi ta zhuanming ba," 46; collected in *Shufa wenku shishang fengcai*, 161–62.

36 *Wudeng huiyuan*, 1.48.

Xinzhou: The Birthplace of the Sixth Patriarch of Chan and His Teachings

新州——六祖出生地及其傳法偈

Professor Wang Yongxing 王永興 of Peking University has asked me to write an article in honor of the late Chen Yinke 陳寅恪 for a festschrift collection. I recall that Professor Chen in 1932 wrote an article analyzing the teachings of the teachings of the Sixth Chan Patriarch, titled *Chanjia Liuzu chuanfa ji zhi fenxi* 禪家六祖傳法偈之分析,¹ which comprises of influential theories and a variety of new interpretations that have ensured the article's enduring significance. Recently, I began to engage with the founding documents of Chan Buddhism, and last year, I was able to visit Shaozhou 韶州, Huaiji county 懷集, Guangdong province. Moreover, this past summer, I was able to visit the former home of the Sixth Patriarch of Chan Buddhism in Xinzhou 新州, present day Xinxing 新興 county, Guangdong province. Upon reading the work of Japanese scholars on Huineng 惠能 (638–713; i.e., the Sixth Patriarch of Chan Buddhism)² as well as other texts on the history of Chan Buddhism, I still feel that I have much more to learn. Therefore, I have gone outside of my comfort zone to compose a short article to offer as a modest contribution to this volume in order to revere and commemorate the achievements of Professor Chen, an exercise that may in turn serve as a testament to the inspiration he has generated through his scholarly works and teachings.

The Fifth Patriarch of Chan Buddhism famously said to Huineng that “the people of Lingnan have no Buddha nature 嶺南人無佛性.” As a result, Huineng, was always thought to have been poverty-stricken, ignorant, and illiterate, but by the time I arrived at Xinxing, my understanding of Huineng had completely changed. First, I learned that Huineng's father, Lu Xingtao 盧行瑫 (603–640), was from Fanyang 范陽,³ and his family was quite wealthy and prominent. Second, the biography of Huineng in *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 records

1 Chen Yinke, “Chanzong Liuzu chuanfa ji zhi fenxi,” *Qinghua xuebao*, 7: 2 (1932), 1–4. Included in *Chen Yike shixue lunwen xuanji*, 14–18.

2 Note: Jao frequently switches between referring to “Huineng” and “the Sixth Patriarch” throughout the article. To facilitate reading, I have standardized the references by replacing “Sixth Patriarch” with “Huineng,” except in quoted texts.

3 Note: The area of Fanyang most likely refers to the area southwest of Beijing and north of Baoding in modern Hebei province. The borders of Fanyang changed over the centuries,

that “the Sixth Patriarch donated his old home in Xinxing, which later became the Guo'en Temple 六祖舍新興舊宅為國恩寺.”⁴ The structure itself is quite grand, so we can be sure that Huineng did not come from a commoner's family of modest means. Third, Huineng gave his parents a proper burial, and he knew that achieving Nirvana would require him to return to his hometown to die. The *Platform Sutra* (*Liuzu tanjing* 六祖壇經) says, “Falling leaves return to their roots 葉落歸根.” This has the same meaning as the Ruist teaching, “Ritual does not forget its roots 禮不忘本.” I am inclined to believe that he received formal education at home during his early years, so he was not completely illiterate, and in fact he was eventually able to effectively recite the *Diamond Sutra* (*Jingang jing* 金剛經) without great difficulty. He was also able to understand the overall meaning of the *Nirvana Sutra* (*Niepan jing* 涅槃經) and was accepted as a Buddhist adept because of it.

During the Tang dynasty, several prominent officials were banished to Xinzhou, including Huineng's father. Later, Zhang Jianzhi 張柬之 (625–706) and Du Wei 杜位 (d. unknown) both were sent there as well. Du Wei was Li Linfu's 李林甫 (d. 753) son-in-law and also served as Right Tower Handyman 右補闕 (a minor administrative position) when Li Linfu was at the peak of his power and prominence.⁵ Upon Li's fall from power, Du Wei relocated to Xinzhou.⁶ The *Xinxing xian zhi* 新興縣志 includes Du Wei's eight poems about the scenery of Xinzhou, “Ba Xinzhou jing” 新州八景, the first of which illustrates the rising sun over one of its city wall, the so-called “Bamboo Wall 筠城,” reading, “Xinzhou, encircled by a city wall made up by a myriad bamboo canes, in its rising the sun pierces through this forest and illuminates the myriad households 新州萬竹繞為城，旭日穿林萬戶明.”⁷ Du Wei was also a nephew of Du Fu 杜甫 (712–770),⁸ and communicated with both Du Fu and Cen Can 岑參 (718–769) through poetry.⁹ Zhang Jianzhi was demoted from his rank and position as Prince of Hanyang and Prefect of Xiangzhou 漢陽郡王襄州刺史 to Commandant 司馬 of Xinzhou.¹⁰ The story goes that Wu Sansi 武三思 (649–707) fabricated a rumor that led to his demotion. Zhang Jianzhi

seeing an expansion under the Tang dynasty, but the point here is simply that Huineng's family was not from the south.

4 *Song gaoseng zhuan*, *Taishō*, 50: 755.

5 See the *Jiu Tang shu*, 106.3241.

6 *Quan Tang shi*, 224.2399.

7 Su Zengwei, “Xinxing xiancheng Juncheng kao,” 23.

8 See *Quan Tang wen*, 395.1a. *Tangren xingdi lu*, 61.

9 More details on this social background can be found in “Zaixiang shixi biao” 宰相世系表 of the *Xin tang shu*.

10 *Jiu Tang shu*, 91.2942.

was furious when he arrived in Xinzhou but spent the rest of his days there until his death at about 80 years old.¹¹ The *Xinxing xian zhi* claims that the number of years he spent at his official post is unknown. However, we can see in the *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 that in the fifth month of the second year of the Shenlong 神龍 era (706), Wu Sansi sent Zheng Yin 鄭愔 (d. 710) to make an announcement to Jing Hui 敬暉 (d. 706), Wei Yanfan 韋彥範 (653–706), Zhang Jianzhi, and Yuan Shuji 袁恕己 (d. 706), according to which, in the sixth month, Jing Hui was demoted to Commandant of Yazhou 崖州. Wei Yanfan was demoted to Commandant of Longzhou 龍州, and Zhang Jianzhi was demoted to Commandant of Xinzhou. In the seventh month, Jing Hui was sent further on to serve in Qiongzhou 琼州, Wei Yanfan was sent to Xiangzhou 襄州, and Zhang Jianzhi to Longzhou. Those who started any trouble were to be executed. During the Zhou interregnum of Wu Zhao, they were to be employed and sent to be envoys in the Lingnan borderlands, but by the time they arrived, Zhang Jianzhi and Jing Hui had already died.¹² From this we can see that Zhang Jianzhi in the sixth month of the second year of Shenlong (706) was demoted to Commandant of Xinzhou. In the seventh month he was further demoted and sent to Longzhou. Thus, his time spent in Xinzhou was hardly more than a month.

A folktale from Xinxing 新興, then the seat of the Xinzhou administration, claims that Huineng's father, Lu Xingtao, was demoted to Commandant of Xinzhou and took up a permanent residence in Xinxing in the ninth month of the third year of the Wude 武德 era (622). Huineng's mother was from the Li 李 clan, who resided in Jiuguo 舊壩 village in Xinxing. Huineng lost his father at the age of three and depended on his mother to survive from that point onward. Lu Xingtao's demotion was similar to that of Zhang Jianzhi, only the original position from which he was demoted is unknown. Xinzhou was established in the fourth year of Wude (ca. 623). The *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書, "Dili zhi" 地理志 says,

Xinzhou: Xin'an county of the Sui dynasty was retitled to Xinxing county in the fourth year of the Wude era. After subduing Xiao Xian 蕭銑 (583–621), Xinzhou was established. In the first year of Tianbao (742) it was converted into the Xinxing commandery. In the first year of Qianyuan (758) it was renamed to Xinzhou again. It used to encompass 4 counties. There were 7388 families with a total population of 35,025.

¹¹ *Jiu Tang shu*, 91.2942.

¹² *Zizhi tongjian*, 208.6605.

Note: Jao is paraphrasing the original source here.

隋信安郡之新興縣。武德四年，平蕭銑，置新州。天寶元年，改為新興郡。乾元元年，復為新州。舊領縣四，戶七千三百八十八，口三萬五千二十五。¹³

In the third year of the Wude era (622) during the period of uncertainty caused by Xiao Xian,¹⁴ Xinzhou did not yet exist. During the Tang period, the territory under the administration of Xinzhou included Xinxing and Suolu 索盧. According to archaeological records, the site of Suolu is located to the south of modern-day Suolu county, Jicheng 集成 district, on the southern side of the Xialu 夏盧 village at the foot of Mt. Long 龍山. Several tiles from the Tang period were excavated there. Huineng's former residence was in Jicheng District, Xialu village, which, according to legend, was also his birthplace. This site still exists today and is located on the edges of the Tang period's Suolu county. Zanning 讚寧 (919–1001) in the *Song gaoseng zhuan*, "Huineng zhuan" 惠能傳 records the following:

He originally resided in Fanyang. His late father's name is Xingtao. During the Wude era (618–626), [Lu Xingtao] moved to Xinzhou, the place where he lived and died as a commoner after he was demoted. Briefly discussing his ancestry, he avoided association with the impropriety of the Luting Island barbarians. In the 12th year of the Zhenguan era (639), *wuxu* year, Huineng was born. Being of a pure, literal-minded, and gentle nature, Huineng spent most time in seclusion and was nearly unscathed by the frivolous barbarian customs that surrounded him. He did, however, feigned them when circumstances beyond our comprehension demanded it. His father died when he was young, and his mother became a widow. His family was impoverished, and he was often without food, so Huineng gathered firewood to make a living.

其本世居范陽。厥考諱行瑫。武德中流亭新州，〔以〕百姓終於貶所。略述家系，避盧亭島夷之不敏也。貞觀十二年戊戌歲生能也。純淑迂懷惠性間出，雖蠻風獠俗漬染不深，而詭行么形駁維難測。父既少失母且寡居，家亦屢空業無腴產，能負薪矣。¹⁵

13 *Jiu Tang shu*, 41.1718.

14 Note: Xiao Xian was a descendant of the imperial house of the Liang dynasty who led an uprising against the Sui dynasty around 618 but was eventually defeated by Tang generals in 621.

15 *Song gaoseng zhuan*, *Taishō*, 50: 754.

During the Wude era, Xingtao was banished to Xinzhou, and after staying there for over a decade, Huineng was born to him during the twelfth year of the Zhenguan 貞觀 era (639). The population of Xinzhou was barely 30,000 at the time. As the prefecture's commandant, he lived well and found it easy to administer the estates, it must have been very much unlike Zanning's claim that the family was impoverished. Hence, Huineng was able to donate his former residence, and it became the site of the Guo'en Temple. His family was originally from the Lu clan of Fanyang (Hebei province). Ever since the middle of Shenjia 神嘉 era (428–431), Lu Xuan 盧玄 (d. unknown) was considered a paragon of cultural refinement, and became a household name in Northern China, known for his Yexia 鄴下 (part of modern Hebei) style. Lu Yuanming 盧元明 (fl. 530s) of Fanyang was also well-regarded.¹⁶ The fourth branch of the Lu clan of Fanyang included Lu Yangwu 盧陽烏 (454–501), a Wei dynasty official.¹⁷ The main branch of the family included Lu Xingjia 盧行嘉 (d. unknown), an administrative supervisor of military affairs in Qingzhou 青州 during the Sui and early Tang.¹⁸ Since his name also contains the character *xing* 行, we can assume that he was from the same generation as that of Lu Xingtao, but the exact kin relationship between these two remains unclear. Recall also that Zanning writes, “discussing his ancestry, he avoided association with the impropriety of the Luting Island barbarians.” It is a shame that there are no documents to verify this claim. The ancestry he mentioned fell into oblivion without any existing records to trace it, but I do believe that it is shared with the Lu clan from Fanyang. The term *luting* 盧亭 is also written as 盧停, and the *Lingbiao luyi* 領表錄異 claims that it refers to the descendants of the group that served under Lu Xun 盧循 (d. 411) during his failed uprising against the Jin. The *Yongle dadian* 永樂大典 lists *luting* 盧亭 under the entry “Guang” 廣, just like the *Song gaoseng zhuan*, which suggests that it was a designation for natives of the Guangdong area.¹⁹ In mentioning his ancestry, Lu Xingtao expressed that he originates from one of the great households of the Central Plains and is not related to any of the local people such as the Man 蠻 or Lao 僚. Thus, we know that Huineng came from a distinguished family from Hebei and that he cannot be regarded as *gelao* 獠, an “uncivilized southerner.”²⁰

16 *Zizhi tongjian*, 157.4878.

17 *Xin Tang shu*, 73A.2884.

18 *Xin Tang shu*, 73A.2888.

19 See my “Shuo dan” for further discussion (Jao Tsung-i, “Shuo dan,” 2: 917).

20 Note: Prof. Jao discusses the term *gelao* in a separate article that is translated in Chapter 15 of this volume.

The tombs of Huineng's parents are located in Xinxing. His mother was from the Li clan, but we cannot confirm whether she was originally from Xinxing. Longshan Temple 龍山寺 (i.e., Guo'en Temple), which is the home that Huineng donated, was established around Jicheng, at the foot of Mt. Long, some 73 km to the south of the county seat. Its floor space measures 9200 square meters, though not the entire estate was necessarily originally in Huineng's possession. It is said that the construction of the temple began during the first year of the Hongdao era 弘道 (633). In the second year of the Shenlong era (706), Tang Zhongzong 唐中宗 (r. 683–684, 705–710) ordered an inscription on the lintels of its doors conferring its title of "Guo'en" therein. The inscription, which remains in good condition to this day, was made in the same year that Zhang Jianzhi was demoted and banished to Xinzhou. To the left of the Guo'en Temple there is a Bao'en 報恩 pagoda, which was constructed during the sixth month of the first year of the Taiji 太極 era (712) during Tang Ruizong's 唐睿宗 (r. 684–690 and 710–712) reign. At that time, Huineng was in Caoxi 曹溪 at the Baolin Temple 寶林寺, and commissioned his followers to build it instead of leading the project himself. In the second year of the Xiantian 先天 era (713), Huineng returned to Xinzhou from the Baolin Temple, passing through Zhaoqing 肇慶 prefecture in Guangdong. There, later generations would eventually go on to build the Mei Nunnery 梅庵 (lit. "Plum Nunnery"), on the site where Huineng was said to have planted plum cherry blossom trees. There is also a well named in his honor, the Liuzu Well 六組井 (Well of the Sixth Patriarch).

The upper-left part of the Guo'en temple contains a lychee tree that was personally planted by Huineng and is some 18m tall with a 4.5m circumference at the base. The Qing dynasty poet, Chen Zaiqian 陳在謙 (19th century) composed a still widely known poem that reads as follows:

A branch grew from the side of Long Mountain; it remains near the Lu family mausoleum. My teacher planted it by hand. Insects refuse to bore into it ... The roots of the tree are unceasing, and the roots of the teacher have never left.

龍山側生枝，仍傍盧公墓，吾師手所植，樹老蟲不蠹……樹也本不住，師也本不去。²¹

Huineng also constructed his father and mother's adjacent burial mounds. During the Shenlong period, a stone tablet was conferred upon the mounds.

21 *Lingnan gujin lu*, 386.

Nearby are also a stone commemorating his mother, the Biemu Stone 別母石 (Stone of Bidding Farewell to Mother), the Sixiang Pavilion 思鄉亭 (Pavilion of Missing the Hometown), and the Bao'en Hall 報恩堂 (Hall of Repaying Kindness). Huineng had deep affection for his hometown and had a particular affection for his mother. The Biemu stone is in the old village area of Jicheng. It received its name, "Farewell to Mother," because when he went to the Dong Chan Temple 東禪寺 in Huangmei 黃梅 to seek the Buddha, his mother, who was from the Li clan, saw him off for his journey at that particular stone. The modern Guo'en Temple still contains its original foundation where Huineng achieved nirvana upon his return to the village and eventual death, and this is also where his body was originally located. The *Xixing xian wenwu zhi gao* 新興縣文物志稿 says:

Lantern Hill is located in Sanping village in the Jicheng area. Legend has it that after the Sixth Patriarch passed away, the monks of the temple competed over receiving the body, and they prayed at this hill.

香燈崗，在集成區三坪村側，相傳六祖示寂後，僧人爭迎其肉身，於此崗禱告。²²

The *Platform Sutra*, "Fushu pin" 付屬品, says of Huineng that "the falling leaves return to the roots 葉落歸根."²³ Qu Yuan (ca. 340–278 BCE) once wrote, "Flying birds return to their homelands. Foxes always die in their first dens 鳥飛返故鄉兮，狐死必首丘."²⁴ All this applies to Huineng, with his devotion to his parents and hometown inspiring people for millennia. Dongshan Liangjie 洞山良价 (807–869), for instance, composed a Buddhist hymn about parents. The Song dynasty author, Brother Qisong 契嵩 (1007–1072) of Tengzhou 藤州 edited the *Fujiao bian* 輔教編, which, aside from containing the "Tanjing zan" 壇經贊 also includes the "Xiao lun shi'er zhang" 孝論十二章, which draws upon the Ruist text, *Xiao jing* 孝經, the "Classic of Filial Piety."²⁵ There is also the *Quanxiao wen* 勸孝文 composed by a monk called Zongyi 宗頤 (d. unknown), which is recorded in the *Song shi* 宋史, "Yiwen zhi" 藝文志.²⁶ Chan Buddhism values filial piety and Huineng's teachings were steeped in it, which further indicates the deep and long-lasting connections between Buddhism and Ruism. The

22 *Xinxing xianzhi*, 603.

23 *Liuzu dashi fabao tanjing*, *Taishō*, 48: 361.

24 *Chuci buzhu*, 4.136.

25 See *Xin jin ji*, 11.21a, *Siku quanshu*, 1091:523.

26 *Song shi*, 205.5187.

historical remnants in the homeland of the Huineng have caused countless people to pause and reflect.

Scholars the world over have carefully studied the events in the history of Chan Buddhism. One Japanese scholar composed a comprehensive collection of the different versions of the *Platform Sutra*, including both the Dunhuang version and the one held by the Xingsheng temple 興聖寺.²⁷ Additionally, regarding the body of Huineng, Paul Demiéville and Xu Hengbin 徐恆彬 each have several detailed studies.²⁸

The traces left by Huineng and his achievements have been discussed at length, therefore I focused primarily on issues regarding the place Xinzhou and will talk only little about others.

Mr. Chen Yinke has levelled criticism at the Buddhist hymns produced by Shenxiu 神秀 (606–706) and Huineng,²⁹ writing as follows:

They simply took over the writings of their forerunners and combined them into a single hymn. Because of their unrefined skills, lack of substance, and their ignorance, only a fraction of the doctrine is transmitted in their writings.

襲用前人之舊文，合為一偈，而作者藝術未精，空疏不學，遂令傳心之語，成為半通之文。³⁰

27 See Ryosho Tanaka 田中良昭, *Tonkō butten to zen* 敦煌佛典と禪.

28 See Paul Demiéville, "Momies d'Extrême-Orient," 144–70, as well as his *Choix d'études sinologiques*, 1921–1970. Also, see Xu Hengbin, *Nanhua si Liuzu Huineng Zhenshen Kao*, 137–51.

29 Note: The following refers to a well-known legend that revolves around a contest in verse writing that took place at Hongren 弘忍 (601–674), the Fifth Patriarch's monastery to find a suitable successor to pass on the Chan teachings.

At that occasion, Shenxiu produced a verse that read:

The body is the *bodhi* tree.

The mind is like a bright mirror's stand.

At all times we must strive to polish it.

And must not let dust collect.

Later on, Huineng responded with a verse of his own:

Bodhi originally has no tree.

The bright mirror also has no stand.

Fundamentally there is not a single thing.

Where could dust arise?

The translations are taken from John R. McRae, *Seeing through Zen*, 61–62.

30 Chen Yinke, "Chanzong Liuzu chuanfa ji zhi fenxi," 16–17.

The above-mentioned writings of their forerunners can be identified in two sources. The first is recorded in a work of Shenxiu's disciple, Jing Jue 淨覺 (late 7th and early 8th century CE), titled *Lengjia shizi ji* 楞伽師資記, which sought out Buddhabhadra's (Fotuobatuoluo 佛陀跋陀羅; 359–429) "Method of Putting the Heart at Ease 安心法." There it says, "It is just like polishing a mirror. When the dust is completely wiped from the mirror's face, the heart cleanses and brightens itself 亦如磨鏡，鏡面上塵落盡，心自明淨."³¹ The second has been transmitted by a Buddhist monk from the Wude era (618–626), Tanlun 曇倫 (d. unknown), who passed down the following saying: "First, cleanse the obscure sentiments as if peeling an onion. ... There is a saying that goes ... originally there was no onion, so what actually is peeled? 先淨昏情，猶如剝葱。……倫曰：……本來無葱，何所剝也?"³²

Chen said something striking, as it is difficult to ascertain whether and to what extent the hymns and sayings of Shenxiu and Huineng drew upon earlier traditions. I have studied the meaning of Shenxiu's notion of "having a mind like a mirror," which was originally a well-known saying. But Huineng's idea that, "originally, there was nothing" has extremely remote origins. The Daoists for a long time have said, "the mind is like a bright mirror 心如明鏡." *Zhuangzi* 莊子 "Ying di wang" 應帝王 says, "the utmost person uses their mind like a mirror 至人之用心若鏡,"³³ which can also be seen in the *Huainanzi* 淮南子.³⁴ The *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 also says, "A mirror that is bright is miniscule, while a scholar that is bright is great 鏡，明已也細，士，明已也大."³⁵ Yao Silian 姚思廉 (533–606) in the *Liang shu* 梁書 "Chushi Tao Hongjing zhuan" 處士陶宏景傳 says:

As for Hongjing's personal character, he was accommodating, unassuming, and reserved. Whether in or out of office, he was natural and reasonable. His mind was like a bright mirror.

弘景為人，圓通謙謹，出處冥會，心如明鏡。³⁶

Additionally, the southern Qi dynasty scholar He Dian 何點 (437–504) from Lujiang 廬江 says, "Lu Huixiao's mind is like a brilliant mirror 陸慧曉心如

31 *Lengjia shizi ji*, *Taishō*, 85.1284.

32 *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, *Taishō*, 50: 598.

33 *Zhuangzi jishi*, 3B.307.

34 *Huainanzi jishi*, 6.463.

35 See the two terms "mirror" and "mirror stand" in *Taiping yulan*, 717.2b.

36 *Liang shu*, 51.743.

照鏡，³⁷ so how can we be sure that Shenxiu's "the mind is like a bright mirror's stand" was not taken from these sorts of examples? The *Liang shu* also says in "Dao Gai zhuan," that "Zijing's personal name is Yuanzhao (brilliant all-round) 子鏡，字圓照，"³⁸ thereby utilizing Buddhist writings to bestow a name. Finally, there is the classic Buddhist phrase, the "wisdom of the great, round mirror 大圓鏡智."³⁹

In the *āgamas* of the Hinayana scriptures, we can also see several examples of the use of mirrors to elucidate the mind. For example, Zhu Fahu's 竺法護 (231–308) translation of the *Pravāraṇa-sūtra* (*Shou xin sui jing* 受新歲經) says the following:

On becoming joyous and pure, from the Buddha himself: When one reaches the level of the World Honored One, he will willingly and joyously practice the Dharma. This is like all of those virtuous and perceptive officials who clean a mirror to look at their own faces. All those worthy and perceptive officials who notice that their faces are covered in dust are therefore unhappy, and they want to remove the dust. All those worthy and perceptive officials who do not notice that their faces are covered in dust are thereby joyous and at peace.

彼便喜悅清淨，白佛：世尊境界行，見已樂行。猶若諸賢有眼之士，持極淨鏡自用觀面。此諸賢有眼之士自見面塵垢便不喜悅，彼便進欲除此垢。諸賢有眼之士不自見面有塵垢，彼便悅喜清淨。……⁴⁰

There is also the anonymous translation of the *Viśākhā-sūtra* (*Youpoyi duoshejia jing* 優陂夷墮舍迦經):

The Buddha says, "Just as people have mirrors, mirrors have dust. Wipe away the dust and the mirror becomes bright. When the mind is open like a brilliant mirror, it becomes impossible to have angry thoughts."

佛言：如人有鏡，鏡有垢，磨去其垢鏡即明。……心開如明如鏡者，不當有瞋怒意。⁴¹

37 *Taiping yulan*, 717.2a.

38 *Liang shu*, 40.569.

39 *Jingde chuandeng lu*, *Taishō*, 51: 238.

40 *Foshuo shousui jing*, *Taishō*, 51: 843.

41 *Youbeyi Duoshejia jing*, *Taishō*, 1: 912.

Both sources suggest that the notions of “watching one’s reflection in a clean and bright mirror” and “polishing away the dust to make the mirror brilliant” originally came from the Buddha’s own words, just like Shenxiu’s idea of “polishing [the mirror] daily” and Huineng’s own idea of “keeping constantly pure.” Most interestingly, the very first Buddhist scripture received in writing by Han dynasty monks, the *Sutra of the Dharma Mirror* (*Fajing jing* 法鏡經), includes the word “mirror” in its title. This text is still extant and can be consulted today.⁴² The book marked the name of the translator as a Parthian *upāsaka*, Anxuan 安玄 (fl. late 2nd century CE) and Yan Fodiao 嚴佛調 (ca. 117–197) is recorded as having written the translations down. The Sanskrit title of the *Fabao yilin* 法寶義林 is *Ugra [datta] pariprcchā*, with the meaning of *ugra [datta]* being “strongly given,” and therefore unrelated to mirrors. The Sanskrit word for mirror is *ādarsa*, and the Pali word is *ādāsa*. In ancient Persion it is *ēwēnag*. During the reign of Emperor Ling of Han 漢靈帝 (r. 168–189), Anxuan travelled as merchant to Luoyang, and for his service he was named Commandant of the Cavalry 騎都尉.⁴³ Because this scripture was transmitted via Parthia, the original edition must have been in a foreign language, but it awaits further research to determine in what script it was written. The text contains the phrase, “Keep dust far away and separate from the dirt—all dharma and insight into it arises from this 遠塵離垢，諸法法眼生。”⁴⁴ There is also a detailed description of “purity and abstinence 淨戒” and “purity and wisdom 淨慧,” at the end. Additionally, there is annotation and preface for the *Sutra of the Dharma Mirror* by the monk, Kang Senghui 康僧會 (d. 280).⁴⁵ His preface to the *Sutra of the Dharma Mirror* reads as follows:

As for the mind, the source of all dharmas, the root of judgment. ... Focus the mind to cleanse the dirt and the spirit and the way are complete. ... The crowds give rise to virtue and sagacity, vying for purity from illusion. The name of the new way is Grand Brilliance. Thus, we call it “dharma mirror.” The commandant of ... dictated it, and Yan Fodiao transcribed it.

夫心者，眾法之原、臧否之根。……專心滌垢，神與道俱。……群生賢聖，競于清淨，稱斯道曰大明，故曰法鏡。……都尉口陳，嚴調筆受。⁴⁶

42 *Fajing jing*, *Taishō*, 12: 15.

43 *Chu sanzang jiji*, *Taishō*, 55: 96.

44 *Fa jing jing*, *Taishō*, 12: 19.

45 *Gaoseng zhuan*, *Taishō*, 50: 326.

46 *Fa jing jing*, *Taishō*, 12: 15.

His afterword further says:

If the mirror is not clean and bright, you cannot see your own figure. If you do not praise the scriptures, you cannot discern your own sentiments. ... If you cannot see the sacred writings, there's no way to make oneself brilliant. As a result, the Buddha composed the scripture called the *Dharma Mirror*.

夫不照明鏡，不見己之形，不讚聖經，不見己之情。……不觀聖典，無以自明，佛故著經，名曰《法鏡》。⁴⁷

Senghui's commentary is no longer extant, though his preface and afterword have been preserved, some of which has been quoted above. The *Hanfeizi* 韓非子 says

Ancient people struggled to see themselves, and so they used mirrors to observe their faces. ... Without a mirror, they would be unable to tame their beards and eyebrows.

古之人目短於自見，故以鏡觀面。……失鏡則無以正鬚眉。⁴⁸

Senghui had vast textual knowledge and hence was able to cite Chinese literature to elucidate the Sanskrit scriptures. One text he collated within his *Liudu jijing* 六度集經 is the *Jingmian wang jing* 鏡面王經, which recounts the Buddhist tale of the blind men who were invited by a king to all touch different parts of an elephant to determine what it was. When the men returned and gave their impression of the creature, the king laughed heartily and said:

You're blind! You're blind! Can you also not see the Buddhist scriptures? A poem says, "When one lacks a working pair of eyes, their admonishments are empty though they deem them the truth. They perceive one portion and deem the rest of it to be wrong. They take up their own position around an elephant and deem each other to be wrong." The Buddha told his monks thus: "This king of the mirror surface, that is what I am to you."

47 *Fa jing jing*, Taishō, 12: 22.

48 *Hanfeizi jijie*, 8.211.

「瞽乎瞽乎！爾猶不見佛經者矣。」便說偈言：「今為無眼曹，空淨自謂諦，覩一云餘非，坐一象相怨。」佛告比丘：「鏡面王者，即吾身是」。⁴⁹

In this allegory, the king is referred to as “mirror’s surface 鏡面,” which demonstrates that nothing can illuminate the Way except for mirrors. From this we know that using mirrors as a metaphor to illustrate the Way indeed goes far back.

Yan Fodiao also was called Yan *ācārya* Fodiao 嚴阿祇梨浮調 (also written *asheli* 阿闍梨, meaning Yan “the learned” Fudiao), being one of the earliest Han people to leave home to adopt a monastic life. Among his extant writings that he transcribed for Anxuan is the *Ahan koujie ershi yinyuan jing* 阿含口解十二因緣經, one of the earliest translations of Buddhist scriptures. The metaphor of the mirror-like mind first appeared in the *Zhuangzi*, but it also accorded with the Buddha’s dharma. Therefore, when the people during the Eastern Han took on translating the first sutras, they could draw on a metaphor which had already been utilized for a very long time.

Regarding Huineng’s two negations, “fundamentally, there is not a single thing,” and “there is also no mirror stand,” the relevant concept of “original” or “fundamental nothingness 本無” has enjoyed numerous prior uses. By breaking from Shenxiu’s “being,” Huineng was indeed able to apprehend the thing-in-itself and thus was able to receive the sincere approval of the Fifth Patriarch. In fact, as far back as the Eastern Han period, the term “fundamental nothingness” had already been admitted its own category within the *Prajñāpāramitā* (*bore* 般若) sūtras. A “category of fundamental nothingness 本無品” is mentioned as the 11th category in Moksāla’s (Wu Luocha 無羅叉; fl. Jin dynasty) translation of the *Pañcaviṃśati-sāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (*Fangguang bore jing* 放光般若經), while in Lokakṣema’s (Zhilou Jiachen 支婁迦讖; fl. 147–189) and Zhi Qian’s 支謙 (fl. 223–253) translations of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-ūtra* (titled *Daoxing bore jing* 道行般若經 and *Damingdu jing* 大明度經, respectively), it appears as the 14th. The following excerpts are from the translations by Lokakṣema and Zhi Qian:

The Buddha says: It is thus, Sons of Heaven! The various dharmas arise from nowhere, as they follow the teachings of Tathāgata. The teachings of Tathāgata are: “fundamental nothingness.” The idea of “fundamental nothingness” moreover arrives from nowhere and goes nowhere.

49 *Liu du ji jing*, *Taishō*, 3: 51.

Tathāgata is fundamentally nothing; all dharmas are fundamentally nothing. The dharma being fundamentally nothing, Tathāgata was also originally nothing. ... Subhūti, regarding the teachings of Tathāgata, is fundamentally nothing, passes over into nothing, and eventually returns to nothing. Nowadays, Tathāgata's "fundamental nothingness" is on the same terms as the idea of "sameness without distinction," and this sameness without distinction is truly the fundamental nothingness.

佛言：「如是，諸天子！諸法無所從生，為隨怛薩阿竭教。隨怛薩阿竭（如來）教是為「本無」，「本無」亦無所從來，亦無所從去。怛薩阿竭本無，諸法亦本無；諸法亦本無，怛薩阿竭亦本無。……須菩提，隨怛薩阿竭教，怛薩阿竭本無，過去本無，當來本無，今現在怛薩阿竭本無等無異，是等無異為真本無。⁵⁰

The above is an Eastern Han translation by Lokakṣema regarding the "category of fundamental nothingness":

The *vinayas* say: "Tathāgata follows the teachings of Tathāgata. What does it mean to "follow the teachings?" If the dharma arises from nothing, then it follows the teachings. This is "fundamental nothingness." Without coming, the source moreover was without departing. All the dharmas are fundamentally nothing. Tathāgata is also fundamentally nothing and without distinction. Following the fundamental nothingness is following the fundamental nothingness of Tathāgata. Establishing Tathāgata's fundamental nothingness is following the teaching of Tathāgata, and the various components of the dharma are no different. Lacking distinctions and fundamental nothingness, there is a lack of accomplishments. All things are fundamentally nothing, and all will return to the fundamental nothingness, to being without rank, and to being without distinctions. Herein lies the true dharma of fundamental nothingness, and the various dharmas are fundamentally nothing. Nothing passes by or goes and comes down to the present day. Tathāgata is also like this. This is truly "fundamental nothingness."

善業言：「如來是隨如來教。何謂隨教？如法無所從生為隨教，是為本無，無來原亦無去迹。諸法本無，如來亦本無無異。隨本無是為隨如來本無。如來本無立為隨如來教。與諸法不異，無異本無。無作

⁵⁰ *Daoxing bore jing, Taishō*, 8: 453.

者，一切皆本無，亦復無本、無等、無異。於真法中本無，諸法本無，無過去當來今現在，如來亦爾，是為真本無。⁵¹

This is from Zhi Qian's translations regarding the "category of fundamental nothingness." Both texts translate the same source, the difference merely being that Lokakṣema employs the transliteration *dasa'ajie* 怛薩阿竭 for the Sanskrit *tathāgata* (the "thus-come," i.e., the Buddha), whereas Zhi Qian uses a literal translation of the term, namely *rulai* 如來. But both describe that fundamentally there is not a single thing, that all dharmas also fundamentally do not exist, which in turn means that the Tathāgata "is also like this." Later, the Chan school was said to be "scolding the buddhas and vilifying the patriarchs 呵佛罵祖" because they pointed out that the Tathāgata as well does fundamentally not exist. Huineng says, "Bodhi originally has no tree. The bright mirror also has no stand." and was thereby able to become aware of the ultimate truth of "fundamental nothingness." But from Zhi Qian's translation of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*'s "category of fundamental nothingness" onwards the notion of a "genuine fundamental nothingness" had already been established. The patriarchs of the Chan school merely parroted this idea, and so we can say with confidence that the origins of Huineng's phrase "fundamental nothingness" are indeed remote.

Sengyou 僧祐 (445–518) recounts in the *Daoxing jing houji* 道行經後記:

In the second year of the Guanghe era (179), tenth month, eighth day, Meng Yuanshi 孟元士 (d. unknown) orally passed on the teachings of the Indian bodhisattva, Zhu Shufo 竺朔佛 (2nd century CE). At that time, it was said that the translator was Lokakṣema. The attendants were Zhang Shao'an 張少安 (d. unknown) from Nanyang and Zibi 子碧 (d. unknown) from Nanhai.

光和二年十月八日，河南洛陽孟元士口授天竺菩薩竺朔佛，時傳言者譯，月支菩薩支讖時。侍者南陽張少安、南海子碧。⁵²

The *Baishi shenjun beiyin* 白石神君碑陰 mentions a manager of libations 祭酒, "Guozhi Zibi" 郭稚子碧. We might, therefore, following Tang Yongtong 湯用彤 (1893–1964), identify Lokakṣema's assistant translator, Zibi from Nanhai 南海, with this Guozhi Zibi. The assistant translator, Guozhi, is believed to come from Nanhai and well predates Huineng. When the Fifth Patriarch first

51 *Da mingdu jing*, *Taishō*, 8: 493–94.

52 *Daoxing jing houji*, in *Chu sanzang jiji*, *Taishō*, 55: 47.

met Huineng, he said that people from Lingnan lacked any Buddha nature. However, if Guozhi Zibi is indeed Zibi from Nanhai (i.e., the “Southern Sea”), we know that this isn’t true.

When I arrived at Xinxing and explained the reason of my visit, the archaeologists were very welcoming and said that I was the first Chinese literature and history professor that was able to come south to visit this place. However, Japanese people of note also came to visit numerous times. In 1981, there was a Buddhist elder Shaku I Shindō 釈井進堂 (i.e., Brother I Shindō) who came from the Daijōji temple 大乘寺 in Kanazawa. In 1984, the Kyoto University scholar, Ryūta Hijiriyama 柳田聖山, praised the ancestral hall as the hometown of the lychee tree. Though our fellow countrymen may look on with indifference, I hope that as we modernize like never before, our ancient relics and structures will not suffer the same fate as those in Nanhua and Yunmen, which endured reckless, numerous, and extravagant remodeling and embellishments that caused their original appearance to be completely lost. I would be pleased, to contrast, with our relics’ being able to have their original appearance preserved. Talking about the schools of Buddhism, Xinzhou truly is the Mecca of the Chan school, though nobody makes the pilgrimage. What a shame! For what reason is there such a declining religious sentiment? Is it a result of, “people from Lingnan having no Buddha nature,” and thereby disregarding this holy place? This is something I would not presume to know.

Some Questions regarding Huineng and the *Sixth Patriarch's Platform Sutra*

慧能及《六祖壇經》的一些問題

I¹ have been invited to give this keynote lecture because of a previous article in which I discussed “Xinzhou: The Birthplace of the Sixth Patriarch of Chan and His Teachings,”² and because it has been said that I am the first Chinese professor to have visited and investigated the birthplace of the Sixth Patriarch. But I do not think that I deserve this designation. Throughout history, there were indeed a few notable persons who have been there and are worth paying attention to. Here, I would like to mention several examples.

1 Some Notable Persons Who Have Been to Xinzhou 新州 throughout History

First is Hu Yin 胡寅 (1098–1156) from the Southern Song period, a famous historian who wrote the *Dushi guanjian* 讀史管見 and who shares a common ancestry with the celebrated scientist, Hu Guo'an 胡國安 (d. unknown). Hu Yin was demoted and banished to live in Xinzhou. In his book, *Feiranji* 斐然集, there is a passage that relates to an early preface to the *Chuandeng lu* 傳燈錄, which claims of the book that he had at hand that, “these are extracts from Yang Yi's 楊億 (974–1020) *Chuandeng lu*, selected in the Jingyou era (1034–1039) by grand minister Wang Sui 王隨 (975–1039).” 乃景祐大臣王隨所撮楊億傳燈錄.³ For this reason, it refers to the work as *Jingyou chuandeng lu* 景祐傳燈錄. The preface also mentions that Hu Yin himself was demoted and sent to Xinzhou in 1150. During his stay, he “journeyed 25 *li* to the south of the city to visit Longshan Temple 城南二十五里龍山寺” (currently known as the Guo'en Temple),⁴ and states that he did not find any Buddhist canon at Longshan

1 Note: This article is based on a talk Jao gave at the international academic workshop titled Huineng yu Lingnan wenhua 慧能與嶺南文化. The contents were summarized and edited in Chinese by Dr. Xiang Qun 向群 from the history department of Sun Yat-sen University.

2 See Chapter 14 of this volume.

3 *Fei ran ji*, 19.17a, in *Siku quanshu*, 1137:545.

4 *Fei ran ji*, 19.17a, in *Siku quanshu*, 1137:545.

Temple, writing, “there are only four of its large sections and the *Yuying ji* 玉英集.” 獨有四大部與《玉英集》。⁵

Tan Cui 檀萃 from the Qianlong 乾隆 period (1735–1796) is another notable individual who visited Xinzhou. He is the author of the *Chuting baizhu lu* 楚庭稗珠錄 and claims to have consulted the *Platform Sutra* (*Baotan jing* 寶壇經) in Xinzhou, observing that it is “simple, clear, and easy to read 直捷爽快，平易近人。”⁶ This indicates that the language of *Platform Sutra* resembled contemporary vernacular Chinese. Tan further criticizes Qu Dajun 屈大均 (1630–1696) for writing in his *Guangdong xinyu* 廣東新語, that “The birthplace of the Sixth Patriarch is very barren and lacking in vegetation 目下草木不生，”⁷ stating that this was disrespectful to the sagely Huineng. However, there is no conclusive evidence that Qu Dajun himself had ever been to Xinxing. Prof. Jiang Boqin 姜伯勤 has cited from the material provided by Tan, but apparently was unaware of Hu Yin’s account.

Although a few notable people passed by Xinzhou and left their traces throughout history, barely any Chinese scholars have visited there in recent times. But this does not mean that the importance of Xinzhou should be underestimated. When I was there, I was most impressed by the Guo’en Temple, and it completely changed my opinions about the Sixth Patriarch from that point forward.

Here I would also like to mention in passing the term, *gelao* 獗獠.⁸ According to the *Platform Sutra*, this was the phrase that the Fifth Patriarch, Hongren 弘忍 (601–674) used to mock Huineng, the Sixth Patriarch, when they first met. Although to this day it has remained a controversial issue, the reality is quite simple. Prof. Pan Chonggui 潘重規 explained in his article on the Dunhuang manuscripts that the *ge* or *lie* 獗 in *gelao* is a loan graph for *lie* 獵 (“hunt”), so the term could be understood as *lieliao* 獵獠.⁹ However, this phonological borrowing did not originate with the Dunhuang manuscripts, as similar examples

5 See *Fei ran ji*, 19.17a, in *Siku quanshu*, 1137:545.

Note: The *Chuangdeng yuying ji* 傳燈玉英集 contains a selection of passages from the *Chuangdeng lu*, edited by Wang Sui in 1034, the first year of the *Jingyou* era. This appears to be the text that the preface refers to as *Jingyou chuandeng lu*.

6 *Chuting baizhu lu*, 2.66.

7 *Guangdong xinyu*, 2.50.

8 Note: Used in isolation, the characters are also pronounced *lie* 獗 and *liao* 獠 respectively. The former denotes a large type of wolf, whereas the latter either describes a nightly hunt or the repulsiveness of a person’s face. One might thus suspect that the expression refers to indigenous people who partake in wolf-hunts, or interpreted less favorably, who are blessed with the “ugly face of a wolf.”

9 Pan Chonggui, “Dunhuang xieben *Liuzu Tanjing* zhong de lie lao,” 164.

can be found from before and after the Tang period. Huang Tingjian 黃庭堅 (1045–1105) from the Song dynasty wrote a poem that says, “chasing *gelaο* in the banana grove 蕉林追獠.”¹⁰ I have personally done some research on the bamboo slips used for record keeping during the Han dynasty and found the phrase *liejun* 獠君 on one of the bamboo slips from the Eastern Han period in the archives of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The character *lie* 獠 in this instance is also a loan for *lie* 獵 (therefore describing the leader of a hunt). But *gelaο* and *lilaο* 俚獠 are both derogatory terms for southerners that were still used in geography books from the later Tang and Song dynasties to describe minority groups in southwestern area.

Based on my personal experience in Xinzhou, I am confident that Huineng would not have been the total illiterate that he was described as in texts such as the *Platform Sutra*. The Guo'en Temple was built on the location where Huineng donated his old house, and it was indeed quite large, as Huineng was the descendant of a local magistrate. Several writings discuss Huineng's family and upbringing, and how his father, Lu Xingtao 盧行瑫 (603–640) was demoted and exiled to Xinzhou. The existence of the Guo'en Temple itself proves that Huineng had assets. And although he lost his father at an early age, he was not born in destitute. His mother was still there for him in his childhood, and the Lu clan, being a large family from the north, should indeed have engaged in the tradition of home education, so Huineng was capable of appreciating literature from a young age. If he was illiterate, it would have been impossible for him to understand the *Diamond Sutra* (*Jingang jing* 金剛經) or the *Nirvana Sutra* (*Niepan jing* 涅槃經). That said, an admirable quality of Huineng is that he was very inconspicuous. He did not often discuss his own life much less show off. As a result, there has been a tendency by later writers to add legendary embellishments to his character.

2 Huineng's Disciples

According to the historical records of the transmission of the Dharma, such as the *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄, Huineng had 43 students. Japanese scholars in the past have gathered scores of related Buddhist verses and performed detailed textual research, showing that the actual number of Huineng's students is much larger. Recently I read He Qiaoyuan's 何喬遠 (1558–1632) *Min shu* 閩書, which references a potential student of Huineng called Zhenggan

10 *Shangu nejishi shizhu*, 19.12b. In *Siku quanshu*, 1114: 221.

正幹 from Huangbo Mountain 黃檗山 in Fuqing 福清, Fujian province.¹¹ However, he was not counted among the 43 students in the received records. The *Min shu* mentions that during the Tang, in the fifth year of the Zhenyuan 貞元 era (789), Zhenggan started following Huineng's teachings and began to receive his instructions. Later on, he stopped at Huangbo Mountain 黃檗山 to construct a "*prajñā* terrace 般若臺," a public hall for worshipping the Buddha,¹² and in the eighth year of Zhenyuan (792), he built the Fuchan Temple 福禪寺.¹³ This entry is followed by a record of the achievements of the well-known Huangbo Xiyun 黃檗希運 (d. 850),¹⁴ which suggests that we should not underestimate the possible value of the accounts regarding Zhenggan. However, a few problems remain. First, someone mistakenly recorded the Zhenyuan era (785–805) as belonging to the Song dynasty rather than the Tang dynasty. Secondly, it records that Zhenggan began following Huineng in the fifth year of Zhenyuan, which cannot be true because Huineng had already died by that time. It seems more reasonable and likely to assume that Zhenggan is a student of one of Huineng's disciples. When we look at the birth places of Huineng's students, we can see that they came from all over the country. Only about three of them came from the Guangdong area, which shows that Huineng's influence went far beyond the borders of Lingnan.

3 Editions of the *Platform Sutra*

I would also like to discuss the Dunhuang versions of the *Platform Sutra*, which can be divided into two types. As we all know, one type of *Platform Sutra* manuscripts found in Dunhuang is currently archived in London, Beijing, and other places. The second version is called the *Dunbo Edition* 敦博本 and is now under the care of the Dunhuang Museum. Here, I will focus on this latter version.

Prof. Pan Chonggui's new book about the Dunbo version is called *Dunhuang Tanjing xinshu* 敦煌壇經新書. He did a commendable job in his book to correct certain typographical errors and restore the phonetic values of several characters. However, a limitation of his work is that it is based on the photos provided by Mr. Xiang Da 向達, which may not provide the best representation of the original. Currently, Deng Wenkuan 鄧文寬 and Rong Xinjiang 榮新江 are working on the same item. Mr. Zhou Shaoliang 周紹良 believes that the Dunbo

11 *Min shu*, 6.143.

12 *Min shu*, 6.143.

13 *Min shu*, 6.143.

14 *Min shu*, 6.143.

edition represents the *Platform Sutra* in its original form. I personally have great reservations. The Dunbo manuscript, No. 077, consists of a collection of five types of *sūtras* and *śāstras*, namely, *Puti Damo Nanzong ding shifei lun* 菩提達摩南宗定是非論, *Nanyang heshang dunjiao jietuo chanmen zhi liao xing tanyu* 南洋和尚頓教解脫禪門直了性壇語, a poem in response to *Nanzong ding xie zheng wu geng zhuan* 南宗定邪正五更轉, *Nanzong dunjiao zui shang-sheng mohe bore boluomi jing liuzu Huineng dashi yu Shaozhou Dafansi shifa baotan jing* 南宗頓教最上乘摩訶般若波羅蜜經六祖慧能大師於韶州大梵寺施法寶壇經, and *Jingjue zhu jingang bore boluo miduo xin jing* 淨覺注金剛般若波羅蜜多心經. During the Tang period many different names were used for the *Platform Sutra*. In the *Ru Tang xinqiu shengjiao mulu* 入唐新求聖教目錄 by the eminent Japanese monk, Ennin 圓仁 (793–864), it is recorded that there is a copy of the *Platform Sutra* held by Kyoto's Kozanji Temple 高山寺. In full, it is listed as *Caoxi shan diliuzu Huineng dashi shuo jianxing dunjiao zhiliao chengfo jueding wuyi fabao ji tanjing, yi juan* 曹溪山第六祖慧能大師說見性頓教直了成佛決定無疑法寶記壇經一卷, and contains many discrepancies when compared to the Dunbo manuscript. Mr. Zhou Shaoliang believes that because the paper of the Dunbo manuscript caught some mold, the copy does not stem from Dunhuang itself, but he was unable to conclusively determine its exact date. And although Mr. Zhou points out that the Dunbo manuscript contains wordings and a style of expression that had become rare already by the Song dynasty, we still do not know when exactly these five *sūtras* and *śāstras* were compiled into a single volume. Because we are still unable to settle this issue at this point in time, it remains very difficult to pass a final judgment on the Dunbo manuscript.

4 The Sichuan “Streams of Chan” in Zongmi’s *Chengxi tu*

During the Tang dynasty, Zongmi 宗密 (780–841) wrote a book titled *Zhonghua chuan xindi shizi chengxi tu* 中華傳心地師資承襲圖 (hereafter *Chengxi tu*). It contains important information about the genealogy of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Patriarch’s dharma and its transmission. In particular, the part about Huineng and the development of the various independent streams of Chan in Sichuan is worthy of consideration.

According to the *Chengxi tu*, there were among the various Chan schools and lineages active in contemporary Sichuan that of master Zhishen 智詵 (609–702) based in Zizhou 資州, that of the Korean master Kim Hwasang 金和尚 (also known as Wuxiang 無相; 648–762) in Yizhou 益州, that of master Chuji 處寂 (669–ca. 736) in Zizhou, and the Baotang school 保唐宗 that was founded

by Baotang Wuzhu 保唐无住 (714–774). Considering the direction of international research on the history of Chan Buddhism over the past few decades, these lineages and their respective backgrounds are being given greater attention. Therefore, those materials are very significant and should not be ignored.

One of the biggest achievements over the past 40 years of international Dunhuang studies is the development of Chan studies utilizing the Dunhuang materials. After decades of hard work by world-class sinologists such as Giuseppe Tucci from Italy, Paul Demiéville from France, and Buddhist historians from Japan, China, and Great Britain, comparisons between the Dunhuang manuscripts and related Tibetan sources have been carried out to ascertain the influence of Chinese Buddhism on Tibetan Buddhism. For example, Prof. Demiéville published a very influential monograph, *Le Concile De Lhasa*, in which he offered in-depth research on the Buddhist debates between Moheyan 摩訶衍 (fl. 8th century), who represented the Northern Chan schools, and Kamalaśīla (Lianhua jie 蓮華戒; c. 740–795) that took place before the Tibetan emperor.

Additionally, because of the progress made in Dunhuang studies and research into the history of Chan Buddhism over the past decades, we now realize the importance of the various streams of Chan Buddhism that developed in Sichuan. The biographies of the Zizhou based masters Shen and Chuji, and Yizhou based master Kim, reflect how Chan developed and spread throughout Sichuan, and that Huineng's ideas entered the area through Shenhui's 神會 (684–768) influence. With the appearance of the phonetic transcription of words like *dun* 頓 and *jian* 漸 in Tibetan scripts, it shows that Chinese Buddhism had been brought to Tibet by means of its Sichuan branches. Therefore, we know that Chan Buddhist ideology had spread out not only in Lingnan and Central China but also to Tibet.

Zongmi's *Chengxi tu* was deemed unreliable by Hu Shi 胡適 (1891–1962) and others, but it should indeed be trusted. Mr. Ran Yunhua 冉雲華 has found more source material regarding Zongmi in Russia. Although these were just fragments, because we know that Zongmi and Huineng were very nearly contemporaries, Ran's discovery did in fact prove again that the *Chengxi tu* is very reliable.

I would finally like to mention one notable person who has done research on topic of Chan Buddhism, Mr. Hu Shi. Mr. Hu not only rejected Zongmi's *Chengxi tu* in his research, but also frequently criticized Buddhist scriptures. Mr. Lou Yulie 樓宇烈 from Peking University edited and published some of Hu's remarks in *Hu Shi yanjiu congkan* 胡適研究叢刊. For instance, when Mr. Hu started his research about the history of Chan in 1929, he remarked that the *Vimalakīrti-sūtra* (*Weimo jing* 維摩經) was “just absurd fiction.” Ten years

later, he admitted that his prior opinion was “a big mistake.” As the example of Mr. Hu shows us, we should not hastily make comments or conclusions on the topics we do not really understand, whether on Buddhism or any other academic topic. When he denied the value of Zongmi’s *Chengxi tu*, this too was very misleading due to his position and social status, and it required enormous efforts on the part of other scholars to correct his mistake. Therefore, we must have a cautious attitude in our academic research and avoid drawing hasty conclusions.

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