

Forming the Image of Cheng Xuanying (ca.600-690)

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Abstract

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The aim of this thesis is to explore the life of Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 (ca.600-690), a prominent Daoist of the early Tang 唐 court known for his *Sub-commentary on Zhuangzi* (*Zhuangzi shu* 莊子疏), of particular interest is Cheng's career in the court eventual exile. I shall explore the politico-religious climate of the early Tang in an attempt to deduce what actions and ideas lead to Cheng Xuanying's sentence and what affect it had on his later life and work. I will also provide a translation of the first chapter of Cheng's *Zhuangzi shu*, with the attempt to preserve the stylistic and peculiarity and unnatural ornamentation that distinguish itself considerably from the contemporary styles of comparable writings.

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Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to explore the life of Cheng Xuanying 成玄英 (ca.600-690), a prominent Daoist of the early Tang 唐 court known for his *Sub-commentary on Zhuangzi* (*Zhuangzi shu* 莊子疏), of particular interest is Cheng's career in the court eventual exile. I shall explore the politico-religious climate of the early Tang in an attempt to deduce what actions and ideas lead to Cheng Xuanying's sentence and what affect it had on his later life and work.

Cheng Xuanying, style-named Zishi 子實, also later known as Ying 英, Yuanying 元英, Shiying 世英, and Wuying 武英, was a native of the Shan 陝 Prefecture, located in what is now modern Henan 河南 province. A prodigious Daoist adept, he was summoned to the capital in Chang'an 長安 in the year 631 to serve the royal court at Xihua 西華 Abbey. There Cheng participated in debates and collaborative textual projects like the translation of the *Laozi* 老子 into Sanskrit. He also began work of his own commenting on *Yijing* 易經 and Daoist canons such as *Laozi* itself, and *Zhuangzi*. His Daoist works are preserved, for which he was renowned; but his commentarial diagram of the *Yijing*, known as the “*Zhouyi Liuyan Qiongji Tu*” 周易流演窮寂圖 was lost even though it was also considered a significant achievement during his time. It was very likely because of the “*Zhouyi Liuyan Qiongji Tu*” he was banished, labelled as a composer of apocryphal prognostications. Cheng was exiled from Chang'an to Yuzhou 鬱州 in the first half of the fifth decade of the seventh century, and lived out the remainder of his days in Donghai 東海, located in what is now modern Jiangsu 江蘇.

Chapter Two begins with a detailed investigation of Daoism's role in the foundation of the Tang Dynasty, focusing on the policies of the first Tang emperors, Li Yuan 李淵 (566-635) and

Li Shimin 李世民 (598-649) and the Daoist aid they received to support their meteoric ascent. Using Laozi's legendary association with the surname Li – the surname of the ultimate royal family – Daoists began to sow seeds of discord during the end of the Sui 隋 Dynasty (ca. 614) using prognostications to test the waters and find up-and-coming political players from the Li clan to associate themselves with. With the Li clan's position secured, the Daoists further entrenched themselves in court politics, exchanging legitimizing the regime for increased status in the capital. A series of edicts solidified Daoism's superior position over Buddhism and saw a number of Daoist benefactors rise to key positions. The change was not to last, however. Though Li Shimin, like his father, used Daoism to legitimize his rule initially, he later pivoted to focus on foreign diplomacy using Buddhist emissaries as a springboard. This set the stage for the religious tension and uncertain status of Daoism during Cheng Xuanying's time.

Chapter Three focuses on Cheng Xuanying himself. Since he does not hold a regular biography, I try to reconstruct the life experience and timeline of this figure by closely reviewing historical resources and circumstantial evidence. The first part of the chapter explores the various notes of Cheng recorded in the official histories and bibliographical catalogues. Although there are many versions, they stem from one source, containing only slight variations. These variations are of particular interest because they reveal how the scholarly consensus of Cheng's life evolved over time. In later versions, some authors add notes like, “it is unknown what offense he committed,” in relation to his exile. They also omitted mention of the “Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu,” one Cheng's major now lost works. In addition, I will clear up the confusions that Cheng Xuanying was attributed the title of *Xihua fashi* 西華法師, based on a different understanding of the concept, “Master of Doctrine” (*fashi* 法師), in Cheng's time and the compilation times of those catalogues that documented his work. It is this thesis' belief that the version of the text

preserved by Wang Xianqian 王先謙 (1842-1917) is the most carefully compiled and historically accurate.

The second part of the chapter focuses on episodes in the official histories in which Cheng is directly mentioned. Three episodes are covered in total: A debate in the capital in which Cheng participated, organized by the royal heir-designate Li Chengqian 李承乾 (619-645) and Monk Huijing 慧淨 (b.578); a tense back-and-forth between Cheng and the famous Buddhist monk Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664) about the translation of the *Laozi* into Sanskrit; Cheng's testimony during the *Sanhuang Jing* 三皇經 censorship case. The three episodes showcase the rapidly deteriorating status of Daoism in the court, and demonstrate the precarious position Daoist elites, like Cheng Xuanying, were placed in. The eradication of the *Sanhuang Jing* is particularly poignant because it exemplifies the court's paranoia over what they considered to be a subversive Daoist canon. Just as Daoism brought the regime to power, it also possessed the potential to strip that power away.

The final part of the chapter attempts to recover the reason for Cheng's exile. I find it reasonable that Cheng's often overlooked "Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu" may have played a critical role in his punishment. The "Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu" was a diagram that most likely attempted to contextualize the divination of the *Yijing* in a contemporary format that could predict future events. Time-wise, what Cheng had deduced in the "Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu" may have very likely been seen as a prognostication of the great drought at the beginning of the Emperor Gaozong, Li Zhi 李治 (628-683)'s reign. It is likely that the court found such a subject to be subversive and called for the discontinuation of the project and Cheng's banishment. After Cheng left the capital he recrafted his previous work into a format that would be consumed by literary elites so that his commentary on the Daoist canon would survive.

This thesis will end with a translation of the first chapter of Cheng's *Zhuangzi shu*, the "Xiaoyao you *shu*" 逍遙遊疏. I attempt to preserve the stylistic and rhetorical features of the original text. Cheng Xuanying's language in the "Xiaoyao you *shu*" has a stylistic peculiarity and unnatural ornamentation that distinguish itself considerably from the contemporary styles of comparable writings. A stylistic and rhetoric study of *Zhuangzi shu* awaits further research and report.

II. The politico-religious background of the Early Tang

Emperor Yang 煬 (r. 604-618), who would later be overthrown as the last monarch of the Sui 隋 Dynasty, became increasingly fretful from the tenth year of his reign (614) onwards.

Prognostications, such as 老君降世 李氏當王 “Lord Lao is about to be reincarnated in this world and the clan of Li 李 will rule” or 當有李氏 應為天子 “there shall be someone from the Li clan becoming the Son of Heaven” prevailed in his rioting empire, in addition to endless outbursts of rebellions, most of which were caused by some members of the Li clan.¹

Prognostications regarding the Li’s usurpation of the throne appeared in the forms of images, texts, spells, and nursery rhymes so prevalently that Emperor Yang itched to eradicate all Li’s in the sub-celestial realm as they had disturbed him for over a year (615).²

The most well-known of the riots that took place against the ruling family of the Sui – because it was the one that finally successfully overthrew the *ancien régime* – was that of Li Yuan 李淵 (r.618-635). His clan was claimed to have originated from the Tuoba 拓跋 clan of the Xianbei 鮮卑 ethnic group, a noble family that dated back to the Northern Zhou 北周 Dynasty.³ For forty-

¹ Multiple Li’s organized rebellions at the end of the Sui, all claiming that their riots properly accorded with the mandate of Laozi. Among all Li’s documented in histories and annals were three most eminent powers: Li Yuan 李淵 (566-635), Li Mi 李密 (582-619) and Li Gui 李軌 (d.619), the first of which is the most famous and the winner in the struggle for the throne. Li Yuan was the founder of the Tang 唐 Dynasty. Li Yuan will be discussed in the chapter. For Li Mi’s biographies in official histories, see Wei Zheng 魏征 (580-643) comp., *Sui shu* 隋書, 70.1624-33; Liu Xu 劉詢 (887-946) comp., *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書, 53.2207-26; and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) comp., *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書, 93.3817-8 (contained in the “Biography of Li Ji 李勣”). For Li Gui’s biographies, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 55.2248-52 and *Xin Tang shu*, 86.3708-11.

² Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086), *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1956), 182.5695; *Sui shu*, 37.1120.

³ The descent of Li Yuan’s family branch has been controversial: While Liu Pansui 劉盼遂 and Wang Tongling 王桐齡 argue for the Xianbei origin of Li Yuan’s lineage through philological investigation of official histories and Buddhist annals, Chen Yinke 陳寅恪 holds, in contrast, that Li Yuan’s clan on the

one year, the middle-aged warlord and friend of the Yang royal family had already been enfeoffed as the Duke of Tang 唐.⁴ As an eminent member of the Li clan, prophecies that supposedly concerned his family were widespread: in the *New History of the Tang Dynasty* (*Xin Tang shu* 新唐書) alone, three officials from different backgrounds report the pervasiveness of these prognostic ballads among the populace.⁵ Li Yuan was quick to take action in this

paternal side was a pure Han clan whose surname and customs were assimilated by those of the Xianbei people during the Northern Dynasties, when the *Tuobas* reigned. For arguments that support the Xianbei origin of the Li clan, see Liu Pansui's "Li shi wei fanzu kao" 李氏為蕃族考, *Nüshida xueshu jikan* 女師大學術季刊 4 (1930) and Wang Tongling's "Yang Sui Li Tang xianshi xitong kao" 楊隋李唐先氏系統考, *Nüshida xueshu jikan* 2 (1931), 129-52. For Chen Yinke, who was against the Xianbei-descent view, see "Li Tang shizu zhi tuice" 李唐世族之推測, *BIHP* 1 (1931), 39-48; Chen Meiyang 陳美延 ed., *Chen Yinke ji: Jinming guan congkao erbian* 陳寅恪集: 金明館叢稿二編 (Taipei: Sanlian shudian, 2001), 320-34. The *Jinming guan congkao erbian* also includes two other articles of Chen's, regarding the investigation on the Li clan's genealogy: "Li Tang shizu zhi tuice houji" 李唐氏族之推測後記 (335-45), and "San lun Li Tang shizu wenti" 三論李唐氏族問題 (346-52). Through these three articles, Chen advanced in his probing of the subject and confirmed his idea that the clan of Li Yuan was purely Han biologically. However, although the biological lineage of Li Yuan remains an issue, the Li family (for the sake of convenience in this thesis, I simply use "the Li family" as a shorthand for Li Yuan's clan) was constantly attacked for being foreigners (*fanren* 蕃人), regardless of fact, before and after they took the throne. The royal family stayed extremely sensitive about this issue, the epitome of which will be discussed later in this chapter. Thus, I use the expression "has been claimed" here.

⁴ Li Yuan was enfeoffed as the Duke of Tang at the age of seven. See *Jiu Tang shu*, 1.1.

⁵ The three people are: Xu Shixu 許世緒 (ca.550-620), the Left Administrator of the Encampment Guard (*zuo tunweifu zhangshi* 左屯衛府長史), Tang Jian 唐儉 (579-656), the Vice Director of the Secretariat (*neishi shilang* 內史侍郎), as well as Dou Kang 竇抗 (d.621), the Maker of Statements (*nayan* 納言) and the Left Marquis of Martiality serving as the General-in-Chief (*zuo wuhou dajiangjun* 左武侯大將軍).

Xu Shixu to Li Yuan:

隋政不綱 天下搖亂 公姓名已著謠策 ... 若收取英俊 為天下倡 帝王業也

"The governance of the Sui is not in order, and the sub-celestial realm has been shaky and disturbed. Duke, your name has been registered in the catalogue of mantic songs ... if you gather (people) of exceptional qualities and be the precentor of the sub-celestial realm, this will be the achievement of an emperor!" (*Xin Tang shu*, 88.3741)

Tang Jian to Li Yuan:

公日角龍廷 姓協圖讖 系天下望久矣

"Duke, the middle of your forehead (is so full and plump that it) resembles that of a dragon; your surname (Li) is in accordance with that in the prophetic pictures. Thus you are exactly what has long been expected by the sub-celestial realm." (*Xin Tang shu*, 89.3759)

Dou Kang to Li Yuan:

李氏名著圖錄 天所啟也

tempestuous climate. Upon hearing the prophecies he told his son, Li Shimin 李世民 (the King of Qin 秦):

帝自以姓名著於圖錄 太原王者所在 慮被猜忌 因而禍及 頗有所晦 時皇太子在河東 獨有秦王侍側耳 謂王曰 隋歷將近 吾家繼膺符命 不早起兵者 顧爾兄弟未集耳

“Since my name – as that of the king of Taiyuan⁶ – has been recorded in the catalogue of the Immortals, I fear being suspected (by the Sui court) and thereby bringing disaster upon myself. Thus, there is much concealed (in regard to my intentions).The years of Sui are numbered; now our family must embrace the omen and carry out the mandate (of Heaven). The reason that we have not yet taken military action is because your brothers have not gathered yet.”⁷

One of the prognostic ballads, “Stanza on Peaches and Plums” (*taoli zhang* 桃李章), or “Song of Peach-lings and Plum-lings” (*taolizi ge* 桃李子歌), demonstrates a mistake that has been made by previous scholarship on the politico-religious situation of the early Tang. Among all seven prognostic ballads that are documented across received and accessible records, this song is

“The Li clan has been registered in the catalogue of prophetic pictures; it is what has been disclosed by the Heaven.” (*Xin Tang shu*, 95.3847)

⁶ “Taiyuan” 太原 in Li Yuan’s words is probably a double entendre. On the one hand, Taiyuan is a place name in modern Shanxi 山西 Province. Li Yuan has been the Directorate of Palace (*gongjian* 宮監), the highest official at Taiyuan before starting the riot. On the other, the literal meaning of “taiyuan” is “a grand plateau,” which may reflect Li Yuan’s ambition of unifying the grand land.

⁷ Wen Daya 溫大雅, *Da Tang chuanyue qijuzhu* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1983), 1.4. The original passage was written in the third person; I have translated it in the first person for enhanced coherence.

documented the most number of times.⁸ There are three documentations of this ballad with textual variations in historical records: the *Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance* (*Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑒), the *History of the Sui Dynasty* (*Sui shu* 隋書), the *Court Diary of the Founding of the Great Tang* (*Da Tang chuangye qiju zhu* 大唐創業起居注).⁹ The *Sui shu* and *Da Tang chuangye qiju zhu* were both compiled around the beginning of the seventh century, almost contemporary to their recorded events; the *Zizhi tongjian* was compiled later in the Northern Song 宋 Dynasty as a general history, and the *Quan Tang shi* even later in the Qing 清. The contents and contexts in which the ballad takes place are listed as the following.

The “Taoli Zhang” in the *Zizhi tongjian*:

會有李玄英者 自東都逃來 經歷諸賊 求訪李密 云斯人當代隋家 人問其故

玄英言 比來民間謠歌有桃李章曰

桃李子 皇后繞揚州 宛轉花園裡 勿浪語 誰道許

⁸ *The Complete Tang Poems* (*Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩) has a section of “Prognostications of the Tang’s Receiving of the (Heavenly) Mandate” (*Tang shouming chen* 唐受命讖) in its “Records of Prognostications” (*chen ji* 讖記) volume. The “Tang shouming chen” is composed of six short songs. All of them are prognostic ballads made at the end of the rioting Sui, and all pointed to someone from the noble Li clan. For these songs in the “Tang shouming chen,” see Peng Dingqiu 彭定求 (1645-1719) comp., *Quan Tang shi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), 875.9900. Peng believes that five of the six songs point to Li Yuan. Chances are high that only songs that targeted at Li Yuan could be preserved in the Tang Dynasty. The other song, nevertheless, is said to point to Li Mi, perhaps because Peng needed more exemplary songs, and they simply could not have all referred directly to Li Yuan. Two of the songs in “Tang shouming chen” that seem to share the same base text will be analyzed as “Stanza on Peaches and Plums” and “Song of Peach-ling and Plum-lings” in the following text. They are respectively preserved in the *Sui shu* and the *Da Tang chuangye qiju zhu*. However, the first version in my subsequent analysis, that of the *Zizhi tongjian* version, is not included in “Tang shouming chen” in the *Quan Tang shi*, but in the *Zizhi tongjian* only. Therefore, across all received documents, I say that there are seven different prognostic ballad texts in total.

⁹ *Qiju zhu* 起居注, literally translated as “notes on the activities and repose (of the emperor),” is a court diary. It is a genre of history. It was kept on a daily basis and recorded the successful uprising of Li Yuan against the Sui as the founder of the Tang Dynasty.

桃李子 謂逃亡者李氏之子也 皇與后 皆君也 宛轉花園裡 謂天子在揚州無
還日 將轉于溝壑也 勿浪語 誰道許者 密也 既與密遇 遂委身事之

There was one Li Xuanying who underwent many hardships fleeing the Eastern Capital¹⁰ to seek an audience with Li Mi. He said: “This person (Li Mi) should replace the family (that is ruling) Sui.” People asked him the reason, and Xuanying said: “Among the songs that the common folk sing these days, there is a ballad called ‘Stanza on Peaches and Plums.’ It goes:

‘Peach-lings and plum-lings:

The emperor and the empress go in circles in Yangzhou,

Twining and twisting in the flower yard.

No crazy talk!

Who allows you to?’

‘Peach-lings and plum-lings’ refers to the fleeing descendant of the Li clan;¹¹ ‘emperor’ and ‘empress’ are all lords; ‘twining and twisting in the flower yard’ refers to the Son of Heaven’s non-return from Yangzhou and his impending fate in gullies and gutters. ‘No crazy talk, who allows you to,’ means that it is a ‘secret.’¹² Now that I have met ‘the secret,’ I thereupon entrust (myself) to serving him.”¹³

¹⁰ The “Eastern Capital” (*dongdu* 東都) refers to Luoyang 洛陽, the second and the last capital of the Sui Dynasty.

¹¹ One of the literal translations of *li* 李, the surname, is “plum.” This is a paronomasia. The same applies for *mi* 密 in Li Mi’s given name, which also means “secret.”

¹² See the previous note.

¹³ *Zizhi tongjian*, 183.5709

The nursery rhyme in the *Sui shu*:

大業中 童謠曰

桃李子 鴻鵠繞陽山 宛轉花林裡 莫浪語 誰道許

其後李密坐楊玄感之逆 為吏所拘 在路逃叛 潛結群盜 自陽城山而來 襲破
洛口倉 後復屯兵苑內 莫浪語 密也 宇文化及自號許國 尋亦破滅 誰道許者 蓋
驚疑之辭也

In the reign of Daye, there was a nursery rhyme that went:

“Peach-lings and plum-lings:

Swan-geese fly in circles around Mount Yang,

Twining and twisting in the flower grove.

Crazy talk for none!

Who allows you to?”

After that, Li Mi was indicted for being involved in Yang Xuangan’s uprising and was arrested by the bailiffs. He escaped on his way and allied himself in secret with throngs of bandits. He came from Mount Yangcheng, attacked and brought down the granary at the mouth of River Luo, after which he assembled his troops in the grove. “Crazy talk for none!” means “secret (Mi).” The State of Xu, of which Yuwen Huaji announced himself emperor,¹⁴ was eventually

¹⁴ Yuwen Huaji was a Sui general who led the riot within the Sui court. He was the person who commanded his subordinate to strangle the Emperor Yang of the Sui in year 618. After killing the Sui emperor, he entitled himself the “Great Prime Minister” (*da chengxiang* 大丞相) and tried to attack Li Mi’s troop. Li Mi defeated him. Yuwen Huaji fled to Wei County 魏縣 on the border of modern Hebei 河北, Henan 河南 and Shandong 山東, and established his own regime in year 619: he titled his dynasty “Xu 許” and titled himself “Emperor Tianshou 天壽.” His Xu Dynasty had not lasted for a year before it was eliminated by Li Yuan’s general Dou Jiande 竇建德 (573-621), and he himself was captured and killed. For Yuwen Huaji’s biography, see *Sui shu*, 85.1888-92. For the Xu Dynasty’s elimination and

destroyed and eliminated. “Who allows you to?” is probably an expression of surprise and exclamation (in relation to this event).¹⁵

The “*Taolizi ge*” in *Da Tang chuangye qiju*:

又有桃李子歌曰

桃李子 莫浪語 黃鵠繞山飛 宛轉花園裡

案李為國姓 桃當作陶 若言陶唐也 配李而言 故云桃花園 宛轉屬旌幡 汾晉老幼 謳歌在耳 忽覩靈驗 不勝懽躍 帝每顧旌幡 笑而言曰 花園可爾 不知黃鵠如何 吾當一舉千裏 以符冥讖 自爾已後 義兵日有千餘集焉 二旬之間 眾得數萬

There was also a “Song on Peaches and Plums” that went:

“Peach-lings and plum-lings:

Crazy talk for none!

Yellow swans fly in circles around the hills,

twining and twisting in the flower yard.”

“Plum (Li)” is the surname of the royal family; “peach (*tao*)” should be interpreted as “Tao” as in “the Tang of Tao.”¹⁶ Matching the “*tao*” with the “*li*,” – this is the reason of mentioning a flower yard of peach blossoms. “Twining and

Yuwen Huaji’s death, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 54.2238 and *Xin Tang shu*, 85.3699. Both are in the “Biography of Dou Jiande.” The *Xin Tang shu* version, nevertheless, did not mention Yuwen Huaji’s Xu Dynasty.

¹⁵ *Sui shu*, 22.639.

¹⁶ “The Tang of Tao” (*Tao Tang* 陶唐) is an alias for *Yao* 堯, a legendary emperor of antiquity. He was extolled by Confucius as the platonic idea of the morally perfected sage-king whose benevolence and diligence should serve as a model for future Chinese monarchs. Since Li Yuan was enfeoffed as the Duke of Tang since the age of seven (see note 4), “*Tao Tang*” is an implicit reference to Li Yuan’s name in this context.

twisting” is a way of describing the flapping and fluttering manner of a flag. As seniors and youths of the Fen and Jin areas¹⁷ were chanting this song, suddenly they witnessed the portent coming true; they could not be happier or hop enough out of joy. (Therefore,) each time as the Emperor (Li Yuan) looked at his flag, he would smile and say: “The flower yard is okay enough; I don’t know how the yellow swan¹⁸ is doing? I need to conquer (the lands of) a thousand miles at once to live up to my hidden prophecies!” Afterwards, over a thousand soldiers joined us (Li Yuan); within twenty days, the multitude numbered by the several tens of thousands.¹⁹

Among the three, the story and the context in which the ballad took place in *Da Tang chuangye qiju zhu* is significantly distinct from those of the other two. The base text clearly reflects the same song; the most palpable trait that distinguishes the third from the first two maybe the target subject of the ballad. Both the *Zizhi tongjian* and the *Sui Shu*, point to Li Mi, but *Da Tang chuangye qiju zhu* point to Li Yuan. In the first two documents, Li Mi as the intended protagonist of the ballad – the warlord named “plums” and “secrets,” – was himself unaware of the existence of this ballad. The connotations of its paronomasia had to be told by someone else and was applied *postmortem* to him on the basis of his already successful rebellion against the Sui. However, in *Da Tang chuangye qiju zhu*, the story with Li Yuan as the targeted protagonist, portrays a completely different recipient of the same prophecy. Li Yuan was not only in full recognition of the meaning and the implication of the ballad, but also altered the song

¹⁷ Both Fen and Jin are in modern Shanxi Province.

¹⁸ Yellow is the imperial color and swan represents grandness in the tradition of the *Book of Changes*. Li Yuan used the yellow swan to refer to his own ambition to seize the throne.

¹⁹ *Da Tang chuangye qijuzhu*, 1.11.

significantly by denoting the color of the swan as yellow – the color of the emperor, – and by removing the last two lines to eliminate the potential interpretation of “secret,” which favored his rival, Li Mi.²⁰ Li Yuan constantly reminded himself of his identity as the ballad’s protagonist and continued planning his rebellion. Circumstantial evidence of Li Yuan’s awareness and comprehension of the ballad manifests itself in his execution of Li Zhongwen 李仲文, the uncle of Li Mi. Zhongwen was Li Yuan’s Vice Minister of the Chamberlain of Ceremonials (*taichang shaoqing* 太常少卿), who fought for him to aid the latter’s ascension to sovereignty. Although Zhongwen ought to have been an ally of Li Yuan, as soon as he was known to have married a woman of the surname Tao 陶, he was regarded as another potential match of the subject of “Peaches and Plums.” He was indicted and investigated numerous times before he was eventually executed.²¹ This event exemplifies Li Yuan’s complete awareness not only of the implications of such prophecies but also the puissance of them. Among the three men whose names were alluded to in the “Stanza on Peaches and Plums” – Mi, Yuan, and Zhongwen – the least likely one of the ballad’s intention was Li Yuan; yet he was the one with the most sensitivity to the rhetorical power of language, an acuteness that may partly explain why he ultimately outdid the other two Li’s.

²⁰ To argue that Li Yuan has altered the ballad’s lyrics from the form that favored Li Mi’s name into his own presumes that the ballad was originally written for Li Mi. I regard this presumption as tenable. The lyrics in the *Da Tang chuangye qijuzhu* are clearly more detailed as it describes the color of the swan, as the protagonist is documented as having consciousness about the meaning of such color, as the whole contextual story occurred in a private (even confidential) circumstance, open to a personal interpretation and variation of text. In comparison, the two stories surrounding Li Mi both involve other people than the protagonist himself, forming a more open environment for the objectivity of the record. Thus, my cumbersome belief is that the earlier version of the “Stanza on Peaches and Plums” intended to foreground Li Mi. As the ballad spread to Li Yuan’s ears, Li Yuan made alternations.

²¹ *Zizhi tongjian*, 188.5904.

As the winner that eventually took the throne among various Li's, Li Yuan was posthumously attributed with prognostications that originally had nothing to do with him. For example, in the “Tang shouming chen”, there is another very short, eight-character ballad that begins with “Peach-lings and plum-lings” (*taoli zi* 桃李子), which I did not include in the previous analysis. It has a different base text from the other three songs and goes:

桃李子 洪水繞楊山

“Peach-lings and plum-lings, a great flood circles the Mount Yang.”²²

This short song is preserved in two places with no textual variations: the place other than “Tang shouming chen” is the “Monograph on the Five Agents” (*wuxing zhi* 五行志) in the *Jiu Tang shu*.²³ According to the “Wuxing zhi,” nobody knew which Li this song referred to. The already neurotic Emperor Yang of the Sui thus killed his innocent Left Militant General-in-Chief (*zuo wuwei dajiangjun* 左武衛大將軍) Li Jincai 李金才²⁴ by the time he heard the song, to vent his long-stuck wraths of the Li clan in general. Two years later (617), it was Li Mi, whose troops

²² The surname of the Sui royal family is Yang 楊.

²³ *Jiu Tang shu*, 37.1375.

²⁴ Li Hun 李渾 (d.615), style-named Jincai 金才. For his biography, see *Sui shu*, 37.1120-1. He was closely related to taking the Daoists' advice in telling his friend and relative, Li Min 李敏 (d. 615), to correspond to any of the prognostications and engage in the struggle for throne; yet he was innocent in “corresponding to” this specific song. *Zizhi tongjian* agrees with the guiltlessness of Li Hun by saying that it was Li Min's wife who 誣告渾謀 “calumniated Hun for scheming” (*Zhizhi tongjian*, 182.5696) and by further including a piece of father-son conversation between Li Yuan and Li Shimin: 且世人皆傳李氏當應圖讖 故李金才無罪 一朝族滅 “... in addition, everyone spreads that the Li clan (shall be the clan that) corresponds to prognostic images; that's why Li Jincai, although faultless, was extirpated of his whole kin-group within a day.” *Zizhi tongjian*, 183.5730-1. But another saying in *The History of Northern Dynasties* (*Bei shi* 北史) believes that Li Hun was not innocent. Its compilers, Li Dashi 李大師 (570-628) and Li Yanshou 李延壽 (fl. 628-660), holds that Emperor Yang's suspicion came from Li Min's nickname, “flood child” (*hong'er* 洪兒), that may correspond to 洪水繞楊山 “flood circles Mount Yang”; after being warned by Emperor Yang in person, the frightened Li Min was caught discussing usurpation with Li Hun, and thus both were extirpated of their whole kin-groups at the same time. See Li Dashi and Li Yanshou comp., *Bei shi* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 59.2110.

besieged the warehouse at the delta of River Luo 洛 and caused a great flood in the Luo delta, that gained public acknowledgement of corresponding to this very prognostication.²⁵²⁶ However, in “Tang shouming chen,” Peng Dingqiu annotates the poem as 高祖諱淵 洪水也 “Emperor Gaozu of the Tang is named Yuan, which means flood,”²⁷ attributing the spotlight of the song to Li Yuan, who was by no means associated or in any aspect related to the aforementioned sequence of affairs.

The ballad of “Peaches and plums” may be the epitome of not only the prevalence of Daoist prophecies at the end of the Sui, but also their non-specification of a targeted Li when they were made. They are likely to have been composed and disseminated before any particular Li would have realized, interpreted, or utilized them for his own benefit. The composers of these prognostications cannot be known; it can only be inferred from their vocabulary and symbolism that they arose from the Daoist tradition. Take again the example of the “Stanza on Peaches and Plums”: the allusions of associating the Li clan’s ascension to power with peaches and plums in flower groves originate from a prophetic poem by a famous Daoist numerologist in the Northern Zhou Dynasty, Wei Yuansong 衛元嵩,²⁸ in the fifth year of the Tianhe 天和 reign of Emperor

²⁵ 煬帝疑李氏有受命之符 故誅李金才 後李密據洛口倉以應其讖 *Jiu Tang shu*, 37.1375.

²⁶ For Li Mi’s siege of the River Luo Warehouse (luokou cang 洛口倉) in modern Henan 河南 Province, there a plethora of historical resources documenting this significant event. For example, *Zizhi tongjian* on page 183.5720-2.

²⁷ *Quan Tang shi*, 875.9900.

²⁸ Wei Yuansong has no biography in the official histories, but just a brief note sketching his life in the *Documents of the Northern Zhou Dynasty (Zhou shu 周書)*: 蜀郡衛元嵩者 亦好言將來之事 蓋江左寶誌之流 天和中 著詩預論周隋廢興及皇家受命 並有征驗 性尤不信釋教 嘗上疏極論之 史失其事故 不為傳 “There is a Wei Yuansong from the Shu Prefecture. He was particularly fond of talking about things in the future, for he was in Baozhi’s flow in the Yangtze area. In the middle of the Tianhe reign (566-572), he composed poems to predict and discuss the declination and prosperity of the Sui Dynasty, as well as which (Heavenly) Mandate the royal family receives; there were phenomena validating (his words) in both regards. By nature, he especially did not believe in Buddhism. Once he made a petition to castigate it. The history loses his affairs; thus he will not be made a biography.” Linghu Defen 令狐德棻 (583-666) comp., *Zhou shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 48.851. For a comprehensive study of Wei

Wu 武 (570).²⁹ Further into the official histories like the *Sui shu*, a whole catalogue of prophecies like the “Stanza on Peaches and Plums” can be found.³⁰ The names of all these texts seem to suggest the Daoist background of their composers, composed during times of chaos. Therefore, Daoist tradition seemed to have paid special attention to portents of turbulence and seized the opportunity – regardless of whether dynastic succession took place or not – to make numerous prognoses and distribute them so as to wait for those willing to respond to them. This opportunistic net-casting maneuver by means of prophecy was how Daoists around the sixth and the seventh century sought out their political backers; especially for Northerners who were fortunate enough to have a member of the Li clan in their social scope. Using prognostications as a means towards political ends is not a strategy newly invented at this time; it is only that the Daoists employed the existing tactic to create an environment where members of the Li clan could – and would – amass enough power to replace the ruling family of the Sui. Contrary to what has been proposed by scholars like Chou Ya-ching 周雅清 or Ren Jiyu 任繼愈, it seems that it was the Daoists who took the first steps in shaping the times and selecting the candidates for the next dynasty, not the other way around. The Daoists, who had been on the rise since the Eastern Jin 晉, had hoped for a new reign to further enhance their status and aid the development of Daoism. They hoped to conjoin forces with the Li’s and collaborate to forge a mutually beneficial politico-religious alliance. Hence, it partly explains the reason that Li Shimin and Li

Yuansong’s chronology, see Yu Jiayi 余嘉錫, “Wei Yuansong shiji kao” 衛元嵩事跡考 in *Yu Jiayi lunxue zazhu* 余嘉錫論學雜著 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1963, rpt. 2007), 1.262.

²⁹ 桃源花□□李樹起堂堂 *Quan Tang shi*, 875.9901. Two characters were missing in the original line.

³⁰ The “Bibliographical Record” (*jingji zhi* 經籍志) in *Sui shu* contains in its *Prophetical and Apocryphal Category* (*chenwei lei* 讖緯類) twelve volumes of *Prophecies by Confucius and Laozi* (*Kong Lao chen* 孔老讖), one volume of *Prophecies by Laozi at the Yellow River and River Luo* (*Laozi He Luo chen* 老子河洛讖), one volume of *Prophecies by the Duke of Yin* (*Yin gong chen* 尹公讖), and one volume of *Songs by Daoist Adepts in Mount Song* (*Songgao daoshi ge* 嵩高道士歌) in total. See *Sui shu*, 32.940.

Zhi 李治, the two successors of Li Yuan, became increasingly watchful of their favored Daoists in the early Tang: after the establishment of the Li clan's reign, what had once been a supportive force for the crown turned into a potential threat to the court. Just as the Daoist-made myths helped enthrone them, descendants of this very clan needed to stay alert in case similar myths dethroned them.

In need of as tight of collaboration as possible at the very time of overthrowing the Sui Dynasty, Daoists also provided remarkable material support and sponsorship on top of prophecy play-up. According to the *Holy Chronicle of Chaos Prime* (*Hunyuan shengji* 混元聖紀), as early as in the seventh year of the Daye reign (611), Qi Hui 歧暉, a Daoist adept of the Lou Abbey 樓觀 at Mount Zhongnan 終南,³¹ told his disciples when asked about the mandate of Heaven: 當有老君子孫治世 此後吾教大興 “There will be offspring of Laozi who govern this world; after which our teachings (Daoism) will greatly prosper.” Six years later (617), when Li Yuan's army arose in Jinyang 晉陽 and arrived at the Gateway of Pujun 蒲津,³² Qi Hui delightfully addressed Li Yuan's arrival as the “True Lord's Coming” that would settle and pacify the state. He immediately supplied Li Yuan's army with food and sustenance in the Lou Abbey as well as dispatched about eighty Daoist adepts to welcome the troop at the Gateway of Pujun. He also changed his own name from Hui to Pingding 平定 to commemorate Li Yuan's coming.³³ Since the Lou Abbey had an exalted status as a legendary lectural altar of Laozi's, Qi Hui's eulogizing words and ardent help were highly influential and effective in prompting the Daoist adepts' support of Li Yuan around his area, so much that it may have impacted the young Li Chunfeng

³¹ In modern Shaanxi 陝西 Province.

³² In modern Shanxi 山西 Province.

³³ Story of Qi Hui (Pingding): See Xie Shouhao 謝守灝 (1134-1212), *Hunyuan shengji* 8, HY 17.854a-b.

李淳風 (602-670), a fellow “child prodigy” Daoist in the area already renowned for predicting and divining since his youth.³⁴ In the same year of 617, Li Chunfeng claimed to have witnessed the coming of the Grand Supreme Elderly Lord (*taishang laojun* 太上老君) right in front of him on the Mount Zhongnan and heard the Lord telling him the real identity of the Duke of Tang as the recipient of the mandate of Heaven.³⁵ As Qi Hui and Li Chunfeng acted in modern Shaanxi 陝西 Province in the Northwest, another famous contemporary Daoist Wang Yuanzhi 王遠知 (509-635) at Mount Mao 茅 acted simultaneously in the modern Jiangsu 江蘇 Province in the Southeast. Wang Yuanzhi disseminated a rumor that he had been entrusted by Laozi to transmit a sacred yet covert command of his: Heaven has already designated a Li to be enthroned and this command must be carried out.³⁶

With the manipulation of public consensus by three prominent Daoists and ample supplies of material sources from them, Li Yuan rose quickly from then on. Along with his frequent triumphs, Daoists started to swarm in to support and serve the great coming of their prospective ruler, Li Yuan the pre-destined. According to *Da Tang chuanyue qiju zhu*'s record, many Daoists directly joined his army. Li Yuan welcomed all of them and accommodated whoever paid allegiance:

內外咸悅 咸思報効 其來詣軍者 帝並節級授朝散大夫以上官 至於逸民道士 亦請效力 教曰 義旗撥亂 庶品來蘇 類聚羣分 無思不至 乃有出自青溪 遠辭

³⁴ For Li Chunfeng's biography, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 2717-9; *Xin Tang shu*, 204.5798. For Li Chunfeng's contribution in astrology, calendrical system and cosmic observation, *Xin Tang shu* has given its whole thirty-first volume, “Astronomical Record One” (*zhi yi tianwen yi* 志一天文一) to it.

³⁵ *Hunyuan shengji* 8, HY 17.854a.

³⁶ *Jiu Tang shu*, 192.5125.

丹竈 就人間而齊物 從戎馬以同塵 咸願解巾 負茲羈鞅 雖欲勿用 重違其請 逸
民道士等 誠有可嘉 並依前授

“Everyone was happy inside and outside the court; everyone thought about rewarding and serving (Li Yuan’s force). As for those who joined the military, the Emperor (Li Yuan) conferred on all of them official positions above the Grand Master for Closing Court; as for refugees and Daoist adepts, they also asked to offer their own strengths. The ‘Instruction’³⁷ says:

‘Our righteous flag put the disorderly back in order, that the common masses came all towards our direction. Gathered in categories, in flocks or separately, nobody considered not to come. Thence there were people who came out of the Green Creek, bidding farewell to their elixir crucibles; they returned to mundanity and regarded everything as uniform, that they went along with the military as if no more than dust. All of these people were willing to untie their head-wraps, carry their reed mats on their backs and bridle their reins. Although I do not want to use them, I cannot deny their requests. Thus, as for the like of refugees and Daoists adepts who truly has something laudable – their entitlement all together follow what has been said before.’”³⁸

³⁷ The “Instruction” (*jiao* 教) here refers to “Instruction on conferring official titles on refugees and Daoist adepts” (*shou yimin daoshi deng guan jiao* 授逸民道士等官教), the whole text of which is included in comp. Dong Gao 董誥 (1740-1818) et al., *Complete Tang Prose* (*Quan Tang wen* 全唐文) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), 1.17.

³⁸ *Da Tang chuanyue qiju zhu*, 2.29.

This favored circumstance provided Li Yuan an even better standpoint to create Daoist myths for himself. Similar to the effect of altering the “Stanza on Peaches and Plums,” some of the myth-composers were clever enough to turn a disadvantageous situation, for example, a dangerous and almost lost battle into a new means of advocating Li Yuan’s numinous connection with Immortals. In the seventh month of 617, as Li Yuan’s army arrived at Huoyi 霍邑,³⁹ it was obstructed by the Sui general Song Laosheng 宋老生’s troops in a heavy rainstorm, and no food resources were able to be replenished through muddy and damaged paths. During the siege, a white-robed Immortal of Mount Huo 霍 came in front of him, introduced himself as a trustee of the Grand Supreme Elderly Lord and advised Li Yuan to retreat and wait for another month until the rain stopped; then he “could take the road towards the Southeast and get assistance from the Immortals. Li Yuan followed the advice of the Immortal of Huo. When the time came in the eighth month of 617, he marched again to Huoyi, successfully conquered the town and beheaded Laosheng “as expected.”⁴⁰ This story is preserved in three versions, respectively the *Hunyuan shengji*,⁴¹ in Li Yuan’s biography in the *Old History of the Tang Dynasty* (*Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書),⁴² and Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933)’s *Records on the Veneration of Daoism over Successive Generations* (*Lidai chongdao ji* 歷代崇道記).⁴³

All three historical records attribute Li Yuan’s success of this battle to the intervention of Daoist immortals; however, the three texts give different degrees of credit to Li Yuan’s numinous power. Among the three texts, Li Yuan’s biography, “Gaozu benji” 高祖本紀 in the

³⁹ The current Huoxian 霍縣 in Shanxi Province.

⁴⁰ *Hunyuan shengji* 8, HY 17.854a-b.

⁴¹ *Hunyuan shengji* 8, HY 17.854b.

⁴² *Jiu Tang shu*, 1.3.

⁴³ Du Guangting, *Lidai chongdao ji*, HY 11.2a.

Xin Tang shu exhibits the lowest degree by only mentioning the conversation between Li Yuan and the Immortal of the Mount Huo without addressing any connections between the Mount Huo Immortal and Laozi as the supreme lord of religious Daoism. Then, *Hunyuan shengji* draws a closer distance between Li Yuan and Laozi as the Immortal of the Mount Huo was a mere messenger if the supreme lord by whom the advice was given. At last, *Lidai chongdao ji* gives Li Yuan the most credit: Li Yuan's conversation between Daoist immortals was no longer palpable to any external witnesses. Instead it was sensed and conducted internally, signifying his innate identity of having a position among the Immortals – "(Li Yuan) sensed the Immortal of the Mount Huo's message, which carried the Supreme Elderly Lord's mandate and read: 'You should come and will inevitably obtain the sub-celestial realm.'"⁴⁴

A probable cause of this escalation of merit attribution is the different nature of the three texts. The *Xin Tang shu* belongs to the official histories, thus it needs to be the most realistic in description. *Hunyuan shengji*, although a Daoist collection of hagiographies, was compiled in the Southern Song Dynasty, more than two hundred years after the fall of the Tang, and thus is open only to some degree of realism. *Lidai chongdao ji*, composed in the late Tang for the sake of announcing the divine restoration of the Tang dynasty under the auspices of Lord Lao, a rousing work to be presented to the Emperor Xizong 僖宗 (r.873-888) on the eve of the fleeing court's difficult return to the capital in 885,⁴⁵ inevitably had to eulogize and sanctify the founding father

⁴⁴ 感霍山神 稱奉太上老君命告唐公 汝當來 必得天下. Du Guangting, *Lidai chongdao ji*, HY 11.2a.

⁴⁵ Emperor Xizong, Li Xuan 李僖 (862-888), was the twenty-first emperor of the Tang. His reign was already in the Late Tang. He fled from Chang'an to Sichuan 四川, after Huang Chao 黃巢 (d.884)'s rebel army occupied Chang'an at the beginning of the year 881 (the twelfth month of the first year of the Guangming 廣明 reign). As Huang Chao died and the Huang Chao Rebellion (*Huang Chao zhi luan* 黃巢之亂) was pacified in the fourth year of the Zhonghe 中和 reign (884), the royal family returned to Chang'an in the third month of the next year (885) and changed the imperial title to Guangqi 光啟. For Emperor Xizong's returning to Chang'an in 885 after the late-Tang riot, see *Zizhi tongjian*, 256.8320, *Jiu Tang shu*, 19.720, and *Xin Tang shu*, 9.276. In the Dunhuang 敦煌 manuscripts, there is an "Edict on the

of the Tang as highly as possible. Despite the distinct natures and functions of the three texts, the above story of Li Yuan's siege at Mount Huo signifies the emphasis of the Daoists' attribution of numinous power and the ability to converse with immortals directly to Li Yuan, to justify that the pre-destined warlord was appointed by the Daoist Supreme. Chances to realize the Daoist adepts' wishes that "our teachings greatly prosper" were dependent on the enthronement of their candidate. Propagation of the story was in great need and was done at the cost of attributing the success of the unremitting endeavor to Li Yuan's ability to commune with immortals instead of just help from the Daoists adepts themselves.

With the assistance from various powers, and on the pretext of the need to "correspond to heavenly commands and prophecies" (*ying fuming* 膺符命), within less than a year after the siege of Huoyi, Li Yuan took the throne and the Tang Dynasty was founded in the fifth month of year 618. In the first month of the following year⁴⁶ the Daoists immediately created another political myth for the emperor. The myth was in the form of a commoner's dream about Lord Lao. Ji Shanxing 吉善行 was a common person living in Jiangzhou 絳州 under Li Shimin's governance at that time. One night, as Shanxing was walking on the northeastern ridge of Mount Ram's Horn (*yangjiao shan* 羊角山), he was stopped by a white-haired old man on a white

Great Exemption Upon Emperor Xizong of Tang's Return to the Capital in Chariot, in the Third Month of the Fifth Year of the Zhonghe Reign" (*Tang Xizong Zhonghe wunian sanyue jujia huan jingshi dashe zhao* 唐僖宗中和五年三月車駕還京師大赦詔) preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, numbered P.2696.

⁴⁶ The *Hunyuan shengji* said it was the "first month of the first year of the Wude 武德 reign" (*HY* 17.854c). However, the first year of Li Yuan's reign starts from the fifth month of year 618, thus the *Hunyuan shengji* might make a mistake here by actually referring to the first month of year 619 – the second year of the Wude reign. *Tang Mirror* (*Tang jian* 唐鑒), another annal of the Tang compiled in the Northern Song Dynasty recorded the same event as taking place in the fifth month of the third year of the Wude reign (620) instead. See Fan Zuyu 范祖禹, *Tang jian* (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1937), 1.6. A comprehensive of *Tang jian* is Jeffrey Rice, "Northern Song Reflections on the Tang," Ph.D diss.: University of Pennsylvania, 2013.

horse, who was dressed in a white-robe and black cap with a red brush in his hand. The old man introduced himself with the surname Li, the style name Boyang 伯陽, and the title “Lord Lao” (*laojun* 老君), and was the ancestor of the Tang royal family. The old man told Shanxing:

與我語唐天子李某 今得聖治 社稷延長 宜於長安城東置安化宮而設道像
則天下太平

“Tell the Son of Heaven of the Tang for me, Li someone: now (the sub-celestial realm) is governed by a sage, and the blessing of the state is prolonged! (The Son of Heaven) should establish a Palace-of-Easy-Conversion east to the city of Chang’an, and set up a statue of the Daoist (ancestor) there. Then the sub-celestial realm will experience great peace.”⁴⁷

Ji Shanxing reported the dream to the minister of his prefecture. Eight days later, the prefecture minister reported to the chief governor, Li Shimin. Li Shimin, along with several local officials in charge, the reporter included, went to the site in person under Ji Shanxing’s guidance to verify the truthfulness of his report. There they performed a sacrifice: indeed, everyone on the spot, together, again witnessed the appearance of the same old immortal, though he was riding a purple cloud instead of a white horse this time, and the whole ecstatic group galloped to tell Li Yuan, now already Emperor Wude 武德. The report reached Li Yuan’s ears after another eight days. The emperor was extremely happy hearing it.⁴⁸ In response to this new myth, he quickly decreed to establish an abbey for Laozi on the very Mount Ram’s Horn of the original apparition.

⁴⁷ *Hunyuan shengji*, HY 17.854c.

⁴⁸ Detailed account of this myth is in *Hunyuan shengji*, 854-855.

He also changed the mountain's name into Mount Dragon's Horn, and formally confirmed his lineage as Laozi (Li Boyang)'s direct descendant by designating the abbey as the imperial family's own ancestral hall. The hall was decorated sumptuously in the style of Li Yuan's own bedroom in his palace.⁴⁹ Furthermore, tetrasyllabic couplets – the prosody of which had represented authority since the Western Han – like 李氏將興 天祚有應 “the Li clan is about to prosper in response to celestial favor”⁵⁰ and 歷數有歸 實為天命 “chances and fate go to their resort (like so) is indeed only a mandate of Heaven”⁵¹ circulated and were chanted at that time. Li Yuan's reign was even more secure with the help of the Daoists.

The endeavor of the Daoists in serving the Li family was not in vain. Li Yuan heavily rewarded the Daoists numerous times. After Li Yuan's ascension to the throne, Li Chunfeng was bestowed the title of “The Grand Astrologer” (*taishi ling* 太史令). Wang Yuanzhi was given the position of Grand Master for Closing Court (*chaosan dafu* 朝散大夫) and was presented a cap with golden sashes and a rose-pink throw with purple silk floss “for predicting (my) acceptance of the auspicious token that represents the mandate (of the Supreme Elderly Lord) before.”⁵² As for Qi Pingding (Qi Hui) who made the most effort and provided the most support, he received even more special favors. He was bestowed the title Purple-Gold Grand Master for Splendid Happiness (*zijin guanglu dafu* 紫金光祿大夫) – a position as an intimate imperial aid and adviser of the imperial court – and was designated as the Master of the Lou Abbey. His

⁴⁹ 唐高祖武德三年從吉善行之言 祖老子 特起宮闕如帝者居 “In the third year of the Wude's reign of Emperor Gaozu of Tang (620), (the emperor) follows auspicious and kind words and regards Laozi as ancestor. He specially established a palace (there on the Mount Dragon's Horn) that looks like his imperial residence.” See Jiang Shizhe 蔣師轍, *Guangxu Luyi xianzhi* 光緒鹿邑縣誌.

⁵⁰ *Jiu Tang shu*, 1.8.

⁵¹ *Xin Tang shu*, 1.7.

⁵² *Hunyuan shengji* 8, HY 17.856a.

subordinates were all entitled Silver-Blue Grand Masters for Splendid Happiness (*yinqing guanglu dafu* 銀青光祿大夫). In his Lou Abbey, Li Yuan constructed another ancestral hall for Laozi and constantly paid visits there.⁵³

Aside from conferring official titles on Daoists and constructing Daoist abbeys across the empire, Li Yuan exalted the status of Daoism in various ways. As Buddhism and Daoism both flourished and vied for favor at the beginning of the seventh century, Li Yuan made his pro-Daoism attitude clear in two consecutive imperial edicts in the eighth year of his reign (625). In the “Edict questioning (Monk) Huicheng” (*wen Huicheng zhao* 問慧乘詔), he said:

悉達太子不能得佛 六年求道 方得成佛 是則道能生佛 佛由道成 道是佛之
 父師 佛乃道之子弟 故佛經云求於無上正真之道 又云體解大道發無上意 外國
 語云阿耨菩提 晉音翻之無上大道 若以此驗 道大佛小 於事可知

“(When) Prince Gautama was not able to attain Buddhist enlightenment, he spent six years seeking the *dao*⁵⁴ before he could become a Buddha. Therefore, the *dao* can generate Buddhist enlightenment and Buddhist enlightenment is

⁵³ HY 769, 17.854c. There is also an “Edict on Investing Qi Pingding and others with Grants” (*baoshou Qi Pingding deng zhao* 褒授岐平定等詔) included in the *Quan Tang wen*, 2.31b, in which Li Yuan explained the reasons for conferring on Qi Pingding and his subordinates as providing enormous assistance to Li Yuan’s army: 徹損衣資 以供戎服 抽割菽粟 以贍軍糧 “(Qi and the Daoist in the Lou Abbey) cleared up their own clothing warehouse to provide military attire; they harvested their own beans and millet to supply the grains for the army.” This army reveals the Lou Abbey’s total support for Li Yuan during the wartime.

⁵⁴ Li Yuan used double entendre here with the word *dao* 道, which literally means “way, path, means.” The *dao* in “he spent six years seeking the *dao* before he could become a Buddha” and the two Buddhist scripture quotations clearly refer to the means by which Buddhist enlightenment is attained to; it has nothing to do with the “Dao” of Daoism. However, Li Yuan took advantage of the two concepts using the same character to switch the meaning. He juggled with the terms to exalt Daoism.

attained to by the *dao*. *Dao-ism*⁵⁵ is the father and the teacher of Buddhism and Buddhism is the son and the student of *Dao-ism*. Thus the Buddhist scriptures says: ‘Seek (enlightenment) from the supreme, orthodox and true *dao*.’ It also says: ‘Embody and delineate the great *dao* and let out supreme ideas.’ As for the ‘anu-bodhi’⁵⁶ of the foreign language, it is translated as ‘the supreme great *dao*’ in the Jin language⁵⁷ If examining proof based on these, the matter that the *dao* is great and Buddhism is small can be known.”⁵⁸

In the same year, he confirmed his stance of prioritizing Daoism even at the cost of yielding Confucianism’s prime place, in the “Edict on Prioritizing Daoism and Deprioritizing Buddhism” (*xian Lao hou Shi zhao* 先老後釋詔):

老教孔教 此土先宗 釋教後興 宜崇客禮 令老先 孔次 末後釋宗

“The teaching of Laozi and of Confucius are the original sects of this land. The teaching of Sakyamuni arose after them, (and thus) should be revered according to the propriety of guests. Thus (I) command (the sect) of Laozi to be prioritized,

⁵⁵ I use *Dao-ism* instead of the fixed word Daoism here because of the reason explained in the last note. It is simply a noun with the suffix –ism is needed here in the couplet to parallel with Buddhism.

⁵⁶ “Anu-bodhi” 阿耨菩提 is not a word; it is actually the combination of the first two and the last two syllable of *anuttarā-samyak-sambodhi*, the Sanskrit expression for “highest perfect awakening.” This word is usually transliterated as 阿耨多羅三藐三菩提 in Chinese. “Anu-bodhi” has been used nowhere prior to this edict of Li Yuan’s. That Li Yuan puts down a random abbreviation, which is not even a word, shows his nonchalant, even contemptuous attitude towards one of the most treasured and sacred Buddhist concepts. He was degrading Buddhism by using this expression.

⁵⁷ The meaning of “the sound of Jin” here is unknown.

⁵⁸ Shi Daoxuan 釋道宣 (596-667), *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 (T 2060) 24, 50.634a.

(the sect of) Confucius to be in the second place, and the sect of Sakyamuni to be in the very last place.”⁵⁹

From the “Stanza on Peaches and Plums” to the “Edict on asking (Monk) Huicheng,” Li Yuan’s extraordinary sensitivity in words and ability in juggling them to manifest himself in the slickest and most circuitous way possible particularly strike the reader. An even more remarkable instance of Li Yuan’s linguistic dexterity is demonstrated in his “Edict on sifting out Buddhism and Daoism” (*shatai fodao zhao* 沙汰佛道詔), issued in the fifth month⁶⁰ of the following year (626) as a reaction to the increasingly apparent struggle between Buddhism and Daoism.⁶¹ In the edict Li Yuan claimed that both religions needed to be sifted out, for 京師寺觀不甚清淨 “neither (Buddhist) temples or (Daoist) abbeys were clean or pure enough in the capital”; yet while he had a litany of Buddhism’s “filth and lowliness,” there were only two sentences criticizing Daoism. In the end, 京城留寺三所 觀二所 其餘天下諸州各留一所 餘悉罷之 “only three temples and two abbeys are allowed in the capital; as for (temples and abbeys in) other

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 50.634a

⁶⁰ The time when the “Edict on sifting out Buddhism and Daoism” was issued in year 626 is different across three documents: in the *Jiu Tang shu*, it was the fifth month; in the *Xin Tang shu*, it was the fourth month (detailed explanation see the next note); in Wang Pu 王溥 (922-982)’s *Institutional history of the Tang dynasty* (*Tang huiyao* 唐會要), it was the second month. I put down the fifth month here according to the *Jiu Tang shu*, because it is an official history with detailed account on this event, thus regarded as the most authoritative in this case. See *Jiu Tang shu*, 1.16-17; *Xin Tang shu*, 1.19; Wang Pu, *Tang huiyao* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1955), 47.836.

⁶¹ For the whole text of the edict, also see *Quan Tang wen*, 3.38a-b and Dao Xuan, *Expanded Collection on Propagating Enlightenment* (*Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明集) 25 (T 2103), 52.283b. For this event, the *Xin Tang shu* also documented the event, but very briefly as “on the *xinsi* day, in the fourth month (of the ninth year of the Wude 武德 reign), the doctrines of Buddha and Laozi were abolished” (*siyue xinsi fei futu Laozi fa* 四月辛巳廢浮屠老子法), *Xin Tang shu*, 1.19.

prefectures, only one of each is allowed to remain. Shut down all others.”⁶² Due to the great promotion and advocacy of Buddhism in the Sui Dynasty, the quantity of Buddhist temples and monks was far more than that of Daoist abbeys and adepts by year 626. If Buddhist temples and Daoist abbeys were to be made equal in number, inevitably more temples than abbeys would have to be reduced. Therefore, contrary to the ostensible balance in juxtaposing temples and abbeys in the edict’s title, Buddhism was the edict’s only actual victim while Daoism was secretly protected. The policy was not carried out due to the outbreak of a palace coup months later, but Li Yuan’s intention of rewarding the Daoists’ assistance for enthroning him was fully reflected by this final deed.

Li Yuan abdicated in the year 627 after his second son, Li Shimin, usurped the throne by means of a *coup d’etat* at the Xuanwu 玄武 Gate in the seventh month, where he killed two of his prince brothers, including Li Yuan’s heir-designate Li Jiancheng 李建成 (589-626), forcing his father to hand over power to him.⁶³ Li Shimin thence became the second emperor, whose reign was titled Zhenguan 貞觀.⁶⁴ As the closest companion of Li Yuan ever since his rebellion against the Sui Dynasty, Li Shimin knew very well the power the Daoists exercised over the royal court: the coincidence that the supreme lord of Daoism shared the same surname with the royal family was a double-edged sword. The power of myths and their language can be used to advocate and justify the sovereignty of the Li’s, but as discussed previously in this chapter, it can also advocate and justify any other Li. In this respect, the politico-religious crises before both the

⁶² This sentence is not included in the *Guang hongming ji*. According to the *Tang huiyao*’s record, three Daoist abbeys were allowed to be kept instead of two (as in the *Jiu Tang shu*’s record). See *Tang huiyao*, 47.836.

⁶³ For a detailed recounting of the Xuanwu Gate Incident, see *Jiu Tang shu* 1.17, 2.29, 64.2418-9; *Xin Tang shu* 1.19, 2.26-7, 79.3544; *Zizhi tongjian*, 192.6010-2.

⁶⁴ For the sake of convenience, I will sometimes refer to Li Shimin by his posthumous Temple Title (*miaohao* 廟號), Taizong 太宗, in this thesis.

father and the son were similar; neither concerned legitimizing the reign of Li. What mattered was legitimizing the one and only Li himself.

Like his father, Li Shimin attracted the assistance of many Daoist adepts in preparation for the Xuanwu Gate *coup d'état*: the same Wang Yuanzhi, who created propaganda and prophecies for Li Yuan's army in the year 617, again served Li Shimin four years later (621) by calling Shimin a "sage" and a "Son of Heaven about-to-be" after Shimin's success in defeating Wang Shichong 王世充 (d.621)'s rebellion.⁶⁵ Since the conversation between Wang Yuanzhi and Li Shimin took place years ahead of the success of Li's *coup d'état*, Yuanzhi was *postmortem* regarded as a foreseer of Li Shimin's enthronement. Though Wang Yuanzhi's prediction had yet to be substantiated, his words were nevertheless great encouragement for Li Shimin and his coterie. Notably, Wang Yuanzhi's audience with Li Shimin was referred to as "ye 謁," a verb used specifically for paying visits to a superior. In the year 626, right before the start of the Xuanwu Gate Incident, another Daoist, Xue Yi 薛頤 from the Hua 滑 Prefecture,⁶⁶ "well-learned in musical pitches and the calendar, and especially good at a variety of means of divination," ran directly to the residence of the King of Qin to secretly tell Li Shimin about this discovery of the Star of Power appearing above the apportion of land that corresponded to the region of Qin, an

⁶⁵ The conversation between Wang Yuanzhi and Li Shimin:

武德中 太宗平王世充 與房玄齡微服以謁之 遠知迎謂曰 此中有聖人得非秦王乎 太宗因以實告 遠知曰 方作太平天子 愿自惜也

"In the middle of the Wude reign, after Taizong (Li Shimin) pacified (the rebellion of) Wang Shichong, he paid a private visit in plain clothes to (the revered Wang Yuanzhi) along with Fang Xuanling. Yuanzhi welcomed them and said: 'Here in this place there is a sage. Might it not be the King of Qin (Li Shimin)?' Taizong thus told (Yuanzhi) the truth (about his identity). Yuanzhi said: 'You will soon be a Son of Heaven of the great pacification! I hope that you will care for yourself.' " (*Jiu Tang shu*, 192.5125)

⁶⁶ In modern Huazhou 滑州 County, Henan 河南 province.

omen that the King of Qin was to acquire the throne.⁶⁷ The Grand Astrologer, Fu Yi 傅奕, also with a Daoist background, reported the same astronomical phenomenon to Li Shimin: “the Grand White Star (*taibai* 太白) passed twice through the sky, thus the King of Qin should acquire the sub-celestial realm.”⁶⁸ ⁶⁹ Since the awe for heavenly mandate was traditional and obedience to the heavenly mandate constituted principal guidelines for political conduct of the aristocracy, Daoists’ knowledge of celestial phenomena provided major guidance for royal activists.

⁶⁷ 解天文律歷 尤曉雜占 于武德初直追秦府 密謂秦王曰 德星守秦分 王當有天下. *Jiu Tang shu*, 191.5089.

⁶⁸ 己未 太白復經天 傅奕密奏 太白見秦分 秦王當有天下. This event combines several documents in two resources. That the Grand White Star passing through the sky is recorded in the *Zizhi tongjian*, 191.6003; that Fu Yi reported Li Shimin about this phenomenon and regarded it as an omen for Li Shimin’s enthronement is in the *Jiu Tang shu*, 79.2716.

⁶⁹ The Bright Star (*jingxing* 景星) is most likely synonymous with the Star of Power (*dexing* 德星). It is believed to appear only when a worthy man or a prosperous age comes forth. The two astronomical phenomena reported by Xue Yi (that the Star of Power appeared) and Fu Yi (that the Grand White Star appeared) were actually the same event, although their interchangeability is not explicitly stated within any single historical resource. According to two quotes in “Treatise on Celestial Offices,” (*tianguan shu* 天官書) in *The Book of Records (Shiji* 史記): 1) 天精而見景星 景星者德星也 其狀無常 常出於有道之國 “When the sky is pure, the Bright Star appears. The Bright Star is the Star of Power. It does not have a constant appearance; it often comes out above a state with principles;” 2) 其出不經天 經天 天下革政 “Its (the Bright star’s) appearance does not pass through the whole sky; if it does, then the governance of the sub-celestial realm would be changed.” Sima Qian 司馬遷 (b.145BCE), *Shiji* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 27.1336 and 27.1324, we build the connection between the Bright Star and the Star of Power. Then, from 景星如半月 生於晦朔 助月為明 或曰星大而中空 或曰有三星在赤方氣與青方氣相連 黃星在赤方氣中亦名德星 “the Bright Star is like half of a moon, born at the beginning or the end of a month. It enhances the brightness of the moon by its (the moon’s) side. Some people say that it is a grand and hollow star. Others say that when three stars are located on the cinnabar-direction (South), whose aura connect with that in the azurite-direction (East), then, the yellow star (among the three) within the aura of the cinnabar-direction is also named ‘the Star of Power.’” “Records of Celestial Patters” (*tianwen zhi* 天文誌) in Fang Xuanling 房玄齡, *Jin shu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987), 12.323. Wang Chong 王充 (27-97), a philosopher in the Eastern Han at last builds a connection between *jingxing* and *taibai* 太白 in his *Discourse on Weighing (Lunheng* 論衡), signifying that although the Grand White Star, which normally refers to the Venus, could have been borrowed to address *jingxing*: 王莽之時 太白經天 精如半月 使不知星者見之 則亦復名之曰景星 “During Wang Mang (45-23 BCE)’s time, the Grand White Star passed through the sky. It was as fine as half-moon. Supposedly it was someone who did not know the constellations that saw it, (for) he also named it as ‘the Bright Star.’” “Verifying Auguries” (*shiying* 是應) in Wang Chong, Liu Pansui annot., Huang Hui 黃暉 comp., *Lunheng jishi* 論衡集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1990), 17.765.

Aside from these three famous adepts documented as individuals, many Daoist adepts actively involved themselves in the Li brothers' struggle for throne around the year 627. Before the Xuanwu Gate Incident broke out, Li Jiancheng rebuked the two most important counsellors – Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (579-648) and Du Ruhui 杜如晦 (585-630)⁷⁰ – in Li Yuan's presence, leading to the two being forbidden to contact Li Shimin. Sensing the upcoming unfavorable change, Li Shimin commanded the two counsellors to sneak into the balcony of his room at night in Daoist clothing.⁷¹ The fact that Daoist clothing can be used as camouflage indicates that Daoist adepts had been freely allowed in Li Shimin's residence over time, and that the sudden appearance of a few more Daoist adepts would not have drawn any attention. It further implies that Daoists were of close relevance to scheming the *coup d'état* for Li Shimin and helping his usurpation.

Li Shimin's enthronement resulted in abundant rewards for the Daoists. Limited by the scope of thesis, I will only talk about one aspect among all pro-Daoist measures in Li Shimin's Zhenguan reign (627-649): the establishment and refurbishment of Daoist abbeys throughout the empire. But what was different from Li Yuan's large-scale construction of the Lord-Lao abbeys 老君廟, most of the newly constructed abbeys during the Zhenguan reign were intended for individual Daoists to commemorate each specific act of aid to the court. Four abbeys were documented in detail. 1) In the fifth year (631), he decreed the establishment of Xihua 西華 Abbey to praise the merit of the Daoist adept Qin (Shi)ying 秦(世)英 (d.640/643), who had

⁷⁰ Biographies of these two important counsellors' in the early Tang – For Fang Xuanling, see the *Jiu Tang shu*, 66.2459-67; the *Xin Tang shu*, 96.3853-7. For Du Ruhui, see the *Jiu Tang shu*, 66.2467-9; the *Xin Tang shu*, 96.3858-60.

⁷¹ For a recount of the whole story of Fang Xuanling and Du Ruhui sneaking into Li Shimin's balcony at night in Daoist clothes, see the *Jiu Tang shu*, 66.2460-2461 and the *Xin Tang shu*, 96.3854: 太子將有變王召二人以方士服入夜計事 “The heir-designate was about to change, so the King summoned the two to enter in alchemists' clothing and discuss the affair at night.”

successfully cured the sickness of Li Shimin's heir-designate, Li Chengqian 李承乾 (619-645).

2) In the ninth year (635), the Taishou 太受 Abbey was erected on Mount Mao 茅 in the Run 潤 Prefecture⁷² for Wang Yuanzhi, the Daoist adept introduced previously who predicted Li Shimin's enthronement. Twenty-seven new adepts were ordained to fill the new abbey.⁷³ 3) In the same year he built the Zifu 紫府 Abbey for Xue Yi the astrologer and numerologist at the Mount Jiuzong 九嶷, and appointed Xue Yi as the Grand Master of the Palace (*zhong dafu* 中大夫) who took chief charge of the Zifu Abbey;⁷⁴ also by imperial decree a Mysterious-Image-Expecting platform was built in the abbey in order to report natural disasters directly to the court.⁷⁵ 4) The Huayang 華陽 Abbey was built on Mount Mao for Wang Gui 王軌 (580-665), titled Master Paulownia and Cypress 桐柏先生, for his eminence in expatiating Daoist scriptures, so famous in the coterie that Li Shimin constantly paid him visit to ask about philosophical ideas.⁷⁶ Other than the four abbeys explicitly noted in the histories and gazetteers, there were also a multitude of imperially constructed abbeys only briefly mentioned. Only taking Mount Hua 華 as an example, there were the Wangmu 王母 and the Xiangong 仙宮 Abbeys,

⁷² The abbey's name is Taishou according to the *Jiu Tang shu*; however, *The Gazetteer of Mount Mao (Maoshan zhi 茅山志)* notes the abbey's name as Taiping 太平. 貞觀九年 太宗為王法主建 號太平觀 “In the ninth year of Zhenguan's reign, Emperor Taizong built an abbey named Taiping for the Master of Doctrine, Wang.” See Liu Dabin 劉大彬, *Maoshan zhi* 17, HY 5.624.

⁷³ *Jiu Tang shu*, 192.5125

⁷⁴ 紫府觀 在(醴泉)縣東北三十里 唐太宗為道士薛頤置 今廢 “The Zifu Abbey was located thirty miles away Northeast to the (Liquan) County. Emperor Taizong of Tang constructed it for the Daoist adept Xue Yi. Now it is wasted.” Song Minqiu 宋敏求 (1019-1079), *The Gazetteer of Chang'an (Chang'an zhi 長安志)* (Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1970), 16.406.

⁷⁵ *Jiu Tang shu*, 191.5089.

⁷⁶ For Wang Gui (Master Paulownia and Cypress)'s biography and his interactions with Emperor Taizong, see 趙道一 (fl.1294-1307), *Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian 歷世真仙體道通鑒* 25, HY 5.245a-b. The *Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian* nevertheless does not document the construction of the Huayang Abbey; the text that documents this event is the *Maoshan zhi* 17, HY 5.625.

built by Taizong's edict at the mountain's feet.⁷⁷ As for the refurbished abbeys, the Hengyue 衡岳 Abbey on Mount Heng 衡 is an example. Li Shimin gifted a new hand-written stele to the Hengyue Abbey in the second year of his reign (628); he also issued a decree to request the abbey's Heavenly Master (*tianshi* 天師), Zhang Huilang 張慧朗, to ordain forty-nine new adepts "to practice Daoism for the state."⁷⁸ The multitudinous abbeys sprung up from Emperor Taizong's decree in the first half of his reign are *ab uno omnes disce* his exaltation of the religion and its priests. One of these abbeys, the Xihua abbey, was the abbey where our protagonist, Cheng Xuanying, resided. The Xihua abbey will be discussed in the following two sections of this chapter.

Though Li Shimin made a reverend gesture to Daoists and Daoism, both as an individual to thank the collaboration of Daoist powers during his father's and his own ascension to power, and as a Li-emperor to carry on the state policy of exalting the status of Daoism, he was significantly different from his father at his core. Li Yuan might have, to some extent, truly believed that he was assisted by some numinous powers that resulted in his success, as the survivor of the late-Sui rebellion and the founder of a new dynasty. Li Shimin, however, did not believe in any religious power or doctrines at all. He was the second emperor of a dynasty, a part of whose apprehension must concern the decline of the empire in his hand; furthermore, he was a

⁷⁷ The reasons and the context surrounding the Wangmu and the Xiangong Abbeys' establishments are unknown; *Xiyue Huashan zhi* the only text that documents their existence and establishment, only one records one brief sentence for each: 王母觀元在大羅峰下 古有廟焉 至唐貞觀中修建華山之下 仙宮觀 金仙公主所居之宮 乘鶴之後 敕修為仙宮觀 "The Wangmu Abbey was originally located at the foot of the Summit Daluo (of the Mount Hua). There has been a temple here since the ancient times. By the middle of the Zhenguan reign (ca.635-640), an abbey was built at the foot of the Mount Hua. As for the Xiangong Abbey, it was the palace that Princess Jinxian resided in. After (she) rode the crane (and ascended to Heaven), by imperial decree (the place) was made into a Xiangong Abbey." Wang Chuyi 王處一, *Xiyue Huashan zhi* 西嶽華山志, HY 5.751c.

⁷⁸ Li Chongzhao 李沖昭 (fl. 900), *Nanyue xiaolu* 南嶽小錄, HY 6.862c.

pragmatist with a much stronger ego and desire for control than his father. Unlike Li Yuan, he made a clear demarcation between taking advantage of Daoism's reverence for the ancestral clan of Li ancestor to justify his ascent to the throne and suppressing the tremendous and threatening power of the Daoists. During his reign, he constantly expressed his disbelief in Daoism and explicitly talked about the pure utilitarian functions of Daoists and Daoism on the court. In fact, he even looked down upon Daoism as a mere tool for maintaining his royal authority. He accused Daoism of emptiness and absurdity while keeping a list of Immortals' names for no apparent purpose. This speech was made right at the beginning of his reign, the central theme of which boils down to emphasizing 周孔之教 “the teaching of Confucius and the Zhou Dynasty” as his one and only belief.⁷⁹ He further delivered two lengthy expatiations of lessons drawn from the two previous dynasties, Qin 秦 and Liang 梁. Both were short. These expatiations are preserved in the “Exalting the Confucian Studies” (*chong ruxue* 崇儒學) chapter of *Essentials of Government in the Zhenguan Reign* (*Zhenguan zhengyao* 貞觀政要), a compendium on the account of statecrafts of the Zhenguan court:

秦始皇非分愛好 為方士所詐 乃遣童男童女數千人隨其入海求神仙 方士避
秦苛虐 因留不歸 始皇猶海側踟躕以待之 還至沙丘而死 漢武帝為求神仙 乃
將女嫁道術之人 事既無驗 便行誅戮 據此二事 神仙不煩妄求也

⁷⁹ Li Shimin's own words in one of his speeches: 神仙事本虛妄 空有其名 “Affairs of deities and immortals are basically empty and absurd; they have their names to nothing.” *Jiu Tang shu*, 2.33; Wu Jing 吳兢 (670-749), *Zhenguan zhengyao* 貞觀政要, in *Yingyin chizao tang Siku quanshu huiyao* 影印摛藻堂四庫全書薈要 (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1986), 6.15b. However, in the *Jiu Tang shu*, Li Shimin said this sentence in the last month of the first year of his reign, while in the *Zhenguan zhengyao* it was in the second year.

“The First Sovereign Emperor of the Qin was fond of inappropriate matters; (that is why he) was deceived by alchemists and accordingly dispatched several thousands of young boys and girls to enter the sea and seek deities and immortals with them. The alchemists stayed overseas and did not return in order to keep away from Qin’s ferocious cruelty; The First Sovereign Emperor still waited for them by the side of the sea, pacing back and forth, until he died upon returning to Shaqiu.⁸⁰ Emperor Wu of the Han married his daughter to a man of Daoist cryptic practices in order to ask for help from immortals, and killed the man thereupon the requested affairs came to no resolution. Based on these two affairs – do not belabor in groundlessly seeking deities and immortals!”⁸¹

至如梁武帝父子誌尚浮華 惟好釋氏老氏之教 武帝末年頻幸同泰寺 親講佛經 百寮皆大冠高履 乘車扈從 終日談論苦空 未嘗以軍國典章為意 及侯景率兵向闕 尚書郎以下 多不解乘馬 狼狽步走 死者相繼於道路 武帝及簡文卒被侯景幽逼而死 孝元帝在於江陵 為萬紐于謹所圍 帝猶講老子不輟 百寮皆戎服以聽 俄而城陷 君臣俱被囚摯 庾信亦嘆其如此 及作哀江南賦乃云 宰衡以幹戈為兒戲 縉紳以清談為廟略 此事亦足為鑒戒 朕今所好者惟在堯舜之道周孔之教 以為如鳥有翼如魚依水 失之必死 不可暫無耳

“The Emperor Wu of Liang’s and his son’s minds were (both) captivated by (the teachings of) Sakyamuni and Laozi; in the last years of Emperor Wu’s reign,

⁸⁰ Shaqiu is in modern Xingtai 邢臺, Hebei 河北 Province.

⁸¹ *Zhenguan zhengyao*, 6.16b-17a.

both the father and son visited the Tongtai temple frequently and lectured about Buddhist canons by themselves. Hundreds of his official colleagues all wore big hats and tall boots, and rode chariots escorted by servants. Throughout the day they talked about “bitterness” and “emptiness,” and never kept in mind military affairs or state regulations. By the time Hou Jing’s troop reached the city gatehouse, most of the officials below the prime minister did not even know how to ride horses. Stumbling and blundering, they walked on foot; one after another they died in the streets. The Emperor Wu and Emperor Jianwen (of Liang) were imprisoned by Hou Jing and hounded to death. When Emperor Yuan was besieged by Wanniu-Yu Jin at Jiangling he was still interminably preaching *Laozi*, with all his hundreds of official colleagues listening in military attire. Before long the city fell (into Hou Jing’s hands), and all, including the lord and the vassals, were captured and imprisoned. Yu Xin also lamented such circumstances. This is enough to draw a lesson from and take precautions against. What I am fond of now only lies in the way of Yao and Shun as well as the teachings of Confucius and the rituals of Zhou. I consider (my relation to them) as

a bird having wings and a fish relying on water.⁸² If I lose them, I must die. I cannot be without them even temporarily.”⁸³

The end of the second passage is a candid self-vindication of Li Shimin’s stance: he believed in nothing but Confucianism and state affairs. It implies that Buddhism and Daoism were equally heterodox in his eyes. All what matter may be the emperor’s need to utilize one of them to stabilize his sovereignty, resulting in sporadic politico-Daoist collaboration against Buddhism. It is hard to imagine how, at the beginning of this reign, the egotistical Li Shimin managed to yield the ostensible credit of his triumph in imperial military affairs to some Daoist-bestowed fortune, and put extremely humble words down into his edict, such as “these (achievements) are all blessings descended from the Supreme Mysteriousness and the awesome numinous power of the Daoist temples. How can they be achieved by someone so empty and shallow like me?”⁸⁴ The

⁸² This “birds having wings and fish relying on water” alludes to Liu Bei 劉備 (161-223)’s evaluation of Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 (181-234) in year 208: 孤之有孔明 猶魚之有水也 “I have Kongming (the style name of Zhuge Liang), as if a fish has (its) water.” This evaluation of Liu Bei was his response to his sworn brothers and fellow generals, Guan Yu 關羽 (160-220) and Zhang Fei 張飛 (166-221), as the latter two were expressing their discontentment with Liu Bei’s appreciation of Zhuge Liang. Liu Bei added another tough-toned imperative sentence, telling the two to stop, after he compared his reliance on Zhuge Liang to a fish’s on water: 願諸君勿復言 “I hope you two not to say a word again!” Immediately, 羽飛乃止 “(Guan) Yu and (Zhang) Fei stopped.” See Chen Shou 陳壽 (233-297) comp., *Sanguo zhi* 三國志 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 35.913. Liu Bei later became the founder and the emperor of the Shu-Han 蜀漢 Dynasty (221-263, Liu Bei r.221-223) in the Three-Kingdoms era. Li Shimin’s allusion to Liu Bei’s words *Sanguo zhi* story reflects his assertion and confirmation on the exalted status of Confucianism over all, and he did not want to accept any oppositions.

⁸³ *Zhenguan zhengyao*, 6.15a-16a.

⁸⁴ 斯皆上元降佑 清廟威靈 豈朕虛薄所能致此 This sentence is documented in an encyclopedia about statecraft by Wang Qinruo 王欽若 (962-1025) et al. comp., *The Prime Tortoise of the Document Storehouse* (*Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜), 84.924; Song Minqiu, *Collection of the Great Edicts of Tang Dynasty* (*Tang da zhaoling ji* 唐大詔令集) (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1959), 83.477; *Quan Tang wen*, 5.60. However, the 上玄 was written as 上玄 in the *Tang da zhaoling ji* and as 上元 in the *Quan Tang wen*, for the former text was compiled in the Northern Song Dynasty and the latter in the Qing Dynasty: thus both were in the need to avoid the taboo of 玄 that respectively appeared in the names of Zhao Xuanlang 趙玄朗 (the legendary ancestor of the third emperor of the Northern Song, Emperor

edict was issued for a great exemption in the second month in the fourth year of his reign (630), in celebration of the Tang army's pacification of the Turks in the North.⁸⁵ Li Shimin's soft-spoken demeanor reflected far more than an obligation to carry on whatever tradition that Li Yuan established. The sovereign of his new empire was primarily conceding to the even stronger Daoist power under the royal family's acquiescence: it seemed to be commonsense for the early Tang higher-classes, that the weak spot of the royal Li Family was their ethnic minority origin; sharing the same ancestor with an autochthonous religion was a necessity for the orthodoxy of the family's rule.

But crediting – and even yielding to – the Daoists was only a palliative, not a cure, for the problem regarding the endlessly acquisitive hoard of people. Putting up abbeys and rewarding Daoist priests all around the empire was never as efficacious as settling contentions with political action. In the fifth to the sixth year of the Zhenguan reign (631-632), Li Shimin commissioned a state-sponsored project, the compilation of the *Genealogy of the Clans* (*Shizu zhi* 氏族志), on the pretext of ending a notorious trend of selling matrimony (*maihun* 賣昏).⁸⁶ Four ministers were

Zhenzong 真宗) and 愛新覺羅·玄燁 (the second emperor of the Qing Dynasty). This note explains all the 玄/元 variances in this thesis. It will be pointed out but not repeatedly explained.

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⁸⁶ *Xin Tang shu* 95.3841:

初太宗嘗以山東士人尚閥閱 後雖衰 子孫猶負世望 嫁娶必多取貲 故人謂之賣昏
 “At the beginning, meritorious deeds had been performed for Emperor Taizong of Tang by Shandong gentry. Later their families declined. But then the sons and grandsons recovered their reputation, and to marry their sons or daughters one needed to bring a lot of money. And so people said they were selling matrimony.”

Zhenguan zhengyao, 7.17a-b:

貞觀六年太宗謂尚書左仆射房玄齡曰 比有山東崔盧李鄭四姓 雖累葉陵遲 猶恃其舊地 好自矜大 稱為士大夫 每嫁女他族 必廣索聘財 以多為貴 論數定約 同於市賈 甚損風俗 有紊禮經 既輕重失宜 理須改革

“In the sixth year of the Zhenguan reign (632), Emperor Taizong told the Vice Director of the Left, Fang Xuanling: ‘Near in time there are four clans: Cui, Lu, Li, Zheng. Although they have gradually declined over generations, they still like to hold themselves above as there are remaining old lands and call themselves gentlemen-grandee. Each time one of these clans marries off its women, the clan must widely force betrothal presents

place in charge: Gao Jian 高儉 styled Shilian 士廉 (575-647),⁸⁷ Wei Ting 韋挺 (590-647),⁸⁸ Cen Wenben 岑文本 (595-645)⁸⁹ and Linghu Defen 令狐德棻 (583-666).⁹⁰ However, as its first draft came out, the clan of Cui Gan 崔幹⁹¹ in Shandong 山東 was, to the emperor's surprise, catalogued in the first place above the imperial clan of Li's. The four ministers claimed that it was the prudent, calculated, well-ordered, and scholarly outcome of their systematic methodology after scrutinizing one-thousand-six-hundred-and-fifty-one households.⁹²

from others; the more the better. That the wedding contract depends on the amount of money is no different from trading on the market. Such a moral impairment! (This custom) scrambles social standards and propriety. Since the trivial and the important fall out of suit, so there must be a thorough change.”

⁸⁷ For Gao Jian (Gao Shilian)'s biography, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 65.2441-5 and *Xin Tang shu*, 95.3839-42.

⁸⁸ For Wei Ting's biography, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 77.2669-71 and *Xin Tang shu*, 98.3902-4.

⁸⁹ For Cen Wenben's biography, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 70.2535-9 and *Xin Tang shu*, 102.3965-7.

⁹⁰ For Linghu Defen's biography, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 73.2596-9 and *Xin Tang shu*, 102.3982-4.

⁹¹ Cui Gan served as the Attendant Gentlemen of the Palace Gate (*huangmen shilang* 黃門侍郎) in Taizong's court. His birth and death years are unknown.

⁹² *Xin Tang shu* 95.3841:

士廉與韋挺岑文本令狐德棻責天下譜牒 參考史傳 檢正真偽 進忠賢 退悖惡 先宗室 後外戚 退新門 進舊望 右膏粱 左寒峻 合二百九十三姓 千六百五十一家 為九等 號曰氏族志 而崔幹仍居第一

“(Gao) Shilian along with Wei Ting, Cen Wenben and Linghu Defen scrutinized the (existing) *catalogue raisonnée* of genealogy of the sub-celestial realm. They perused and examined historical biographies, investigated truth and falsehood, advanced the loyal and worthy and relegated the perverse and the evil. They gave precedence to patrilineal imperial clansmen over matrilineal clansmen. They relegated newly-risen families, advanced old houses, and placed those who live in luxury into the right and the talented of low station into the left column. They collected two-hundred-and-ninety-three surnames and one-thousand-six-hundred-and-fifty-one households. They assigned nine classes and called the work *Genealogy of the Clans*, with Cui Gan still being the first in precedence.”

Zhengguan zhengyao 7.17b documents the same affair with textual variation:

乃詔吏部尚書高士廉 禦史大夫韋挺 中書侍郎岑文本 禮部侍郎令狐德棻等 刊正姓氏 普責天下譜牒 兼據憑史傳 剪其浮華 定其真偽 忠賢者褒進 悖逆者貶黜 撰為氏族誌 士廉等及進定氏族等第 遂以崔幹為第一等

“For this reason, (the emperor) decreed that the Minister of the Bureau of Appointment, Gao Shilian, the Censor-in-Chief, Wei Ting, the Attendant Gentleman, Cen Wenben and the Attendant of the Ministry of Rites, Linghu Defen, to revise and rectify the name of each lineage and clan, and widely scrutinize the (existing) *catalogue raisonnée* of genealogy of the sub-celestial realm. Also, according to histories and biographies, they cut off the veneered and the distorted, investigated their truths and falsehoods. They advanced the loyal and worthy and relegated the perverse and the

Unsurprisingly Li Shimin was very dissatisfied, if not shocked, with the result of the project that implied an overt lack of public imprimatur of his clan's supremacy. The enraged emperor delivered a long speech – perhaps the longest, not in the form of an edict, ever made by a Tang emperor among all documented in histories – upon seeing the draft. He compelled the compilers to reconduct the survey and downgrade the Cui clan to the third class in surnames.

太宗謂曰 我與山東崔盧李鄭舊既無嫌 為其世代衰微 全無官宦 猶自云士大夫 婚姻之際則多索財物 或才識庸下 而偃仰自高 依托富貴 我不解人間何為重之 且士大夫有能立功 爵位崇重 善事君父 忠孝可稱 或道義清素 學藝通博 此亦足為門戶 可謂天下士大夫 今崔盧之屬寧比當朝之貴 公卿已下 何暇多輸錢物 兼與他氣勢 向聲背實 以得為榮 我今定氏族者 誠欲崇樹今朝冠冕 何因崔幹猶為第一等 卿等不貴我官爵耶 不論數代已前 只取今日官品人才作等級 宜一量定用為永則 遂以崔幹為第三等

The Emperor told (the ministers in charge): “I was not at all apprehensive of the Cui, Lu, Li and Zheng (families) in Shandong in the past. I am just concerned that they (all) were declining for generations without any reinstated posts and still called themselves gentlemen-grandee. At the time when they marry, they require as high betrothal prices as possible. Some of their members are mediocre and poor in talent or knowledge; however, they are pompous, presumptuous and

opponents. (Thus) they compiled the *Genealogy of the Clans*. As Shilian et al. further determined the ranks of each clan, they made Cui Gan ('s clan) as the first in precedence according to their research.

pretentious. I do not understand why this world values these clans? In addition, gentlemen-grandee (should) have the capability to achieve. (They should have) exalted, significant and noble positions and (should) be good at serving their lords and fathers. Some of them may be laudable for loyalty and piety; some of them may be pure and unaffected in their conducts and propriety; some of them may be thorough in arts and broad in studies. All these (qualities of its members) are enough to (support a clan to) stand by itself. These are the people who can be called gentlemen-grandee under the sub-celestial realm. Now, how can the likes of the Cui's and Lu's be compared to the precious people in my current court? From the dignitaries and high officials below, why should I offer them such assets and grant them such power? Why should I ignore the reality to heed their reputation? Now that I (ask you to) settle the genealogy of clans, because I hope to elevate and establish models for this current court of mine: For what reasons is Cui Gan ('s clan) still placed in the first class? Do you not value the officials and nobles of my (the Li) clan? Let us not talk about what happened several generations ago. Classify the clans only based on (their members') offices, positions and talents at the present time. As long as these criteria are settled, they should be used as permanent principles!"

Therefore, Cui Gan ('s clan) was placed in the third class.⁹³

This first draft of *Shizu zhi*, in every respect, seemed to reflect an insolent opposition to the court's will by blatantly violating a tradition, one that was commonsense of the time: how can an imperially patronized scholarship fail to carry out the mission of eulogizing and prioritizing the

⁹³ *Zhengguan zhengyao* 7.17b-18b.

court, or providing justification of the current royal family's sovereignty? The bold and baffled tone in Li Shimin's response, 我不解人間何為貴之 "I do not understand why this world values those clans (instead of the Li's)," reflects the once confused emperor's sudden realization of the urge to re-emphasize the supremacy of his Li clan, a temporarily neglected endeavor as he had been too busy regulating his empire according "the way of Confucius and the Zhou." Having founded and ruled the empire for two generations, he and his family were nevertheless regarded as decedents of a *fan* 蕃 (*Xianbei*) clan in an age when the Eastern Jin 晉 and the Six Dynasties tradition of valuing aristocratic power were still great and fixed and the Han-foreign (*hanfan* 漢蕃) debate continued to be a popular trend of thought. The influence of aristocratic families on social value judgment was everywhere. The *Shizu zhi* draft was merely an alarm that concretized the problem. It stirred the emperor to compensate for this his previously overlooked weak spot. As his new empire began to stabilize and recover from the turmoil of dynastic change, this second emperor again needed to keep deifying his rule and make a genealogical connection with the supreme lord of Daoism in pursuance of proving the nobility of his own clan and stabilizing his own reign. At the time, the most palpable device to utilize was the power of religion, especially by capitalizing on the eagerness of both sides to win favor during Buddho-Daoist contention. First, both sides were highly influential, and in collaboration they shaped the trend of thoughts. Second, between the two, Daoism revered the same Li ancestor as the royal court did, and such a genealogical connection was ubiquitously acknowledged. Third and most importantly, putting religious and philosophical interpretations aside, the indisputably distinct origins of Buddhism and Daoism – the former came from a foreign culture while the latter originated from China's own land – provided a perfect ground to end any skepticism towards the

purity and orthodoxy of Li family's lineage. Exalting Daoism and suppressing Buddhism hence became a dominant policy.

That the osculation of Buddho-Daoist strife and the Han-foreign debate may be circumstantially upheld by Li Shimin's largess to the Daoist-background Grand Astrologer, Fu Yi, for his successful prediction of Li Shimin's enthronement mentioned earlier in this section. The largess took place after a mere four months in the Zhenguan reign (627), starting with a trick question from the emperor: "Buddhism, as a teaching, is abstruse and marvelous enough for me to learn from. How can you alone not understand its truthfulness?" In face of the emperor's test, Fu Yi's reply was also clever. His attempt was to reproach Buddhism from a Han-foreign point of view, the most sensitive issue to Li Shimin: "Buddhism is no more than truculent interrogations in uncouth Northwestern areas, whose mendacity shines through those lands. Some malicious perverts of (our) Central Land, grabbed the arcane conversations of *Zhuangzi* and *Laozi*, garnishing them with specious and fantastic words to deceive the foolish and the vulgar. They are of no benefit to the people and very harmful to the state. It is not that I do not understand (Buddhism) – I despise it so I will not learn it!"⁹⁴ The emperor greatly approved of Fu Yi's response. Li Shimin's reaction represents that the Buddho-Daoist contention was, by nature, a guise of the Han-*fan* contention, a sensitive issue to the early Tang royal Li clan of alleged "*fan* descent."

Aforementioned, at the beginning of the Zhenguan reign, Li Shimin was indeed using Daoism as a tool, but in a gentle and conceding way, pretending to exalt it as the religious counterpart of the political governance. Now, in face of the widely known "royal weak spot," he was stimulated

⁹⁴ Li Shimin's question: 佛之為教 玄妙可師 卿何獨不悟其理? Fu Yi's reply: 佛乃胡中桀詰 誑耀彼土 中國邪僻之人 取莊老玄談 飾以妖幻之語 用欺愚俗 無益於民 有害於國 臣非不悟 鄙不學也. Right after Fu Yi's reply was the description of Li Shimin's reaction: 上頗然之. *Zizhi tongjian*, 192.6029.

to rehash tough-on-heterodox policies. A decree was thus made in the eleventh year of the Zhenguan reign (637). The “Edict on commanding the (status of) Daoists adepts’ to precede monks” (*ling daoshi zai seng qian zhao* 令道士在僧前詔) is an edict of 353 words.⁹⁵ This was the first time in the Zhenguan reign and the second time in the Tang Dynasty, that Daoism was proclaimed to supersede Buddhism. It reads so:

老君垂範 義在清虛 釋迦貽則 理存因果 求其教也 汲引之跡殊途 窮其宗也
宏益之風齊致 然大道之興 肇於邃古 源出無名之始 事高有形之外 邁兩儀而
運行 包萬物而亭育 故能經邦致治 反樸還淳

至如佛教之興 基於西域 逮於後漢 方被中華 神變之理多方 報應之緣匪一
洎乎近世 崇信滋深 人覬當年之福 家懼來生之禍 由是滯俗者聞元宗而大笑
好異者望真諦而爭歸 始波湧於閭裏 終風靡於朝廷 遂使殊俗之典 鬱為眾妙之
先 諸華之教 翻居一乘之後 流遯忘反 於茲累代

朕夙夜夤畏 緬惟至道 思革前弊 納諸軌物 況朕之本系 出於柱史

今鼎祚克昌 既憑上德之慶 天下大定 亦賴無為之功 宜有解張 闡茲玄化 自
今已後 齋供行立 至於稱謂 道士女道士 可在僧尼之前

庶敦本之俗 暢於九有 尊祖之風 貽諸萬葉 告報天下 主者施行

⁹⁵ This word count is based on the text from *Quan Tang wen* and *Tang da zhaoling ji*. There are textual variants of this edict in Shi Daoxuan, *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 集古今佛道論衡實錄, see note 107 later. Also, “ling daoshi zai seng qian zhao” is the edict’s name as documented in *Quan Tang wen*; in *Tang da zhaoling ji*, it is named “daoshi nüguan zai sengni zhishang zhao” 道士女冠在僧尼之上詔.

“The Lord Lao hung down his casting mold, lying his propriety in Pure and Empty; Sakyamuni passed on his precepts, keeping his principle in Cause and Effect. Seeking their teachings, the traces of deducing and deriving take different paths; exhausting their foundations, their influences concerning prevalence and increment are brought to a par. However, the prosperity of the great Way (Daoism) began from unfathomable antiquity. Its source flows out of the fountainhead of No-name; its affairs ascend beyond concrete matters. It moves the two Principles⁹⁶ around, and forward it proceeds; it hems the myriad matters in and rears and nurtures. That is why it can regulate a state to bring about good order, return (things) to simplicity and bring them back to an unadulterated state.

As for the prosperity of Buddhism: it is grounded in a western realm and not until the Later Han did it prevail in the Central Lands. It is multi-sided regarding its principle of spiritual essence and transformation; there is not a sole cause to retribution or effects of karma. Coming up to the recent ages, esteem and belief in it grows increasingly deeper; (every) person covets blessings in his present year, and (every) household fears disaster in their next life. Therefore, those who are stagnated in grooves laugh upon hearing the Mysterious-clan (Daoism);⁹⁷ those who chase after extraordinariness contend in resorting to it as they see the ‘absolute truth.’⁹⁸ It started from surging and swelling in villages and hamlets; it ends with sweeping over the court. In due course, the canon of an outlandish

⁹⁶ Heaven and Earth, or *yin* and *yang*.

⁹⁷ Another textual variation between *yuan* 元 and *xuan* 玄. The word is *xuanzong* 玄宗 in *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*, compiled in the Tang. It becomes *yuanzong* 元宗 in *Tang da zhaoling ji* and *Quan Tang wen*, the former compiled in the Song and the later in the Qing. See note 76 for explanation.

⁹⁸ The “absolute truth” specifically refers the Buddhist truth; Emperor Taizong may be using an ironic reference here.

convention has been bedecked into a priority over Multitude-Marvels;⁹⁹ the teachings of various civilized traditions were nevertheless set behind a ‘vehicle.’¹⁰⁰ (This trend) has been drifting and getting astray, forgetting to return; up to now it has already been generations.

For days and nights, I have been deeply daunted and absorbed in the ultimate Way, contemplating to change my earlier malpractices and keep (my conduct) within the orbit of matters. Even more, my lineage originates from that Scribe-under-the-pillar.¹⁰¹

Nowadays, since (our) heavenly-favored dynastic strength has achieved its prosperity, thanks to the felicity of the superior power; the great settlement of the sub-celestial realm also depended on the merit of the Non-action (teaching).¹⁰² At this time, there ought to be some easing and tightening, (in order to) carry forward the Conversion-of-the-mysterious.¹⁰³ From now on, rituals and offerings (will be made) in moving and in standing. As for appellations, (those of male and) female Daoist adepts should be above (those of) monks and nuns.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ The “Multitude-Marvels” is an appeal to Daoism. In *Classic of the Way of Power (Daode jing 道德經)*: 玄之又玄 眾妙之門 “The mysterious beyond the mysterious; the gate to a multitude of marvels.” Lou Yulie 樓宇烈, *Laozi “Daode jing zhu” jiaoshi 老子道德經注校釋* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008), 1.2.

¹⁰⁰ There are two main branches of Buddhism, *mahāyāna* and *hīnayāna*, literally translated as the “great vehicle” and “small vehicle” of teaching. Thus “a vehicle” is also a reference of Buddhism.

¹⁰¹ Refers to Laozi. Laozi was according to legend a scribe under the pillar.

¹⁰² Alias for Daoism, because non-action is an important concept *Daode jing*: 為無為則無不治 “Act the non-action, then none will not be regulated.” *Laozi “Daode jing zhu” jiaoshi*, 1.8.

¹⁰³ *Xuanhua* 玄化 is also an euphemism for Daoism.

¹⁰⁴ *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 24 (T 2060), 50.635c; *Guang hongming ji* 25 (T 2103), 52.283c-284a; and *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 3 (T 2104), 52.382b.

The custom of esteeming one's origin is ubiquitous in the nine-realities;¹⁰⁵ the practice to revere one's ancestor will be passed on for a myriad of generations.
Announce this to the whole empire! Administrator of (each) state, carry them on.

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In this edict, the emperor makes a straightforward and sharp contrast regarding his attitude towards the two mainstream religions: while he denounces Buddhism as “the canon of a foreign convention” followed by rustics and eccentricity-seekers, he confirms the status of Daoism as a teaching rooted in his own lineage, and the identity of Laozi as his forefather; therefore, the exaltation of Daoism becomes a practice of “esteeming one's origin” and “revering one's ancestor.” The edict also manifested his intention to implement realistic policies: “At this time,

¹⁰⁵ The Nine-realities refers to the nine realms, a legendary nine divisions of China in remote antiquity; later it was used to address whole land of the sub-celestial realm. *Ode* 303 “Black bird” (*xuanniao* 玄鳥): 方命厥後 奄有九有 “Everywhere he commanded his descendants; wholly they possess the nine realities.” The Mao 毛 commentary: “The nine realities means the nine realms.” 九有九州也. See Kong Yingda 孔穎達, *Maoshi Zhengyi* 毛詩正義 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000), 20.1700a. The nine-realms refers to the whole empire or the entire land. This usage originates from “Tribute of Yu” (*Yu gong* 禹貢 in the *Book of Documents*, in which Yu 禹, the founder of the legendary Xia 夏 Dynasty, divided the land into nine prefectures. See Kong Anguo 孔安國 comm., Kong Yingda subcomm., *Shangshu zhengyi* 尚書正義 in Li Xueqin 李學勤 comp., *Shisanjing zhushu* 十三經註疏 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1999), 132-171. Also see “Explanation on Geography” (*shi di* 釋地) in *Erya* 爾雅, the oldest surviving Chinese dictionary known: 兩河間曰冀州 河南曰豫州 河西曰雍州 漢南曰荊州 江南曰揚州 濟南曰兗州 濟東曰徐州 燕曰幽州 齊曰營州 “(The land) between the two rivers (River Qing 清 and River Xi 西) is called Ji Prefecture. The southern bank is called Yu Prefecture. The western bank is called Yong Prefecture. The southern bank of River Han is called Jing Prefecture. The southern bank of Yangtze River is called Yang Prefecture. The southern bank of River Ji is called Yan Prefecture. The eastern bank of River Ji is called Xu Prefecture. (The land of) Yan is called You Prefecture. (The land of) Qi is called Ying Prefecture.” Guo Pu 郭璞 comm., Xing Bing 邢昺 subcomm., *Erya zhushu* 爾雅註疏 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000), 7.209-211.

¹⁰⁶ *Quan Tang wen*, 6.73a-b and *Tang da zhaoling ji*, 113.586-587.

¹⁰⁷ Among the five major documents that include this edict, the two underlined paragraphs do not appear in any of Dao Xuan's works: *Xu gaozeng zhuan*, *Guang hongming ji*, or *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*. In other words, the Taishō Tripiṭaka does not include the underline parts of Li Shimin's self-acclaim of his clan's Daoist ancestry. It is likely due to the Buddhist identity of their author has deleted the passages intentionally, in which the emperor declared his identity as the descendant of Laozi.

there ought to be some easing and tightening, (in order to) carry forward the Conversion-of-the-mysterious.”

The edict instantly engendered a mighty uproar upon its announcement. At the time, almost all monks residing in the capital wrote their remonstrations to the court, refusing to obey the edict.¹⁰⁸ The eminent monk Falin 法琳 (572-640)¹⁰⁹ was selected as the representative to propose a 311-word lengthy exposition against the decree, only to get the imperial response: 語諸僧等明詔既下 如也不伏 國有嚴科 “Let me tell you this, monks, now a clear decree has been issued, if (anyone) would still not submit to it, there will be rigorous punishment!”¹¹⁰ The only monk brave enough to step up in defense of Buddhism after receiving the imperial warning was monk Zhishi 智實 (601-638),¹¹¹ who, as expected, was brutally caned and passed away within less than a year¹¹² due to injury and depression at the age of thirty-eight.¹¹³

This incident and its harsh policy in consequence seemed to be somehow efficacious: by the following year (638), the new *Shizu zhi* were completed by the same scholar-ministers’ group under Gao Jian’s lead. The clan of Li was placed first and the authority of the surname Li was completely established and acknowledged.¹¹⁴ Within the next four years, not only did Daoism

¹⁰⁸ This event has multiple versions in Buddhist documents, and the version that I base my description on is in Yancong 彦琮, *Tang hufa shamen Falin biezhuàn* 唐護法沙門法琳別傳 2, (T 2051), 50.204.

¹⁰⁹ For Falin’s biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 24 (T 2060), 50.636b-639a.

¹¹⁰ This is Li Shimin’s answer as recorded in *Falin biezhuàn*. In the *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*, the emperor’s response was instead: 僧等 此事久以行訖 不伏者與杖 “Monks and others, this issue has long been concluded. Cut it off – or whoever disobeys – will only get caned!” *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 3 (T 2104), 52.382c.

¹¹¹ For the eminent monk Zhishi’s biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 24 (T 2060), 634c-636a.

¹¹² Zhishi died in the Zongchi 總持 Temple in the first month of the twelfth year of Zhenguan reign (638). See *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 24 (T 2060), 50.636a.

¹¹³ The entire Buddhist protest led by Falin and followed up by Zhishi can be seen in *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 3 (T 2104), 52.382c-383a and *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 24 (T 2060), 50.635c-636a.

¹¹⁴ *Tang huiyao*, 36.664; *Zhenguan zhengyao*, 7.18b-19a. These two events were not juxtaposed or explicitly pointed out their osculation in any historical documents, but one could observe their relationship and make arguments.

and Daoists completely get their way in overtopping their Buddhist rivals as they wanted, the imperial power also intensified in its manipulation of uncommitted Daoists.

Li Shimin's desire to fortify the nascent authority of the Li clan escalated to an extreme and came to supersede his filial duty within the royal household. Towards the late-middle of his twenty-three-year reign, even some moral codes in "the teachings of Confucius and the Zhou" such as filial piety (*xiao* 孝) were cast aside as necessary. The supersession of Daoism over the Confucian teachings is best reflected in another major politico-Daoist event three years after the completion of *Shizu zhi* (641): the famous imperial visit to the Hongfu 弘福 Temple in capital Chang'an. The Hongfu temple was established in the eighth year of the Zhenguan reign (634) in memory of Li Shimin's late mother, Empress Taimu 太穆 (ca.569-613).¹¹⁵ It is unrecorded in historical documents, whether Empress Taimu was a Buddhist herself. We are only able to infer from the empress' living time, almost entirely in the pro-Buddhist Sui Dynasty, that she was very likely a supporter of Buddhism. Hence her son built her a memorial temple despite the wide elimination of Buddhist temples and relentless suppression of its practitioners since the first year of his reign.¹¹⁶ Although he decreed the establishment of the Hongfu temple seven years ago, it seems that this was his first visit there. The entire temple went out to welcome his advent, after which the emperor, for the first and only time in his reign, discussed his attitude towards Buddhism in person with Buddhist monks. This event was primarily recorded in the *Ji gujin*

¹¹⁵ *Chang'an zhi*, 10.227.

¹¹⁶ In the first year of the Zhenguan reign (627), the emperor dispatched his Secretarial Censor (*zhishu shi yushi* 治書侍御史), Du Zhenglun 杜正倫 (d.658) to censor and "sanitize" all Buddhist canons (*jianjiao fofa* 檢校佛法) and excise all "excessive and unqualified ones" (*qingsu feilan* 清肅非濫); in the same year he decreed that the whole empire must strictly keep the tradition in Li Yuan's reign, that only four temples in the capital and one in each prefecture can be preserved. All temples, if they were to secretly ordain new monks, would be punished and the newly ordained would be executed. For what happened to the politico-Buddhist environment in 627, See *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* 24 (T 2060), 50.635a.

fodao lunheng shilu, and the conversation, on both sides, was as calculated as it possibly could be, constituting perhaps one of the most interesting, intricate and misinterpreted exchanges of the early Tang.

貞觀十五年五月十四日 太宗文帝躬幸弘福寺 於時僧眾並出 虞候遠辟 敕召大德五人 在寺內堂中坐訖 具敘立寺所由 意存太穆皇后 哀泪橫流 僧并垂泣

On the fourteenth day of the fifth month, the fifteenth year of the Zhenguan reign, (Emperor) Taizong, or Emperor Wen, graced the Hongfu Temple with his royal presence. At that time, the multitude of monks all came forth, walked a far distance away (from the temple) and waited attentively. By imperial decree, five (monks) with great virtue were summoned (to talk with the emperor in person). After they all took seat in the hall inside the temple, they discussed the reason to establish the temple in details, which mainly concerns preserving Empress Taimu ('s soul). (The emperor's) sad tears crisscrossed (his) face; the monks also shed tears along with him.¹¹⁷

Within the mournful aura or right after it, the emperor made a handwritten pledge (*yuanwen* 愿文) for his mother.¹¹⁸ The pledge thematically and formally patterns a humble Buddhist prose

¹¹⁷ *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 3 (T 2104), 52.385c

¹¹⁸ 皇帝菩薩戒弟子稽首和南十方諸佛菩薩聖僧天龍大眾 若夫至理凝寂 道絕名言 大慈方便 隨機攝誘 濟苦海以智舟 朗重昏以慧日 開曉度脫 不可思議 弟子夙罹保嬰 早嬰偏罰 追惟撫育之恩 每念慈顏之遠 泣血崩心 永無逮及 號天蹙地 何所厝身 歲月不居 炎涼亟改 荼毒之痛 在乎茲日 敬養已絕 萬恨不追 冤酷之深 百身何贖 惟以丹誠 歸依三寶 謹於弘福道場 奉施齋供 並施淨財 以充檀舍 用其功

style, piled with sets of stock Buddhist lexicon, and is in a special Buddhist-hybrid Chinese grammar distinct from that of the Tang Classical Chinese. However, thereupon the commemorative pledge was completed, the emperor started his actual speech forthwith to the monks, with his topic switched and real attitude dramatically exposed. The main spokesperson among the five conversing with the emperor was the abbot of Hongfu temple, Daoyi 道懿.¹¹⁹

帝謂僧曰 比以老君是朕先宗 尊祖重親 有生之本 故令在前 師等大應悵悵
寺主道懿奉對 陛下尊重祖宗 使天下成式 僧等荷國重恩 安心行道 詔旨行下
咸大歡喜 豈敢悵悵

The emperor told the monks: “Since the Lord Lao is the original ancestor of my clan, and the foundation of sentient beings is honoring one’s ancestor and valuing one’s kin, I command that (Laozi should be) put on a primary position. Masters like you should all hold very dear (to my words)!”

The abbot of the temple, Daoyi replied respectfully: “Your Majesty shows great respect to his ancestors and forms a paradigm in sub-celestial realm. We monks, bearing extra favor of the state, (will) proceed on our way with content minds. Upon the edict having reached down to us, we were all greatly pleased. How can we be despondent and disheartened?”¹²⁰

德 奉為先靈 願心悟無生 神遷妙喜 策紺馬以入香城 躡金階而升寶殿 遊玩法樂 逍遙淨土 永蔭法雲 常餐甘露 疾證菩提 早登正覺 六道四生 並同斯願 *Ibid.*, 52.385c

¹¹⁹ Daoyi has no biography of his own. This event seems to be his only recorded activity.

¹²⁰ *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 3 (T 2104), 52.385c-386a.

Although brief, Daoyi's response was deliberate on multiple strata. First, though his reply seemed to begin with mere stale sayings eulogizing the modeling role of the court, it took the form akin to the Daoist language. 使天下成式 “To form a paradigm in the sub-celestial realm” prototyped a sentence in *Laozi*, 聖人抱一為天下式 “the sage holds fast to the One and makes sub-celestial paradigms.”¹²¹ By modeling the beginning of his reply to *Laozi*, Daoyi manifested his familiarity with Daoist canonical texts, i.e. what the court had emphasized everyone to value just a moment ago. By applying a consensual lexical model to the start of the reply, the tension of the conversation was alleviated so that a smoother transition to the upcoming, acute, Buddho-Daoist issue was thus made possible. In other words, the comfortable language mode of the discussion helped ease its discomfiting content. Then, following an interim of cliché – that it was the monks' duty to live up to the court's expectation – Daoyi made a sudden and sharp shift, ending with a rhetorical question: “Upon the edict having reached down to us, we were all greatly pleased. How can we be despondent and disheartened?” This ending to Daoyi's reply was ironic, even vitriolic. Notably, there had not been any new edicts regarding Buddhist policy for the recent four years, namely, between the “Edict on commanding the (status of) Daoists adepts' to precede monks” in the eleventh year and this conversation in the fifteenth years. Thus, “*the* edict” that Daoyi brought up pointed directly at nothing else but the very disturbing one enacted four years ago, a significant suppressive policy that not only led to major turbulence in Buddhist circles but even caused a monk's death. How bitter of sarcasm was his “we were all greatly pleased!”

Another small yet crucial detail in the language of this portion of conversation is the use of *liangliang* 悵悵. The same word was shared by both sides of the conversation. In Tang,

¹²¹ *Laozi* “*Daode jing zhu*” *jiaoshi*, 1.56.

liangliang had two meanings. In Li Shimin's speech, *liangliang* was a di-syllabic lexical item meaning "to hold dear to," usually with a complimentary undertone of fondly holding tight to something with affection. However, in Daoyi's reply, *liangliang* was a reduplicative binome: *liang*, standing alone, means "to be downhearted." Intensifying the degree of the qualitative verb by reduplication results in the meaning of "to be despondent and disheartened." Further, investigating the source text of the two meanings, one may find that they come from distinct contextual traditions. The first meaning of *liangliang* that Li Shimin used, "to hold dear to with affection," originated from a petition (*zou* 奏) by Chen Fan 陳藩 (d.168) to Emperor Huan 桓 (r.146-167) of the Eastern Han: 天之於漢 恨恨無已 故殷勤示變 以悟陛下 "About Heaven to the Han, it holds fond affection without an end. Thus (Heaven) is ardently eager to show its changes, to awaken Your Majesty." Chen Fan was petitioning to the emperor in defense of an imprisoned fellow official, Li Ying 李膺 (110-169), whom was put into jail for disobeying the fatuous emperor's will. Chen Fan himself was also dismissed because of the petition. The text preserving Chen Fan's petition is *the Hou Han shu*, the official history of the Later Han.¹²² The second meaning of *liangliang*, "to be despondent and disheartened," used by Daoyi, came from a pentasyllabic poem attributed to a Western Han military officer, Li Ling 李陵 (134-74BCE) by *Wenxuan*. The sentence goes: 徘徊蹊路側 恨恨不得辭 "Pacing back and forth by the side of the pathway, we were despondent and disheartened, we could not bid farewell."¹²³ Li Ling

¹²² Fan Ye 范曄 (398-445) comp., *Hou Han shu* 後漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 66.2166. The whole story of Chen Fan defending and petitioning to his emperor for a series of wrongfully punished officials, Li Ying included, is contained in Chen Fan's biography in the "Biography on Kings of Chen" (*Chen wang liezhuan* 陳王列傳), *Hou Han shu*, 66.2159-72.

¹²³ These two lines are the third and fourth lines of the third among "Three Poems to Su Wu" (*yu Su Wu sanshou* 與蘇武三首). *Wenxuan*, 29.1353. There has been suspicions on the authenticity and authorship of "Three Poems to Su Wu" since the Southern Dynasties. Most scholars believe that the poems are *about*

surrendered after his unit was surrounded by Xiongnu cavalry in an expedition against Xiongnu 匈奴 in 99 BCE. Since his surrender aroused the wrath of Emperor Wu 武 and caused severe punishment for whoever defended for him, the most famous being Sima Qian 司馬遷 (d.86BCE)'s castration, Li Ling stayed in Xiongnu territory and never returned to China. The poem was attributed to him as a sad farewell to his friend, a Han envoy named Su Wu 蘇武 (d.60BCE) before Su returned to China from a nineteen-year long diplomatic mission (100-80BCE), most of which was spent in Xiongnu prison.¹²⁴

One might notice that the two contexts, although ostensibly distant from each other, are substantially similar with two major differences. 1) Li Shimin was addressing the story from the standpoint of an emperor's and Daoyi of a vassal defender's. 2) Li Shimin utilized an official historical resource and Daoyi used a five-syllable line poem, the genre of which aimed in expressing embittered folk resentment in Chinese literary tradition. The two meanings of one word alluding to two different fountainheads is an interesting play on words. Both source stories captured the current Tang politico-religious situation quite felicitously. Last but not least, the grammatical structure of Daoyi's reply, literally translated as "how can we be *liangliang*" 豈敢 悵悵 was itself antithetical to Li Shimin's previous sentence, "you should be greatly *liangliang*" 大應悵悵. The contrasting tradition of the two distinct meanings of *liangliang* has been overlooked by many scholars, causing amusing textual variations in later Buddhist collections, such as 卿等應悵悵也.....詎敢有悵 "you should all be greatly resentful (to me)!".... "Who

Li Ling and Su Wu rather than by them, and are Eastern Han at the earliest, most likely Six Dynasties period work.

¹²⁴ For the story of Li Ling and Su Wu and their combined biographies, see Ban Gu 班固 (32-92) comp., *Han shu* 漢書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 54.2451-66. Su Wu does not have a biography in the *Shiji*, since Sima Qian died before Su Wu returned to China. Li Ling has a short biography in *Shiji*, 109.2877-8.

dares to have resentment?” in a Song Dynasty Buddhist chronology, *A General Buddhist Chronological Exposition compiled in the Longxing Reign* (*Longxing fojiao biannian tonglun* 隆興佛教編年通論),¹²⁵ and the same words in a Yuan 元 work (*Fozu lidai tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載), that took its base on *Longxing biannian tonglun*.¹²⁶

帝曰 朕以先宗在前可即大於佛也 自有國已來 何處別造道觀 凡有功德並歸寺家 國內戰場之始 無不一心歸命於佛 今天下大定 戰場之地並置佛寺 乃至本宅先妣唯置佛寺 朕敬有處所以盡命歸依 師等宜悉朕懷 彼道士者止是師習先宗 故位在前 今李家據國李老在前 若釋家治化則釋門居上 可不平也

The Emperor (kept on) say(ing):

“I regard the ancestor of my clan as primary; this is precisely why (Lord Lao) is greater than the Buddha. Since Tang came into being, where has another Daoist abbey ever been built? Whatever merit or blessings have all been attributed to the sect-of-the-temples.¹²⁷ Since the beginning of war within (our) state, none would not whole-heartly resort to Buddhism. Now, the sub-celestial realm has been greatly settled, and battlefields are all turned into Buddhist temples. In fact, with

¹²⁵ Monk Zuxiu 祖琇 (fl. ca. 1164) comp., *Longxing fojiao biannian tonglun* 11 (T 1512), 75.165c.

¹²⁶ Monk Nianchang 念常 (1282-1341) comp., *Fozu lidai tongzai* 11 (T 2036), 49.571a.

¹²⁷ This is a lie. As aforementioned in this section, one of the most important pro-Daoist measure is the establishment and refurbishment of Daoist abbeys throughout the empire, and seven abbeys were listed as examples, including the Xihua abbey awaits discussion. Also, the imperial merit attribution was also clearly to the Daoist power as shown in the edict after the pacification of the Turks. On the contrary, Buddhist temples were eliminated and Buddhist monks were suppressed in multiple affairs. This blatant lie itself during Li Shimin’s conversation with monks in a temple reveals the emperor’s condescending and distainful demeanor to Buddhism.

regard to my own late mother, she would only construct Buddhist temples.¹²⁸ I command all to resort to Buddhism because I could have a place to commemorate her. Masters like you should all know my heart! As for those Daoist adepts, they were placed above you merely because they follow the teaching of my lineal ancestor. Now it is the family of Li who possess this state, thus Laozi with surname Li is placed above; if the family that regulates living beings is surnamed Shi,¹²⁹ then the Shi-community would sit above. How could this be unfair?”¹³⁰

Some scholars read the end of this edict as Li Shimin’s equal treatment between Buddhism and Daoism owing to his juxtaposition of the two in parallel sentences. I strongly oppose this idea. This edict is in particular in need of rumination over its tone, and if one does, one would find Li Shimin’s attitude stern to an intimidating degree. This ending part of the emperor’s speech transmits two major ideas. First, as previously discussed, fortifying the royal clan’s

¹²⁸ Li Shimin decreed to establish Buddhist temples on battlefields at the beginning of his reign. The decree has three documentations with textual variations. It is called “Edict of Establishing Temples For Places Where Battles Occurred” (*wei zhanzhen chu li si zhao* 為戰陣處立寺詔) in the *Quan Tang wen*, 5.59b-60a; “Edicts of Establishing Buddhist Temples For Those Who Died In Troops and Battles” (*wei yunshen rongzhen zhe li sisha zhao* 為殞身戎陣者立寺剎詔) in *Tang da zhaoling ji*, 113.586; and “Edict by Emperor Taizong of the Tang, of the Seven Temples Established On Battlefields” (*Tang Taizong yu hangzhen suo li qisi zhao* 唐太宗於行陣所立七寺詔) in *Guang hongming ji* 28 (T 2103), 52.328c. At the end of the *Tang da zhaoling ji* version, there is an annotation saying “decreed in the third year of the Zhenguan reign (629).” The month of the decree’s enactment is controversial. The *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 edition of the *Tang da zhaoling ji* says 閏十二月 “the epactic twelfth month.” The *Shangwu yingshu guan* 商務印書館 1958 edition, based on one of the four greatest Qing private libraries, *tieqin tongjian lou* 鐵琴銅劍樓’s copy, which was collated by 顧廣圻 (1766-1835), says 閏十一月 “the epactic eleventh month.” Both versions reached a consensus on the year 629. This thesis quoted the *Shangwu yinshu guan* version and used its page number previously in this note. For this edict’s *Tang da zhaoling ji* version in the *Siku*, see *Tang da zhaoling ji* 113, *Siku quanshu* 92.3b.

¹²⁹ *Shi* 釋 is the initial syllable in traditional Chinese transcription of *Sakyamuni* as *shi jia mu ni* 釋迦牟尼, the founder of Buddhism. Thus the “Shi family” is used as a counterpart to the “Li family,” respectively referring to Buddhism and Daoism.

¹³⁰ *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 3 (T 2104), 52.386a.

supremacy overrides the emperor's own filial devotion, one of the central tenets and key virtue of Confucian ethics, not to mention any other creeds. The speech itself, during Li Shimin's visit to the memorial temple of his late Buddhist mother, already manifests the inevitability of degrading even the Confucian teachings in face of the need to emphasize the imperial power; his reiteration of "I regard the ancestor of my clan as primary" 朕以先宗在前 is an even more serious and authoritarian reinforcement of the fact that he is first an emperor of the Tang of Li's, then a person or a son. Second, the end of his speech did not hide its attempt to devastate the monks: it is the Li's family ruling the state nowadays, thus Daoism, as the ancestor of the Li's clan, must prevail. The current sovereign of the clan was telling them: not until my court gets overthrown one day, may any non-Daoist school be treated equally. My ancestry is greater than my family; my family is greater than you. Combined, the last part of his speech, in every aspect, leaves no room for hope or suspicion at all in a tradition that values ancestry (*ben* 本). With the monks only able to rise and express their gratitude to Emperor Taizong's visit, (*seng deng qixie* 僧等起谢), this affair came to an end. Before the emperor said his final, decisive sentence in the Hongfu temple: 是弟子意 不述不知 "These are the disciple's (my) genuine thoughts. Without telling, they will not be known!"¹³¹

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

III. Cheng Xuanying

Our protagonist, Cheng Xuanying 成玄英, is neither well-documented in the official histories nor in the Daoist hagiographies; he has no biographies in *Jiu Tang shu*, *Xin Tang shu*, or *Comprehensive Mirror of Perfected Immortals and Those Who Embodied the Dao Through Ages* (*Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian* 歷世真仙體道通鑒) by Zhao Daoyi 趙道一 (fl.1294-1307), the most extensive and comprehensive Daoist biographical collection up to the year 1294.¹³² Of his life the earliest record preserved is a short fifty-nine-word introduction attached to a list of Cheng Xuanying's work in the "Bibliographical Record" (*yiwen zhi* 藝文志) in the *Xin Tang shu*, – ninety-one words including the list of work. It illustrates a relatively complete picture of a once-famous figure turned exile and reflects a typical Tang dynasty scholar-official's life.

道士成玄英注老子道德經二卷 又開題序訣義疏七卷 注莊子三十卷 疏十二卷 玄英字子實 陝州人 隱居東海 貞觀五年召至京師 永徽中流郁州 書成 道王元慶遣文學賈鼎就授大義 嵩高山人李利涉為序 唯老子注莊子疏著錄

The Daoist Cheng Xuanying made two volumes of commentaries on *Laozi Daode jing*, and also seven volumes of subcommentary on (*Laozi*) *kaiti xujue*. He made thirty volumes of commentary on *Zhuangzi* and twelve volumes of (its) subcommentary. Xuanying, styled Zishi, was a native of Shan Prefecture,¹³³ and

¹³² See the note 76 on Wang Gui for Zhao Daoyi's and *Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian*'s reference.

¹³³ In modern Henan 河南 Province.

lived in seclusion in Donghai.¹³⁴ In the fifth year of the Zhenguan reign (631) he arrived in the capital¹³⁵ by imperial decree. In the middle of the Yonghui reign (650-655), he was banished to Yuzhou.¹³⁶ When the texts (listed above) were completed, King of Dao (Prefecture), (Li) Yuanqing,¹³⁷ dispatched an Instructor, Jia Ding,¹³⁸ to approach him and be instructed of (those texts') general meaning. Li Lishe from Mount Song prefaced his book.¹³⁹ Among his works only

¹³⁴ Southeast of present-day Lianyungang 連雲港 in Jiangsu 江蘇 Province. For a detailed study on the place Donghai 東海, see Yu Shiyi, *Reading the Chuang-tzu in the T'ang Dynasty: The Commentary of Ch'eng Hsüan-ying* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2000), 44-53.

¹³⁵ "The capital" refers to Chang'an.

¹³⁶ Also around present-day Lianyungang 連雲港 in Jiangsu 江蘇 Province. According to Yu Shiyi (*Reading the Chuang-tzu in the T'ang Dynasty*, 46), Yuzhou and Donghai are the same place, although his idea still needs further investigation. Cheng Xuanying was probably banished to the Yuntai 雲臺 mountain there.

¹³⁷ "King of Dao Prefecture, Yuanqing" (*Daowang Yuanqing* 道王元慶) only appears in *Xin Tang shu* version. It corrupts into two other versions: "A Daoist, Wang Yuanqing" (*daoshi Wang Yuanqing* 道士王元慶) in all versions of Chao Gongwu 晁公武's *Bibliographical Records of (Chao) Junzhai's Studio* (*Junzhai dushuzhi* 郡齋讀書志), and "a Daoist, Yuanqing" (*daoshi Yuanqing* 道士元慶) in Ma Duanlin 馬端臨's *A Comprehensive Investigation of Bibliographical Records* (*Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考). The textual comparison will be discussed later in this section. However, multiple pieces of evidence point to the fact that the "Daowang Yuanqing" is the correct reading. Yuanqing refers to Li Yuanqing 李元慶 (d.664), the sixteenth son of Li Yuan's. He was entitled King of Dao 道 Prefecture (in modern Hunan 湖南 Province) in the sixth year of the Zhenguan reign (636) and kept his title until death in the first year of the Linde 麟德 reign of his nephew Li Zhi 李治 – Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (664). For Li Yuanqing's biographies, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 64.2432 and *Xin Tang shu*, 79.3556. For geographical information on the Dao Prefecture, see Li Linfu 李林甫 (683-753) comp., *The Six Codes of the Tang* (*Tang liudian* 唐六典) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992), 3.70. No matter his geographical location or his living time, he is very likely to be the one who was "dispatched" as an educational official to study with Cheng Xuanying after Cheng was exiled into Yuzhou in modern Jiangsu. On the contrary, there is no record of any Daoist called Wang Yuanqing 王元慶. Thus, in my translation, I take the "King of Dao, Li Yuanqing" reading.

¹³⁸ Unknown.

¹³⁹ Li Lishe 李利涉 has no biographies in any official histories. However, we know that this is a Tang figure. Yu Shiyi, in his monograph, refers Li Lishe to Lishe 利涉 the Buddhist monk who was the student of the famous Xuanzang 玄奘 (596-664) and whose name appears in Zanning 贊寧 (918-999)'s *Biographies of Eminent Monks in the Song Dynasty* (*Song gaozeng zhuan* 宋高僧傳) 17 (T 2061), 50.815a-b. See *Reading the Chuang-tzu in the Tang Dynasty*, 44-45, note 5. I disagree with Yu's view. Although Li Lishe's life is not documented, his identity very clear. Li Lishe was a Tang genealogical scholar that experienced the misfortune of being banished to the South, a fate similar to Cheng Xuanying. Maybe he was a Daoist hermit in Mount Song 嵩 as he was called "a mountain man" (*shanren* 山人) in *Xin Tang shu*; but it is sure from their biographies and from the fact they lived during the turbulent of

Buddho-Daoist contention that Cheng Xuanying's prefacer, Li Lishe, had nothing to do with Lishe the monk. At least a monk in the early Tang would never take the royal family's secular surname, Li.

1) The second volume of the "Yiwen zhi" of *Xin Tang shu* records: 李利涉 唐官姓氏記五卷 初十卷 利涉貶南方 亡其半 "Under the name Li Lishe, there are five volumes of *Records of the Surnames of Tang Officials*. At first there were ten volumes. Lishe was demoted and sent to the South. He lost half of his work." *Xin Tang shu*, 58.1501.

2) The earliest Chinese epigraphic collection, *Colophons to Record of Collecting Antiquities (Jigulu bawei 集古錄跋尾)*, compiled by Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) in the Northern Song Dynasty, mentioned Li Lishe's name and another work of his – *Bian gumingshi 編古命氏*— and specifies him as a Tang figure in one of the Han 漢 stone inscriptions in front of a general's tomb: 唐李利涉編古命氏 北海逢氏有名絲字子繡者.... "A Tang figure Li Lishe's *A Compilation of Ancient Surnames* (says): 'The Pang clan at Beihai has someone who is named Si (*silk*) and style-named Zixiu (*Master Embroidery*) ...'" See *Jigulu bawei* 9, in 朱記榮 (1836-1905) comp., *Xingsu caotang jinshi congshu 行素草堂金石叢書* (Wuxian 吳縣 Zhushi huailu jiaokanben, 1887), 19.3a.

3) Two Southern Song *collectiae* support the existence of Li Lishe's *Bian gumingshi*: The first work is an epigraphic catalogue of inscriptions, *Encyclopedic Catalogue of Treasured Inscriptions (Baoke congbian 寶刻叢編)* compiled by a Southern Song book seller, Chen Si 陳思 (fl. 1224-1264). He was active in Lin'an 臨安, the modern greater Hangzhou 杭州 are in Zhejiang 浙江 Province. In his catalogue, he included what Ouyang Xiu said about Li Lishe's *Jigulu bawei*, but provided much more details that bolster the credibility of the record. See Chen Si comp., *Baoke congbian (SKQS)*, 2.14b-15a. The second one is Wang Yinglin 王應麟 (1223-1296)'s encyclopedia, *Jade Sea (Yuhai 玉海)*. *Yuhai* specifies the time when *Bian gumingshi* was composed. 唐編古命氏 書目永隆二年李利涉撰 三卷凡二百五十六姓 著胄系之始 其末又載諸氏族譜一卷云 梁天監七年 中丞王僧孺所撰 俾士流案此譜 乃通昏姻 貞觀六年 又命高士廉等氏族明加禁約 "A *Compilation of Ancient Surnames* in the Tang time: this book is composed by Li Lishe in the second year of Yonglong reign (681). It has three volumes and two-hundred and fifty-six surnames in total. It recounts the beginning of each clan. At its end, it documents another volume of 'Genealogies of Various Clans' and says: 'In the seventh year of the Tianjian reign in the Liang Dynasty (508), this text was composed by the Vice Censor-in-Chief, Wang Sengru (465-522). (Its completion) culminates in people circulating and inspecting this genealogy, based on which they conducted matrimony. In the sixth year of the Zhenguan reign (632), again (the emperor) commanded Gao Shilian and the like (scholars) to put clear and strict prohibition on such (matrimonial) rules.'" After the name of *Bian gumingshi*, comes the *Tanguan xingshiji* mentioned earlier in the *Xin Tang shu*. Wang Yinglin comp., *Yuhai (SKQS)*, 50.35a-b. Combining the historical background explained in chapter 2 about the compilation and textual history of *Shizu zhi*, it is credible to believe that this *Bian gumingshi* – compiled after Emperor Taizong has already strictly banned such genealogical texts and clearly decreed the Li clan to be the most venerable of all – might be the reason that its compiler, Li Lishe, was "demoted and sent to the South" around the year 681. This identity of Li Lishe is also tenable for him to be a prefacer of Cheng Xuanying's *Subcommentary on Zhuangzi*. Cheng Xuanying's life will be discussed later in this section.

4) The "Yiwen zhi" of *The History of the Song Dynasty (Song shi 宋史)* records a third and fourth work by Li Lishe, both of which are genealogical investigations: three volumes of *A Sketch of the Secret of Surnames (Xingshi milüe 姓氏祕略)* and five volumes of *The Five Tones Resemble (The Nature of Various Clans) (Wusheng lei shizu 五聲類氏族)*. See Toqto'a (*Tuotuo 脫脫*) (1314-1356) comp., *Song shi 宋史* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 204.5148.

Commentary on Laozi (Laozi zhu) and *Subcommentary on Zhuangzi (Zhuangzi shu)* are listed in (any) catalogue.¹⁴⁰

This short note becomes the base text for all three later introductions of Cheng Xuanying. However, this *Xin Tang shu* note does not include what is thought of as Cheng Xuanying's greatest title: Master of Doctrine at the Xihua Abbey (*Xihua fashi* 西華法師). The first biographical document that associates Cheng Xuanying's name with the title *Xihua fashi* is the *Bibliographical Records of (Chao) Junzhai's Studio (Junzhai dushuzhi* 郡齋讀書志), a Southern Song 宋 *collectea* by Chao Gongwu 晁公武 (1105-1180). *Junzhai dushuzhi* has a complicated textual history stemming from two distinct original editions,¹⁴¹ but all editions share the feature of adding the title *Xihua fashi* to Cheng Xuanying's years in Chang'an. Ever since the *Junzhai dushuzhi*, later texts such as *Zhizhai Studio's Bibliographical Catalogue with Explanations (Zhizhai shulu jieti* 直齋書錄解題) by Chen Zhensun 陳振孫 (b.1183) a hundred years later, and *A Comprehensive Investigation of Bibliographical Records (Wenxian tongkao* 文獻通考) by Ma Duanlin 馬端臨 (1254-1323) even one more century later at the beginning of the Yuan 元 dynasty, all presume Cheng must have held the title of *Xihua fashi*. The last two texts on this list mostly reiterate and combine what was said in the *Xin Tang shu* and the *Junzhai dushuzhi*. For a textual comparison across 1) *Junzhai dushuzhi*'s editions, 2) the *Xin Tang shu* note that *Junzhai dushuzhi* is based on, and 3) the *Zhizhai shulu jieti* and *Wenxian tongkao* that took their bases on *Junzhai dushuzhi*,¹⁴² see Table 1 for reference. If we combine all editions and make a

¹⁴⁰ *Xin Tang shu*, 59.1517.

¹⁴¹ I will dedicate a whole sub-section later to discuss the editions and textual history of *Junzhai dushuzhi*.

¹⁴² In the preface of *Wenxian Tongkao*, Ma Duanlin clearly states that the material of his *collectea* was based on Chao Gongwu's. Also, as one can see from Table 1, Ma Duanlin was explicitly quoting the

comprehensive recount of Cheng Xuanying's biography in *Junzhai dushuzhi*, (yes, this is my 'edition'), then it would read:

玄英字子實 陝州人 隱居東海 貞觀五年召至京師 加號西華法師 永徽中流
 郁州 不知坐何事 書成 道士王元慶邀文學賈鼎就授大義 嵩高山人李利涉為之
 序疏 序云周字子休 師長桑公子 內篇理深 故別立篇目 外篇雜篇其題取篇首
 二字而已

Xuanying, styled Zishi, was a native of Shan Prefecture. He lived in seclusion in Donghai. In the fifth year of the Zhenguan reign he arrived in the capital by imperial decree, and then was conferred the title of “Master of Doctrine at the Xihua abbey.” In the middle of the Yonghui reign, he was banished to Yuzhou, without knowing what crime he was convicted of. When the text was completed, a Daoist, Wang Yuanqing, invited an Instructor, Jia Ding, to approach him and be instructed of (the text's) general meaning.¹⁴³ The “mountain-man” from Mount Song, Li Lishe, prefaced and further sub-commented on it. In (Li's) preface he says: “(Zhuang) Zhou is styled Zixiu. He was taught by Master Changsang (tall-mulberry). His ‘Inner Chapters’ have deep truths. His ‘Outer Chapters’ and

Quzhou 衢州 edition despite one slight change, or mistake, from 道士王元慶 to 道士元慶. However, *Zhizhai shulu jieti* has a different nature. Chen Zhensun was making his own collectea, only based on the formatting and the cataloguing methodology of *Junzhai dushuzhi*.

¹⁴³ For the difference between “Yuanqing the King of Dao Prefecture dispatched Jia Ding” and “a Daoist Wang Yuanqing invited Jia Ding,” see explained above in note 137 and below.

‘Miscellaneous Chapters’ are titled by nothing but the first two characters of each text.”¹⁴⁴

The following table shows a comparison of Cheng Xuanying’s biography. Here for the various editions of *Junzhai dushu zhi*, I am only listing the last collections that each edition was received and the compilers of those collections – if any collection was compiled by an individual. In parentheses are the names and dates of the original composers and each edition’s corresponding Qing compilers. For the orderliness of the table, I will only use Chinese in each cell.

¹⁴⁴ As said, this “edition” does not occur in any real texts. This is my combination of all information in various editions of *Junzhai dushuzhi* for the sake of convenience in being able to translate and present as much as possible into English.

新唐書 (宋祁 歐陽修) (1060)	郡齋讀書志 (ca.1170) (晁公武)			文獻通考 (馬端臨) (ca.1300)	直齋書錄解題 (陳振孫) (ca.1240)	
	袁州本 (1254)		衢州本 (1254)			光緒甲申 王氏棻藏 衢袁合本 (王先謙) (1884)
	四庫全書 史部 (1782)	四部叢刊 三編 (1936)	宛委別藏 (阮元) (ca.1820)			
道士成玄英 …… 注莊子三十卷 疏十二卷	南華真經疏/疏 ¹⁴⁵ 三十三卷		成元英莊子 疏三十三卷	成元英莊子 疏三十三卷	成元英莊子 疏三十三卷	莊子疏 三十卷
	右成玄英 撰本	右唐成玄英 撰本	右唐道士 成元英撰	右唐成元英 撰本	鼂氏曰唐道士 成元英 ¹⁴⁶ 撰本	唐道士西華法師 陝郡成玄英 子實撰
玄/元英字子實 陝州人 隱居東海 貞觀五年召至京師 ¹⁴⁷						
——	加號西華法師					——
永徽中流郁州						
——	不知坐何事		——	不知坐何事		
書成						
道王元慶	道士王元慶			道士元慶		
遣文學賈鼎 就授大義	邀文學賈鼎就授大義 ¹⁴⁸					——
嵩高山人 李利涉為序	嵩高山人 李利涉為之序疏/疏云		序云			
——	莊周字子休		周字子休			

¹⁴⁵ *Siku* uses 疏 and *Sibu* uses 疏. I will not specify this again later in this thesis.

¹⁴⁶ Ma Duanlin wrote Cheng's name as Yuanying 元英 instead of Xuanying 玄英. This is a mis-transcription in the Southern Song Dynasty owing to the merge of the non-labial *yuán* 元 rime with the *xiān* 仙 rime in the late Middle Chinese: 元 *ɲjwɔn* > *ɲjɛn* and 玄 *hwɛn* > *xjɛn*. Therefore, with 成 *tɕʰɛŋ* before 玄 *xjɛn*, the initial of 玄 *xjɛn* assimilates with the ending of 成 and is easy to be mistakenly transcribed as 元 *ɲjɛn*, creating this pseudo-textual variant.

¹⁴⁷ The use of *xuan* 玄 VS *yuan* 元 is consistent according to each text. I will not specify this again later in this thesis.

¹⁴⁸ Based on the identity of the subject of this sentence – 道王元慶 “King of Dao, (Li) Yuanqing” versus 道士(王)元慶 “Daoist (Wang) Yuanqing”, there is a “dispatched” (*qian* 遣) versus “invited” (*yao* 邀) textual variation accordingly. The former reading in the *Xin Tang shu* is the correct one; see previous notes 137 and 143 on Li Yuanqing. Only when the subject is a King, might he “dispatch” someone; a Daoist could only “invite” an educational official to study with Cheng Xuanying if he wanted to. Thus, it is likely that Chao Gongwu changed the main verb from *qian* to *yao* according to the collapse and misunderstanding of the identity of Yuanqing; and later scholar followed Chao Gongwu without further investigation.

	——	師長桑公子 內篇理深 故別立篇目 外篇雜篇其題取篇首二字而已				
唯老子注莊子疏 著錄	——					唐藝文志云
59.1517	3a.17b-18a	3a.14b	11.8a	11.10a-b	211.1733c	9.287

Table 1: Textual Comparison of Cheng Xuanying's biography

This table reveals three major problems. First, Cheng Xuanying's birth and death time are unknown. We can deduce his birth time by the only specific year number across all versions: the fifth year of the Zhenguan reign, i.e. year 631, when that he was summoned to Chang'an by Emperor's Taizong's decree. In the Tang dynasty, when someone was summoned by the emperor to the capital, that means that he was discovered to be an unusual talent in some areas the emperor took an interest in. For example, Emperor Taizong also summoned Sun Simiao 孫思邈 (ca.537-682)¹⁴⁹ to the capital because he excelled in classics and medicine.¹⁵⁰ Two Daoist figures, Sima Zhengzhen 司馬承禎 (647-735) and Wu Jun 吳筠 (d.778) were both summoned

¹⁴⁹ Sun Simiao's biography is in the *Jiu Tang shu*, 191.5094-6 and the *Xin Tang shu*, 196.5596-8. It seems unlikely that Sun Simiao has lived for about a hundred and forty-five years; but this is what could be deducted from his biographies in both of the Tang official histories. The two Tang histories reached a consensus in respect to his age. Combining the information from both documents, Sun Simiao was in his twenties (*ruoguan* 弱冠) when Dugu Xin 獨孤信 (512-557) saw him and was extremely impressed with the young man's wit (*Jiu Tang shu*, 191.5094). According to both the *Bei shi* and the *History of the (Northern) Zhou (Zhou shu 周書)*, Dugu Xin was forced to commit suicide in the first and only year of the sixteen-year-old Emperor Xiaomin 孝閔's reign in the Northern Zhou (557). See *Bei shi*, 61.2170 and Linghu Defen 令狐德棻 comp., *Zhou shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 16.267 for Dugu Xin's death. Therefore, Sun Simiao must have been born at least twenty years before 557, which makes his birth year at latest 537. Sun Simiao's death year was definitive. He died in the first year of the Yongchun 永淳 reign, which is year 682. See *Jiu Tang shu*, 191.5096. Although the *Xin Tang shu* only says that he died at the beginning of the Yongchun reign, since the Yongchun reign of Emperor Gaozong only lasted for less than two years, its beginning must mark the year 682. In addition, the *Xin Tang shu* also says that he was over a hundred years of age by his death. See *Xin Tang shu*, 196.5598. Thus, Sun Simiao did live for about a hundred and forty-five years according to the two Tang official histories. Nevertheless, there is no circumstantial evidence to support Sun Simiao's age and validate the accuracy of these records.

¹⁵⁰ The year of Sun Simiao's arrival at Chang'an is unknown. The *Xin Tang shu* only says 太宗初召至京師 "it was the beginning of Taizong's reign, that (Sun) was summoned to the capital." See *Xin Tang shu*, 196.5596. So Sun Simiao was summoned around the year 630.

by Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 in his Kaiyuan 開元 reign (713-741) and Tianbao 天寶 reign (742-756); Sima Chengzhen was summoned to collate the new version of imperially-compiled *Laozi*, and Wu Jun for his literary talent in composing Daoist poems.¹⁵¹ Then, after Wu Jun's arrival at Chang'an, he recommended Li Bo 李白 (701-762), a godly poet who had already been well-reputed among literati, and Li Bo was immediately summoned.¹⁵² For the person summoned there would always be an official post in the store, provided he was willing to accept it. In this respect, such person did not have to take the state examinations (*keju* 科舉) in order to acquire an official position. For Cheng Xuanying to be such a summoned talent, he at least had to be in his adulthood. Compared to the ages of the people listed above when they were summoned to capital, Cheng Xuanying might as well be in his late twenties or early thirties in the year 631. This means that the latest he could have been born was the first decade of the seventh century (600-610). As for his death year, there is a Tang gazeteer of Luoyang (the Eastern Capital) and Chang'an (the Western Capital), named *New Records of the Two Capitals* (*Liang jing xinji* 兩京新記). Its compilation was finished in the tenth year of the Kaiyuan reign (722) by Wei Shu 韋述 (d.757), and it records: "During the Chuigong reign (685-688), there was a Daoist priest Cheng Xuanying who was skilled in exposition. He composed several works on *Zhuangzi* and *Laozi*, and they were popular in his time."¹⁵³ Cheng Xuanying must have lived through the year 688, as

¹⁵¹ For Sima Chengzhen's and Wu Jun's biographies (including their summoning to the capital), see *Jiu Tang shu*, 192.5127-9 and *Ibid.*, 192.5129-30; *Xin Tang shu*, 196.5605-6 and *Ibid.*, 196.5604-5. Sima Chengzhen was summoned in the ninth year of Kaiyuan reign (721). See *Jiu Tang shu*, 192.5128. The year of Wu Jun's summoning is unknown. The *Jiu Tang shu* has no record of time. and according to the *Xin Tang shu*, it was 天寶初 "at the beginning of the Tianbao reign." See *Xin Tang shu*, 196.5604. So Wu Jun was summoned around the year 745.

¹⁵² For Li Bo's biography, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 190.5053-4 and *Xin Tang shu*, 202.5762-4. Li Bo was also summoned at around 745, not too late after Wu Jun's arrival.

¹⁵³ 垂拱中有道士成玄英長於言論 著莊老數部 行於時也. Xin Deyong 辛德勇, *Liangjing xinji jijiao* 兩京新記輯校 (Xi'an: Sanqin chubanshe, 2006), 3.65.

Emperor Ruizong 睿宗's reign name did not switch from Chuigong to the next one, Zaichu 載初, until the second month of 689. If Cheng Xuanying was born in the first decade of the seventh century, he would be in his late seventies, or eighties, in year 688. The Chuigong reign was probably the end of his years. He might have died around year 690.¹⁵⁴

Second, since the *Xin Tang shu* did not mention the *fashi* title of Cheng Xuanying, one might wonder which other text did *Junzhai dushuzhi* use as its basis on. Before the *Junzhai dushuzhi*, the only text that titles Cheng Xuanying as *fashi* is the preface to the *Commentaries and Subcommentaries to the Real Canon of Southern Hua* (*Nanhua zhenjing zhushu* 南華真經註疏). It is preserved in *The Daoist Canon Storehouse in the Zhengtong Reign* (*Zhengtong Daozang* 正統道藏). *Daozang* is an imperially-sponsored collection of Daoist texts kept in the imperial libraries; its compilation started in the second year of the Yongle 永樂 reign (1403) and finished in the tenth year of the Zhengtong 正統 reign (1445) of the Ming 明 Dynasty. This is the earliest received version of the whole text of Cheng Xuanying's *Zhuangzi shu*. The preface to the *Nanhua zhenjing zhushu* is made up of two parts, both are written in the first person. The first part is Guo Xiang's preface "*Nanhua zhenjing xu*" 南華真經序, after the title of which the authorship writes 河南郭象子玄撰 "composed by Guo Xiang, (styled) Zixuan, in Henan";¹⁵⁵ the second part is Cheng Xuanying's preface "*Nanhua zhenjing shu xu*" 南華真經疏序, followed by 唐西華法師成玄英撰 "composed by Cheng Xuanying, the *fashi* at the Xihua Abbey in the

¹⁵⁴ Yu Shiyi claimed that Cheng Xuanying died around year 660 with no explanation. See *Reading the Chuang-tzu in the T'ang Dynasty*, 1. I don't know how he reached that conclusion.

¹⁵⁵ HY 16.273b

Tang.”¹⁵⁶ Chao Gongwu might have incorporated this information at the beginning of the “*Nanhua zhenjing shu xu*” into the *Xin Tang shu*’s note, to make his own version.

There is an important reason that makes one suspicious of the reliability of this piece of information as well as the authenticity of the line of authorship in “*Nanhua zhenjing shu xu*”—no documents contemporary to Cheng Xuanying’s time referred to him as *Xihua fashi*. In both Daoxuan’s *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* and Daoshi 道世 (d.683)’s¹⁵⁷ *Pearl Forest of the Dharma Park* (*Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林), he was a “Daoist adept at the Xihua abbey” (*Xihuaguan daoshi* 西華觀道士).¹⁵⁸ In the *Jiu Tang shu*, the *Xin Tang shu*, and the *Liangjing xinji*, he was “the Daoist Cheng Xuanying” (*daoshi Cheng Xuanying* 道士成玄英).¹⁵⁹ Even in the *Laozi* section of the *Junzhai dushuzhi*, when Chao Gongwu was cataloguing the work of a High-to-mid Tang Daoist, Zhang Junxiang 張君相, he mentioned Cheng Xuanying’s appellation in Zhang Junxiang’s time – slightly after the Tianbao reign (ca.760): “the Daoist of the August Court” (*huangchao daoshi* 皇朝道士).¹⁶⁰ Across Buddhist history and encyclopedia, official histories, and Daoist work, Cheng Xuanying was nowhere a *fashi*. Neither was Qin Shiyong 秦世英 nor Guo Xingzhen 郭行真, Cheng Xuanying’s predecessor and successor in the Xihua Abbey, ever called a *Xihua fashi*. What makes *Junzhai dushuzhi* – the compilation time of which was a century later from that of the *Xin Tang shu*, nearly three hundred later than the time when

¹⁵⁶ HY 16.273c.

¹⁵⁷ Daoshi was a monk at the Ximing 西明 Temple in Chang’an. He was the brother of Daoxuan. For Daoshi’s biography, see *Song gaoseng zhuan* 4 (T 2061), 50.726c.

¹⁵⁸ *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 3 (T 2104), 52.239; *Fayuan zhulin* 55 (T 2122), 53.708a. For *Fayuan zhulin*’s reference, also see Zhou Shujia 周叔迦 and Su Jinren 蘇晉仁, *Fayuan zhulin jiaoshi* 法苑珠林校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003), 55.1675. From now on, this thesis will quote the *Fayuan zhulin jiaoshi* version only.

¹⁵⁹ *Jiu Tang shu*, 47.2029, *Xin Tang shu*, 59.1518, and *Liangjing xinji jijiao*, 3.65.

¹⁶⁰ *Zhaode xiansheng Junzhai dushu zhi*, 3.10b-11a.

Zhuangzi was sanctified as *Nanhua zhenjing*,¹⁶¹ and five hundred years away from Cheng Xuanying’s lifetime – the first text to incorporate his *fashi* identity into Cheng Xuanying’s reference, even when the compiler himself knows that Cheng was previously merely referred to as a *huangchao daoshi*?

The answer to this problem needs an explanation of the change of *fashi*’s meaning as a Daoist tradition. It had very different meanings in Chao Gongwu’s time and in Cheng Xuanying’s time. The first Daoist figure that was clearly referred to as *fashi* was Lu Xiujing 陸修靜 (406-477) in the Liu-Song 劉宋 Dynasty. He was referred to as “*Fashi* of the Three Grottoes” (*sandong fashi* 三洞法師) in the Liang 梁 dynasty, a few decades after his time;¹⁶² his title, “Lu *fashi* 陸法師,” also appeared at the beginning of the “On Transmission of the *Supreme-Quality*”¹⁶³ and the ‘Ten-

¹⁶¹ The sanctification of *Zhuangzi* into a Daoist canon was in the first year of the Tianbao reign (908).

¹⁶² “*Sandong fashi* Lu Xiujing” 三洞法師陸修靜 appears in the inscription on a stele in front of the Jianji Abbey 簡寂觀, written by Shen Xuan 沈璿/璇 in the Liang Dynasty. The Jianji Abbey is where Lu Xiujing resided. It was originally named the Taixu 太虛 Abbey. Since Lu Xiujing was posthumously titled “Master Simple-and-Solitary” (*jianji xiansheng* 簡寂先生) by Emperor Later-Abolished (*Houfei* 后廢) (r.473-477) of the Liu-Song Dynasty shortly after Lu’s death, the Taixu Abbey was renamed as the Jianji Abbey ever since. The inscription is catalogued as “Jianji Abbey Inscription of the Liang” (*Liang Jianji guan bei* 梁簡寂觀碑) in the second volume of a Southern Song geographical treatise, *Superb Scenery of the Empire Recorded* (*Yudi jisheng* 輿地紀勝) by Wang Xiangzhi 王象之 (1163-1230). Its first four volumes were extracted as a separate epigraphical catalogue, the *Catalogue of Inscriptional Records of the Empire* (*Yudi beiji mu* 輿地碑記目), and only this four-volume catalogue was included in the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (*SKQS*). Thus the “Inscription on the Jianji Abbey Stele” is documented in both collections; its author documents 梁太子僕射沈璿撰 “Composed by Shen Xuan, the Supervisor of the Heir-Designate (*taizi puyi*).” For the *SKQS* version of the text, see *Yudi beiji mu* (*SKQS*), 2.1a. Neither the *Yudi meiji mu* in the *Siku* nor the *Yudi jisheng* show the content of the “Inscription on the Jianji Abbey Stele”; the only place that documents its content is the “Steles and Inscriptions” (*beijie* 碑碣) section of the *Provincial Gazetteer of Jiangxi* (*Jiangxi tongzhi* 江西通志), compiled by the Governor (*xunfu* 巡撫) of the Jiangxi Province, Xie Min 謝旻, who flourished in the Yongzheng 雍正 reign (1722-1735) in the Qing 清 Dynasty. In the *Jiangxi tongzhi* we can see its author – as Shen Xuan 沈璿 in this version – referring to Lu Xiujing as *sandong fashi*. See *Jiangxi tongzhi* (*SKQS*), 120.1b.

¹⁶³ The “Supreme-quality” (*shangpin* 上品) refers to the primary Lingbao 靈寶 Daoist canon: *The Supreme-Quality Marvelous Canon on the Lingbao* (*Sect*)’s *Measureless Salvation of People* (*Lingbao wuliang duren shangpin miaojing* 靈寶無量度人上品妙經). This is the first and opening canon in *Daozang*. See *HY* 1.1-417.

Prohibitions,¹⁶⁴ Selections and Arrangements of (Daoist Offices), and Proscriptions and Punishment” (*shou shangpin shijie xuanshu jinfa* 授上品十戒選署禁罰) section of a Daoist ceremonial precept that he compiled, the *Dongxuan lingbao shuo guangzhu jiefadeng zhuyuanyi* 洞玄靈寶齋說光燭戒罰燈祝願儀.¹⁶⁵ In the same text, Lu Xiujing demonstrated a *fashi*’s major task: practicing the Daoist ritual ceremony (*xing zhai* 行齋法). To be more specific, there are four steps in general: 1) explaining the set of rules for awesome observances, including the “ten-prohibitions,”¹⁶⁶ 2) expounding on (Daoist) essential truths when asked,¹⁶⁷ 3) selecting and arranging the positions of various offices,¹⁶⁸ and 4) promulgating the codes and claiming the prohibitions, and re-emphasizing the rules for awesome observances in the end.¹⁶⁹ He further explains missions and qualities of a *fashi* as:

當舉高德	He should take the lead in eminent virtue,
玄解經義	and explain canons and meanings in an abstruse way.
斯人也	As for this person,
道德內充	He is filled with the Way and the Power inside,
威儀外備	And full of awesome demeanors outside.
俯仰動止	His lowering and raising, his action and cessation,

¹⁶⁴ The “ten-prohibitions” (*shijie* 十戒) refers to ten Daoist rules that prohibits its adepts from non-religious behaviors. These ten rules are expounded in this section. It would be a *fashi*’s job to declare and explain them. See *HY* 9.823b-c.

¹⁶⁵ Lu Xiujing’s title “Lu *fashi*” appears on *HY* 9.823a. The whole text of the precept is *HY* 9.823a-6a.

¹⁶⁶ 說戒威儀. *HY* 9.823b.

¹⁶⁷ 唯當請問法師經義禁戒 法師當為解說真要. *HY* 9.824c.

¹⁶⁸ 選署眾官. *HY* 9.824c.

¹⁶⁹ 宣科說禁 告示威儀. *HY* 9.825b.

- 莫非法式 None of them are not regulated by (Daoist) doctrines.
- 三界所範 He is what the “three worlds” model;
- 鬼神所瞻 He is what ghosts and deities look up to;
- 關啟祝願 He starts each invocation and prayer;
- 通真召靈 He is connected with the Truth, and (is able to) summon spirits.
- 釋疑解滯 He explains uncertainties and unfolds the obstructions;
- 導達羣賢 He leads the various worthy people to arrive (at the utmost).¹⁷⁰

and his job, as a *fashi*, in Daoist ritual procedure as:

齋日燒香 上講都講當率眾官 先下牀 西向倚 法師然後下座 引行尊卑 以次
安行雅步 到於道戶 不得更相越錯 遲疾不均皆依事糾罰 燒香竟 及下講 率眾
官先出治戶 還悉西向倚 法師後至上牀 眾官一時禮一拜 然後就坐 道士登齋
起居 皆當關白監齋 禮法師一拜 次禮香三拜而去

The Day of Rituals (starts with) burning incense. The Highest Preacher and the Leading Preacher should lead the various offices to rise from their seats, and all lean towards the west. Then, the *fashi* rises from his seat, leading the procession (of Daoists that line up according to their) high and low rankings. In regular sequence, they pace slowly and elegantly, until they arrive at the gate. They may not stride over each other. If (their paces) are not equal in speed, (the *fashi*) would

¹⁷⁰ HY 9.825a.

accordingly correct and punish them all. When the incense is completely burnt, it comes to the Lower Preacher's turn, who would lead various offices out of the gate first, and again all lean towards the west. After that, the *fashi* ascends the raised seat. The various offices bow (to the *fashi*) once at a time. They take their seats after that. As for the Daoists adepts' activities and reposes during the rituals, they all need to be reported to the Observer of the Ritual, then bow once to the *fashi* and bow thrice to the incense before they go.¹⁷¹

From Lu Xiujing's record, we can see that *fashi* was a title for someone who was in charge of ritual procedures in pre-Tang times. Though it required a sufficiently capable and revered Daoist to take the responsibility, *fashi* was mainly a term for the undertaker of a job during ceremonial days, instead of a hierarchical ranking of a person. This meaning of *fashi* was carried on until the emergence of the Complete Reality (*quanzhen* 全真) School of Daoism in the middle of the twelfth century – between the completions of the *Xin Tang shu* and the *Junzhai dushuzhi* – with the prosperity of which *fashi* became a title that ranked the highest position among Daoists. Since the *Quanzhen* was the dominant sect of Daoism almost right after its establishment, its terms might be taken for granted as general Daoist terms. Therefore, even if Cheng Xuanying was indeed a *fashi* at the Xihua Abbey, it was nothing more than a job description than a prestigious title. My conjecture is that the authorship line in the “*Nanhua zhenjing shu xu*,” that says “composed by the *fashi* of the Xihua Abbey, Cheng Xuanying, in the Tang,” might be a later add-on to Cheng Xuanying's self-preface shortly before Chao Gongwu's time. This means that although we have no idea whether Cheng Xuanying was really a *fashi* or not in his lifetime,

¹⁷¹ HY 9.825b.

this piece of information does not matter in the case of him composing the *Zhuangzi shu*, since a *fashi* position, as the leading performer in Daoist rites, had nothing to affect Cheng Xuanying's interpretation of *Zhuangzi* in his time. However, in Chao Gongwu's time it might. The *Quanzhen* sect of Daoism arose, and a *fashi*, as the chief master at a Daoist abbey and the abbey's social representative, must be the one with the deepest understanding of Daoist Principles. The fact that Chao Gongwu chose to add the *fashi* title to his introduction to Cheng Xuanying, despite the fact that he knew Cheng's contemporary, Zhang Junxiang, only called him a *huangchao daoshi*, represents Southern Song people's different understanding of the identity of *fashi* from the Tang People: *fashi* was regarded as more important in the case of a Daoist's identity in the Southern Song than the Tang. Furthermore, in the counterpart to the Daoist tradition – the Buddhist tradition – a Buddhist *fashi* 法師 is short for the monastic vocation *shuofashi* 說法師, which stands for Sanskrit *dharma-bhanaka*, literally “the Reciter of the Principles,” who in charge of orally teaching and transmitting Buddhist canons before the canons were committed to writing. The term also occurs in the *Mahāyāna* tradition to describe a teacher of the *Mahāyāna*, who may have played an important role in the dissemination of the *Mahāyāna sūtras*.¹⁷² In Chinese Buddhist tradition, this monastic vocation of *fashi* has existed ever since the importation of Buddhism into China in the Eastern Han. Since Cheng Xuanying's *Zhuangzi shu* language has a cadence and musicality that reflect a kind of oral transmission and Cheng Xuanying's text was preserved as a renowned philosophical text, it was likely for Chao Gongwu to treat *fashi* as an important factor that influenced Cheng Xuanying's composition of *Zhuangzi shu*, which indeed, was probably not, for Cheng Xuanying himself.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Buswell and Lopez, *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 243.

¹⁷³ On this point regarding the *Xihua fashi* title of Cheng Xuanying, every modern scholar differs.

The third problem is that, in the various received versions of Cheng Xuanying's introduction, some scholars added the sentence 不知坐何事 "it is unknown what offense he committed," while others did not. This demonstrates that they did not understand why he was exiled. The impetus for Cheng Xuanying's banishment has been long overlooked by previous scholarship. I will approach this issue from two perspectives which shall constitute the following two subsections of this chapter. Cheng Xuanying had to have been significant enough during his years in the capital to merit punishment by the court. Subsection 3.1 will explore his activities in the capital and illustrate three important experiences during his life that demonstrate his stature. Subsection 3.2 will probe into his banishment during the Yonghui reign (ca.652), by re-examining a neglected work of his: a five-volume diagram on the *Book of Changes* called "Diagram on the Circulation and Development of the *Book of Changes*" (*Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu* 周易流演窮寂圖).¹⁷⁴ This re-examination also involves textual research of the versions and transmission of the *Junzhai dushuzhi* – the first received text that not only simply catalogued the works of Cheng but explained their content. Associating this work with Cheng Xuanying's life in the politico-religious environment at the Early Tang (expatiated in chapter 2) will help decode the reason for Cheng Xuanying's banishment. Together, 3.1 and 3.2 will patch together the life of Cheng Xuanying from various fragments scattering across historical resources.

¹⁷⁴ The name of "*Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu*" is according to what is catalogued in the "Yiwen zhi" of the *Song shi*, 202.5035. Most catalogues treat this as one single text. However, the Qing philologist, Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊 (1629-1709), in his major bibliographical catalogue *Inspecting the Meanings of Canons* (*Jingyi kao* 經義考), regards the name of "*Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu*" as two five-volume texts put together under Cheng Xuanying's name: the "*Yi liuyan*" 易流演 and the "*Zhouyi qiongji tu*" 周易窮寂圖. See *Jingyi kao* (*Siku*), 15.17b-18a. Details will be explained in subsection 3.2.

3.1 Life in the Capital Chang'an

Cheng Xuanying was called to Chang'an in the year 631. Little of his life is understood before his summoning to the capital.¹⁷⁵ The year 631 is when his activities were first documented. Some scholars maintain that Cheng Xuanying was first summoned to Chang'an to serve as the disciple of an imperially favored Daoist, Liu Jinxi 劉進喜 (fl. 620). Liu Jinxi was one of the Daoist preachers in Li Shimin's Institute of Education (*wenxue guan* 文學館) and was chosen to represent the entire Daoist school of thought and give a sermon in the presence of Li Yuan during his visit to Li Shimin's Academy.¹⁷⁶ Other scholars believe that Cheng Xuanying was famous as a philosopher before his summoning, because his *Commentary on the Canon of Salvation* (*Durenjing shuyi* 度人經疏義) was already finished and widespread, garnering Emperor Taizong's attention.¹⁷⁷ Although the reason is left unspecified in the sources, we know that Cheng Xuanying must have been a talented prodigy that was already well-reputed before he was summoned, and his expertise must have been of interest to the royal court.

¹⁷⁵ Due to the limitation of the scope of this thesis this is not discussed. For an investigation on his early years and education, see Yu Shiyi's "Ch'eng Hsüan-ying's early education" in *Reading the Chuang-tzu in the T'ang Dynasty*, 44-53.

¹⁷⁶ When Li Yuan visited Li Shimin (still the King of Qin)'s Academic Institute in the year 621 (it was the same year after the pacification of the Wang Shichong Rebellion), each of the three main teachings in the early Tang chose a representative figure to preach in front of the emperor. For Confucianism (*ru* 儒), it was Xu Wen Yuan 徐文遠 (550-623); for Buddhism (*fo* 佛), it was Huicheng 慧乘 (554-630); and for Daoism (*dao* 道), it was Liu Jinxi. Liu Jinxi has no biography. We only know from this material that he must have been a renowned Daoist preacher that flourished during the Wude reign of Li Yuan. See *Jiu Tang shu*, 189.4945 and *Xin Tang shu*, 198.5640. Modern scholar Lu Guolong 盧國龍 conjectures that Cheng Xuanying might have been a student of Liu Jinxi because Cheng's philosophical thoughts, reflected in his commentaries, exhibit inheritance from Liu Jinxi's thoughts. Therefore, it is possible that Cheng was summoned to Chang'an to join Liu Jinxi's preaching group. See Lu Guolong, *Zhongguo chongxuan xue* 中國重玄學 (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin chubanshe, 1993), 222 and 235-6.

¹⁷⁷ Chou Ya-ching 周雅清, *Cheng Xuanying sixiang yanjiu* 成玄英思想研究 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 2003), 71-73. Choi, Jin-Hee 崔珍皙, *Cheng Xuanying Zhuangzi shu yanjiu* 成玄英莊子疏研究 (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 2010), 17.

In the sources, Cheng Xuanying is mentioned explicitly by name in three different episodes throughout his life. The first and the second episodes are religious events involving the Daoist struggle with Buddhism. The third is a more of a literary inquisition. In the tenth (636), or the twelfth year (638) of the Zhenguan reign,¹⁷⁸ Cheng Xuanying's name first appeared in a series of Buddho-Daoist debates. The series of debates was initiated by the Monk Huijing 慧淨 (b.578) in his own temple, the Jiguo Temple 紀國寺.¹⁷⁹ On the Daoist side, there were two attendees: Cai Zihuang 蔡子晃 and Cheng Xuanying.¹⁸⁰ Daoxuan documented this event in both his *Xu gaoseng zhuan* and *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*, but only the former text mentions Cheng Xuanying by name, perhaps because Cai was the major speaker while Cheng was merely present and did not participate. According to the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*:

至貞觀十年 本寺開講 王公宰輔才辯有聲者 莫不畢集 時以為榮望也 京輔
停輪 盛言陳抗 皆稱機判委綽有餘逸 黃巾蔡子晃成世英 道門之秀 纔申論擊
因遂徵求 自覆義端 失其宗緒 淨乃安詞調引 晃等飲氣而旋

¹⁷⁸ The year 636 is the time documented in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*; however, in the *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*, it was documented as in the twelfth year of the Zhenguan reign (638). The two books are by the same author, monk Daoxuan; according to the contents of the conversations recorded and their contexts, they seem to refer to the same event. I do not know why Daoxuan wrote down two different times in his two books. This thesis will quote the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* version. For the *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* version of this event, see its “Fifth Affair: The Heir-Designate Gathered Scholars from the Three Teachings for Discussion” (*huangtaizi ji sanjiao xuezhe xianglun shi diwu* 皇太子集三教學者詳論事第五) section. *Ji gujin fodao lunheng* 3, 52.383a.

¹⁷⁹ Although the location of the debate unspecified and only records “Huijing’s own temple” (*bensi* 本寺), we know that it took place in the Jiguo temple for Huijing was referred to as 唐京師紀國寺沙門釋慧淨 “Monk Shi Huijing of the Jiguo Temple of the Tang capital” in *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 3, 50.439c. For Huijing’s biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 3, 50.441c-444a. For the Jiguo Temple, see *Chang’an zhi*, 10.4b.

¹⁸⁰ Cheng Xuanying was referred to as Cheng Shiyong 成世英 in the text. But these are two variants of the same person’s name. My identification follows Sunayama Minoru 砂山稔’s treatise in his *Zui Tō Dōkyō shisōshi kenkyū* 隋唐道教思想史研究 (Tokyo: Hirakawa Suppan Inc., 1990), 246.

When it came to the tenth year of the Zhenguan reign (636), (Huijing) opened a series of lectures at his own temple. Kings, dukes, and ministers in the capitals who were renowned for their talent in argumentation all came. (This event) was considered glorious and remarkable for the time, (during which daily activities in) the capital and its vicinity all came to a halt. Presentations and debates were all conveyed in high-spirited manners, and all (attendees) considered the quickness, judgment, intricacy and the grace (exhibited) in argumentations as extraordinary and beyond expectations.¹⁸¹ The yellow-hatted Cai Zihuang and Cheng Shiyong, two flowers of the Daoist community, were interrogated and on held hostage by each previous sentence they had said as soon as they started to expand their counter-arguments. They (thus) spoiled their argument and lost the thread of their own teaching; whereas Huijing made fun of them in a composed manner, so they went back infuriated to where they had come from.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Yu Shiyi was the only previous English translator on this passage. I believe that Yu erred in interpreting some sentences. To begin with, he translated 時以為榮望也 as “he (Huijing) was considered the glorious celebrity of the time.” I think the subject of this sentence, which people regarded as glorious and honorable, should be the event itself – initiated by the heir-designate Li Chengqian and gathered the most famous debaters at that time – instead of the monk Huijing. Next, I do not see Yu’s translation of 京輔停輪 盛言陳抗; instead the English at its place is “visitors to the capital all spoke of him (Huijing) in great appreciation,” and I do not know which Chinese sentence that English translation corresponds to. Clearly the translation does not match with what is said in the original text here. Last, Yu seems to again treat the subject of 皆稱機判委綽有餘逸 as the monk Huijing, in his translation “(all visitors say that) his quickness and judgment in argumentation were graciously and bountifully endowed,” while I believe that the subject refers to 盛言陳抗 – the presentations and debates, which were conveyed in high-spirited manners. Compare my translation with Yu’s in *Reading the Chuang-tzu in the T’ang Dynasty*, 55.

¹⁸² *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 3, 50.443a.

Cheng Xuanying's involvement in this Buddho-Daoist series of debate might not be quite significant to his overall role in Chang'an. He was cast as a protagonist in the second episode, which took place eleven years later (647). By that time Cheng had advanced in age and matured as a person. His status might have also shifted after his predecessor, Qin Shiyong's death in year 640. This was the most famous Buddho-Daoist collaborative project before the High Tang period, and it was recounted in great detail in religious histories because it epitomized the inverted status of Buddhism and Daoism in relation to each other during these eleven years. In actuality, the period in which the religious circumstances started to shift was even less than eleven years. If we consider the time from Taizong's visit to the Hongfu Temple in year 641, during which he explicitly warned Monk Daoyi and his fellow Buddhists that not until the Shi family (i.e. Buddhist advocates) overthrow his Li family's sovereignty would Buddhism ever be placed above Daoism, then it would only be seven years up until the year 647. This project, promulgated by Emperor Taizong, was to translate *Laozi* 老子, or the *Daode jing* 道德經, into Sanskrit with the goal of propagating Daoism to the "Western Realms" (*xiyu* 西域).¹⁸³ The Buddhist monk in charge of the Sanskrit language was the renowned Xuanzang 玄奘 (602-664), who had just returned to China two years earlier (645) after a nineteen-year tour along the Silk Road, via Central Asia to India,¹⁸⁴ a year after which (646) he published his travelogue that

¹⁸³ This project constitutes the whole section of the "Tenth Affairs: Emperor Wen decreed that Master (Xuan)zang translate *Laozi* into Sanskrit" 文帝诏令奘法师翻老子为梵文事第十. *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 3, 52.386b.

¹⁸⁴ For Xuanzang's biography in hagiographies, see the *Xu gaozeng zhuan* 4, 50.446c-458c; in official histories, see the *Jiu Tang shu*, 191.5108-9. The *Xin Tang shu* does not hold a biography for Xuanzang, since Buddhism was again suppressed and dismissed during the *Xin Tang shu*'s compilation time. For his nineteen-year travel to India, both biographies mentioned it starting from the first year (627) and continuing to the nineteenth year (645) of the Zhenguan reign. There is a biographical monograph specially dedicated to Xuanzang: *A biography on the Tripitaka dharma-master of the Great Ci'en Temple* (*Da ci'en si sanzang fashi zhuan* 大慈恩寺三藏法师传) (T 2053), written by monk Huili 慧立 (b.615) and annotated by Yancong, the author of *Tang hufa shamen Falin biezhu*. Along with Yancong's

recounts the social, historical, geographical and religious information of various polities during his pilgrimage: the *Records from the Regions West of the Great Tang* (*Da Tang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記).¹⁸⁵ He was perhaps the most treasured monk of Emperor Taizong. Upon Xuanzang's return, he was assigned the position of translator by imperial decree and commanded to start translating the Buddhist canons he brought back from western countries, right in the Hongfu Temple the emperor built for his mother and once visited. He was even allowed to follow the emperor into his palace, on the North and Northeast Gates of which a "Dharma-Promotion Institute" (*hongfa yuan* 弘法院) and a "Canon-Translation Institute" (*fanjing yuan* 翻經院) were built for him, with fifteen new monks at each institute under his tutelage.¹⁸⁶ Taizong loved Xuanzang so much that he told his empire: "Maintaining the seed of the sacred (Buddhism) – it was all his (Xuanzang's) effort!"¹⁸⁷

Imperially supported and socially revered, Xuanzang's translational project, including six-hundred-and-fifty-seven canons in total, went on smoothly for two years until it came to

commentaries, this book has ten volumes in total. The first five volumes recount Xuanzang's becoming a Buddhist monk and his journey to India; the other five volumes describe Xuanzang's work on Buddhist canon translation in Chang'an, during which he constantly interacted with the court. His petitions, letters and notes to the emperors are well-preserved in this book. For studies on Xuanzang in the Western-language-speaking world, see Arthur Waley's *The Real Tripitaka: and Other Pieces* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1952), 11-130; René Grousset, *Sur les traces du Bouddha* (Paris: Plon, 1929) and its English translation by Mariette Leon: *In the Footsteps of the Buddha*, New York: Grossman Publishers, 1971.

¹⁸⁵ *Da Tang xiyu ji* is the *magnum opus* of Xuanzang that records what he saw and heard in various countries during his journey. With its wealth of detailed and precise data, the book has been of inestimable value to historians and archaeologists. For a comprehensive investigation and commentary on the *Da Tang xiyu ji* in Chinese, see Ji Xianlin 季羨林 comm., *Da Tang xiyu ji jiaozhu* 大唐西域記校注. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985. For a study in Japanese, see Adachi Kiroku 足立喜六, *Dai Tō Seiiki ki no kenkyū* 大唐西域記の研究. Tokyo: Hōzōkan, 1942-1943. For English translations of the *Da Tang xiyu ji*, the most recent is by Li Rongxi, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*. Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1995.

¹⁸⁶ *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 4, 50.456c.

¹⁸⁷ 維持聖種 皆其力也. *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 4, 50.456c. However, this edict by Emperor Taizong was not included in the *Tang da zhaoling ji*, but only in the Buddhist histories.

translation of *Laozi*, the primary Daoist text among all. The idea of translating a Daoist text into Sanskrit started with the Tang emissary Li Yibiao 李義表's return from his seven-year ambassadorial trip to the Western Realm. Li Yibiao came back in the twenty-first year of the Zhenguan reign (647),¹⁸⁸ and made a petition to the emperor, saying that Daoism and its exemplary canon were requested to be seen by *Kumāra raja* (“Boy King”) of Eastern India.¹⁸⁹ The emperor immediately issued a decree, commanding Xuanzang to collaborate with Daoist adepts and translate the *Laozi* together. The two leading Daoist figures in this Buddho-Daoist collaborative project were Cheng Xuanying and his old colleague, Cai Zihuang. Cheng and Cai joined hands again after their last presentation eleven years ago. The Daoists were in charge of expatiating the meaning of the *Laozi* to Xuanzang, while the latter synthesize all interpretation into a proper way of Sanskrit expression. The *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* has the most detailed record of the entire story among all documents, and it reads so:¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ Li Yibiao's biographical information is unknown. We only know that he was also a Tang envoy to the Western Realms, according to a record of interaction between Emperor Taizong and Sīlāditya (*shi luo yi duo* 尸羅逸多), the king of Magadha (*mo jie tuo* 摩揭陀). In the fifteenth year of the Zhenguan reign (641), Sīlāditya was newly enthroned; Li Shimin sent him a letter to congratulate him. Sīlāditya was so surprised – it was the first time ever that something came from China – and instantly he sent an envoy to the Tang. Li Shimin treasured his interaction with the State of Magadha and 復遣衛尉丞李義表報使 “in turn dispatched the Chief Minister heading the Chamberlain for the Palace Garrison (*weiwei cheng* 衛尉丞), Li Yibiao, on a diplomatic mission there.” It was a seven-year trip for Li Yibiao since its start in year 641 and end in year 647. *Jiu Tang shu*, 198.5307.

¹⁸⁹ In the seventh century, India was divided into five parts: Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern and the Middle. The Eastern India (*Dong Tianzhu* 東天竺) is the kingdom of Kāmarupa in modern Assam and Bengal. The “Boy King” (*tongzi wang* 童子王) refers to King Bhaskaravarman (600–650), or the *Kumāra raja* (literally “boy king”), of the Varman dynasty of Kāmarupa. The reason that he was called *kumāra* (boy) is not clear; it could be that he was a bachelor throughout his life. See Kanak Lal Barua, *Early History of Kāmarupa: from the earliest times to the end of the sixteenth century* (Shillong, 1933), 58.

¹⁹⁰ The twentieth-century scholar Ji Xianlin 季羨林 (1911-2009) has a comprehensive textual study of *Laozi* translational project in his article, “Fojiao de daoliu” 佛教的倒流. The article is included in his *Ji Xianlin fojiao xueshu lunwen ji* 季羨林佛教學術論文集 (Taipei: Dongchu chubanshe, 1995), 463-486.

貞觀二十一年 西域使李義表還奏 稱東天竺童子王所未有佛法 外道宗盛 臣已告云 支那大國未有佛教已前 舊有得聖人說經在俗流布 但此文不來 若得聞者必當信奉 彼王言 卿還本國 譯為梵言 我欲見之 必道越此徒 傳通不晚

登即下敕 令玄奘法師與諸道士對共譯出 於時道士蔡晃成英二人 李宗之望 自余鋒穎三十余人 並集五通觀 日別參議 詳覈道德 奘乃句句披析 窮其義類 得其旨理 方為譯之 諸道士等並引用佛經中百等論 以通玄極

In the twenty-first year of the Zhenguan reign (647), the emissary to the Western Realms, Li Yibiao returned and made a petition. The petition said: “In the Eastern Indian Boy King (’s realm) Buddhism still does not exist; secular sects thrive (in his realm). I already told him: ‘Before the great state of China had Buddhist teaching, there were long been canons, conveyed by a sage,¹⁹¹ circulating and spreading among the commonfolk. However, this text (of the canon of *Laozi*) has not come (to your state). If you ever heard of it, you would believe in it!’ That king said: ‘After you return to your own country, translate the text into Sanskrit for me. I want to see it. I must surpass this epigone. It is not yet too late to pass it on to me!’”

Instantly, (the emperor) made a decree, commanding the monk Xuanzang, and various Daoists to translate (*Laozi*) together.¹⁹² At that time, there were Cai

¹⁹¹ This “sage” refers to Laozi; the “canon conveyed” is the *Daode jing*.

¹⁹² This *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* version implies that both Xuanzang and the Daoists were summoned as equals by the emperor to work as a group. However, according to the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, it seemed that Xuanzang was the leader of all Daoists and commanded them to work for him in a condescending way: 奘乃召諸黃巾 述其玄奧 領疊詞旨 方為翻述 “Upon (hearing the imperial decree), Xuanzang summoned all the yellow-hatted (Daoists) to explain to him the abstruse and obscure (parts of the *Laozi*);

(Zi)huang and Cheng (Xuan)ying¹⁹³ – two eminent and respected Daoists of the Li-sect¹⁹⁴ – and more than thirty other outstanding leading (Daoists) figures, all gathered at the Wutong Abbey. They deliberated and discussed and every day and examined *The Way and The Power*¹⁹⁵ in detail. Thereafter, (Xuan)zang dissected and analyzed each sentence; he exhausted their categories of meaning and acquired their purports and principles before he set to translating them. The various Daoists, together, quoted the Buddhist *Mādhyamaka-śāstra*, *Śata-Śāstra*,¹⁹⁶ and their likes, in order to (assist Xuanzang) to comprehend the most abstruse (parts of *The Way and The Power*).¹⁹⁷

The Daoists quoted Buddhist texts during their expatiation of the meaning of *Laozi*. Perhaps they did it out of good intention, thinking that it would be easier for Xuanzang to comprehend Daoist concepts by drawing analogies with Buddhist concepts, which were more familiar to him.

he would confirm his understanding of each word and (its) meaning repeatedly, and then started his translation.” *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 4, 50.455b. The status of Xuanzang and the Daoists are thus treated differently by both texts. In *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*, they were equal, while in *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, they were not.

¹⁹³ The omission of the middle character of a person’s name, i.e. the first character of one’s given name, was common in early Tang texts. Therefore, Cai Zihuang and Cai Huang, or Cheng Xuanying and Cheng Ying, were freely interchangeable with each other. This point will not be further repeated in this thesis.

¹⁹⁴ It seems that the status of Daoism as the “teaching of the state” (*guojiao* 國教) has already been well-established and acknowledged after several imperial actions discussed in chapter 2. Now Daoism is addressed as “the Li-ism” (*Li zong* 李宗) by the Buddhist author. Of course, we may not rule out the possibility that monk Daoxuan was being sarcastic when he said “Li-ism.”

¹⁹⁵ Refers to the *Daode jing*, literally translated as “Canon on the Way and the Power.”

¹⁹⁶ “*Zhong bai deng lun*” 中百等論 refer to the *Mādhyamaka-śāstra* (*Zhonglun* 中論), T 1564 and *Śata-Śāstra* (*Bailun* 百論), T 1569. As for the “...and others” (*deng* 等) in this phrase, the unnamed śāstra is likely to refer to the *Dvādaśanikāya Śāstra* (*Shiermen lun* 十二門論), T 1568. It was probably unnamed for rhetoric purpose of the sentence. Together the three śāstras, all translated by *Kumārajīva* 鳩摩羅什 (344-413), constitute the “three-śāstras” (*sanlun* 三論) on which the “Three-śāstra Sect” (*sanlun zong* 三論宗), a major Sui-Tang Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhist sect base its doctrines.

¹⁹⁷ *Ji gujin fodao lunheng* 3, 52.386b-c.

However, Xuanzang seemed not to accept such “kind” assistance. Instead, he frankly expressed his suspicion on whether it was possible to interpret Daoist principles in Buddhist language in a quite aggressive, even bellicose, tone:

佛教道教 理致天乖 安用佛理 通明道義 如是言議往還 累日窮勘 出語濩落
的據無從

“The principles and intentions of Buddhist teachings and Daoist teachings are tremendously inconsistent to each other’s. How can (you) use Buddhist principles to comprehend the meaning of a Daoist text? If you keep talking like this back and forth, it would exhaust all of our days to verify their meanings. Those are immensely useless words with no basis!”¹⁹⁸

The next thing in the *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* was Cai Zihuang’s wordy explanations, in further reply to which Xuanzang came up with even more astute interrogations, until no Daoist could give him satisfactory answer and were all silenced. Since the account is extremely verbose in the *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* and this thesis’ scope is limited, I will use, instead, the same part in the *Xu gaozeng zhuan* here to complete the story. The *Xu gaozheng zhuan* provides an abridged and less detailed version, but it is equally clear and coherent in helping us understand the whole affair. I will start by re-quoting the textual variant question by Xuanzang.

樊曰 佛道兩教 其致天殊 安用佛言 用通道義 窮覈言疏 本出無從

¹⁹⁸ *Ji gujin fodao lunheng* 3, 52.386c.

晁歸情曰 自昔相傳 祖憑佛教 至於三論 晁所師遵准義 幽通不無同會 故引
解也 如僧肇著論 盛引老莊 猶自申明 不相為怪 佛言似道 何爽綸言

樊曰 佛教初開 深文尚擁 老談玄理 微附佛言 肇論所傳 引為聯類 豈以喻詞
而成通極 今經論繁富 各有司南 老但五千 論無文解 自餘千卷 多是醫方 至如
此土賢明 何晏王弼周顛蕭繹顧歡之徒 動數十家 注解老子 何不引用 乃復旁
通釋氏 不乃推步逸蹤乎

(Xuan)zang said: “The intentions of Buddhism and Daoism are extremely
distinct with each other’s. How can (you) use Buddhist language to comprehend
the meaning of a Daoist text? (Even if it is the case that you) inquire and interpret
those words exhaustively, they are of no basis and are from nowhere!”

(Cai Zi)huang in turn expressed his thoughts: “Ever since (Daoist canons) were
transmitted, our ancestor depended on Buddhism. As for the three śāstras,
compared with the standard meanings that I have learned and followed, there are
actually many implicitly coherent parts shared by both. That is why we quoted
(Buddhist śāstras) to explain (Daoist concepts). For example, the discourse that
Monk Zhao¹⁹⁹ has composed, quotes *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi* heavily. He even stated

¹⁹⁹ Monk (*Seng*) Zhao 僧肇 (d.414), was a Chinese Buddhist philosopher of the Eastern Jin. He was a disciple of Kumārajīva. In his early life, he was fond of Daoist texts such as *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*; when he read the Vimalakīrti Sūtra (*Weimo jing* 維摩經), he was so attracted to its contents that converted to Buddhism. Seng Zhao was famous for expatiating the “three-śāstras,” see note 196 above for explanation. Since Seng Zhao was a convert, his Buddhist treatises embraced Daoist ideas and quoted Daoist texts heavily. Perhaps that was why the Daoists chose to quote the *Zhonglun* and the *Bailun*, mentioned previously, to assist Xuanzang. Seng Zhao compiled four treatises during his life: “*Prajñā* is Without Dichotomizing Knowledge” (*bo’re wu zhi lun* 般若無知論), “Non-Absolute Emptiness” (*bu zhen kong lun* 不真空論), “Things Do Not Shift” (*wu buqian lun* 物不遷論), and “Nirvna Is Without Conceptualization” (*niepan wuming lun* 涅槃無名論). The four treatises are combined as one *Treatise of*

himself that there is no eccentricity regarding (quoting Daoist texts). Buddhist texts are just like Daoist (texts). What violates its textuality?”

(Xuan)zang said: “When Buddhism was just made known, many profound texts were still elusive. Those Lao-people, during their discussion about arcane theories, when they slightly touched upon Buddhist texts, Zhao would pass on what they said in his discourse and draw analogies between those theories. How can you treat (what Monk Zhao did) as the standard way and even push those analogies to the extreme? Nowadays, sūtras and śāstras are abundant and profuse; each has its own compass. Only on *Laozi*, there are five-thousand volumes (of interpretations), yet the text is still unsolved. Moreover, more than a thousand of them are medicinal formulas. As for the worthy and wise people of this land, there

(Monk) Zhao (*Zhao lun* 肇論), T 1858, with its commentary “*Zhao lun shu*” as T 1859. The Buddhist scholar and historian, Huijiao 慧皎 (497-554) included Seng Zhao’s biography in the “Expatiation and Explanation” (*yijie* 義解) category in his *Biographies on Eminent Buddhists* (*Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳), the first Buddhist hagiographical collection in China. See Tang Yongtong 湯用彤, *Gaoseng zhuan jiaozhu* 高僧傳校注 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1992), 6.248-54.

are the likes of He Yan,²⁰⁰ Wang Bi,²⁰¹ Zhou Yong,²⁰² Xiao Yi,²⁰³ Gu Huan,²⁰⁴ etc., adding up to tens of schools on *Laozi* commentary.²⁰⁵ Why do you not quote those works? You even want to stretch to seek coherency of Buddhist texts – are you not (trying to) predict and follow the unfathomable and the unsurpassable?”²⁰⁶

²⁰⁰ He Yan 何晏 (ca.190-249) is a Later Han and Wei philosopher and scholar. He was one of the two leading proponents of the Chinese ontological philosophy in the Zhengshi 正始 period era (240-248), known as the “abstruse learning” (*xuanxue* 玄學). He composed many works pertaining to the *Laozi* including a treatise on *Laozi* called “Treatise on the Way and the Power” (*daode lun* 道德論) and two works influenced by Daoist philosophy: “Treatise on non-action” (*wuwei lun* 無為論) and “Treatise on the nameless” (*wuming lun* 無名論). The “Daode lun” is no longer extant. It was probably lost in the Song. Both the “Wuwei lun” and the “Wuming lun” are partially extant. For He Yan’s biography, see *Sanguo zhi*, 9.292-3.

²⁰¹ Wang Bi 王弼 (226-249) is the other main proponent of the *xuanxue* philosophical system, along with He Yan. He was a precocious philosopher and commentator whose *magnum opuses* were commentaries on *Yijing* and *Laozi*. Wang Bi’s commentary on *Laozi* is included in Lou Yulie 樓宇烈, *Laozi “Daode jing zhu” jiaoshi* 老子道德經注校釋. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2008. I have quoted this book throughout this thesis for any reference to the main text of *Laozi*. For the entire collection of Wang Bi and a comprehensive study on his collection, see Lou Yulie, *Wang Bi ji jiaoshi* 王弼集校釋. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980. For Wang Bi’s biography, see *Sanguo zhi*, 28.795-6.

²⁰² Zhou Yong 周顒 (fl.473) is a Southern Qi 齊 Buddhist scholar-official and linguist. He was 長於佛理 “excellent in Buddhist principles” and 兼善老莊 “also good at *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi*.” He has composed a “Treatise on the three-śāstras” (*sanzong lun* 三宗論) that focuses on expatiating “emptiness.” Influenced by the Buddhist impact on phonological analysis, he also wrote a rime book named *Sisheng qieyun* 四聲切韻, which was popular at his time, but now lost. However, he has never composed any commentaries on *Laozi*. It was Xuanzang’s misunderstanding to place Zhou Yong as one of the *Laozi* commentators. For Zhou Yong’s biography that contains all the information above, see Li Yanshou comp., *History of the Souther Dynasties (Nan shi* 南史) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 34.894-5.

²⁰³ Xiao Yi 蕭繹 (508-555) is the Emperor Yuan 元 of the Liang 梁 Dynasty.

²⁰⁴ Gu Huan 顧歡 (fl.420-479). He is a Liu-Song and Southern Qi period scholar and writer. The most famous treatise of his is the “Treatise on (Northeastern) Barbarians and Chinese People” (*yi xia lun* 夷夏論), preserved in his biography in Xiao Zixian 蕭子顯 (489-537) comp., *History of the Southern Qi (Nan Qi shu* 南齊書) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 54.928-35. The text of “Yi xia lun” is on page 531-5. A portion of his commentary on *Laozi* survived in the *Daode zhenjing zhushu* 道德真經註疏 (HY 375, 13.274-357) preserved in the *Daozang*.

²⁰⁵ All of these names mentioned in the above list are *Laozi* commentators.

²⁰⁶ *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 4, 50.455b.

This conversation reflects the Daoists' attitude during this collaborative project: toward the end of the Zhenguan reign, they were already trying to associate themselves with, or even cater to, the favored Buddhist. After Xuanzang's overt rejection to Cai Zihuang and Cheng Xuanying's good will in quoting Buddhist concepts for the comprehension of Daoism, Cai Zihuang further brought forth the example of Monk (*Seng*) Zhao 僧肇, the famous Buddhist flourished at the beginning of the fifth century, to make amends. Cai wanted to argue that the inseparability of Buddhist and Daoist doctrines and their underlying philosophy was the reason why Monk Zhao quoted Daoists texts in his work. Xuanzang refuted Cai by means of glaringly telling him that quoting Daoist texts was a mere expedient of propagating Buddhism to the mindless when Buddhism was nascent to the land of China; two centuries passed and there was no more need to interquote. The end of Xuanzang's reply degraded almost all famous *Laozi* commentators by referring them in the pejorative way of "the likes of" (*zhi tu* 之徒), and mocked the unsolvability of *Laozi*'s meanings. From the third-person perspective, it was actually Xuanzang's ignorance here in the case of him ridiculing He Yan, Wang Bi, and the list of commentators; those were all arcane learning (*xuanxue* 玄學) scholars since the Wei-Jin time (the third century) up to the Southern Dynasties, whose modes of thought and discourses were rooted in a combination of Buddhist and Daoist thought. Deriding their achievements was partly a degradation of the Buddhist side of *xuanxue*, not to mention that one of those scholars, Zhou Yong, was himself a Buddhist. Notwithstanding the validity of Xuanzang or Cai Zihuang's understanding of the other side's principles and history of development, Xuanzang's tone was shockingly acrimonious. If we recall the death of the genuinely guiltless monk Falin 法琳 – the monk as revered in the Buddhist community as Xuanzang in his time – in his contention with the calumniating Daoist Qin Shiyong, it does not only surprise us how, after a short seven years, the

monk Xuanzang dared to scorn Daoists in such a blatant way, but also the fact that Daoists dared not respond.

However, even with such tolerance on the Daoist side, it seemed that as soon as the translation started proper, conflict broke again more vitriolic than ever. The opening sentence of *Laozi* is “the Way, (if it) can be Way-ed, is not the constant Way” (*dao ke dao fei chang dao* 道可道非常道).²⁰⁷ Regarding how to even translate its first word, *dao* 道, Xuanzang's idea discorded with the Daoists' again. Xuanzang wanted to translate it in its literal sense of "path, road" - that corresponds to *mārga* in Sanskrit - while the Daoists wanted to keep the Chinese *Dao* there as a fixed, philosophical, term. During this dialogue and the next one, Cheng Xuanying spoke up for the first and only time to defend for "the Way" and the intactness of its primary text. This dialogue records his only words.

梵云末伽 可以翻度

諸道士等一時舉袂曰 道翻末伽失於古譯 昔稱菩提 此謂為道 未聞末伽以為
道也

樊曰 今翻道德 奉勅不輕 須覈方言 乃名傳旨 菩提言覺 末伽言道 唐梵音義
確爾難乖 豈得浪翻 冒罔天聽

道士成英曰 佛陀言覺 菩提言道 由來盛談 道俗同委 今翻末伽 何得非妄

樊曰 傳聞濫真 良談匪惑 未達梵言 故存恒習 佛陀天音 唐言覺者 菩提天語
人言為覺 此則人法兩異 聲采全乖 末伽為道 通國齊解 如不見信 謂是妄談 請

²⁰⁷ *Laozi* “*Daode jing zhu*” *jiaoshi*, 1.1.

以此語問彼西人 足所行道彼名何物 非末伽者 余是罪人 非唯罔上 當時亦乃
取笑天下

自此眾鋒一時潛退 便譯盡文

Xuanzang says: “In Sanskrit, the word *mārga*²⁰⁸ can be used for translating *dao* (the Way).”

All Daoists raised their sleeves simultaneously and said: “Translating *Dao* (the Way) into *mâr-ga*²⁰⁹ would lose its ancient interpretation. In the past, it was called

²⁰⁸ *Mārga* means “path, way” in Sanskrit. It is a polysemous term, whose root denotation is a road, track, way, or course. It is one of the most important terms in Buddhism, referring to the metaphorical route from one state to another, typically from suffering to liberation, from *samsāra* to *nirvāna*. For more explanation of the meaning and implication of *mārga*, see *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 532.

²⁰⁹ The seventh-century Chang’an pronunciation of the word 末伽 is approximated following Coblin 1991, “Studies in Old Northwest Chinese.” This is accomplished by approximating an intermediary form between Coblin’s Old Northwestern Chinese (ca. 400) and his Common Shazhou 沙洲 dialect (ca. 800). The pronunciation was likely */*mar.ga/* during this time. We have opted to romanize this form as *mâr-ga*, using a circumflex to indicate the backed nature of the low vowel, a notation common in other Middle Chinese reconstructions, and a hyphen to notate the break in syllable and graphs. This romanize is intended to keep this Chinese word separate from its near homophonous Sanskrit counterpart (*mārga*).

Coblin gives no reconstruction of 末 directly, so we have to use the principles of his reconstruction and its relationship to the *Qieyun* 切韻 system (QYS) to deduce 末’s sound. 末 had a bilabial initial. Coblin covers the reconstruction of these initials on pages 13-16. These initials correspond with the QYS initials near perfectly. Therefore, we can assume the initial of 末 was **m-*.

Then, on pages 67-70, Coblin argues that during the life of a Sui Buddhist translator, Jñānagupta 闍那崛多 (Chinese name Zhide 志德) (fl.527-604) – almost contemporary to Xuanzang and Cheng Xuanying’s time – the QYS final **-t* codas most likely corresponded to underlyingly final **-r* coda in the dialects around Chang’an. They assimilated in place, articulation, and manner, forming geminates if they preceded acute initials. This led to Jñānagupta inserting epithetic **t-* initial syllables to account for *VrC[+acute]* clusters in his transcriptions. In all other environments, these codas were likely realized as a rhotic flap (something like [r]). Because 末 ends in a **-t* coda in the QYS and the following syllable, 伽, began in a grave initial **g-*, we may assume 末 ended in an **-r* coda in the transliteration 末伽.

Then, on page 107-109, Coblin summarizes his observations on vowel quality in various rime groups given in Yan Shigu 顏師古’s (581-645) *fanqie* 反切 based on Jñānagupta and other’s transliterations and concludes the QYS rime **-ât* (Baxter *-at*) most likely was **-ar* at the beginning of the seventh century. 末 belonged to this rhyme. So 末 may be reconstructed as **mar*.

As for 伽, Coblin has given its reconstruction for this time period directly: “In any case, it would seem justifiable for reconstruct 迦, 佉, and 伽 as ONWC **ka*, **kha*, and **ga* and assume that the modern

bodhi; nowadays, it is called *Dao*.²¹⁰ We have never heard anyone treat *Dao* as *mâr-ga!*”

Xuanzang said: “Now that we are translating the *Daode jing*, we are doing so by imperial decree, and we cannot be careless about it. We need to look into (the word in) language of each (translator), and then name it (in Sanskrit) to convey (its proper meaning). *Bodhi* refers to the awakening; *mâr-ga* refers to its path. Indeed, the sounds between the Tang (language, i.e. Chinese) and Sanskrit are very different and difficult to understand. (Nevertheless,) how can a word be absurdly translated? It offends and baffles the Heavenly ears!”

A Daoist, Cheng (Xuan)ying said: “(When) the Buddha talked about awakening, *bodhi* referred to that path. It has been a popular saying from the beginning; both the Daoists and the secular folk accept (such a saying) together.²¹¹ Now what is absurd or senseless about translating *Dao* as *mâr-ga?*”

northwest element -i- arose as some later period...perhaps later than the other Shazhou transcriptional texts." See Coblin 1991:78. We can safely assume that 伽 was pronounced *ga at the beginning of the 7th century following Coblin's reconstruction.

Combining reconstruction for both words together, 末伽 was likely pronounced as /*mar.ga/ in the seventh-century Chang'an. I have opted to transcribe the Chinese word as *mâr-ga* instead of *mojia* for 末伽 in Standard Modern Chinese, to represent the transliterative nature of the word. It is an ideal match for Sanskrit *mâr-ga*.

²¹⁰ *Bodhi*, transliterated as 菩提, means “awakening” in both Sanskrit and Pāli. For the definition of *bodhi*, see *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 129.

²¹¹ The “popular saying” (*shengtān* 盛談) that Cheng Xuanying believed and referred to was wrong in a literal sense. Although the meaning of *buddha*, transliterated as 佛陀 in Chinese, is indeed a form of \sqrt{budh} , the verb root that means “to wake, to be aware of,” which is correspondingly *jue* 覺 in Chinese, it does not contrast with *bodhi*, which is another form of \sqrt{budh} . See the previous note, 210, for the explanation on 菩提. As for 菩提言道 “*bodhi* is the word for ‘path,’” it is wrong in a literal sense. *Bodhi* does not mean path, but it can be understood as enlightenment, which is something that Daoists would have conceived as the *Dao*, or following the *Dao*. It demonstrates Cheng Xuanying’s ignorance of the Sanskrit language. However what Cheng said would have been salient to other Daoists.

Xuanzang said: “Hearsays abuse the truth; good sayings would not be confusing. (You) do not know the Sanskrit language, thus preserve the normal habit (of believing in hearsays). As for the heavenly sound²¹² ‘*buddha*,’ it is what the Tang language called ‘the awakened one (*juezhe*).’ As for the heavenly language ‘*bodhi*,’ it is what people called ‘awakening (*jue*).’²¹³ (If one follows this (saying), then the performer and the performing action would both be confused, not to mention that their sounds are completely different (in Sanskrit). That ‘*mārga*’ means ‘the way’ is understood by the whole country. If I am not believed, and you say that my talk is absurd – please ask those Western people this question, (and ask them) how they would name the path on which they walk? If they would not answer ‘*mārga*,’ then see me as a criminal. If I do not (translate in this way), verily I would be deceiving our emperor; in which case, the entire sub-celestial realm would also laugh (at my translation)!”

²¹² The “heavenly sound” (*tianyin* 天音) and “heavenly language” (*tianyu* 天語) here are ambiguous for their references with respect to the meaning of *tian* 天. 1) “*Tian*” may simply mean “heavenly.” Xuanzang is a Buddhist, thus he regards Sanskrit as the prestigious language. 2) “*Tian*” may also be short for “*tianzhu*” 天竺, which refers to India, in which sense *tianyin* and *tianyu* refer to the “language and sound of India,” i.e. Sanskrit. There is a trouble with the second interpretation. In Xuanzang’s *Da Tang xiyu ji* (see note 185 for its reference), he says: 詳夫天竺之稱 異議糾紛 舊云身毒 或曰賢豆 今從正音 宜云印度 “If we go into the particulars of the names of *tianzhu* (India), there have been a variety of different discussions. In the past it was called *yuandu*; some people also called it *xiandou*. Now, if we follow its correct pronunciation, it should be called *yindu*.” See *Da Tang xiyu ji jiaozhu*, 161. Ji Xianlin 季羨林 explained the historical changes and sound changes of India’s name on page 162. If Xuanzang reckons the correct name of India in his time as *yindu* 印度, then it would be less likely that he still used its old name, *tianzhu*, when he referred to the Indic language. Thus I believe that the “*tian*” in *tianyin* and *tianyu* should just be translated as “heavenly,” as an honorific expression.

²¹³ The Sanskrit root for both *buddha* and *bodhi* is \sqrt{budh} (class 1P) “to wake, to be aware of”, the third person present singular form of which is *bodhati*. *Buddha* is the past participle of *bodhati*, thus “the awakened.” When used substantively, it is translated as “the awakened one,” which is *juezhe* 覺者在 Chinese. *Bodhi*, i.e. 菩提, is one of its derived i-stem masculine noun form, “awakening, enlightenment.” Therefore, in Chinese, it is the abstract noun *jue* 覺. Xuanzang was correct in explaining the literal meaning of these two words: *buddha* 佛陀 as *juezhe* 覺者 and *bodhi* 菩提 as *jue* 覺.

After this, all the Daoists kept silent and stepped back. Then (Xuanzang) completed (his) translation of the text.²¹⁴

The above dialogue reflects nothing but one fact: that Xuanzang was a master of Sanskrit, while the Daoists did not know the Sanskrit language. What was a word to Xuanzang was merely an eccentric, unheard combination of two syllables to Daoist ears. Cheng Xuanying must have received some Buddhist education, for he had some knowledge of some concepts like "*buddha*" and "*bodhi*," both of which touch upon the sense of "awakening" (*jue* 覺) and "means" (*dao* 道) to some extent. The textual resources that Cheng learned from must have been in Chinese, for he knows those concepts' basic meanings and transliterated forms without knowing anything about their grammatical functions or linguistic forms (participles, agentive, case and numbers etc. *Buddha* and *bodhi* in fact come from the exact same root!). Cheng Xuanying must not have known any Sanskrit. Though as a Daoist, it was not necessary for him. In fact, even among Chinese monks, no one else attained the same level as Xuanzang in his time. All Buddhist translators before Xuanzang were of non-Chinese origin except one: Yancong 彥琮 (557-610), the previously mentioned author of *Falin biezhuān* and the translator of *Canon on the Auspicious Picture of Śarīra* (*Sheli ruitu jing* 舍利瑞圖經) and *Catalogue of propitious omens of the Realm* (*Guojia xiangrui lu* 國家祥瑞錄) from Chinese to Sanskrit.²¹⁵ Throughout the history of Buddhist translation in China, Yancong and Xuanzang are the only two translators who translated from Chinese into Sanskrit.

²¹⁴ *Ji gujin fodaolunheng* 3, 52.387a.

²¹⁵ For Yancong's biography, see *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 2, 50.436b-439c. Both texts that he translated from Chinese to Sanskrit are lost. We know that they were translated into Sanskrit only from his biography in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*.

But there was one more problem after the project seemed to be completed. When the *Laozi*'s translation was completed, all according to Xuanzang's interpretation, and about to be sealed and bound,²¹⁶ Cheng Xuanying found out that its preface, by Master Up-River (*Heshanggong* 河上公),²¹⁷ was still left untranslated. Upon realizing this, he reminded Xuanzang of the existence of the preface and urged him to translate it along with the main text. Again, Cheng Xuanying requested nicely while Xuanzang replied in a vitriolic tone.

河上序胤闕而不出
 成英曰 老經幽秘 聞必具儀 非夫序胤 何以開悟 請為翻度 惠彼邊戎
 英曰 觀老存身存國之文 文詞具矣 叩齒咽液之序 序實驚人 同巫覡之姪哇
 等禽獸之淺術 將恐西關異國 有愧卿邦
 英等不愜其情 以事陳諸朝宰中書馬周 曰 西域有道如李莊不
 答彼土尚道 九十六家 並厭形骸為桎梏 指神我為聖本 莫不淪滯情有 致使
 不拔我根 故其陶練精靈 不能出俗 上極非想 終墜無間 至如順俗四大之術 冥
 初六諦之宗 東夏老莊所未言也 若翻老序彼必以為笑林 英告忠誠 如何不相體
 悉

²¹⁶ 既依翻了 將欲封勒. *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 4, 50.455c.

²¹⁷ Heshanggong 河上公 was a Daoist recluse in Emperor Wen 文's time of the Western Han (r.180-157 BCE). Nobody knows his name or life. We only know that he got his title "Master Up-River" (*heshang gong*) for his self-made thatch cabin located upstream of the Yellow River. His commentary on *Laozi*, or the *Daode jing*, was the earliest extant commentary of the text and the most widespread and influential ever since the reign of Emperor Wen. Heshanggong interpreted *Laozi* from a supernatural perspective. That was probably why Xuanzang, as a non-Daoist, despised and refused to translate his work. Heshanggong's only biography exists in the Eastern Jin Daoist physician and scholar, Ge Hong 葛洪 (283-343)'s *Biographies on Deities and Immortals* (*Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳). For Heshanggong's information, see *Shenxian zhuan* (SKQS), 8.9a-10b. Heshanggong's preface to and commentary on *Laozi* is preserved in *Daozang*, "Daode zhenjing zhu" 道德真經注, HY 12.1-22.

當時中書門下同僚咸然此述 遂不翻之

(However,) the series of prefaces by Master Up-River and his descendant (school of teaching) was missing and not translated.

Cheng (Xuan)ying said: “Master Lao’s canon is abstruse and covert; in order to know it, one must be equipped with an instrument. If not (by) the series of preface, how can one be enlightened? Please translate it too. It would benefit those barbarians on the border regions.”

(Xuan)zang said: “I have looked intently at *Laozi*’s texts concerning the preservation of (one’s body) and the state; (those) words are already comprehensible. As for the preface on clacking the teeth and swallowing the saliva,²¹⁸ -- what an awesome preface! It (sounds) the same as shaman and shamanka’s nasty vomiting; its (contents) are equal to the shallow tricks of beasts. I’m afraid that if heard in the West by foreign countries, we would be abashed in front of those states!”²¹⁹

²¹⁸ “Clacking the teeth” (*kouchi* 叩齒), the action preparatory to meditation, originates from Ge Hong’s *Master Embracing-the-Simplicity* (*Baopuzi* 抱樸子): 或問堅齒之道 抱樸子曰 能養以華池 浸以醴液 清晨建齒三百過者 永不搖動 “Someone asked about the Way to strengthen one’s teeth. Master Embracing-the-Simplicity says: ‘(Those who) can nourish them with the flowery-pond (floor of the mouth), immerse them in sweet liquor (i.e. saliva), and clack their teeth three-hundred times each morning, will never have loose teeth.’” Wang Ming 王明, *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi* 抱樸子內篇校釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1996), 274.

²¹⁹ This sentence has a textual variant in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan*: 觀老治身治國之文 文詞具矣 叩齒咽液之序 其言鄙陋 將恐西聞異國有愧鄉邦 “I have looked intently at Laozi’s texts concerning the regulation of (one’s body) and the state; (those) words are already comprehensible. As for the preface on clacking the teeth and swallowing the saliva, those words are vulgar and ugly! I am afraid that if it was heard in the West by foreign countries, we would be abashed in front of those states.” *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 4, 50.455c. Xuanzang’s tone in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* version is much less vitriolic and intense than its *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* counterpart, that I have translated in the main text.

(Xuan)ying and his fellows were not happy with what he (Xuanzang) said and reported this affair to the Palace Secretary, Ma Zhou, in the court.²²⁰ (Ma Zhou) said (back to Xuanzang): “Is there such a Way in the Western Realms like Li (Er)’s and Zhuang (Zhou)’s or not?”²²¹

(Xuanzang) answered: “That land has ninety-six sects that revere the *mārga*; all of them hate their bodies as shackles and manacles; (and all of them) regard “spiritual-self”²²² as the sacred base. (Nevertheless,) none of them could avoid sinking and stagnating in sentience and existence, so that the conception of self²²³ (in those sects) was unable to be unrooted. That is why they cannot transcend mundanity (even after) cultivating and training their inner spirits. Their ultimate, extreme, and extraordinary thoughts would all eventually fall into the Interminable.²²⁴ As for the practices of the Four Great Elements of the Worldly

²²⁰ For Ma Zhou 馬周 (601-648)’s biographies, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 74.2612-9 and *Xin Tang shu*, 98.3894-3901.

²²¹ For this part, *Xu gaoseng zhuan* had many more details that cleared up the confusing conversation here. 英等以事聞諸宰輔 奘又陳露其情 中書馬周曰 西域有道如老莊不 奘曰 九十六道 並欲超生 “(Xuan)ying and others told the Grand Councilor and his ministers about this affair. Then (Xuan)zang stated his opinions outright. The Palace Secretary, Ma Zhou, asked: ‘Is there a Way like that of the *Laozi* and the *Zhuangzi* in the Western Realms?’ (Xuan)zang replied: ‘There are ninety-six Ways, all of which desired to venture beyond death....’” In addition to the textual variation in describing the dialogue, Xuanzang’s reaction was added after the end of the dialogue: 奘以弘讚之極 (Xuan)zang regarded (the result) as extremely great and laudable. *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 4, 50.455c.

²²² The “spiritual-self” (*shenwo* 神我), or simply “self” (*wo* 我), refers to Sanskrit *ātman*: a perduring, autonomous self, the existence of which are denied by almost all Buddhist schools. For *ātman*, see *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 78.

²²³ The “concept of self” refers to Sanskrit *ātmagraha*, translated into *wozhi* 我執 in Chinese according to its literal meaning, “clinging to self.” In Buddhism, *ātmagraha* is the fundamental ignorance that is the ultimate cause of suffering and rebirth. *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 78.

²²⁴ “The Interminable” (*wujian* 無間) is short for “the interminable hell” (*wujian diyu* 無間地獄). It refers to Sanskrit *avīci*, which could be transliterated into 阿鼻地獄 in Chinese. It refers to the deepest, largest and most tortuous of the eight *nāraka* (hells). *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 86.

school²²⁵ and the essence of the Six Truths at the beginning of the imperceptible,²²⁶ neither has been mentioned by *Laozi* or *Zhuangzi* in China on the East. If we translate the preface to *Laozi*, they (the Buddhists) would take it as a jokebook.²²⁷ I, (Xuan)zang, am only telling you wholehearted and honest words. How can you all not understand (me)?” At that time, fellows in the Palace Secretary (Ma Zhou)’s community all agreed with what Xuanzang had said. Thus, (the prefaces to *Laozi*) were not translated.²²⁸

The second episode ends here, with a high official’s support to Xuanzang’s actions. Cheng Xuanying’s reported on behalf of the humiliated and neglected Daoists who were, surprisingly, ignored by political officials; as aforementioned in this episode, the politico-religious environment seemed to have underwent drastic change towards the end of the Zhenguan reign. Rather than attributing the aversion of Buddhism’s and Daoism’s status to Xuanzang’s flourish, I believe main cause of such an aversion was more of a change of imperial attitude. Towards the end of the Zhenguan reign, society was much more stable. After the authority of the Li clan no

²²⁵ The word *shunshu* 順俗 has a textual variant in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* as *shunshi* 順世. It is short for *shunshi waidao* 順世外道, the literal Chinese translation for Sanskrit *Lokāyata*. *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* translates *Lokāyata* as the “Naturalist” or “Worldly” school, and I follow it. The *Lokāyata* school is claimed to have taken a rigidly materialist perspective towards the world, in which everything in the universe, including consciousness, was composed only of the four *mahābhūta* (*sida* 四大): earth, water, heat and air. *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, 481.

²²⁶ The “Six-Truths” (*liudi* 六諦), also called the “Six-sentenced Principle” (*liuju yi* 六句義), is the *ṣaṭpadārtha* in Sanskrit. It is the central doctrine of the *Vaiśeṣika* 毗世, one of the six ancient philosophical schools in India. Neither *ṣaṭpadārtha* nor *Vaiśeṣika* is included in *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*; yet Ji Xianlin explained its meaning in his “Fojiao de daoliu,” *Ji Xianlin fojiao xueshu lunwen ji*, 485-6.

²²⁷ The “jokebook,” *Xiaolin* 笑林, refers to the *Grove of Laughters*, the earliest collection of jokes in China, compiled by Handan Chun 邯鄲淳 (d.221) in the Later Han. The book is lost, but some pieces are preserved in Tang and Song encyclopediae such as *Yiwen leiju*, *Beitang shuchao*, *Taiping guangji*, and *Taiping yulan*, etc.

²²⁸ *Ji gujin fodao lunheng* 3, 52.387b.

longer needed to be defended, Daoism lost its utilitarian function compared to the early and the middle of the Zhenguan reign. It was now time Li Shimin to debut in his new role as cultural ambassador. To this Buddhism, and its star diplomat, Xuanzang, were to be favored. It was also the time when religions and philosophical schools could shed their functional exteriors in politics and complete doctrines and thought. Naturally in this case, Xuanzang, who had a better understanding of the Sanskrit language, would be obeyed in the collaborative project of *Laozi's* translation.

The prelude to Daoism's decline in the Buddho-Daoist struggle for political favor has been illustrated by the second episode; it was pushed to its climax in the year 647 and the politico-Daoist environment deteriorated to its lowest point a mere one year later.²²⁹ Upon receiving a secret petition from one of the southwestern prefectures about the treasonous nature of the Daoist *Three-Sovereign Canon* (*Sanhuang jing* 三皇經),²³⁰ Emperor Taizong commanded that Cheng Xuanying participate in the investigation the canon and decreed that all copies of it must be burned. The canon, once one of the most powerful instructions for summoning numinous spirits in Daoism, was suddenly eliminated. This will be the third and final episode of Cheng Xuanying's documented activity during his years in Chang'an. About four years after this episode he went to an exile. The loss of the *Three-Sovereign Canon* is significant in Daoist religious history, thus it is also the most lengthily recounted and the most complicated among all three episodes in instances of textual variation and historical understanding. There are three texts that documented this same event. With unknown reasons, no official histories or Daoist histories

²²⁹ Similar to the first episode, some versions have treated the time of this third episode as year 646, instead of 648. Details will be explained later.

²³⁰ For a comprehensive study on *Sanhuang jing* and the Three-Sovereign tradition, see Dominic Steavu-Balint, "The Three Sovereigns Tradition: Talismans, Elixirs, and Meditation in Early Medieval China." Ph.D. diss., Stanford, 2010.

preserve this episode, and all texts that do are Buddhist histories. I will juxtapose the three documents together in chronological order down below. The first two text are both Tang texts by authors that are contemporary to the occurrence of the affair – Monk Daoxuan’s *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* and Monk Daoshi’s *Fayuan zhulin*. Daoxuan and Daoshi were brothers. Between these two Tang records, Cheng Xuanying’s name was only mentioned by the latter as Cheng Wuying 成武英; the former did not mention him at all. The third is a Yuan text, the description in which is based on resources in the first two. It is Nianchang’s *Fozu lidai tongzai*, the nature and introduction of which was expatiated in chapter 2. Interestingly, the three texts are drastically different from each other: each has a distinct element of the affair to emphasize, which makes the combined narrative bewildering. Since Daoxuan’s record is the only text that recorded the correct time of the event – the twenty-second year of the Zhenguan reign (648)²³¹ – I will place it at the very front, followed by his brother, Daoshi’s *Fayuan zhulin*, in which Cheng Xuanying was noted to participate. The Yuan text, *Fozu lidai tongzai*, will be placed last.

To begin, the *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*’s account foregrounds the conversation between the three sides: the Daoists, with Zhang Huiyuan²³² as representative; the officials; and the emperor.

²³¹ Both other texts write year 646. I believe that year 648 is the correct time, given that the inspection on Daoism and such ultimate suppression of the Daoists’ power should come after the bud of averted Buddho-Daoist status reflect in the translational project in year 647.

²³² Zhang Huiyuan’s identity and experience, as a Daoist in capital Chang’an, is expatiated in the fourth volume of this book. It seems that he has switched among many abbey in the capital in his life. Although not in specified here, he was referred to as 下清觀道士 “Daoist at the Xiaqing Abbey” in *Fayuan zhulin* – the text that comes next. This is the year 648. Then, in the fourth volume of this book – *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* – his name was mentioned in two Buddho-Daoist debates as the protagonist of the Daoist side, but his identity kept changing. In the debate occurred in the second year of the Xianqing 顯慶 reign of Gaozong (657), he was a 清都觀道士 “Daoist at the Qingdu Abbey” (*Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 4, T 52.389a); one year later (658), he became a 東明觀道士 “Daoist at the Dongming Abbey” (*Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 4, T 52.389c-391a) in his debate, also on Sanskrit-Chinese translation, with Monk Yibao 義褒. The way to write his name, 張惠元, has a textual variant as 張慧元 in *Fayuan zhulin*. *Fozu lidai tongzai* in the Yuan Dynasty (the third text that comes) followed the writing of 張惠元.

It also stands out in stark contrast to contemporary histories in it documents the text of an entire verbose decree promulgated by the infuriated Emperor Li Shimin, so that the full reaction to the imperial order might be seen.

太宗下敕以道士三皇經不足傳授令焚除事

“Emperor Taizong decreed that the *Three-Sovereign Canon* should be burned and eliminated considering it is not worthy to be transmitted and taught.”

貞觀二十二年十月有吉州上表云 有事天尊者行三皇齋法 依檢其經 乃云 欲為天子欲為皇后者可讀此經 據此言及國家檢田令云 道士通三皇經者給地三十畝 檢公式令諸有令式不便者奏 聞此三皇經文言有異 具錄以聞

有勅令 百官議定 依追道士張惠元問有此言不 惠元答云 此處三皇經並無此言 不知遠州何因有此 然為之一字聲有平去 若平聲讀之 誠如所奏 若去聲讀之 此乃為國 於理無妨

臣等以為惠元所說不乖勸善 然此經中天文大字符圖等不入家籍 請除 余者請留

吏部楊纂等議云 依識三皇經 今與老子道德經義類不同 並不可留 以惑於後 勅旨 其三皇經並收取焚之 其道士通道德經者給地三十畝 仍著令於時省司下諸州 收三皇經 並聚於尚書禮部廳前 試以火焚爇 一時灰燼 昔宋時鮑靜初造三皇被誅 今仍宗尚改三皇為三洞 妄立天文大字惑誤昏俗 其詐顯然 迷者不覺 今遇大唐聖帝 體其偽妄 故此焚除 近如大業末年 京師五通觀道士輔慧詳三年不言 改涅槃經為長安經 將欲入山巖中 於時條制不許出城門 候見其內著

黃衣又獲新經 執送留守 及至勘校改經事實 尚書衛文升以狀奏聞 於金光門外
 戮之 耳目生靈所共同委 其覺者如此 不覺者有之 然彼輒爾制經寫於藏篋 無
 人檢勘 誰辯偽真 且所造者 文義淺俗 濫引佛經 讀者無味 不足觀采 至如南華
 幽求 固是命家之作 不可及也

In the tenth month of the twenty-second year of the Zhenguan reign (648), someone from the Ji Prefecture²³³ petitioned and said: “There is someone who served the Celestial Worthy,²³⁴ and as he was practicing Doctrine of ‘Three High Sovereign Salvations,’²³⁵ he perused the canon accordingly, and found it to say, ‘(Whoever) wants to be the Son of Heaven, or the Empress, can read this canon.’ Based on these words and investigate what is said of the state’s Code of Field Measurement – ‘Daoist adepts who master the Three-Sovereign Canon are given thirty acres of land; (if) anyone investigates this code and finds it not beneficial enough to follow, he shall petition (the emperor).’²³⁶ – I think what is said in the

²³³ The Ji 吉 Prefecture is in modern Jiangxi 江西 Province.

²³⁴ The “Celestial Worthy” (*tianzun* 天尊) is short for the religious title of exalted deity “The Primal Celestial Honored One” (*yuanshi tianzun* 元始天尊), in the Lingbao 靈寶 sect of Daoism. The aforementioned Lu Xiujing was an eminent representative of Lingbao Daoist adept.

²³⁵ *Zhaifa* 齋法 refers to a variety of collective rituals particularly associated with Lingbao liturgy, and the rite of repentance is a representative. It is practiced for salvation of the dead, for relieving sickness, etc. There are also rites for protection of the emperor and welfare of the nation, etc. Since the *Sanhuang jing* is lost, now it is unknown which specific *zhai* he was practicing according to the canon. Dominic Steavu-Balint has done a comprehensive investigation on the Three-Sovereign Tradition in his dissertation. He talked about liturgical texts and scrolls that involve Three-Sovereign rituals (*Sanhuang zhaiyi* 三皇齋儀 and *Sanhuang zhaipin* 三皇齋品): see Dominic Steavu-Balint, “The Three Sovereign Tradition: Talismans, Elixirs, and Meditation in Early Medieval China” (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 2010), 94-130.

²³⁶ “Code of Field Measurement” (*tianling* 田令) is one of the administrative statutes on distribution of stipends as acres of lands according different official rankings and positions. For clergies, the “tianling” in received Tang codes says: 凡道士給田三十畝女冠二十畝 僧尼亦如之 “In general, thirty or twenty acres of land are respectively given to male or female Daoist adepts *per capita*; the same for monks and

text of *Three-Sovereign Canon* is abnormal. (Therefore,) I copy these words in detail for Your Majesty to know.”

The imperial decree then came. After hundreds of officials concluded the discussion, they sought the Daoist adept, Zhang Huiyuan, according to (what the decree commanded them to) and asked whether there were truly such words in the *Three-Sovereign Canon* or not.

Huiyuan replied: “As for these (words), they truly do not exist in the *Three-Sovereign Canon*.²³⁷ I do not know on what basis does someone from a distant prefecture think that they do? However, as for the word ‘wei,’ it has a level-tone reading and a falling-tone reading. If it is read in the level tone, then indeed it fits what the petition says; if it is read in the falling tone, then it means ‘for the state’ and there is no harm to the principles.”²³⁸ (Then the officials replied to the emperor:) “We think what Huiyuan said is not quite perverse; it is convincing and well-expressed. However, the likes of ‘heavenly-patterns,’ ‘great-characters,’ spells, or images, cannot be accepted in the register or our House. We request to remove those (parts) and preserve the rest (of the canon).”

nuns.” See *Tang liu dian*, 3.74. However, the knowledge to *Sanhuang jing* 三皇經 was not mentioned in this text. More explanation surrounding the mentioning of knowing *Daode jing* 道德經 in Tang “Code of Field Measurement” will be explained in note 258.

²³⁷ The text of *Sanhuang jing* is already lost after eradication; now only a small, four-paged text that is claimed to be a portion of *Sanhuang jing*, is preserved as the “Secret Residue of the *Three-Sovereign Canon*’s Inner Text” (*Sanhuang neiwen yimi* 三皇內文遺秘) in *Daozang*, HY 18.581-4. These words are not in the “*Sanhuang neiwen yimi*.” Therefore, we do not know whether it was truly in the original *Sanhuang jing* or not.

²³⁸ The verb *wei* 為 in Classical Chinese has two distinct senses. If read in the Middle Chinese level tone, 為 MC *hjwe* < OC **g^w(r)aj* serves as a factor that means “to make,” or a copula “to become, to act as.” If read in the Middle Chinese falling tone, 為 MC *hjweH* < OC **g^w(r)aj-s* means “to serve for, for the sake of.”

Yang Zuan²³⁹ and others in the Ministry of Personnel, in (another) discussion, again said: “According to (our) knowledge of the *Three-Sovereign Canon*, it is now different from Laozi’s *Canon on the Way and the Power* in both principles and categories. The entire text should not be preserved, in case that it will deceive later people.”

(Then, another) edict was enacted.²⁴⁰

“As for the (copies of) *Three-Sovereign Canon*, they should all be gathered and burned; as for the Daoist adepts, whoever masters the *Canon on the Way and the Power* will (still) be given thirty acres of land. However, I still command each prefecture, under each current bureau, to collect (copies of) *the Three-Sovereign Canon* and gather them in front of the hall of the Rites Ministry. Burn (the copies) with fire; in an instant they will turn to ash. In the past time of the Song, Bao Jing was executed because he started to compose the *Three-Sovereign Canon*; Now the canon is still treated with reverence, with its name changed from the “Three-Sovereign” (*sanhuang*) into the “Three-Grotto” (*sandong*). In an absurd way, it establishes the ‘Heavenly-Patterns and ‘Great-Graphs’ to deceive and mislead the dim-witted commoners, such mendacity is obviously thus! The perplexed people are still unaware (of this)! Now, (you all) have encountered a sagacious emperor of the great Tang, who realizes the fraudulent and absurd nature of this canon.

This is exactly why (I command that you to) burn and eliminate (it). In the recent

²³⁹ For Yang Zuan 楊纂 (d.650)’s biography, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 77.2673 and *Xin Tang shu*, 106.4046.

²⁴⁰ This decree is not included in either the *Quan Tang wen* or the *Tang da zhaoling ji*. Its text can only be found in here.

time, for instance, the last few years of the Daye reign,²⁴¹ there was a Daoist adept, Fu Huixiang²⁴² in the Wutong Abbey of the capital,²⁴³ that had not talked for three years. He changed (the name of) the *Nirvana Sutra* into the *Chang'an Sutra* and desired to (take it with him) into the mountains. At that time, the imperial announcement forbade anyone from leaving the city gates; the watchman saw him in a yellow robe inside (his outerwear) with a new canon in his hand, captured him and sent him to the Regency. When (the regents) investigated and verified his alternation of the canon, The Magister of documents, Wei Wensheng,²⁴⁴ reported his deed for the emperor to know. (Fu Huixiang) was killed outside the Golden-Light Gate. Everyone on the spot witnessed the scene together.²⁴⁵ This was what happened when (such a deed) was realized. There must be many cases that have been unaware of! However, as for the canons that those Daoists arbitrarily made, written in small hidden cabinet without anyone

²⁴¹ Daye 大業 is the imperial title of the Emperor Yang of Sui, Yang Guang 楊廣 (569-618)'s reign. The Daye reign started in year 605 and ended in the third month of year 618.

²⁴² This sentence is a quotation Monk Falin 法琳's "Treatise on Truthfulness" (*bianzheng lun* 辯正論), preserved in the Sui Dynasty Monk Yancong's *Tang shamen hufa Falin biezhuàn* 唐沙門護法法琳別傳 (T 2051) with slight textual variation: 有五通觀道士輔慧祥三年不言 因改涅槃經為長安經 當時被約不許出城門 家見內著黃衣 執送留守 改經事發 為尚書衛文昇所奏 於金光門外被戮 耳目同驗 There was a Daoist Fu Huixiang at the Wutong Abbey, that had not talked for three years. Owing his change of (the name of) the *Nirvana Sutra* into the *Chang'an Sutra*, he was called upon immediately and forbidden to from leaving the city gates. He was seen wearing a yellow robe inside (his outerwear) at home, (thus) captured and sent to the Regency. The affair of changing the sutra was revealed. (He was) reported by the Magister of documents, Wei Wensheng and killed outside the Golden-Light Gate. Everyone on the spot witnessed the scene together. *Tang shamen hufa Falin biezhuàn* 3, 50.209a.

²⁴³ The Wutong Abbey 五通觀 is an abbey in Chang'an that was built in the Sui, lasted throughout the Tang, and disappeared in an unknown post-Tang time. Today the only Wutong Abbey in existence is the one located in modern Guilin 桂林, Yunnan 雲南 Province; it is not the Wutong Abbey mentioned here.

²⁴⁴ The Magister of documents (*shangshu* 尚書) Wei Wensheng refers to Wei Xuan 衛玄 (541-617), styled Wensheng 文昇. He was a Northern Zhou to Sui official. For Wei Xuan's biography, see *Sui shu*, 63.1051-3 and *Bei shi*, 76.2601-2.

²⁴⁵ "Ears and eyes of the living creatures" 耳目生靈 refers to the concept of "everyone" in Buddhism.

inspecting them – who knows whether they are real or forged? In addition, what they have made are shallow in expression and vulgar in meaning, and abusively quote Buddhist texts. They are tasteless to their readers, and are not worthy to behold, or (even) pay attention to. As for the subtle and intriguing *Nanhua Canon*, it is a composition one of its kind. It cannot be compared with.”²⁴⁶

Now, compare its second version in *Fayuan zhulin*, which recounts mainly the background story of the discovery of the *Sanhuang jing*. In this text, not only is a new name – Cheng Wu(Xuan)ying appears, but also, notice that the Daoists’ words in response to imperial inquiry are very different from those documented in the *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*.²⁴⁷

至唐貞觀二十年 有吉州囚人劉紹略妻王氏有五嶽真仙圖及舊道士鮑靜所造三皇經合一十四紙 上云 凡諸侯有此文者必為國王 大夫有此文者為人父母 庶人有此文者錢財自聚 婦人有此文者必為皇后 時吉州司法參軍吉辯因檢囚席 乃於王氏衣籠中得之 時追紹略等勘問 云向道士所得之受持 州官將為圖識 因封此圖及經 馳驛申省奏聞 敕令省官勘

當時朝議郎刑部郎中紀懷業等乃追京下清都觀道士張慧元 西華觀道士成武英等勘問

並款稱云 此先道士鮑靜等所作妄為墨書 非今元等所造 敕遣除毀 又得田令官奏云 如佛教依內律 僧尼受戒 得蔭田 人各三十畝 今道士女道士皆依三皇

²⁴⁶ *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu* 3, T 52.386a-b.

²⁴⁷ For a previous translation on this *Fayuan zhulin* text, see “The Three Sovereign Tradition,” 112-114. Compare mine with Steavu-Balint’s.

經受其上清下清 替僧尼戒處 亦合蔭田三十畝 此經既偽廢除 道士女道士既無
戒法 即不合受田 請同經廢 京城道士等當時懼怕 畏廢蔭田 私憑奏官 請將老
子道德經替處

其年五月十五日出敕 侍郎崔仁師宣敕旨云

三皇經文字既不可傳 又語涉妖妄 宜並除之 即以老子道德經替處 有諸道觀
及以百姓人間有此文者 並勒送省除毀 其年冬諸州考使入京朝集 括得此文者
總取禮部尚書廳前 並從火謝也 故知代代穿鑿 狂簡實繁 人人妄作 斐然盈卷
無識之徒 將為聖說

Up to the twentieth year of the Zhenguan reign (646), there was a Madam Wang, the wife of a prisoner from the Ji Prefecture named Liu Shaolüe.²⁴⁸ She was in possession of the “True Immortal Charts of the Five Sacred Marchmounts,”²⁴⁹ and the *Three-Sovereign Canon* composed by a previous

²⁴⁸ Liu Shaolüe 劉紹略’s name was written as Liu Shao in *Fozu lidai tongzai*. This prisoner’s information cannot be found anywhere else. Since the *Fayuan zhulin*’s record is around seven centuries earlier than that of the *Fozu lidai tongzai*,

²⁴⁹ “Seven tablets in a cloudy satchel” (*yunji qijian* 云笈七籙), SKCS 79.5a, there is a 五嶽真形圖 and a 五嶽真形神仙圖記, but there is never a 五嶽真仙圖. It might be a textual mistake, or because of the Buddhist nature of the texts, they paid little attention to Daoist texts’ names. In the same despising manner as in Li Yuan’s edict towards Anu-bodhi. Same for the next text. The existence of “Wuyue zhenxing tu” is first found in the “Viewing Afar” (*xialan* 遐覽) section of the *Baopuzi* 抱樸子: 抱樸子曰余聞鄭君言道書之重者莫過於三皇內文五嶽真形圖也 古人仙官至人尊秘此道非有仙名者不可授也 “Master Embracing-the-Simplicity says: ‘I heard that Lord Zheng had said, that no Daoist texts would surpass the significance of *Sanhuang neiwen* and ‘Wuyue zhenxing tu.’ The immortal officials or the utmost people in the ancient time revere and keep confidential of this text. If someone’s name is not enlisted among the Immortals, he could not be taught of the text.” *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 336. The whole text of the *Sanhuang jing* is recounted on *Baopuzi neipian jiaoshi*, 333-336. For a study on “Wuyue zhenxing tu”, see Judith M. Boltz, “Wuyue zhenxing tu” 五嶽真形圖 in Fabrizio Pregadio ed., *Encyclopedia of Taoism* (London: Routledge, 2008), 2.1075-8.

Daoist, Baojing.²⁵⁰ This copy totaled fourteen sheets. It says on the sheets:²⁵¹

“Whichever vassal lord has this text, he will sure be a king of the state; whichever Grand Master has this text, he will sure be people’s parents; whichever commoner has this text, money and assets will gather by themselves; whichever woman has this text, she will surely be an empress.”²⁵² At that time, a Legal Adjutant, Ji Bian,²⁵³ was in charge of inspecting the prisoners, and received the texts from Madam Wang’s dresser. He instantly called on (Liu) Shaolüe and his wife to inquire about them. (They) answered: “I went to a Daoist’s residence and got it from him. The prefectural official was about to make chart-prophecies with it.” (Ji Bian) subsequently sealed the chart and the canon in an envelope and sent by express service to the capital in order to make further inquiries. An imperial decree to investigate the matter was issued to the prefectural offices.²⁵⁴

²⁵⁰ Bao Jing 鮑靜 (fl. 2nd or 5th century)’s biography is unknown. We only know that he was Daoist that has composed the *Sanhuang jing*. His name was previously mentioned in Falin’s “Bianzheng lun”: 鮑靜造三皇經後改為三清經 “Baojing composed the Three-Sovereign Canon, which (he) later changed into the Three-Purity Canon.” *Tang hufa shamen Falin biezhuàn* 3, 50.209a. In this text, Daoxuan referred to Bao Jing as a Daoist in (Liu-Song) period (420-479); however, later in the *Fozu lidai tongjian*, he seemed to be regarded as someone living in the Eastern Han (ca. 167). Also see note 259 later.

²⁵¹ Steavu-Balint’s translation treated *shangyun* 上云 as “Madam Wang would exalt the text’s powers and claim.” However, the phrase simply means “it says on the sheets.” Setting aside the controversy whether a prisoner’s wife could read and interpretate a Daoist manuscript in the seventh century, what Steavu-Balint meant should be *shangzou yun* 上奏云 or *zouyun* 奏云 in the Tang texts. “The Three Sovereign Tradition,” 112.

²⁵² See note 237.

²⁵³ Ji Bian’s biography can be found nowhere in official histories. We only know that he is the Legal Adjutant, or the Administrator of the Public order (*sifa canjun* 司法參軍) of the Ji Prefecture during the Zhenguan reign.

²⁵⁴ This decree still cannot be found in either the *Quan Tang wen* or *Tang da zhaoling ji*. I wonder if all imperial decrees surrounding this affair was deleted and not preserved in official collections.

At that time, the Gentleman for Court Discussions, the Gentleman for the Bureau of Punishment, Ji Huaiye²⁵⁵ and his associates, accordingly summoned the in-capital Daoists – Zhang Huiyuan from the Xiaqing Abbey²⁵⁶ and Cheng Wuying from the Xihua Abbey – for investigation.

Both (the two Daoists, Zhang and Cheng) reported in a sincere tone: “This (canon) is what was composed by previous Daoists, Bao Jing and his likes; it is an absurdly written document, in no way composed in the current time.” Thus the imperial decree made them eliminate (the canon). They received another petition from the Office of Land Bestowal:²⁵⁷ “If, according to the inner rules of Buddhism, when Buddhist monks and nuns take the precepts for ordination, they each obtain a stipend in the amount of thirty acres. Now, both male and female Daoist clergy rely on the *Sanhuang jing* (for ordination purposes); from the Upper Clarity and Lower Clarity grades, this text is (for Daoists) what the precepts are for Buddhist monks and nuns. On this basis, the Daoists, (just as the Buddhists,) also benefit from thirty acres of land *per capita*. Now that this scripture is a forgery and it is now condemned to eradication, there is already no valid precepts and codes for male and female Daoists’ religious behaviors. It is not appropriate for them to accept lands anymore. Please abolish their accepted lands along with this canon.” Daoists in the capital at that time were frightened (by Zhang and Cheng’s proposal). They were afraid that their ancestral lands were abolished.

²⁵⁵ Ji Huaiye 紀懷業’s biography is unknown. We only see his name mentioned in his grandson, 紀審宜 (674-733)’s tomb inscription: 唐故通宜郎行湖州參軍事丹陽郡紀公諱審宜墓誌銘, preserved in the *Quan Tang wen*.

²⁵⁶ See note 232 on Zhang Huiyuan.

²⁵⁷ For the Office of Land Bestowal (*tianling guan* 田令官) and the quotation, see note __ on Tang Code of Land Measurement, or “tianling.”

They secretly requested to petition the official, soliciting to replace (the *Three-Sovereign Canon*) with (the new regulatory Daoist canon,) Laozi's *Daode jing*.

In the same year (648), the fifteenth day of the fifth month, the Attendant Gentleman, Cui Renshi, declared an imperial decree that said:

“As for the *Three-Sovereign Canon*, its text cannot be transmitted, and its content involves bizarre and absurd (issues). They should all be eliminated, and from now on, replaced by Master Lao's *Daode jing*.²⁵⁸ If any abbey or common household has this text, I compel (you) to send them all to your governmental bureaus for elimination and abolishment.”²⁵⁹

This text in the *Fayuan zhulin*, compared to its author's brother's previous version in the *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*, abridged Emperor Taizong's decree and deleted the word-play on the reading of *wei* 為, while adding details in two places. The whole process of the sheets of *Sanhuang jing* being discovered in a commoner's residence was expanded upon, and an

²⁵⁸ A Ming 明 manuscript of the “Heavenly-Sagacious Codes” (*tiansheng ling* 天聖令), first compiled in the seventh year of the Tiansheng 天聖 reign of Emperor Renzong 仁宗 of the Northern Song Dynasty, was discovered in 1992 in the Taiyige 天一閣 museum at Ningbo 寧波, Zhejiang 浙江 Province. At the end of the manuscript there is an appendix called “Codes during the Kaiyuan reign” (*Kaiyuan ling* 開元令), documenting the legal codes in various aspects during the Kaiyuan reign of Emperor Xuanzong of Tang Dynasty. For the Kaiyuan reign and Emperor Xuanzong, see the main text on page 68 and note 151 for reference. The twenty-first section of the “Kaiyuan ling” is called “Code of Land Measurement” (*tianling* 田令). According to what the manuscript writes, the “tianling” was issued on the twenty-fifth year of the Kaiyuan reign (737). Its twenty-eighth code reads: 諸道士 女冠受老子道德經以上 道士給田三十畝 女冠二十畝 僧尼受具戒者 各準此 “As for each male and female Daoist adept who has received (ordination) according to Master Lao's *Daode jing*: each male Daoist would be given thirty-acres of land; each female Daoist twenty-acres. As for monks and nuns who are fully ordained, the above code also applies to them.” It is written on the thirty-eighth sheet of this section of the manuscript. It is also quoted in a comprehensive study of the “tianling”: Dai Jianguo 戴建國, “Tang Kaiyuan ershiwu nian ling tianling yanjiu” 唐開元二十五年令田令研究, in *Lishi yanjiu* 2 (2000), 36-51. The sentence is on page 38.

²⁵⁹ *Fayuan zhulin jiaoshi*, 55.1675-6.

elaborated version regarding Buddhists and Daoist clergies' stipends in Code of Land Measurement was incorporated into a well-documented response from Cheng Xuanying's side. Compared to his brother Daoxuan, who was more attentive to the imperial response and detailed word-play (actually, paying attention to the tones and word-play hidden in the language of conversations that reflect the intricate and subtle attitudes of both sides – has always been a unique feature across the entire *Ji gujin fodao lunheng shilu*), Daoshi tends to elaborate on narrating the procedure of the affair in details. It is also interesting how the stories behind the discovery of *Sanhuang jing* reflected in the brothers' records, are different. In Daoxuan's record, it was reported by the discoverer himself; in Daoshi's record, it was the local office that initiated a search for the text.

Last, the *Fozu lidai tongzai* version in the Yuan Dynasty, a synthesis of previous historiographies reads:

道家三皇經乃鮑靜所撰十四紙也 彼曰凡諸侯有此文者必為國王 大夫有此文者為人父母 庶人有此文者錢財自聚 婦人有此文者必為皇后 既犯國諱 永康中被誅 出晉史 後人改曰三洞 至唐二十年貞觀間 吉州囚人劉紹妻王氏 有五嶽真仙圖及鮑靜所撰三皇經 時吉州司法參軍吉辨因檢囚 於王氏處得之 申省 勅令刑部郎中紀懷業等 追京下道士張惠元成武英等勘問 得在先道士鮑靜所撰 妄為墨本 非今元等所造 勅令毀除 追諸道士及百姓有此文者 其年冬並集得之 遂於禮部廳前悉焚之

The Daoist *Three-Sovereign Canon* are the fourteen sheets of text that Bao Jing composed. He says: “Whichever vassal lord has this text, he will surely be a king of the state; whichever Grand Master has this text, he will surely be the people’s parents; whichever commoner has this text, money and assets will gather (for him) of their own accord; whichever woman has this text, she will surely be an empress.” Since he violated the state taboo, he was executed in the middle of the Yongkang reign.²⁶⁰ Beyond the history of the Jin Dynasty, later people changed (its name) into the *Three-Grotto (Canon)*.²⁶¹ Up to the twentieth year of the Zhenguan reign (646), Ms. Wang, wife of a prisoner, Liu Shao in Ji Prefecture, was possessed of the “True Immortal Charts of the Five Sacred Marchmounts.” At that time, the Administrator of the Public order, Ji Bian, was in charge of inspecting the prisoners, and acquired the texts from Ms. Wang. After scrutinizing them repeatedly, he commanded the Gentlemen of the Bureau of Punishment, Ji Huaiye and his fellows, to inquire in-capital Daoists such as Zhang Huiyuan and Cheng Wuying, to investigate (this affair). They acquired the ink-copied texts of the absurd (canon) previously composed by Baojing; they were in no ways composed in the current times. Thus, they were destroyed and eliminated by decree. They further pursued Daoists and commoners who had this text. In the

²⁶⁰ There are two reigns titled Yongkang 永康: the first is the title of Emperor Xiaowen 孝文’s reign of the Northern Wei 魏 Dynasty (464-484). This time period in the North concurs with time within the Liu-Song Dynasty (420-479), and this seems to be the living time of Bao Jing as referred to in the *Fayuan zhulin* previously; see note 250. The second is the imperial title for the reign of Emperor Huan of the Eastern Han (sixth – twelfth month, 167), for whose introduction, see page 55 and note 122 in chapter 2 on Chen Fan. This seems to be Bao Jing’s living time as referred to here in the *Fozu lidai tongjian*, because it is followed by 出晉史 “after the Jin Dynasty (265-420),” which implicates that Bao Jing should be a pre-Jin figure. I do not know which one is correct.

²⁶¹ See note 250 for Baojing’s *Sanhuang jing*; however, we only see its name changed into the *Three-Purity Canon (Sanqing jing 三清經)*, instead of the *Three-Grotto Canon (Sandong jing 三洞經)*.

same winter they gathered them all, then burned all of them in front the hall of the Rites Ministry.²⁶²

Although short and much less detailed than the two Tang records, this record cannot be ignored because it reflects most fully the content of the *Sanhuang jing*'s sheets. If Zhang Huiyuan's word-play on the double-entendre of *wei* 為 could be explained by what was recorded in the *Ji gujin fodaolunheng shilu*: 欲為天子欲為皇后可讀此經 “Whoever wants to be/serve the Son of Heaven, or the Empress, can read this canon,” then his answer becomes no longer tenable given the fuller text in *Fozu lidai tongzai*: 彼曰凡諸侯有此文者必為國王 大夫有此文者為人父母 庶人有此文者錢財自聚 婦人有此文者必為皇后 “Whichever vassal lord has this text, he will surely be a king of the state; whichever Grand Master has this text, he will surely be the people's parents; whichever commoner has this text, money and assets will gather (for him) of their own accord; whichever woman has this text, she will surely be an empress.”

Grammatically, *wei* 為 can now only have one reading – “to be in the place of.” This might be the reason why the Emperor did not accept the defense from the Daoist side, and set the *Sanhuang jing* ablaze. I am curious of the reason why the Tang historian chose not to include the full text of what was said on the sheets of the *Sanhuang jing*, or, conversely, where Nianchang in the Yuan Dynasty discovered that sentence in the *Sanhuang jing*, since it was already lost by Nianchang's time. This awaits further research. We can only know that Daoists and Daoism lost their favor at the end of Emperor Taizong's reign. What once was the assisting force of the royal family had now become a threat. It is not difficult to explain Cheng Xuanying's banishment a

²⁶² *Fozu lidai tongzai* 6, 49.518b.

few years right after Taizong's death. The neurotic royal court, after suppressing Buddhism, had now already shifted its sights toward Daoism as well.

3.2 Cheng Xuanying's Banishment

Within less than a year after the eradication of the *Sanhuang jing*, Emperor Taizong, Li Shimin, co-founder of the Tang Dynasty with his father Li Yuan, commonly considered one of the greatest emperors in Chinese history, passed away due to dysentery in the sixth month of year 649, at the age of fifty-one.²⁶³ His twenty-three-year Zhenguan reign came to an end. The throne was passed on to his twenty-one-year-old ninth son, Li Zhi 李治 (628-683, r.649-683), whose first era of reign, titled Yonghui 永徽 (650-655), started half a year after his enthronement.²⁶⁴ The next thing we know about Cheng Xuanying is his expulsion from the capital to the South after about two or three years around year 653. No modern scholars have probed into the reason of Cheng Xuanying's exile. All claim that "it is unclear what kind of offense led to his banishment."²⁶⁵ For pre-modern scholars, though some of them did not declare their lack of knowledge of the reason, none explicitly stated the reason itself. This subsection will investigate and deduce the probable reasons for the exile. I believe that Cheng Xuanying's banishment was closely associated with an overlooked work of his, sometimes even un-included

²⁶³ For Li Shimin's death, see *Jiu Tang shu* 4.62 and *Xin Tang shu*, 3.48.

²⁶⁴ Li Zhi's posthumous imperial title is Gaozong 高宗, so in this thesis I will later refer to him as Emperor Gaozong of the Tang. Li Zhi had fourteen imperial titles (*nianhao* 年號) in total during his thirty-five years of reign, and Yonghui was the first title. For Li Zhi's biographies, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 4.65-5.113; *Xin Tang shu*, 3.51-79.

²⁶⁵ What Yu Shiyi has claimed in his *Reading the Chuang-tzu in the T'ang Dynasty*, 57, is an example of what all modern scholars have said in their work. I will not list all their acknowledgements of the lack of information about Cheng Xuanying's exile.

in the versions of the official histories – the *Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經): “Diagram on the Circulation and Development of the *Book of Changes*” (*Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu* 周易流演窮寂圖).²⁶⁶

The “*Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu*” was not catalogued in either of the Tang official histories; the first bibliographical record in official histories is the *Song shi*. However, the *Song shi* was compiled in the Yuan Dynasty; all works that included this diagram prior to the Yuan Dynasty called it “*Zhouyi liuyan tu*” 周易流演圖. Where the “qiongji” 窮寂 comes from is unknown. Zhu Yizun, in his *Jingyi kao*, regards the name of “*Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu*” as two five-volume texts put together under Cheng Xuanying’s name: the “*Yi liuyan*” 易流演 and the “*Zhouyi qiongji tu*” 周易窮寂圖. He implies that “*Zhouyi qiongji tu*” is the “*Zhouyi liuyan qiongji tu*” catalogued in the “*Yiwen zhi*” of the *Song shi*, while “*Yi liuyan*” is another text that is included in the “*Shaoxing catalogue*” (*Shaoxing shumu* 紹興書目).²⁶⁷ However, since some later scholars regard the “*Book of Changes category*” (*yi lei* 易類) section as the only unreliable part of the *Jingyi kao* due to Zhu Yizun’s misunderstanding of many ancillary texts to the *Yijing*,²⁶⁸ it might very likely be a mistake of Zhu Yizun to consider the existence of another work called “*Zhouyi qiongji tu*,” when he did not know the basis of the appearance of word “qiongji” in the *Song shi*. Therefore, it is safe to assume that there is only one five-volume work by Cheng Xuanying. Since the whole

²⁶⁶ See note 174.

²⁶⁷ 成氏玄英周易窮寂圖宋志五卷 佚 易流演宋志五卷 佚 按紹興書目有之. *Jingyi kao*, 15.17a-b. What “*Shaoxing shumu*” is referred to awaits further investigation.

²⁶⁸ Modern scholars’ work that hold this view are collected in Lin Qingzhang 林慶彰 comp., *Zhu Yizun Jingyi kao yanjiu lunji* 朱彝尊經義考研究論集. Taipei: Academia Sinica, 2000. For representative articles, see Qiu Jianqun 邱建群 in his “Zhu Yizun *Jingyi kao* duhou ji” 朱彝尊經義考讀後記, *Yanjiu lunji*, 127-130 and Wang Weiqing 王渭清, “Tan *Jingyi kao* zhong de *Yi kao*” 談經義考中的“易”考——兼及全祖望《讀易別錄》, *Yanjiu lunji*, 199-208.

text is lost, its exact name is unknown. One thing that we do know is that text concerns the circulation and interpretation (*liuyan* 流演) of the *Book of Changes* (*zhouyi* 周易).²⁶⁹ Even across the Song Dynasty bibliographical catalogues, there are discrepancies on whether the “*Zhouyi liuyan*” is included. Since it is the only work on the *Book of Changes* by Cheng Xuanying and the only work of his on non-Daoist base text, if the “*Zhouyi liuyan*” was not recorded in a bibliographical catalogue, then Cheng Xuanying’s name would disappear from all non-Daoist categories, making him a pure Daoist author.

If we look at the Table 1, we find the fountainhead of the discrepancy in cataloguing this work: again, it is the *Junzhai dushuzhi* due to its two disparate versions. For a detailed study, a modern scholar Niu Jiqing 牛繼清 has done a comprehensive investigation on the development of the two versions of *Junzhai dushuzhi*:²⁷⁰ the four-volumed Yuanzhou 袁州 version²⁷¹ and the twenty-volumed Quzhou 衢州 version.²⁷² Only the Quzhou version documented the “*Zhouyi liuyan*.” The received text of which is now preserved in Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764-1849)’s *Wanwei bieyang* 宛委別藏, also named *Siku weishou shu* 四庫未收書, a collection that Ruan Yuan gathered from various commoner collections for Emperor Jiaqing 嘉慶 (r.1796-1820)’s private library in his palace. The *Wenxian tongkao*, whose catalogue mostly reiterated the Quzhou version, and only that version, of the *Junzhai dushuzhi*’s, catalogued it as well, in the form of quoting the latter’s record with no textual variation.²⁷³ The short note reads:

²⁶⁹ In this thesis, I will simply address this book as “*Zhouyi liuyan*” for convenience.

²⁷⁰ Niu Jiqing 牛繼清. “*Junzhai dushuzhi* banben yuanliu jianlun Song Chunyou Yuanzhou kanben de zhenwei” 郡齋讀書志版本源流——兼論宋淳祐袁州刊本的真偽. In *Anhui wenxian yanjiu jikan* 4 (2011), 1-15.

²⁷¹ Originated and circulated in modern Hunan 湖南.

²⁷² Originated and circulated in modern Zhejiang 浙江.

²⁷³ That Ma Duanlin’s *Wenxian tongkao* took its basis on the Quzhou edition of *Junzhai dushuzhi* only, has been investigated and affirmed by Qian Daxin 錢大昕 (1728-1804): 馬氏經籍考所引晁說皆據衢本

右唐成元英撰 錯綜六十四卦 演九宮 以直年月日 推國家之吉凶 玄英道士也 故道藏錄之 或云釋仁英撰 未知孰是

Composed by Cheng Xuanying in the Reverent Tang.²⁷⁴ He examined across and synthesized all sixty-four hexagrams and explained the Nine Palaces,²⁷⁵ extrapolating the weal and woe of the state down to the months and days. Xuanying is a Daoist, thus (his work) is included in *Daozang*.²⁷⁶ Someone says it was composed by Monk Renying (instead). I do not know who is right.²⁷⁷

The text and the diagram of the “Zhouyi liuyan” are both lost and even nowhere to be found in the *Daozang*. However, a small portion of Cheng Xuanying’s understanding of the *Yijing* is preserved in his commentary to the 太上洞玄靈寶無量度人上品妙經法. In the 普度章 section of the 元始無量度人上品經法, the fourth volume of the text, under the main text 道言 夫天地運度 亦有否終 “The Way says: ‘In general, the operation and measurement of the Heaven and Earth, for their parts, have an End to Stoppage,’” Cheng Xuanying made such a commentary:

不用袁本 當時兩本並行 而優劣自判. Qian Daxin, *Shijia zhai yangxin lu* 十駕齋養新錄 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1983), 14.344.

²⁷⁴ All Tang authors were addressed as living in “The Reverent Tang” (*you Tang* 右唐) in *Junzhai dushuzhi*. Its origin and tradition awaits further investigation.

²⁷⁵

²⁷⁶ *Daozang* does not include the *Zhouyi liuyan*. The demonstrative, *zhi* 之 in this sentence likely refers to his *Nanhua zhenjing zhushu* 南華真經註疏 and 道德真經玄德纂疏 (three other commentators: 河上公 嚴君平 李榮. Also 唐玄宗.) in *Daozang*. For the latter one, see *Daozang* 13.357-538.

²⁷⁷ Ruan Yuan comp., *Quben Junzhai dushu zhi* 衢本郡齋讀書志 (Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1988), 1.9a-b and Wang Xianqian 王先謙 (1842-1917), *Junzhai dushuzhi* (Guangxu jiashen Qu-Yuan hekeben, 1884), 1.11a.

否終者 否是陽九百六 終謂三界消亡 陽九百六者 按周易大衍十九年為一章 四章為一部 二十部為一統 三統為一元 一元四千六百二十年 其中通有五十四年水旱

陽九者 陽數奇 極於九 災應之時 大則九年之旱也 其次則七年五年三年一年之火也 陰數偶 極於八 災應之時 則八年六年四年二年之水

百六初入元 一百六十年 陽數奇 有小旱之災 故云百六之災 通論陽九百六之會者 初入元 三百年為小陽九小百六 九百年為大陽九大百六 大則大旱九年大水八年也 漢書云 四千六百一十七年為一元 數盡三元為大劫之終 天地消亡也 三元合一萬三千八百五十一年 初入元一百六十年為一小災 故云百六否終之義 略舉如前也

As for the “End to Stoppage”: the “Stoppage”²⁷⁸ means (the disastrous situation) of the “Nine at yang”²⁷⁹ and the “Hundred of Six.”²⁸⁰ According to the “Orthodox Derivation” of the *Book of Changes*, nineteen years form a chapter;

²⁷⁸ “Stoppage” (*pi* 否) is the twelfth hexagram of *Yijing*.

²⁷⁹ “Nine” (*jiu* 九) is numerologically representative of *yang* 陽, as in the *Book of Changes* where lines with value of nine are “strong” or “noving” unbroken lines. The symbolic of the number nine is the most fully *yang* of the nine fundamental numerals; according to traditional *Daoist* point of view, things would reverse when reaching their utmost. Therefore, when *yang* reaches its ultimate maximum – the full number nine – its energy would be exhausted. Consequently the “Nine at yang” (*yangjiu* 陽九) signifies the end of a cosmic cycle. Since unbroken lines represent the *qian* 乾 trigram that stands for Heaven, the *yangjiu* disaster stands for the disaster of the Heaven.

²⁸⁰ “Six” (*liu* 六) represents the broken lines, or the *kun* 坤 trigram that stands for Earth, in an *Yijing* hexagram. Thus six is the numerological representative for *yin* 陰. “A Hundred” (*bai* 百), just like “Nine,” is a full complement. As a counterpart to the “Nine at the yang,” the “Hundred of Six” (*bailiu* 百六) represents the fullness, followed by inevitable exhaustion of the *yin* energy, thus the disaster of the Earth. Combined, *yangjiu bailiu* is a term for catastrophes in Daoist language.

four chapters form a section; twenty sections form a series; three series form an epoch. One epoch is four-thousand-six-hundred-and-twenty years, within which there are fifty-four (years of) floods or drought in total.

As for the “Nine at the *yang*”: (it would be the time when) the *yang* numbers are odd, the largest of which is nine. (Then, if) a disaster would correspond (to it), the greatest would be a nine-year drought. Less (serious) than that would be a fire (that lasts for) seven years, five years, three years, or one year. (It would also be the time when) the *yin* numbers are even, the largest of which is eight. (Then, if) a disaster would correspond (to it), (such a disaster would be) a flood (that lasts for) eight years, six years, four years or two years.

(The time when) the “Hundred of Six” first enters an epoch, would be the one-hundred-and-sixtieth year. In that year, the *yang* number is odd. There would be a slight drought, and thus (the drought) is called the disaster of the “Hundred of Six.” In general sayings, when (the disasters of both) the “Nine at *yang*” and the “Hundred of Six” meet, the first time in that epoch would be the three-hundredth year – the “Lesser Nine at *yang* and Hundred of Six” – and the nine-hundredth year – the “Greater Nine at *yang* and Hundred of Six.” The greater one would be a great drought for nine years followed by a great flood for eight years. The *Han shu* says: “Four-thousand-six-hundred-and-seventeen years form an epoch; at the end of three full epochs, it would be the end of the Great Kalpa – the time when Heaven and Earth all dissolve and die.” Three epochs would add up to thirteen-thousand-eight-hundred-and-fifty-one years. There is a small disaster at the first one-hundred-and-sixtieth year after an epoch begins. Therefore, the meanings of

the sayings (such as) the “Hundred of Six” and the “End to Stoppage” are what (I) have listed and elaborated above.²⁸¹

We do not know whether this constitutes a part of his “*Zhouyi liuyan*,” or serves as its gist. Its content does fit what the catalogue says, “extrapolating the weal and woe of the state down to the months and days.” We nevertheless can infer that Cheng Xuanying’s understanding and interpretation of the *Yijing* was regarded as jeopardizing to the court, especially after Daoists fell out of the imperial favor and lost their functionality ever since the late years of the Zhenguan reign. Since Daoist prognostications assisted in enthroning Li Yuan, what was useful and beneficial to the Tang court became even more threatening and sensitive in the middle of the dynasty. Additionally, during the Yonghui reign, there was a drought. According to the “Wuxing zhi” in the *Xin Tang shu*, the drought was quite severe and widespread:

永徽元年 京畿雍同絳等州十旱 二年九月不雨至於明年二月 四年夏秋旱
光婺滁潁等州尤甚

In the first year of the Yonghui reign (650), the surroundings of the capital, the Yong,²⁸² Tong,²⁸³ Jiang²⁸⁴ Prefectures and seven other prefectures in total, were undergoing drought. In the ninth month of the second year (651), it still did not rain until the second month of the next year (652). In summer and autumn of the

²⁸¹ *HY* 2.505.

²⁸² The Yong 雍 Prefecture is on the border of modern Shaanxi 陝西, Ningxia 寧夏 and Gansu 甘肅 Provinces.

²⁸³ The Tong 同 Prefecture is in the eastern modern Shaanxi Province.

²⁸⁴ The Jiang 絳 Prefecture is in the southern modern Shanxi 山西 Province.

fourth year (653), there was drought. It was especially severe in Prefectures such as Guang,²⁸⁵ Wu,²⁸⁶ Chu²⁸⁷ and Ying.^{288 289}

If we examine the time in the above commentary composed by Cheng Xuanying, matching with the drought at the beginning of the Yonghui reign, they may match in time,²⁹⁰ causing Cheng Xuanying's "Zhouyi liuyan" to be another prognostication, the composing of which would certainly be cast as a crime. Among all scholars and their works listed in Table 1, the *Xin Tang shu* and the Yuanzhou edition of *Junzhai dushuzhi* did not include either the "Zhouyi liuyan" or the "unknown offense." The Quzhou version included both, perhaps this version, aiming at comprehensiveness, has an all-encompassing intention and tendency. Therefore, while it catalogued five times more books than its Quzhou counterpart, inevitably some unnecessary, redundant elements would be preserved too. The *Wenxian tongkao* followed the Quzhou version of the *Junzhai dushuzhi*. The *Zhizhai shulu jieti* does not include the "Zhouyi liuyan," but acknowledging that the author does not know the reason for Cheng's banishment. Finally, the 1884 combined version (*Qu Yuan heben* 衢袁合本) edited by the Qing scholar, Wang Xianqian 王先謙 (1842-1917), includes the "Zhouyi liuyan" and deleted the "unknown offense" from the Quzhou version. This suggests that Wang saw the *Zhouyi liuyan* and "it is unknown what offense

²⁸⁵ The Guang 光 Prefecture is on the border of modern Henan 河南, Anhui 安徽 and Hubei 湖北 Provinces.

²⁸⁶ The Wu 婺 Prefecture is in the east of modern Jiangxi 江西 Province.

²⁸⁷ The Chu 滁 Prefecture is in the eastern modern Anhui Province.

²⁸⁸ The Ying 潁 Prefecture is in the northwestern modern Anhui Province. From the location of the above list of prefectures affected by drought, we could see that the drought in the first half of the fifth decade of the seventh century was quite widespread.

²⁸⁹ *Xin Tang shu*, 35.915.

²⁹⁰ The time limit does not allow me to look into how they match. It's just my intuition right now. It will be researched thus this suggestion awaits verification or falsification.

he committed” parts of the texts as incompatible versions. Although he devotes no specific discussion, perhaps Wang himself might have even contemplated a connection between the “*Zhouyi liuyan*” and the offense that led to Cheng’s banishment. We follow Wang in that we agree that the two aforementioned parts are incompatible and go further to propose that the contents “*Zhouyi liuyan*” might have been sensitive enough in the Yonghui reign that the entire work was labelled as subversive, adding to the reasons why Cheng was banished and the text itself was not transmitted.

Appendix:

Translation of a piece of Cheng Xuanying's work: "Xiaoyao you shu" 逍遙遊疏

南華真經註疏 內篇逍遙遊第一

Commentaries and Subcommentaries on Canon of the Southern Hua (Zhuangzi)

The First of the Inner Chapters: "Free-and-Easy Wandering"

唐西華法師成玄英疏

Composed by Cheng Xuanying, the Master of Doctrines at the Xihua Abbey of the Tang

1 北冥有魚，其名為鯤。鯤之大，不知其幾千裏也。

In the Northern Main there is a fish; its name is called Kun. The greatness of the Kun measures who knows how many thousand miles.

〔疏〕溟，猶海也，取其溟漠無涯，故為之溟。東方朔十洲記云：溟海無風而洪波百丈。巨海之內，有此大魚，欲明物性自然，故標為章首。玄中記云：東方有大魚焉，行者一日過魚頭，七日過魚尾；產三日，碧海為之變紅。故知大物生於大處，豈獨北溟而已。

The main, is similar to the "ocean." It takes up the far-fathomed and boundless nature of the main, thus named the "ming." Dongfang shuo's *Record of the Ten Islands* says: "The far-

fathomed sea has no wind yet great waves are a hundred feet high.” The great fish, inside the vast ocean, intends to signify the *natura naturata* character of matters. Therefore, this word marks the beginning of the chapter. *Stories from the mid of mystery* says: “A great fish is there at the east. A man walks for a day and passes its head, for seven days he passes its tail. It delivers for three days; the green ocean is made red.” Thus, we know that great matters are born from great places. Does it happen to the Northern Main alone?

2 化而為鳥，其名為鵬。

It changes into a bird, its name is the Peng.

〔疏〕夫四序風馳，三光電卷，是以負山嶽而捨故，揚舟壑以趨新。故化魚為鳥，欲明變化之大理也。

In any respect, the four sequences gallop like wind, and the three lights swirl like lightning. Therefore, the Peng carries hills and marchmounts on its back and lets go of the past, and speeds up the boat in river valley towards the new. Thus the transformation from the fish into a bird hopes to manifest the great principle of change.

3 鵬之背，不知其幾千里也；怒而飛，其翼若垂天之雲。

The Peng’s back measures who knows how many thousand miles; when it puffs out its chest and flies off, its wings are like clouds hanging from the sky.

〔疏〕魚論其大，以表頭尾難知；鳥言其背，亦示修短叵測。故下文云，未有知其修者也。鼓怒翅翼，奮迅毛衣，既欲搏風，方將擊水。遂乃斷絕雲氣，背負青天，騫翥翱翔，凌摩霄漢，垂陰布影，若天涯之降行雲也。

Discussing the fish's greatness reveals the hard-to-be-known distance between its head and tail; emphasizing the bird's back also shows the impossibility to measure its length and shortness. Thus later text says that no one knows their lengths. Fluttering and flapping its wings, spreading and fluffing its plumage, (the Peng is) ready to fight the wind and about to strike the water. Thereupon it is clear of the clouds it carries the blue sky on its back. Prancing and lifting high away, wheeling and hovering on its wings, surmounting the Milky Way until it touches the heaven, and hanging down its shade and spreading its shadows, (it looks like) as if floating clouds are coming down from the edge of sky.

4 是鳥也，海運則將徙於南冥。南冥者，天池也。

This bird when the seas are heaving has a mind to travel to the South Ocean. The South Ocean is the Lake of Heaven.

〔疏〕運，轉也。是，指斥也。即此鵬鳥，其形重大，若不海中運轉，無以自致高升，皆不得不然，非樂然也。且形既遷革，情亦隨變。昔日為魚，涵泳北海；今時作鳥，騰翥南溟。雖復升沈性殊，逍遙一也。亦猶死生聚散，所遇斯適。千變萬化，未始非吾，所以化魚為鳥。自北徂南者，鳥是凌虛之物，南即啟明之方；魚乃滯溺之蟲，北蓋幽冥之地；欲

表向明背暗，捨滯求進，故舉南北鳥魚以示為道之徑耳。而大海洪川，原夫造化，非人所作，故曰天池也。

Heaving means swirling. “This,” is a direct address to the bird. It means that this Peng bird’s body is so heavy and great that if the seas are not heaving, it cannot lift itself away into the height. It has to so instead of being fond of so. Furthermore, having the form just transformed, the spirit also accordingly changes. In the past days it was a fish, submerged and swimming in the North Sea; nowadays it is a bird, soaring high and hovering to the South Ocean. Despite its constant rise and fall, its “free and easy”-ness is the same. This (principle) is also like death and life, gathering and parting, whatever is encountered is conformed to. Altering for a thousand times and transforming for ten thousand times, I never yet became “un-me.” Thus (Zhuangzi gave the metaphor of) transforming a fish into a bird. As for the one who came from North to the South, a bird is a creature that rides the emptiness, south is the direction of the opener-of-light; a fish is a worm stuck in the mire, north is a place of the secluded-and-dark. These metaphors are to manifest the action of facing the light and turning against darkness as well as of renouncing stagnation and seeking progression. Thus (Zhuangzi) takes the south, the north, the bird and the fish simply to show the path to the Way. As for the vast ocean and the great falls, they were creation of the Fashioner, not made by the men – thus they were called “The Lake of Heaven.”

5 齊諧者，誌怪者也。諧之言曰：鵬之徙於南冥也，水擊三千里，搏扶搖而上者九萬里，
The Tall stories of Qi is a record of marvels. In the words of the *Tall stories*, “When the Peng travels to the South Ocean, the wake it thrashes on the water is three thousand miles long, it mounts spiraling on the whirlwind ninety thousand miles high,

6 去以六月息者也。

“And is gone six months before it is out of breath.”

〔疏〕姓齊，名諧，人姓名也。亦言書名也，齊國有此俳諧之書也。誌，記也。擊，打也。搏，鬥也。扶搖，旋風也。齊諧所著之書，多記怪異之事，莊生引以為證，明己所說不虛。大鵬既將適南溟，不可決然而起，所以舉擊兩翅，動蕩三千，踉蹌而行，方能離水。然後繚戾宛轉，鼓怒徘徊，風氣相扶，搖動而上。塗經九萬，時隔半年，從容誌滿，方言憩止。適足而已，豈措情乎哉。

Qi Xie is the name of a man with surname Qi and given name Xie. It is also the name of a book. The State of Qi has this book of jest. Record means a written document. To hit means to beat. To mount mean to fight. “The spiraling” means the whirlwind. The book that Qi Xie has written notes down mostly fascinating events; Sir Zhuang quotes the book as evidence in order to show that his words are not empty. The great Peng were about to journey the Southern Ming, it could not fly off in a sudden. Therefore, it lifts up and flaps its two wings, stirs and stimulates waters of three-thousand miles, staggers and stumbles forward (for a while), until it is able to leave the water. After that, it reels and wheels, supplely sweeps; supported by the wind and the air, swaying and rising then up it goes. Covering the path of ninety-thousand miles and the time of half a year, calm and relaxed it completes its ambition; only after that it talks about cessation. Merely conforming to its (own) needs, has it really resulted in anything real?

7 野馬也，塵埃也，生物之以息相吹也。

Heat-hazes, and dust-storms, are the breaths which living things blow at each other.

〔疏〕爾雅云：邑外曰郊，郊外曰牧，牧外曰野。此言青春之時，陽氣發動，遙望藪澤之中，猶如奔馬，故謂之野馬也。揚土曰塵，塵之細者曰埃。天地之間，生物氣息更相吹動，以舉於鵬者也。夫四生雜沓，萬類參差，形性不同，資待宜異。故鵬鼓垂天之翼，托風氣以逍遙；蝸張決起之翅，檜榆枋而自得。斯皆率性而動，稟之造化，非有情於遐邇，豈措意於驕矜。體斯趣者，於何而語誇企乎。

Erya says: “Outside the town is called the suburb, outside the suburb is called the pasture, outside the pasture is called the wild.” This part says that at the time of green spring, the *yang* air is aroused and stirred up. One gazes at the depth of the marsh, dirt is aroused by heat like galloping horses, thus refers to it as “wild horses.” Earth cast into the air is called dust; minor dusts are called motes. Between Heaven and Earth, the breaths of creatures blow and agitate each other, so as to lift the Peng. In general, the four kinds of living beings become mingled masses, myriad matters are diversely disposed. Their forms and dispositions are different; their gifts and sustenance should be distinct. Therefore, the Peng flaps its Heaven-hanging pinion, wandering free and easy relying on the wind; cicadas open their shooting-up wings, bumping into elms and sandalwoods and enjoy themselves. These creatures all act according to their own nature, gifted by the fashioner of mutations. It is not that the Peng has a desire for the near and the far; how can it have an inclination to be arrogant and aloof? If someone comprehends this proclivity (of beings), about what would he say that (the Peng has) too much to desire?

8 天之蒼蒼，其正色邪？其遠而無所至極邪？其視下也，亦若是則已矣。

Is the azure of the sky its true color? Or is that the distance into which we are looking is infinite?
It never stops flying higher till everything below looks the same as above.

〔疏〕仰視圓穹，甚為迢遞，碧空高遠，筭數無窮。蒼蒼茫昧，豈天正色，然鵬處中天，人居下地，而鵬之俯視，不異人之仰觀。人既不辨天之正色，鵬亦詎知地之遠近？自勝取足，適至南溟，鵬之圖度，止在於是矣。

Looking up at the round firmament so far and farther off – the azure sky is high and distant, with endless fates beyond count. Shadowy and dark blue, vast and vague – is that the true color of the sky? It being so, the Peng is located in the middle of the Heaven; humans reside down here in the Earth. The Peng's looking down at us is no different from us gazing up at it. Now that humans cannot tell the true color of the Heaven, how can the Peng, in the same case, know its own distance from the Earth? It is merely capable of taking whatever is enough for itself to go off to the South Ocean. The Peng's planning and measuring stops at such degree, and that's it.

9 且夫水之積也不厚，則其負大舟也無力。覆杯水於坳堂之上，則芥為之舟；置杯焉則膠，水淺而舟大也。

If a mass of water is not bulky enough it lacks the strength to carry a big boat. When you upset a bowl of water over a dip in the floor, a seed will make a boat for it, but if you put the cup there it jams, because your boat is too big for such shallow water.

〔疏〕且者，假借，是聊略之辭。夫者，乃是發（在）語之端緒。積，聚也。厚，深也。杯，小器也。坳，汙陷也，謂堂庭坳陷之地也。芥，草也。膠，黏也。此起譬也。夫翻覆

一杯之水於坳汙堂地之間，將草葉為舟，則浮泛靡滯；若還用杯為舟，理必不可。何者？水淺舟大，則黏地不行故也。是以大舟必須深水，小芥不待洪流，苟其大小得宜，則物皆逍遙。

Qie is a loan word and an abbreviation marker. *Fu* is a sentence-initial modifier. To accumulate means to amass. Bulky means deep. A cup is a small vessel. A dip is a sunken place. The gateway to the hall is addressed “the dip.” Mustard plant is a kind of grass. To be glued on means to adhere to. This is a beginning-type metaphor. In any case, turning a cup of water over on a hollow ground and making a piece of grass leaf into a boat, the boat would be buoyed up and not stuck. If one instead makes a cup into a boat, this set-up must not work. Why so? The water is shallow and the boat is big, the boat would be adhered to the ground instead of going forward. That is the reason. Therefore, a big boat must be paired with deep water, while a small mustard seed cannot bear the flow of flood. As long as size fits, every matter can reach the state of “free and easy”-ness.

10 風之積也不厚，則其負大翼也無力。故九萬里則風斯在下矣，

If a mass of wind is not bulky enough it lacks the strength to carry the great wings. So it is only when the bird is ninety thousand miles high, with the wind underneath it,

〔疏〕此合喻也。夫水不深厚，則大舟不可載浮；風不崇高，大翼無由凌霄漢。是以小鳥半朝，決起（檜）榆「枋」之上；大鵬九萬，飄風鼓扇其下也。

This is a conjoined analogy. In any case, if the water is not deep and profound, the great boat cannot be carried and drifted; if the wind is not elevated and exalted, the great wings has no possibility to approach the sky. Therefore, the small bird bursts and flies above elms and sandalwoods within half a day, and the great Peng travels ninety thousand miles with whirling and billowing winds aroused beneath it.

11 而後乃今培風；背負青天而莫之夭闕者，而後乃今將圖南。

that it rests its weight on the wind; and it must have the blue sky on its back and a clear view ahead before it will set its course for the South.

〔疏〕培，重也。夭，折也。闕，塞也。初賴扶搖，故能升翥；重積風吹，然後飛行。既而上負青天，下乘風脊，一凌霄漢，六月方止。網羅不逮，畢弋無侵，折塞之禍，於何而至。良由資待合宜，自致得所。逍遙南海，不亦宜乎。

To mound up means to layer. To cease early means to suddenly break off. To be impeded means to be blocked. At first it relies on the spiraling whirlwind, then repeatedly, accumulated winds blow it until off it flies. Now that it bears the blue sky on its back and rides the spine of wind on its belly, it at once surmounts the Sky River, until it finally stops after six months. Meshes and snares would not trap it, and fork-nets and arrows would not hurt it. Whence would the disaster of dying and being obstructed come? It is very much so owing to the fitness between what awaits it and what it waits for, so that it finds itself a suitable place. Free and easy, (the Peng) wanders in the South Sea – is it not favorable?

12 蝸與學鳩笑之曰：我決起而飛，檜榆枋，時則不至，而控於地而已矣，奚以之九萬里而南為？

A cicada and turtle-dove laughed at it, saying, “We keep flying till we are bursting, stop when we get to an elm or sandalwood, and sometimes dragged back to the ground before we are there. What’s all this about being ninety thousand miles up when he travels south?”

〔疏〕蝸，蟬也，生七八月，紫青色，一名昭繚。鸞鳩，鶻鳩也，即今之斑鳩是也。決，卒疾之貌。檜，集也，亦突也。枋，檀木也。控，投也，引也，窮也。奚，何也。之，適也。蝸鳩聞鵬鳥之宏大，資風水以高飛，故嗤彼形大而劬勞，欣我質小而逸豫。且騰躍不過數仞，突榆檀而棲集；時困不到前林，投地息而更起，逍遙適性，樂在其中。何須時經六月，途遙九萬，跋涉辛苦，南適胡為。以小笑大，誇企自息而不逍遙者，未之有也。

A *tiao* means a cicada, born in the seventh or the eighth month, in dark purplish-blue color. It is also named *zhaoliao*. *Xuejiu*, or *hujiu*, is what is called the turtle-dove now (*Streptopelia chinensis*). Shooting up means the manner of being quick and swift. To bump into means to pause and perch, also means to suddenly (do so). Sappanwood (*Caesalpinia sappan*) is sandalwood (*Santalum album*). To throw off means to hurl, to drag, to exhaust. “What’s that all about” means why. To go means to get to. The cicada and the dove heard about the vastness and greatness of the Peng bird that flies high with the support of the wind and the water, thus sneers at the Peng’s giant-bodied toilsome travail and are happy with their own tiny-natured unconfined contentment. In addition, hopping and skipping up not yet a few yards, they bump into elms and sandalwoods, and gather and perch there; not yet passing the time for (reaching) the front of the woods, they throw off to the ground, and rest before they fly up again. Free and easy conforming

to their natures, happiness is within (their lifestyles). Why must they need a time that spans as much as six months, a journey that reaches as far as ninety-thousand miles? Treading and wading, laborious and toilsome, for what would they go South? Laughing at the great as the small, and boasting about their self-resting and non-free-and-easy, I have never seen one in existence.

13 適莽蒼者，三餐而反，腹猶果然；適百里者，宿春糧；適千里者，三月聚糧。

Someone off to the green of the woods, with enough for three meals will be home with his belly still full; someone going thirty miles pounds grain for the days he will be away; someone going three hundred miles lays in grain to last three months.

〔疏〕適，往也。莽蒼，郊野之色，遙望之不甚分明也。果然，飽貌也。往於郊野，來去三食，路既非遙，腹猶充飽。百里之行，路程稍遠，春梲糧食，為一宿之備。適於千里之途，路既迢遙，聚積三月之糧，方充往來之食。故郭註云，所適彌遠，則聚糧彌多，故其翼彌大，則積氣彌厚者也。

To journey means to go toward. Blurred and boundless is the color of the suburbs and the wilds, not quite distinct as one gazes from a distant. Fruit-filled-like means the look when one is full.

One goes toward the suburbs and the wilds with enough for three meals, since the distance is not far, his belly is still full (after he comes back). (As for) a journey of a hundred miles, the distance is a little bit far, one would pound grain in order to prepare for (the meal that sustains oneself) overnight. (If one) takes a journey of one thousand miles, now that the road is far and farther off, (one) accumulates and amasses grains for three months only which can suffice his sustenance as

he comes and goes. Thus Guo (Xiang)'s commentary says: "The further one goes, the more food one has to gather. In the same way, the larger the wings are, the more air it needs."

14 之二蟲又何知。

What do these two creatures know?

〔疏〕郭註云，二蟲，鵬蜩也；對大於小，所以均異趣也。且大鵬搏風九萬，小鳥決起榆枋，雖復遠近不同，適性均也。咸不知道里之遠近，各取足而自勝，天機自張，不知所以。既無意於高卑，豈有情於優劣。逍遙之致，其在茲乎。而呼鵬為蟲者，大戴禮云：東方鱗蟲三百六十，應龍為其長；南方羽蟲三百六十，鳳皇為其長；西方毛蟲三百六十，麒麟為其長；北方甲蟲三百六十，靈龜為其長；中央裸蟲三百六十，聖人為其長。通而為語，故名鵬為蟲也。

Guo's commentary says: "The two worms' addresses the Peng and the cicada. With respect to the relation between the great and the small, that is the way they match their different inclination against each other." In addition, as for the great Peng bundling the wind and the small bird shooting up from elms and sandalwoods, although their (choices of) distance are different in proximity and remoteness, the accordance (of their choice of distance) to (their own respective) nature is the same. Neither of them know the real distance of their ways; each takes what is enough and capable for themselves, and the Heaven's mechanism will set forth by itself without being known why. Since they have no intention for highness or lowness, how can they tell between eminence and abasement? The utmost of "free and easy" might lie in here! As for those who address the Peng as a bug, *Dadai li* says: "In the East there are three hundred and sixty

scaled bugs, and winged-dragon is the chief among them; in the South there are three hundred and sixty feathered bugs, and phoenix is the chief among them; in the West there are three hundred and sixty fuzzy bugs, and unicorn is the chief among them; in the North there are three hundred and sixty shelled bugs, and numinous turtle is the chief among them; in the Center there are three hundred and sixty naked bugs, and the sage is the chief among them.”

15 小知不及大知，小年不及大年。

Little wits cannot keep up with great, of few years with many.

〔疏〕夫物受氣不同，稟分各異，智則有明有暗，年則或短或長，故舉朝菌冥靈、宰官榮子，皆如年智，豈企尚之所及哉。故知物性不同，不可強相希效也。

In general, matters receive different aura so each has distinct gifts. As for wisdom, there is bright and dark; as for years, there might be short or long years (according to each creature's relative life span). Thus (Zhuangzi) takes the examples of the fungus of a morning, the tree Mingling, an official minister, and (Song) Rongzi (altogether to indicate that) each has their own respective wisdom and year. Is it something one can reach (even) by standing on one's tiptoe in awe? Therefore, we know that the dispositions of matters are distinct from each other; one cannot be forcefully admired or mimicked by another.

16 奚以知其然也?

How would know that this is so?

〔疏〕奚，何也。然，如此也。此何以知年智不相及若此之懸解耶？假設其問，以生後答。

Xi means “how (*he*).” *Ran* means “like so (*ruci*).” How would one know, by means of which, that years and wisdom (of things) do not match and vary drastically? (Zhuangzi) deliberately proposes a question in order to produce a later answer.

17 朝菌不知晦朔，蟪蛄不知春秋，此小年也。

The mushroom of a morning does not know old and new moon, the cricket does not know spring and autumn; their time is too short.

〔疏〕此答前問也。朝菌者，謂天時滯雨，於糞壤之上熱蒸而生，陰濕則生，見日便死，亦謂之大芝，生於朝而死於暮，故曰朝菌。月終謂之晦，月旦謂之朔；假令逢陰，數日便萎，終不涉三旬，故不知晦朔也。蟪蛄，夏蟬也。生於麥梗，亦謂之麥節，夏生秋死，故不知春秋也。菌則朝生暮死，蟬則夏長秋殂，斯言齡命短促，故謂之小年也。

This is the answer to the previous question. The fungus of a morning is what stimulated by heat and vapor and sprouted from the rotten earth in the rain-lingering weather. If the weather is cold and damp, it lives; if it sees the sun, it dies. It is also called “the great mushroom.” It is born in the morning and dies by the sunset, thus is called “fungus of a morning.” The end of the month is called *hui*, the beginning of the month is called *shuo*; if it ever encounters a gloomy weather, it withers within a few days. After all, it cannot survive through three decades of days, thus it does not know what *hui* or *shuo* is. *Huigu* means the cicada of the summer. It is born on the stem of wheats, (thus) is also called “the node of the wheat.” It is born in the summer and dies in the

autumn, thus it does know what a whole year (*chunqiu*) is. As for a mushroom, it is born in the morning and dies by the sunset; as for a cicada, it grows in the summer and deceases in the autumn. These two (creatures) are used to represent the shortness and swiftness of ages and lives, thus calling (their years) small years.

18 楚之南有冥靈者，以五百歲為春，五百歲為秋；上古有大椿者，以八千歲為春，八千歲為秋。

South of Chu there is the tree Mingling, which grows through a spring of five hundred years, declines through an autumn of five hundred years; in the remotest past there was the great tree Chun, with eight thousand years for its spring and eight thousand years for its autumn.

〔疏〕冥靈大椿，並木名也，以葉生為春，以葉落為秋。冥靈生於楚之南，以二千歲為一年也。而言上古者，伏羲時也。大椿之木長於上古，以三萬二千歲為一年也。冥靈五百歲而花生，大椿八千歲而葉落，並以春秋賒永，故謂之大年也。

Mingling and the Great Chun are both names of trees. One considers (the time when) leaves sprout as spring; One considers (the time when) leaves fall as autumn. Mingling is born at the South of Chu, and makes two thousand years as one (of its) harvest. As for the remotest past, it refers to the time of Fuxi's. The tree of the Great Chun is grown in the remotest past, and makes thirty-two thousand years as one (of its) harvests. Mingling's flowers bloom each five hundred years. The Great Chun's leaves fall each eight thousand years. Also, their springs and falls are eternal and everlasting, thus (their years) are called great years.

19 而彭祖乃今以久特聞，眾人匹之，不亦悲乎。

It is only nowadays that Pengzu is uniquely famous for living long (he is said to have lived for eight hundred years), and is it not sad that common men should think him insurpassable?

〔疏〕彭祖者，姓籛，名鏗，帝顓頊之玄孫也。善養性，能調鼎，進雉羹於堯，堯封於彭城，其道可祖，故謂之彭祖。歷夏經殷，至周年八百歲矣。特，獨也。以其年長壽，所以聲名獨聞於世。而世人比匹彭祖，深可悲傷；而不悲者，為彭祖稟性遐壽，非我氣類，置之言外，不敢嗟傷。故知生也有涯，豈唯彭祖去已一毫不可企及。於是均椿菌，混彭殤，各止其分，而性命安矣。

Pengzu is a person with surname Jian and given name Keng. He is the great-great-grandson of *Di Zhuanxu*. He is good at nourishing human nature and capable of cooking with a tripod. He presented chicken soup to Yao, and Yao enfeoffed him in the state of Peng. His enfeoffment could be carried on to later generations, thus is addressed as “the Ancestor Peng.” Passing the Xia and through the Yin, eight hundred years already elapsed (from then) up to the Zhou. “In particular” means distinctively. His reputation is distinctively spread around the world because of his longevity. However, if the mundane people attempt to make a match with Pengzu, how miserable are they! For those who do not grieve (upon their incapability to match Pengzu), it is because (they realize that) Pengzu’s disposition and nature of advancement in years are not among our human’s category, (for which reason) they set Pengzu aside from their words and dare not to sigh and lament (about this incomparability). On this accord we know that there is a shore of life – is Pengzu the only one already beyond reach? From the above: if one recognizes the balance between the Chun tree and the fungus, and considers the dead infant and Pengzu as

alternates, then each will stop at its own allotted proportion. Their natures and destinies will thereupon be stabilized.

20 湯之問棘也是已。

Tang's question to Ji were about this:

〔疏〕湯是帝嚳之後，契之苗裔，姓子，名履，字天乙。母氏扶都，見白氣貫月，感而生湯。豐下兌上。身長九尺。仕夏為諸侯，有聖德，諸侯歸之。遭桀無道，囚於夏臺。後得免，乃與諸侯同盟於景亳之地，會桀於昆吾之墟，大戰於鳴條之野，桀奔於南巢。湯既克桀，讓天下於務光，務光不受。湯即位，乃都於亳，後改為商，殷開基之主也。棘者，湯時賢人，亦云湯之博士。列子謂之夏革，革棘聲類，蓋字之誤也。而棘既是賢人，湯師事之，故湯問於棘，詢其至道，云物性不同，各有素分，循而直往，固而任之。殷湯請益，深有玄趣，莊子許其所問，故云是已。

Tang is the descendant of *Di Ku* and the offshoot of *Qi*: surnamed *Zi*, given name *Lü*, and style named *Tianyi*. His mother, from the clan of *Fudu*, saw white light passing through the center of the moon, affected by which she gave birth to Tang. He was nine feet tall, with “fullness” at below and “joy” at above, serving a position at the suzerainty of *Xia* as a feudal lord. He had sacred power and the various nobles all resorted to him. He encountered King *Jie*'s absence of principle and was imprisoned at the Terrace of *Xia*. Later he was remitted, after which he allied with various noblemen at the place of *Jingbo*. They met *Jie* on the ruins of *Kunwu*, battled fiercely on the wilds of *Mingtiao*, and *Jie* fled to *Nanchao*. Having just vanquished *Jie*, Tang

resigned the empire to Wuguang, and Wuguang did not accept it. Tang took the throne and then established his capital at Bo, which was later renamed as Shang. He was the founder of the groundwork of Yin Dynasty. *Ji* is a worthy man at the time of Tang; also addressed as “the Erudite of Tang.” Liezi calls him Ge of Xia; *ge* and *ji* sound similar, thus it is a mistakenly written word. Since Ji is a worthy man, Tang regarded him as a teacher, thus Tang asked Ji about the ultimate Way. Ji said: “The nature of matters are different, and each has its habitual distribution. Follow it and go directly towards it; fix it and let it be.” The Tang of Yin asks for more (says from Ji), (for) it has significantly mysterious interest. *Zhuangzi* approves of his question, thus quotes the above.

21 窮發之北有冥海者，天池也。有魚焉，其廣數千裏，未有知其修者，其名為鯤。

“In the North where nothing grows there is a vast sea, which is the Lake of Heaven. There is a fish there, several thousand miles broad, no one knows how long; its name is Kun.

〔疏〕修，長也。地以草為毛發，北方寒沍之地，草木不生，故名窮發，所謂不毛之地。鯤魚廣闊數千，未有知其長者，明其大也。然溟海鯤鵬，前文已出，如今重顯者，正言前引《齊諧》，足為典實，今牽《列子》，再證非虛，鄭重殷勤以成其義者也。

Elongation means long. The earth takes grass as its hair; the North is a freezing and closed off land where no grass or tree grows, thus calling it (a land) lack-of-hair to address its sterility. That the Kun fish is several thousand miles broad and wide and nobody knows how long it is, is to signify its greatness. However, the caliginous main, the Kun and the Peng were already mentioned previously in the text; now they reappear, exactly to state that what was quoted in The

Jest of Qi is verified allusion. Now Liezi is brought up to once again prove that the words are not empty. Earnestly and attentively, eagerly and ardently, the passage is restated to reinforce its significance.

22 有鳥焉，其名為鵬，背若太山，翼若垂天之雲，搏扶搖羊角而上者九萬里，絕雲氣，負青天，然後圖南，

“There is a bird there, its name is Peng, its back is as big as Mount Tai, its wings are like clouds hanging from the sky. It mounts the whirlwind in a ram’s horn spiral ninety thousand miles high, and only when it is clear of the clouds, with the blue sky on its back, does it set its course southward,

〔疏〕鵬背宏巨，狀若嵩華；旋風曲戾，猶如羊角。既而凌摩蒼昊，遏絕雲霄，鼓怒放暢，圖度南海。故禦寇《湯問》篇云：“世豈知有此物哉？大禹行而見之，伯益知而名之，夷堅聞而誌之”是也。

The back of the Peng is enormous and immense, shaped like Mount Song and Mount Hua; the whirlwind curls and coils, resembling a ram’s horn. Having surmounted and rubbed the cerulean Sublime, it breaks off and cuts through the cloudy empyrean – fluttering and flapping, unbridled and unimpeded – and attempts to fly cross the South Sea. Therefore, (Lie) Yukou’s “Tangwen” text says: “How would the world even know the existence of this thing? The Great Yu walked and around and saw it, Earl Yi knew it then named it, Yijian heard of it and recorded it.” That’s what it (the text) says.

23 且適南冥也。斥鴳笑之曰：彼且奚適也？我騰躍而上，不過數仞而下，翱翔蓬蒿之間，此亦飛之至也。而彼且奚適也？此小大之辯也。

“to journey to the South Ocean. A quail laughed at it, saying ‘Where does he think he’s going? I do a hop and a skip and up I go, and before I’ve gone more than a few dozen yards come fluttering down among the bushes. That is the highest one can fly. Where does he think he’s going?’” This was in disputation about the small and the great.

〔疏〕且，將也，亦語助也。斥，小澤也。鴳，雀也。八尺曰仞。翱翔，猶嬉戲也。而鴳雀小鳥，縱任斥澤之中，騰舉踴躍，自得蓬蒿之內，故能嗤九萬之遠適，欣數仞之近飛。斯蓋辯小大之性殊，論各足之不二也。

“Then” means about to; it is also an auxiliary word. A mere means a small marshland. A quail is a birdling that flies for the measure of eight feet per day. To hover is like to enjoy oneself. A quail, as a birdling, unleashes itself and lets go in the middle of meres and marshlands, and enjoys itself among bushes. That is how it can sneer at a journey towards nine thousand miles away, and take pleasure in a near flight within several miles. This is an argument on the difference between small and big natures, and a discussion that the sufficiency of each is not a second of another one’s.

24 故夫知效一官，行比一鄉，德合一君，而征一國者，其自視也亦若此矣。

Those, then, who are clever enough to do well in one office or efficient enough to protect one district, whose power suit one prince and are put to the test in one state, are seeing themselves as those (little birds) did.

〔疏〕故是仍前之語，夫是生後之詞。國是五等之邦，鄉是萬二千五百家也。自有智數功效，堪蒞一官；自有名譽著聞，比周鄉黨；自有道德弘博，可使南面，征成邦國，安有黎元。此三者，察分不同，優劣斯異，其於各足，未始不齊，視己所能，亦猶鳥之自得於一方。

Gu is a reference of something in the past; *fu* is a word that introduces something subsequent. A *guo* is a fifth-ranked state; a parish is the collection of twelve thousand and five hundred households. (There are people who) themselves have wisdom and appetency and efficacy, capable of taking a post. (There are people who) themselves have names and honors worthy to be heard of, circulated around every household within the parish. (There are people who) themselves have potency and power extensive and all-encompassing, that can be used for serving as rulers; who, having successfully brought a state or a territory into proper order, stabilize and settle their multitudinous folks. As for these three kinds of people, their scrutiny and lots are distinct and thus their superiority and inferiority different. As for each of their sufficiency, they have never yet been on a par; visualizing what oneself is capable of is just like a bird enjoying itself within one area.

25 而宋榮子猶然笑之。

Yet Master Rong of Song smiled at them in disdain.

〔疏〕子者，有德之稱，姓榮氏，宋人也。猶然，如是。榮子雖能忘有，未能遣無，故笑。宰官之徒，滯於爵祿，虛淡之人，猶懷嗤笑，見如是所以不齊。前既以小笑大，示大者不誇；今則以大笑小，小者不企；而性命不安者，理未之聞也。

A Master is to address someone with virtue. This “master” is surnamed Rong; he is native to the state of Song. “Similar to that” means to be like so. Although Master Rong can forget about beings, he cannot let go of the non-beings. Thus he laughs. (While) the likes of officials and ministers are stagnated in ranks and emoluments, people of emptiness and blandness yet incline toward jesting and laughing. The latter recognizes the reason that they’re not on a par. The previous example already takes the small laughing at the large to reveal that the large is not boastful; (on the contrary) the present example now takes the large laughing at the small to show that the small is not expecting. Yet if one’s being and destiny would not be at ease (because of these), in principle it is never heard of!

26 且舉世而譽之而不加勸，舉世而非之而不加沮，

Not only that, he refused to be encouraged though the whole world praised him, or deterred though the whole world blamed him,

〔疏〕舉，皆也。勸，勵勉也。沮，怨喪也。榮子率性懷道，警然超俗，假令世皆譽贊，亦不增其勸獎，率土非毀，亦不加其沮喪，審自得也。

The whole means all. To motivate means to encourage. To deter means to complain and to renounce. Master Rong acts accord to his nature with the Way in his bosom, haughtily hovers

above the mundanity. Even if the whole world honors and praises him, it would not increase his encouragement or support; even if the earth in general negates and defames him, it would not add to his despair. He scrutinizes himself and enjoys himself.

27 定乎內外之分，

He was unwavering about the division between inward and outward,

〔疏〕榮子知內既非我，外亦非物，內外雙遣，物我兩忘，故於內外之分定而不忒也。

Master Rong knows that: since the “in” is un-him, the “out” should also be un-others. Letting go of both the “in” and the “out,” he forgets about both the others and himself. Therefore, the demarcation between the “in” and the “out” is clarified and not blurred.

28 辯乎榮辱之境，

discriminating about the boundary between honor and disgrace,

〔疏〕忘勸沮於非譽，混窮通於榮辱，故能反照明乎心智，玄鑒辯於物境，不復內我而外物，榮己而辱人也。

Forgetting about encouragement or discouragement in negation and praise, and mixing together bumpiness and thoroughness in pride and humiliation, (would make) one capable to reflect the understanding at one’s mind and wisdom, and to mysteriously mirror the distinction in things

and limits. One (will then) no longer regard oneself as inward and other matters as outward, oneself as aloft and others as abase.

29 斯已矣。

But then this is it. (He soared no higher.)

〔疏〕斯，此也。已，止也，宋榮智德止盡於斯已也。

Si means “this.” *Yi* means to comes to a halt. The wisdom and virtue of Rong of Song stops and ends at this level, and this is it.

30 彼其於世，未數數然也。

He was too concerned about the world to break clean away.

〔疏〕數數，猶汲汲也。宋榮率性虛淡，任理直前，未嘗運智推求，役心為道，棲身物外，故不汲汲然者也。

“To be frequently concerned” means to scurry after. Rong of Song follows his nature that is empty and bland, and goes forward in accordance with the structure-in-itself. He has not yet once manipulated his wisdom to extrapolate or pursue anything further, or force his heart for the sake of the Way. He perches his body beyond matters, thus he is someone who does not look rushed-round.

31 雖然，猶有未樹也。

Even so, there was something he failed to plant in his own soil.

〔疏〕樹，立也。榮子拾有證無，溺在偏滯，故於無待之心未立，逍遙之趣智尚虧也。

To plant means to establish. Master Rong gathers the manifest to attest to the missing and becomes mired in partiality and obstinacy, thus before his heart of “non-reliance” is established, the wisdom for the destination of “free-and-easy”-ness is still yet deficient.

32 夫列子禦風而行，泠然善也。

Or that Master Lie now, he journey with the winds for his chariot, a fine sight it must have been,

〔疏〕姓列，名禦寇，鄭人也。與鄭繡公同時，師於壺丘子林，著書八卷。得風仙之道，乘風遊，泠然輕舉，所以稱善也。

Surnamed Lie, given name Yukou, (this person) was a man of Zheng. He was contemporary with the Duke Xu of Zheng. He learned from Master Lin of Huqiu, and composed eight volumes of books. He attained the Way of the Immortal of wind, rode the wind and roamed, lightly and swiftly he was lifted up, thus he said: “Nice!”

33 旬有五日而後反。

and did not come back for fifteen days.

〔疏〕旬，十日也。既得風仙，遊行天下，每經一十五日回反歸家，未能無所不乘，故不可一時周也。

“A decade of days” means ten days. Now that he has taken the possession of the Immortal of wind, he roamed and journeyed under the sub-celestial realm. After every passage of fifteen days he returned home. Since he could not be borne on nothing, he cannot make a full circuit at one time.

34 彼於致福者，未數數然也。

The former of the two, in the hope of bringing blessings to the world, failed to break clean away;

〔疏〕致，得也。彼列禦寇得於風仙之福者，蓋由炎涼無心，虛懷任運，非關役情取舍，汲汲求之。欲明為道之要，要在忘心，若運役智慮，去之遠矣。

To result in means to obtain. That Lie Yukou obtains the blessings of the Immortal of wind is probably because he has no heat or coldness in his mind and (his) emptiness or fulfillment are according to his cycle. These are not related to forcing his disposition to select or reject, or scurrying in pursuit of things. (*Zhuangzi*) wants to show that the essence of conducting the Way lies in forgetting the mind. If one operates and forces his sentience and concerns, one would depart far away from it (the Way).

35 此雖免乎行，猶有所待者也。

The latter, even if he did save himself the trouble of going on foot, still depended on something to carry his weight.

〔疏〕乘風輕舉，雖免步行，非風不進，猶有須待。自宰官已下及宋榮、禦寇，歷舉智德優劣不同，既未洞忘，咸歸有待。唯當順萬物之性，遊變化之塗，而能無所不成/乘者，方盡逍遙之妙致者也。

Although (the means of) riding the wind and being lightly up exempts one from walking on one's feet, there is still inevitable reliance for one since one cannot advance without the wind. From ministers and officials down to Rong of Song and Yukou, (*Zhuangzi*) one by one adduces the differences between superior and inferior wisdom and virtue. Since none of them have completely forgotten, they all return to the state of reliance. Only when someone goes with the current of the predispositions of myriad matters and journeys in the mire of alternation and transformation yet is still capable of completing everything – he will be the one who exhausts the ultimate marvel of “free and easy.”

36 若夫乘天地之正，而禦六氣之辯，以遊無窮者，彼且惡乎待哉。

As for the man who rides a true course between heaven and earth, with the changes of the Six Energies (Yin and Yang, wind and rain, dark and light – the six energies that activate the cyclic motions of heaven and earth) for his chariot, to travel into the infinite, is there anything that he depends on?

〔疏〕天地者，萬物之總名。萬物者，自然之別稱。六氣者，季/李頤云：平旦朝霞，日午正陽，日入飛泉，夜半沆瀣，天地二氣為六氣也。又杜預云：六氣者，陰陽風雨晦明也。又支道林云：六氣，天地四時也，辯者，變也。惡乎，猶於何也。言無待聖人，虛懷體道，故能乘兩儀之正理，順萬物之自然，禦六氣以逍遙，混群靈以變化。苟無物而不順，亦何往而不通哉。明徹於無窮，將於何而有待者也。

Heaven and Earth are the general names of myriad matters. The myriad matters is the alias of what is so-of-itself. As for the Six Pneuma, Li Yi says: “The dawn-flush in the placid morning, the direct sunlight in the middle of the noon, the flying springs at the sunset, coldest dampness in the middle of the night, as well as the pneuma of the Heaven and of the Earth, are altogether the Six Pneuma.” Also, Du Yu says: “The Six Pneuma means the shadow, the sunlight, the wind, the rain, the darkness, and the brightness.” Also, Zhi Daolin says: “The Six Pneuma means the four seasons of the Heaven and the Earth.” Changes means alternations. *Wuhu* is a phrase similar to *yuhe* as regard to “on what” (Old Chinese notes here.) The above paragraph says that the sage, without reliance and with empty bosom as well as the embodiment of the Way, is capable of riding the proper principle of the two exemplars, following the course of the nature of the myriad matters, charioting the Six Pneuma to achieve the “free-and-easy”-ness, and blending the various numina to alter and transform. If only with respect to (this person) nothing is not in conformity, whither would it go obstructed? Perspicacious and discerning at the Infinite, on what will it rely then?

37 故曰，至人無己，

As the saying goes, “The utmost man is selfless,

38 神人無功,

“The daemonic man takes no credit for his deeds,

39 聖人無名。

“The sage is nameless.”

〔疏〕至言其體，神言其用，聖言其名。故就體語至，就用語神，就名語聖，其實一也。詣於靈極，故謂之至，陰陽不測，故謂之神；正名百物，故謂之聖也。一人之上，其有此三，欲顯功用名殊，故有三人之別。此三人者，則是前文乘天地之正、禦六氣之辯人也。欲結此人無待之德，彰其體用，反言故曰耳。

“The utmost” talks about his form, “the daemonic” talks about his use, “the sage” talks about his name. Therefore, if attending to the form, “the utmost” would be talked about; if attending to the use, “the daemonic” would be talked about; if attending to the name, “the sage” would be talked about. They are actually the same. By the same token, going directly to the extreme of awareness is called “the utmost”; not able to be measured its Yin or Yang is called “the daemonic”; rectifying the names of myriad matter is called “the sage.” Above a common man, there are these three men. The distinction between credits, uses and names are to be manifested, thus the three men are distinguished. These three people are the ones who, in the previous text, ride a true course between heaven and earth with the changes of the Six Pneumas. (*Zhuangzi*) would like to conclude that virtue comes from non-reliance in order that its form and uses are clearly shown. Thus in return he says “thus we say.”

40 堯讓天下於許由，

Yao resigned the Empire to Xu You,

〔疏〕堯者，帝嚳之子，姓伊祁，字放助，母慶都，嚳感赤龍而生，身長一丈，兌上而豐下，眉有八彩，足履翼星，有聖德。年十五，對唐侯，二十一，代兄登帝位，都平陽，號曰陶唐。在位七十二年，乃授舜。年百二十八歲崩，葬於陽城，謚曰堯。依謚法，翼善傳聖曰堯，言其有傳舜之功也。許由，隱者也，姓許，名由，字仲武，潁川陽城人也。隱於箕山，師於嚳缺，依山而食，就河而飲。堯知其賢，讓以帝位。許由聞之，乃臨河洗耳。巢父飲犢，牽而避之，曰：惡吾水也。死後，堯封其墓，謚曰箕公，即堯之師也。

Yao is the son of Di Ku, surnamed Yiqi, style name Fangzhu. His mother is Qingdu. Ku sensed (the pneuma of) a red dragon and gave birth (to Yao), who was ten feet tall with “joy” above him and “fulfillment” below him. With eight-colored eyebrows and winged stars below every footstep of his, he is a man with sagacious virtue. At the age of fifteen, he proposed in the face of the Marquis of Tang; at the age of twenty-one, he took the throne in his brother’s stead, set the capital at Pingyang, thus is named Taotang. He was enthroned for seventy-two years before passing his throne on to Shun. At the age of one hundred and twenty-eight he died and was buried at the State of Yang and bestowed with the posthumous title Yao. According to the “Rules of posthumous title,” (one who) assists the good and transmits one’s throne to (another) sage (should be) named Yao. This refers to his credit in transmitting his throne to Shun. Xu You is a recluse. Surnamed Xu, given name You, style name Zhongwu, a native of Yingchuan in the State of Yang. He secluded in Mount Ji (Mount of the Winnowing Basket) and learned from Nique

(the Cracked-front-teeth), ate whatever food provided by the mountain, and drank by the river. Yao knew that he was worthy and would like to hand over its throne to him. Thereupon Xu You having heard it, he washed his ears by the side of the river. Chaofu (Father of the Nest) was giving his baby cattle drinks and avoided the river, saying: “You contaminated my water!” After Xu You died, Yao buried his body into a coffin and put in his tomb and titled him posthumously as “Duke of the Winnowing Basket,” after Yao’s teacher.

41 曰：日日出矣而燭火不息，其於光也不亦難乎。時而降矣而猶浸灌，其於澤也不亦勞乎。

saying: “When the sun or the moon is up, if the torch fires are not put out, aren’t we taking too much trouble to light the world? When the timely rains fall, if we go on flooding the channels, aren’t we working too hard to water the fields?”

〔疏〕燭火，猶炬火也，亦小火也。神農時十五日一雨，謂之時雨也。且以日月照燭，詎假炬火之光；時雨滂沱，無勞浸灌之澤。堯既撝謙²⁹¹克讓，退己進人，所以致此之辭，盛推仲武也。

Flambeau is like torch fire, it also means small fire. In the time of the Shennong, it rains every fifteen days, thus calling it “the timely rain.” In addition, with the sun and the moon shedding light all around, who would borrow the light of a torch? With the “timely rain” pouring and streaming down, there is no need to belabor about moistening the marshlands. Since Yao shows

²⁹¹ Qian, “modesty,” is the 15th hexagram of *Yijing*.

the signal of modesty and is capable of being deferential, retiring himself and recommending others, thus he makes a speech like so and hold in high regard for Zhongwu.

42 夫子立而天下治，而我猶屍之，吾自視缺然。請致天下。

“While you, sir, are in your place the Empire is in order, yet here I still am in the seat of honor, in my own eyes I do not deserve it. Let me make you a present of the Empire.”

〔疏〕治，正也。屍，主也。致，與也。堯既師於許由，故謂之為夫子。若仲武立為天子，宇內必致太平，而我猶為物主，自視缺然不足，請將帝位讓與賢人。

To put in order means to rectify; to be in the seat of honor means to be in charge; to make a present means to give. Since Yao follows the example of Xu You, he thus addresses him as a sir: “If you, Zhongwu, have ever ascended the throne, great pacification must be attained within the realm under the heavens. Yet still here I am in charge of everything; in my own eyes I am flawed and do not deserve it. I request to defer my throne to (you, who are) worthy of it.”

43 許由曰：子治天下，天下既已治也。

Xu You said: “If you order things as Emperor, it’s that already the Empire is in order;

〔疏〕治，謂理也。既，盡也。言堯治天下，久以升平，四海八荒，盡皆清謐，何勞讓我，過為辭費。然睹莊文則貶堯而推許，尋郭註乃劣許而優堯者，何耶？欲明放勳大聖，仲武大賢，賢聖二塗，相去遠矣。故堯負宸汾陽而喪天下，許由不夷其俗而獨立高山，圓

照偏溺，斷可知矣。是以莊子援禪讓之跡，故有燭火之談；郭生察無待之心，更致不治之說。可謂采微索隱，了文合義，宜尋其旨況，無所稍嫌也。

To set things in propriety means to organize. “Already” means having been achieved. This sentence says that, during Yao’s governance, peace and prosperity already lasted long; within the four seas and the eight expanses purity and placidness have been everywhere. Why would you bother to cede the throne to me? That would be too troublesome. However, notice that the text of Zhuangzi degrades Yao and promotes Xu, while Guo (Xiang)’s commentary regards Xu as inferior but Yao as superior. Why so? This (difference) is to elucidate that the two ways of Fangxun, a great sage, and Zhongwu, a great eminence, were far distinct from each other. Therefore Yao took the throne at Fenyang but then relinquished his empire; Xu You did not harm his convention and stands alone on mountain high. As for (the distinction between) completeness in inspection and wallowing in partiality, it is certainly able to be known. By this means Master Zhuang takes up the trace of abdication, thus having the discussion of the torch fire; Sir Guo scrutinizes the heart of non-reliance, and furthermore concludes in the assertion of “no-resolution.” This can be called as picking the subtle and searching for the hidden, perfecting the pattern and conjoining the meaning. The (writer’s) purport and context should be carefully examined and not vexed about even for a slight bit.

44 而我猶代子，吾將為名乎？名者實之賓也，吾將為實(賓)乎？

“And if I were to see any point in taking your place, would it be for the sake of the name? The name is the guest of the substance. Would it be for the sake of the substance?”

〔疏〕許由偃蹇箕山，逍遙潁水，臆臊榮利，厭穢聲名。而堯殷勤致請，猶希代己，許由若高九五，將為萬乘之名。然實以生名，名從實起，實則是內是主，名便是外是賓。捨主取賓，喪內求外，既非隱者所尚，故云吾將為賓也。

Xu You rested and reposed in the Mount Ji, rambled and roamed by the River Ying, and regarded glory and profit as rank and rancid while fame and name as filthy and foul. But Yao proffered and proposed with ardent eagerness, still hoping that (Xu You) would be in his stead (even so). If Xu You were to take the throne (be on the position of nine-five in hexagram), Xu would be make a name for (possessing) ten thousand chariots. However, reality gives birth to names and names arise from reality. If it is reality, then it is the “inner” and the master; if it is the name, then it is the “outer” and the guest. Abandoning the master and choosing the guest, losing the inner and seeking the outer – since this is not what is honored by the recluses, therefore, Xu asks “would I be the guest?”²⁹²

45 鷦鷯巢於深林，不過一枝；偃鼠飲河，不過滿腹。

“The wren that nests in the deep forest wants no more than one branch, the mole that drinks in the Yellow River no more than a bellyful.

〔疏〕鷦鷯，巧婦鳥也，一名工雀，一名女匠，亦名桃蟲，好深處而巧為巢也。偃鼠，形大小如牛，亦黑色，獐腳，腳有三甲，耳似象耳，尾端白，好入河飲水。而鳥巢一枝之

²⁹² It should be 賓 here according to the context, yet Cheng mis-wrote it as s 實.

外，不假茂林；獸飲滿腹之余，無勞浩汗。況許由安茲蓬蓽，不顧金闈，樂彼蔬食，詎勞玉食也。

A wren is called a “qiaofu” bird (adept-maiden bird). One of its names is “craftsman sparrow (*gongque*),” another is “maiden craftsman (*nüjiang*),” and it is also named “peach-bug (*taochong*).” It likes to reside in depth and makes its nest with artistry. A mole is roughly the size of an ox; it is also black (like an ox is), with feet like a roe and each foot has three nails.²⁹³ Its ears resemble those of an elephant’s; the tip of its tail is white. It likes to step into the middle of the river to drink water. In addition, a bird rests in nothing else but its nest on a single branch; it does not need (even) a lush forest. A beast drinks nothing else but a belly-full (of water); it does not trouble with (even) flood of endless extent – let alone that Xu You, who was settled in tumbleweed and pipal bushes there, who would not even take a look at the golden palace-gate while enjoying those vegetative foods. How could he belabor about luxurious foods?

46 歸休乎君，予無所用天下為。

“Go back where you belong, my lord. The empire is no use to me.

〔疏〕予，我也。許由寡欲清康，不受堯讓，故謂堯云：君宜速還黃屋，歸反紫微，禪讓之辭，宜其休息。四海之尊，於我無用，九五之貴，予何用為。

²⁹³ A mole is far from the size of an ox or is black. I do not know where Cheng gets this from.

Yu means I.²⁹⁴ Xu You, pure and at ease with few desires, did not accept Yao's cession of throne. Thus he told Yao: "You should quickly return to your yellow canopy and go back to the Purple Tenuity;²⁹⁵ as for words regarding cessation and deference, they should be put to an end. Reverence within the Four Seas are of no use to me; nobility of the nine-five, what are they for in my case?"

47 庖人雖不治庖，屍祝不越樽俎而代之矣。

"Even when the chief cook does run a disorderly kitchen, the priest and the medium will not step over the jars and dishes to take his place."

〔疏〕庖人，謂掌庖廚之人，則今之太官供膳是也。屍者，太廟中神主也；祝者，則今太常太祝是也；執祭版對屍而祝之，故謂之屍祝也。樽，酒器也。俎，肉器也。而庖人屍祝者，各有司存。假令膳夫懈怠，不肯治庖，屍祝之人，終不越局濫職，棄於樽俎而代之宰烹；亦猶帝堯禪讓，不治天下，許由亦不去彼山林，就茲帝位；故註云：帝堯許由各靜於所已。

A cook is the name for someone in charge of the kitchen. It is nowadays the grand official who provides meal (for the court). An impersonator is the master of divine affairs in the imperial ancestral temple. An invoker is nowadays the Great Supplicator, a chamberlain for ceremonials. This person holds a sacrificial memorial tablet and supplicate in the face of the deceased, thus he

²⁹⁴ In *Zhuangzi's* time, *yu* 予 refers to the first person singular pronoun and *wo* 我 refers to the first person plural. But by Cheng Xuanying's time the two have already merged.

²⁹⁵ Both refer to the imperial court.

is called The Impersonator. A goblet is a wine container. A meat-tray is a meat container. As for the cook and the impersonator, each of them has his appointed official charge. If the cook is indolent and refuses to take charge of the kitchen, an impersonator cannot go beyond his service, abuse his duties, and abandon his goblet and meat-tray to mactate and cook (the sacrificial cattles). This is just like the case that if Emperor Yao cedes his throne and stops managing his empire, Xu You should not leave his mountain and forest to attend to the position of an emperor. Thus (Guo Xiang's) commentary says: "Each between Emperor Yao and Xu You is quiet in wherever they should stop at."

48 肩吾問於連叔曰：吾聞言於接輿，

Jianwu put a question to Lianshu: "I heard Jieyu say something.

〔疏〕肩吾連叔，並古之懷道人也。接輿者，姓陸，名通，字接輿，楚之賢人隱者也，與孔子同時。而佯狂不仕，常以躬耕為務，楚王知其賢，聘以黃金百鎰，車駟二乘，並不受。於是夫負妻戴，以遊山海，莫知所終。肩吾聞接輿之言，過無準的，故問連叔，詢其義旨。而言吾聞言於接輿者，聞接輿之言也。莊生寄三賢以明堯之一聖，所聞之狀，具列於下文也。

Jianwu and Lianshu are both ancient people that hold fast to the Way. Jieyu was a man whose surname was Lu and given name was Tong; his style name was Jieyu, and he was a worthy recluse in the State of Chu. He was contemporary with Confucius. However, he pretended to be deranged in order not to serve in office, and for a long time has been engaging in farm work on his own. The King of Chu knew his worthiness and requested his service at court with a hundred

ys of gold and two quadrigas; he would not accept either of them. From then on, he and his wife carried (their belongings) on their backs and heads, and roamed in mountains and seas in which way; nobody knows how they ended up like. As Jianwu heard Jieyu's excessive words without a pivot points, he thereupon asked Lianshu about his gist.

49 大而無當，往而不反，吾驚怖其言，猶河漢而無極也。

“He talked big but there was no sense in it, he left the firm ground and never came back. I was amazed and frightened by his words, which streamed on into the infinite like the Milky Way,

〔疏〕所聞接輿之言，恢弘而無的當，一往而陳梗概，曾無反覆可尋。吾竊聞之，驚疑怖恐，猶如上天河漢，迢遞清高，尋其源流，略無窮極也。

Jieyu's words that were heard were extensive and grandiose without a pivot, running on only to make rough and generalized speeches with no meticulousness or prudence ever to be traced. I have secretly heard about it (Jieyu's words) and became shocked, suspicious and terrified: (these words) are like the Yellow River and the Han River in the sky, far and farther off, pure and lofty. If one ever searches for its fountainhead, it is completely without a finite end!

50 大有徑庭，不近人情焉。

“wild extravagances, nothing to do with man as he really is.”

〔疏〕徑庭，猶過差，亦是直往不顧之貌也。謂接輿之言不偶於俗，多有過差，不附世情，故大言不合於裡耳也。

“Wild and wide of the mark”²⁹⁶ is similar to the meaning of being enormously different. It also stands for the manner of going straight away without looking back. This refers to Jieyu’s words that are not on a par with those of the mundanity’s. There are too many extraordinary differences that cannot attach to the actual situation of the world. Therefore, great words do not match (one’s) inner ears.

51 連叔曰：其言謂何哉？

Lianshu said: “What did he say?”

〔疏〕陸通之說其若何？此則反質肩吾所聞（意謂）。

“How is Lu Tong’s sayings like?” This is an interrogation at what Jianwu has heard of.

52 曰：藐姑射之山，有神人居焉，肌膚若冰雪，綽約若處子。

(Lianshu) Said: “In the mountains of far-off Guyi there lives a daemonic man, whose skin and flesh are like ice and snow, who is gentle as a virgin.

〔疏〕藐，遠也。《山海經》云：姑射山在寰海之外，有神聖之人，戢機應物。時須揖讓，即為堯舜；時須幹戈，即為湯武。綽約，柔弱也。處子，未嫁女也。言聖人動寂相應，一則空有並照，雖居廊廟，無異山林，和光同塵，在染不染。冰雪取其潔淨，綽約譬

²⁹⁶ 徑庭 literally means pathway and hallway.

以柔和，處子不為物傷，姑射語其絕遠。此明堯之盛德，窈冥玄妙，故托之絕垠之外，推之視聽之表。斯蓋寓言耳，亦何必有姑射之實乎。宜忘言以尋其所況。此即肩吾述己昔聞，以答連叔之辭者也。

Far-off means remote. *The Canon of Mountains and Seas* says: In Mount Guyi, beyond the confines of the seas, there is an immortal and sagacious person, that evens out the springs of action in correspondence with the phenomena. When the time needs cessation and deference, immediately he becomes Yao and Shun; when the time needs shields and glaives, immediately he becomes (King) Tang (of Shang) and (King) Wu (of Zhou). Tender and ductile means pliant and meek. A virgin means an unmarried girl. This says that a sage on the one hand corresponds to both motion and stillness, on the other hand reflects upon both emptiness and existence. Although he resides in the court, it is no different from (residing in) mountains and forests. Comporting with the light and in concert with the dusts, locating in the defiled yet has never been defiled. (The metaphor of) ice and snow comes from its cleanliness; (the description of) tender and ductile exemplifies its meekness; a virgin is not harmed by anything, and (Mount) Guyi states its remoteness. This is to signify that Yao's laudable virtue is obscure and imperceptible, arcane and marvelous; thus hold it up to beyond the endpoint of the horizon, and push it up to the surface of seeing and hearing. This is merely a parable; why must there be a Mount Guyi for real? One should forget about words in order to seek the situation. This means that Jianwu was telling what he himself heard in order to answer Lianshu's questions.

53 不食五谷，吸風飲露。

“He does not eat the five grains but sucks in the wind and drinks the dew.

〔疏〕 五谷者，黍稷麻菽麥也。言神聖之人，降生應物，挺淳粹之精靈，稟陰陽之秀氣。雖順物以資待，非五谷之所為，托風露以清虛，豈四時之能變也。

Five grains are glutinous millet, foxtail millet, hemp seed, soybean and wheat. This sentence says that the sacred and sagacious person, descended and born in response to the matters, elicits spirits and vita of the pure and the whole, and receives from the above blossoms of pneuma of the Yin and the Yang. Although he conforms to the exterior world to provide for his (source of) reliance, (that reliance) is not what the five grains can bestow upon. He carries wind and dew in his palms to purify and empty (himself) – is it what can be changed by the four seasons?

54 乘雲氣，禦飛龍，而遊乎四海之外。

“He rides the vapor of the clouds, yokes flying dragons to his chariot, and roams beyond the four seas.

〔疏〕 智照靈通，無心順物，故曰乘雲氣。不疾而速，變現無常，故曰禦飛龍。寄生萬物之上而神超六合之表，故曰進乎四海之外也。

Enlightened in his cognition, unobstructed in his spirit, and go with the course of matters with no intentions, he is thus said to ride the vapor of clouds. He does not rush yet is speedy; his transformations and appearances have no regularity. Thus he is said to yoke flying dragons to his chariot.

55 其神凝，使物不疵癘而年谷熟。吾以是狂而不信也。

“When the daemonic in him concentrates it keeps creatures free from plagues and makes the grain ripen every year. I thought him mad and wouldn’t believe him.”

〔疏〕凝，靜也。疵癘，疾病也。五谷熟，謂有年也。聖人形同枯木，心若死灰，本跡一時，動寂俱妙，凝照潛通，虛懷利物。遂使四時順序，五谷豐登，人無災害，物無夭枉。聖人之處世，有此功能，肩吾未悟至言，謂為狂而不信。

To concentrate means to calm. *Cili* means disease. The time when the five grains are ripened is called the harvest. A sage’s form is the same as that of a deadwood; his heart is like cold ash. His origin and traces (appear) at the same time; his motion and stillness are both marvelous. He concentrates his regards and secretly attains his goal; he empties his bosom to the benefit of other matters. In this way, he causes the four seasons to follow a proper order, the five grains to be plentiful and piled up, humans with no disasters or harms, and things with no deformation or distortion. When a sage dwells in the world, he has these functions and abilities. Jianwu has not been aware of ultimate words, and call (those words) crazy and incredible.

56 連叔曰：然。瞽者無以與乎文章之觀，聾者無以與乎鐘鼓之聲。豈唯形骸有聾盲哉？夫知亦有之。

Lianshu said: “Yes. The blind can never share in the spectacles of emblems and ornaments, nor the deaf in the music of drums and bells. Is it only in flesh-and-bone that there is blindness and deafness? The wits have them too.

〔疏〕瞽者，謂眼無眳縫，冥冥如鼓皮也。聾者，耳病也。盲者，眼根敗也。夫目視耳聽，蓋有物之常情也，既瞽既聾，不可示之以聲色也。亦猶至言妙道，唯懸解者能知。愚惑之徒，終身未悟，良由智障盲闇，不能照察，豈唯形質獨有之耶。是以聞接輿之言，謂為狂而不信。自此已下，是連叔答肩吾之辭也。

A drum-sighted person refers to those whose eyes have no seams for pupils (to be exposed), dark and faint like drum faces. Deafness means disease in the ears. Blindness means the damage of the root of one's eyes. In general, seeing with eyes and listening with ears has been the ordinary condition ever since there had been matters; if one is blind or deaf, one cannot be shown to with sounds or colors. (Blindness and deafness) are similar to ultimate words and marvelous Ways, only those untied from concerns (enlightened ones) can understand them. As for the ignorant and perplexed who cannot become aware for their whole lives, it is because their insight is blocked, blinded and obscured, so that they are not able to inspect or investigate. Are they only (blind and deaf) physically? Thus, one who hears Jieyu's words (with this mind) would regard them as crazy and incredible. Following this sentence is the speech which Lianshu answered Jianwu.

57 是其言也，猶時女也。

“When he spoke these words he was like a girl who waits for a suitor to come.

〔疏〕是者，指斥之言也。時女，少年處室之女也。指此接輿之言，猶如窈窕之女，綽約凝潔，為君子所求，但智之聾盲言謂無此理也。

Shi is a word of reference. A “girl in her time” means a young girl who stays in her boudoir. This indicates that Jieyu’s words are similar to a delicate and demur girl, tender and ductile, pure and clean and condensed with impeccability, sought by lordlings. However, those who are blind and deaf at intelligence say that there is no such a thing.

58 之人也，之德也。將旁礴萬物以為一，世蘄乎亂，孰弊弊焉以天下為事。

“This man, this power that is in him, would merge the myriad things and make them one. The age has an incessant urge towards misrule, who are these people so eager to make the business of the empire theirs?

〔疏〕之是語助，亦嘆美也。旁礴，猶混同也。蘄，求也。孰，誰也。之人者，嘆堯是聖人；之德者，歎堯之盛德也。言聖人德合二儀，道齊群品，混同萬物，制馭百靈。世道荒淫，蒼生離亂，故求大聖君臨安撫。而虛舟懸鏡，應感無心，誰肯勞形弊智。經營區宇，以事為事，然後能事。故老子云為無為，事無事，又云取天下常以無事，及其有事不足以取天下也。

Zhi is a modal particle, also an exclamation of beauty. To merge and make unbroken is just like to mix up and equalize. An incessant urge is a request; *shu* is equal to *shui*, which means “who.” “This man” extols that Yao is a sage; “this power” overpowers Yao’s abundant power. This says that the sage’s power conjoins the Two Principles, and his Way equates (those of) the multitude; he merges and blends myriad phenomena (of the world), and he regulates and steers hundreds of spirits. The mundane way is desolate and depraved, the common folks’ lives go disorderly and astray, thus (people) look for a great sage to take a lordly overlook for settlement and

consolation. (Everyone is like) an empty boat and a hanging mirror, with heartless senses and sentience – who would have overworked their body and wreck their wisdom for the sake of them? (As for) arranging and aligning things within the universe, only after one regards an affair as an affair itself is he able to handle the affair. Thus *Laozi* says: “do the non-doing; devote to the non-devotion”; as well as seizing the sub-celestial realm is usually by means of non-devotion; when devotion comes into being, one is not enough to seize the sub-celestial realm.”

59 之人也，物莫之傷，

“This man no other things will wound;

60 大浸稽天而不溺，大旱金石流土山焦而不熱。

“though the great floods rise to the sky he will not drown, though metal and stone fuse in the great droughts and moors and mountains char he will not burn.

〔疏〕稽，至也。夫達於生死，則無死無生；宜於水火，則不溺不熱。假令陽九流金之災，百六滔天之禍，紛紜自彼，於我何為。故郭註云，死生無變於己，何況溺熱之間也哉。

To rise to means to reach. In general, if one reaches both life and death, there would be no death or life; if one suits both water and fire, then one would not be drowned or burnt. Let it be that there is gold-flowing catastrophe at the end of the cosmic cycle (Nine at the *yang*), and water-flooding disaster at a-hundred-and-six – even if all were milling about, it would be their own

business, what has it to do with me? Thus Guo's commentary says: "If life and death do not change into one another at oneself, how much more should drowned and burnt?"

61 是其塵垢秕糠，將猶陶鑄堯舜者也，孰肯以物為事。

"From this man's very dust and siftings you could smelt and mould a Yao or Shun. Who are these people so determined to make other things their business?"

〔疏〕散為塵，膩為垢，谷不熟為秕，谷皮曰糠，皆猥物也。鎔金曰鑄，範土曰陶。謚法，翼善傳聖曰堯，化聖盛明曰舜。夫堯至本聖，妙絕形名，混進同塵，物甘其德，故立名謚以彰聖體。然名者粗法，不異秕糠；謚者世事，何殊塵垢。既而矯諂佞妄，將彼塵垢鍛鑄為堯，用此秕糠埏埴作舜。豈知妙體，胡可言耶。是以誰肯以物為事者也。

What is scattered is dust, what is greasy is dirt. Grain that is not ripen is kernel-less, the husk of grain is called bran. They are all lowly things. To smelt metal is called to forge, to mold earth is called to fashion. According to the *Rules of Posthumous Title*, (one who) assists the good and transmits one's throne to (another) sage (should be posthumously) named Yao; (one who) transforms the sages' sagaciousness into great brightness (should be posthumously) named Shun. In general, Yao arrived as the utmost of the origin of sagacity, whose marvel outdoes all forms and names and whose amorphousness advances into the dust of mundanity. Living beings are fond of his virtue, thus they established a posthumous name (for him) in order to manifest its sagacious form. However, naming is merely a rough method, no different from kernel-less grain and grain bran; (giving) posthumous name is a worldly affair, what's its distinction from dust and dirt. No sooner were there obsequious, pretentious, shrewd and absurd people, who took

those dust and dirt, forge and mould them into Yao; who uses these kernel-less grain and grain bran, rubbing the mud and clay together to make Shun. How do they know about marvelous forms, and how can they be talked with? That is the reason that “who are these people so determined to make other things their business.”

62 宋人資章甫而適諸越，越人斷發文身，無所用之。

“A man of Song who traded in ceremonial caps travelled to the Yue tribes, but the men of Yue who cut their hair short and tattoo their bodies had no use for them.

〔疏〕此起譬也。資，貨也。越國逼近江湖，斷發文身，以避蛟龍之難也。章甫，冠名也。故孔子生於魯，衣縫掖；長於宋，冠章甫。而宋實微子之裔，越乃太伯之苗，二國貿遷往來，乃以章甫為貨。且章甫本充首飾，必須雲鬢承冠，越人斷發文身，資貨便成無用。亦如榮華本猶滯著，富貴起自驕矜。堯既體道洞忘，故能無用天下。故郭註云，夫堯之無所用天下為，亦猶越人無所用章甫耳。

This is a “beginning-type” metaphor. To trade means to sell. The State of Yue is in proximity to rivers and lakes, (thus its people) cut their hair short and tattoo their bodies to avoid the disaster by dragons. *Zhangfu* is the name of a kind of cap. Thus Confucius was born in Lu and was clothed in *fengye* (seamed-armspits); grown up in Song and wore a *zhangfu* (embroidered-patterned) cap. Moreover, the Song people are descendants of Master Wei and the Yue people are offshoots of the Grand Earl. The two states migrate and trade between each other, and they traded the *zhangfu* ceremonial caps. Also, the *zhangfu* cap served originally as a kind of head ornament, one must be in chignon in order to wear this cap. Since the Yue people cut their hair

short and tattoo their bodies, thus such commodities became of no use. It is just like glory and fruition that were originally similar to the (byproduct of) stagnation, as well as richness and nobility that arose from preemptory proudness. Since Yao can comprehend the way and fully understand forgetfulness, he therefore can be of no use to the sub-celestial realm. Thus Guo's commentary says: "In general, the reason that Yao had no use to the sub-celestial realm is just like the Yue people had no use in regard of the *zhangfu* caps."

63 堯治天下之民，平海內之政，往見四子藐姑射之山汾水之陽，窅然喪其天下焉。

"Yao who reduced the people of the empire to order, and imposed regular government on all within the seas, went off to see the Four in the mountains of far-off Guyi, on the north bank of Fen River, and in a daze forgot his empire there."

〔疏〕治言緝理，政言風教。此合喻也。汾水出自太原，西入於河。水北曰陽，則今之晉州平陽縣，在汾水北，昔堯都也。窅然者，寂寥，是深遠之名。喪之言忘，是遺蕩之義。而四子者，四德也：一本，二跡，三非本非跡，四非非本跡也。言堯反照心源，洞見道境，超茲四句，故言往見四子也。夫聖人無心，有感斯應，故能緝理萬邦，和平九土。雖復凝神，四子端拱而坐汾陽，統禦萬機，窅然而喪天下。斯蓋即本即跡，即體即用，空有雙照，動寂一時。是以姑射不異汾陽，山林豈殊黃屋。世人齊其所見，曷嘗信此耶。而馬彪將四子為嚙缺，便未達於遠理；劉璋推汾水於射山，更迷惑於事。今所解釋，稍異於斯。故郭註云，四子者蓋寄言明堯之不一於堯耳，世徒見堯之跡，豈識其冥哉。

“To put into order” speaks about to join together and to regulate; “government” speaks about custom and teaching. These are conjoined metaphors. The Fen River comes out of Taiyuan and goes westward to enter the Yellow River. The north bank of a river is called *yang*; therefore, the Pingyang County of the Prefecture of Jin nowadays, is located on the north bank of Fen River. It was the capital of Yao’s regime in the past. “In daze” means unimaginable and unattainable, a name for deepness and remoteness. To lose is to forget, which takes the meaning of letting go without restraint. The Four Masters are actually the four virtues: first, origin; second, trace; third, non-origin or –trace; fourth, non- non-origin-or-trace. This passage talks about the way that Yao illuminates back to the fountainhead of his own heart, reaches the core of the realm of the Way, and surpasses the (level) that the (above) four sentences (speaks of). Thus (Zhuangzi) says he went to see the Four Masters. In general, a sage does not have intentions. He senses what should be corresponded to, in which way is he able to conjoin and regulate the myriad states, and harmonize and pacify the nine lands. Although concentrating their spirits, the Four Masters stand straight with their hands crossed in the location of the north bank of Fen River, integrating and attending on countless mechanisms, in daze they have “lost” the sub-celestial realm. This is possibly owing to their near-simultaneous trace with origin and function with form; empty in being are the double reflections, and motion and stillness (occur) at the same time. By this means, Mount Guyi is no different from the north bank of Fen River; how can mountains and forests be distinct from the Yellow Cabin (royal court)? Mundane people who act in concert with what they see – have they ever believed in such a thing? In addition, as for Ma Biao taking the Four Masters as Lack-of-front-teeth, is the result of not reaching far principles; as for Liu Zhang preferring River Fen to Mount (Gu)Yi, signifies more of perplexity at affairs. Now what I have explained is slightly divergent from those (two) readings (by Ma Biao and Liu Zhang). Thus the

Guo commentary says: “The Four Masters is probably a way of confiding to words that Yao is not just one as for (being) Yao. The world simply sees the traces of Yao; can they ever recognize Yao’s imperceptibility?”

64 惠子謂莊子曰：魏王貽我大瓠之種，

Said Master Hui to Master Zhuang: “The King of Wei gave me the seeds of a great calabash.

〔疏〕姓惠，名施，宋人也。為梁國相。謂，語也。貽，遺也。瓠，匏之類也。魏王，即梁惠王也。昔居安邑，國號為魏，後為強秦所逼，徙於大梁，復改為梁；僭號稱王也。惠子所以起此大匏之譬，以譏莊子之書，雖復詞旨恢弘，而不切機務，故致此詞而更相激發者也。

(He is a native of Song surnamed Hui and given named Shi. He was the minister of the State of Liang. To address is to tell. To present to means to send. A calabash is a kind of gourd. The King of Wei is King Hui of Liang. In the past (the Wei people) resided in the town of An, and named its state as Wei. Later, forced by the powerful Qin, they migrated to the Great Liang, thus named (their state) again as Liang. (King Hui) arrogated to himself kingship. The reason that Master Hui begins this metaphor of this great gourd, is to satirize Master Zhuang’s book, which, despite the vast and broad topics and words, it cannot make cutting remarks on cruxes and fundamentals (of any topic). Thus, (Master Hui) made the following speech in order to further provoke and aggregate (him).

65 我樹之成而實五石，以盛水漿，其堅不能自舉也。

“I planted them, they grew up, with gourds of five bushels. When you filled them with water or soup they weren’t solid enough to stay upright.

〔疏〕樹者，藝植之謂也。實者，子也。惠施既得瓠種，藝之成就，生子甚大，容受五石，仍持此瓠以盛水漿，虛脆不堅，故不能自勝舉也。

To plant is a name for “to skillfully grow.” Gourd means fruit. As soon as Hui Shi has got the seeds of a calabash, he skillfully plants it until completion is achieved. It grows quite large gourds that can hold five bushels of water. If one holds this calabash gourd to fill with water, it is fragile and crumbly and not solid enough. Therefore, it cannot bear to stay upright.

66 剖之以為瓢，則瓠落無所容。非不呶然大也，吾為其無用而掊之。

“If you split them to make ladles they sagged and spilled over. It is not that they weren’t impressively big, but because they were useless I smashed them into bits.”

〔疏〕剖，分割之也。瓢，勺也。瓠落，平淺也。呶然，虛大也。掊，打破也。用而盛水，虛脆不能自勝；分割為瓢，平淺不容易多物。眾謂無用，打破棄之。刺莊子之言不救時要，有同此瓠，應須屏削也。

To sever means to cut open and split. A ladle is a spoon. (That it) sags and spills over means (that the vessel is) flat and shallow. Impressively spacious means its big but in vain. To smash means to strike against and to break. If making use of it to contain water, it is too fragile and crumbly to stay upright; if splitting and severing it to make a ladle, it is too flat and shallow to

contain many things. Everyone says that it is of no use, thus (Hui Shi) breaks it and discards it. This (parable) is to satirize that Zhuangzi's words can not cure the essential problems of his time, which is similar to this calabash gourd that should have been set aside and cut into pieces.

67 莊子曰：夫子固拙於用大矣。宋人有善為不龜手之藥者，世世以泝泝絀為事。

Master Zhuang said: “You, sir, are clumsy in finding uses for something big! There was a man of Song who was expert in making a salve to keep hands from chapping. For generations, the clan had been silk-bleachers by trade.

〔疏〕泝，浮；泝，漂也。絀，絮也。世世，年也。宋人隆冬涉水，漂絮以作牽離，手指生瘡，拘坼有同龜背。故世世相承，家傳此藥，令其手不拘坼，常得漂絮水中，保斯事業，永無虧替。又云：泝，擗也。絀，紵也。謂擗紵於水中之故也。

Ping means to float; *pi* means to rinse. Floss-silk means silk floss. “For generations and generations” means year after year. The people of the State of Song waded through water in the height of winter, rinsed the silk flosses to turn loose and disconnect from each other. Wounds grew from the fingers of silk-bleachers that were chapped resembling the back of turtles. Therefore, for generations the clan had this salve transmitted in their families so that the silk-bleacher's fingers would not be chapped. In this way, they found it possible to rinse and bleach silk in the river and preserve their career, with no deficiency or declination forever. Also, it is said that to rinse (*phək* > *pì*) means to beat (*bjiek* > *bì*) and floss-silk means unlined robe. This glossing refers to (the sameness of rinsing floss-silk with) beating unlined robes in water.

68 客聞之，請買其方百金。

“A stranger heard about it, and asked to buy the secret for a hundred pieces of gold.

〔疏〕金方一寸重一斤為一金也。他國游客，偶爾聞之，請買手瘡一術，遂費百金之價者也。

A piece of gold of which size is a one inch cube and weights one catty is called “(measurement of) one gold.” A visitor, or a guest, from other states heard about this by accident and requested to buy this specialized craft for chapped hands. Because of this, he paid a hundred golds for its price.

69 聚族而謀曰：我世世為泚澣，不過數金；今一朝而鬻技百金，請與之。

“The man assembled his clan and talked it over. ‘For generations,’ he said, ‘we have been silk-bleaching, for no more than a few pieces of gold; now in one morning we can sell the art for a hundred. I propose we give it to him.’

〔疏〕鬻，賣也。估價既高，聚族謀議。世世泚澣，為利蓋寡。一朝賣術，資貨極多。異口同音，僉曰請與。

To vend means to sell. Since the estimated price (for this craft) was already high, the clan was assembled to talk it over. Having been rinsing and bleaching silk floss for generations, they had made few profit; if they sold their craft within one morning, properties and money would become

abundant to the extreme. (Thus,) different mouths uttered a same sound – everyone said: “please give (it to him)!”

70 客得之，以說吳王。越有難，吳王使之將，冬與越人水戰，大敗越人，裂地而封之。

“The stranger when he got it recommended it to the King of Wu. There was trouble with Yue, and the King of Wu made him a general. That winter he fought a battle by water with the men of Yue, and utterly defeated the Yue people. He was enfeoffed in a bit of the conquered territory.

〔疏〕吳越北鄰，地帶江海，兵戈相接，必用艦舡。戰士隆冬，手多拘坼。而客素稟雄才，天生睿智，既得方術，遂說吳王。越國兵難侵吳，吳王使為將帥。賴此名藥，而兵手不拘坼。旌旗才舉，越人亂轍。獲此大捷，獻凱而旋，勛庸克著，胙之苑土。

(The State of) Wu and Yue adjoined each other on (Yue's) northern border, a land surrounded by rivers and seas. (When) armaments and spears came into contact, boats must be used. This visitor had been naturally endowed with overpowering talent and intrinsically born with sagaciousness and wisdom. Having acquired the special formula, he immediately persuaded the king of Wu (about it). When the State of Yue had a military conflict with Wu. The king of Wu made him a general. Owing to this famous salve, hands of (the Wu) soldiers were not chapped. As soon as the banner were put up, the wheel-tracks of the Yue people were in disorder. (Wu has) won this great victory, celebrated their triumph and returned. They conferred on the contribution of the outstanding people, and granted them with earth from the imperial park.

71 能不龜手一也，或以封，或不免於泝澣，則所用之異也。

“In their ability to keep hands from chapping, there was nothing to choose between them; if one of them got a fief for it while the other stayed a silk-bleacher, it is that they put it to different uses.

〔疏〕或，不定也。方藥無二而用者有殊，故行客得之以封侯，宋人用之以泝澣，此則所用工拙之異。

“In some cases” means that the situation is not certain. The salve discussed just now has no second to itself, yet their uses are different; thus visiting guests acquired it for enfeoffment while the people of Song used it for rinsing and bleaching floss-silk. This is the distinction between the well-crafted and clumsy means of utilization.

72 今子有五石之瓠，何不攄以為大樽而浮乎江湖，而憂其瓠落無所容？則夫子猶有蓬之心也夫。

“Now that you had five-bushel calabashes, why didn’t it occur to you to make them into those big bottle swimmers tie to their waists, and go floating away over the Yangtze and the Lakes? If you worried because they sagged and wouldn’t hold anything, isn’t it that you still have a heart where the shoots grow up tangled?”

〔疏〕攄者，繩絡之也。樽者，漆之如酒罇，以繩結縛，用渡江湖，南人所謂腰舟者也。蓬，草名，拳曲不直也。夫，嘆也。言大瓠浮泛江湖，可以舟船淪溺；至教興行世境，可

以濟渡群迷。而惠生既有蓬心，未能直達玄理，故妄起掙擊之譬，譏刺莊子之書。為用失宜，深可嘆之。

To hollow is to encircle the gourd with a rope.²⁹⁷ A jug is what looks like a wine goblet after being lacquered. Tie a rope around it (to one's waist) to cross a river or a lake, this is what the southern people called "waist-boat." A tumbleweed is the name of a kind of grass that curls and cannot be straightened. *Fu* (at the end of the sentence) is an exclamation. This metaphor shows that a great gourd floating and drifting on the water can be used as a boat for the drowned, and an ultimate teaching prospers and conducted in the realm of the world can be used to ferry the herd of bewildered. However, although Sir Hui has already possessed a tumbleweed's heart, he could not arrive directly at the mystery of principles. This is how he groundlessly started the smashing-and-striking metaphor to criticize and satirize Master Zhuang's book. This is an improper employment (of metaphor) that can be deeply bewailed.

73 惠子謂莊子曰：吾有大樹，人謂之樗。

Said Master Hui to Master Zhuang: "I have a great tree, people call it the tree-of-heaven.

〔疏〕樗，栲漆之類，嗅之甚臭，惡木者也。世間名字，例皆虛假，相與嗅之，未知的當，故言人謂之樗也。

²⁹⁷ This is a wrong gloss. 攄 means to "make empty."

A tree-of-heaven²⁹⁸ belongs to the category of chinquapin and Chinese lacquer tree. It smells quite odorous, and is an odious tree. Names in this finite world are all of a piece empty and baseless. One after another men smell its odor without knowing its proper name. Therefore, the text says that people call it the tree-of-heaven.

74 其大本擁腫而不中繩墨，其小枝卷曲而不中規矩。立之塗，匠者不顧。

“Its trunk is too knobbly and bumpy to measure with the inked line, its branches are too curly and crooked to fit compasses or L-square. Stand it up in the road and a carpenter wouldn’t give it a glance.

〔疏〕擁腫，槃癭也。卷曲，不端直也。規圓而矩方。塗，道也。樗栲之樹，不材之木，根本擁腫，枝干彎卷，繩墨不加，方圓無取，立之行路之旁，匠人曾不顧盼也。

Knobby and bumpy means that the tree is fully covered in burls. Curly and crooked means not straight or upright. Compasses are circular, and L-squares are square. A road is a way. Trees such as ailanthuses and chinquapins are woods that cannot be used as timber. Their roots and trunks are knobby and bumpy, their branches and boles are crooked and coiled. Inked lines cannot be added (to them), and compasses or L-squares cannot be used (to handle it). (Even if) it stands by the side of the road where people walk, and carpenters would never even take a look back at it.

²⁹⁸ Ailanthus.

75 今子之言，大而無用，眾所同去也。

“Now this talk of yours is big but useless, dismissed by everyone alike.”

〔疏〕樹既擁腫不材，匠人不顧；言跡迂誕無用，眾所不歸。此合喻者也。

Since the tree is knobby and bumpy and cannot be used as timber, carpenters would not take a look at it; as traces of utterance is fraudulent and redundant with no use, the crowd would not resort to them. This is a conjoined metaphor.

76 莊子曰：子獨不見狸狌乎？卑身而伏，以候敖者；東西跳梁，不辟高下；中於機辟，死於罔罟。

Zhuangai said: “Haven’t you ever seen a wild cat or a weasel? It lurks crouching low in wait for strays, makes a pounce east or west as nimble uphill or down, and drops plumb into the snares and dies in the net.

〔疏〕狌，野貓也。跳梁，猶走躑也。辟，法也，謂機關之類也。罔罟，罟罟也。子獨不見狸狌捕鼠之狀乎？卑伏其身，伺侯傲慢之鼠；東西跳躑，不避高下之地；而中於機關之法，身死罔罟之中，皆以利惑其小，不謀大故也。亦猶擊跪曲奉，執持聖跡，偽情矯性，以要時利。前雖遂意，後必危亡，而商鞅蘇張，即是其事。此何異乎捕鼠狸狌死於罔罟也。

A weasel is a wild cat. Pouncing on the beam is similar to running in a measured rhythm. A trigger-snare is a means (for catching) akin to trigger mechanism of crossbow. A snare means a net for catching birds or beasts. Haven't you ever seen the manner of which a weasel catches mice? It lurks crouching low, keeping its watch on strutting and swaggering mice; it jumps and hops east and west, without avoiding places high or low; however, it drops plumb into the trap of snares and dies in the net. All of these is because profit deceives the small so that the great cannot be considered, similar to kneeling down and holding up for the sake of flattering. (The small people) clutch and clasp on traces of the sage, feign their feelings and fake their dispositions, only to strive for immediate benefits. Though the minds (of the small) are complied with at the beginning, they would inevitably fall into danger and death in a later time. Speaking of which, the cases of Shang Yang, Su (Qin) and Zhang (Yi) were like so. How are (those cases) different from mice-catching weasels that die in nets and snares?

77 今夫犛牛，其大若垂天之雲，此能為大矣，而不能執鼠。

“But the yak now, which is as big as a cloud hanging from the sky, this by being able to be so big is unable to catch as much as a mouse.

〔疏〕犛牛，猶旄牛也，出西南夷，其形甚大，山中遠望，如天際之雲。藪澤之中，逍遙養性。跳梁執鼠，不及野狸。亦猶莊子之言，不狎流俗，可以理國治身，且長且久者也。

A *li*-yak is a *mao*-yak the tail of which are made into pennants. (This species of yak) originates from the barbarian lands of the Southwest. The yak's form is quite huge; gazing from the middle of the mountains afar at it, it looks like a piece of cloud at the edge of the sky. In the depth of the

marsh, they nourish their nature free and easy; as for pouncing on beams to get hold of mice, they cannot be compared to wild weasel. (Yaks) are just like Zhuangzi's words: they are not habituated to going with the flow of tradition. They (are the words with which one) can regulate a state and discipline oneself, both longstanding and lasting.

78 今子有大樹，患其無用，何不樹之於無何有之鄉，廣莫之野，

“Now that you had a great tree and think it's pity it's so useless, why not plant it in the realm of Nothingwhatever, in the wilds which spreads out into nowhere,

〔疏〕無何有，猶無有也。莫，無也。謂寬曠無人之處，不問何物，悉皆無有，故曰無何有之鄉也。

Nothingwhatever means just like nothing. Nowhere means non-being. This sentence says, at a far-ranging and –reaching place where no one is there, whatever exists (can be seen as) completely nothing. Thus (the place) is called the realm of Nothingwhatever.

79 彷徨乎無為其側，逍遙乎寢臥其下，

“and go roaming away to do nothing at its side, ramble around and fall asleep in its shade?

〔疏〕彷徨，縱任之名；逍遙，自得之稱。亦是異言一致，互其文耳。不材之木，枝葉茂盛，婆娑蔭映，蔽日來風，故行李經過，徘徊憩息，徙倚顧步，寢臥其下。亦猶莊子之言，無為虛淡，可以逍遙適性，蔭庇蒼生也。

Back-and-forth-pacing is the name for indulging and at will; free-and-easy is the address to self-complacency. The words used are different, yet (the meaning) is the same. These two lines have an interlocking structure. A tree, unable to be made into a timber, has branches and leaves are thriving and luxuriant; lush and leafy they provide a shadowy shelter, blocking the sunlight and bringing the wind. Therefore, when passengers pass through this place, they linger and loiter, repose and rest; haltingly and hesitantly they look back at their (own) footsteps, then lie down to sleep beneath the tree. (This tree) is also like Zhuangzi's words: they are not consciously dictated. Empty and bland, free and easy, they can be used to (both) satisfy one's inborn nature and shelter the common folks.

80 不夭斤斧，物無害者，無所可用，安所困苦哉！

“Spared by the axe, nothing will harm it. If you are no use at all, who will come to bother you?”

〔疏〕擁腫不材，拳曲無取；匠人不顧，斤斧無加。夭折之災，何從而至？故得終其天年，盡其生理。無用之用，何所困苦哉。亦猶莊子之言：垂俗會道，可以攝衛，可以全真，既不夭枉於世塗，詎肯困苦於生分也。

Knobby and bumpy, they cannot be made into timber; crooked and coiled, they are not selected. Carpenters would not take a look at it; axes and hatchets would not be placed upon it. The disaster of dying early and breaking down – whence would that come? That is how it gets to end of its heavenly-endowed years and exhaust its inborn inner set-up. If its use is “no use,” then what is to be obstructed and suffered from? (This metaphor) is also like Zhuangzi's words: showing concern for mundanity and comprehending the Way, they can provide guardianship and

assistance, and bring truthfulness to its fullest degree. Since his words do not deform or bend on the muddy road of the world, how could they get stagnated in clumsiness or be distorted by fragmentation?

Abbreviations and Conventions

- CZT* *Chizaotang siku quanshu huiyao* 摛藻堂四庫全書薈要.
- HY* *Hanfenlou yingyin Daozang* 涵芬樓影印道藏. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, and Tianjin: Tianjin guji chubanshe, 1988.
- SKQS* *Qinding siku quanshu* 欽定四庫全書.
- SBCK* *Sibu congkan* 四部叢刊.
- SJZS* *Shisan jing zhushu* 十三經註疏. Ed. Shisanjing zhushu zhengli weiyuan hui 十三經註疏整理委員會. Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2000.
- T* *Taisho Shinshu Daizokyo* 大正新脩大藏經. Ed. Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku. Tokyo: Taisho Issaikyo Kankokai, 1961-1978.

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