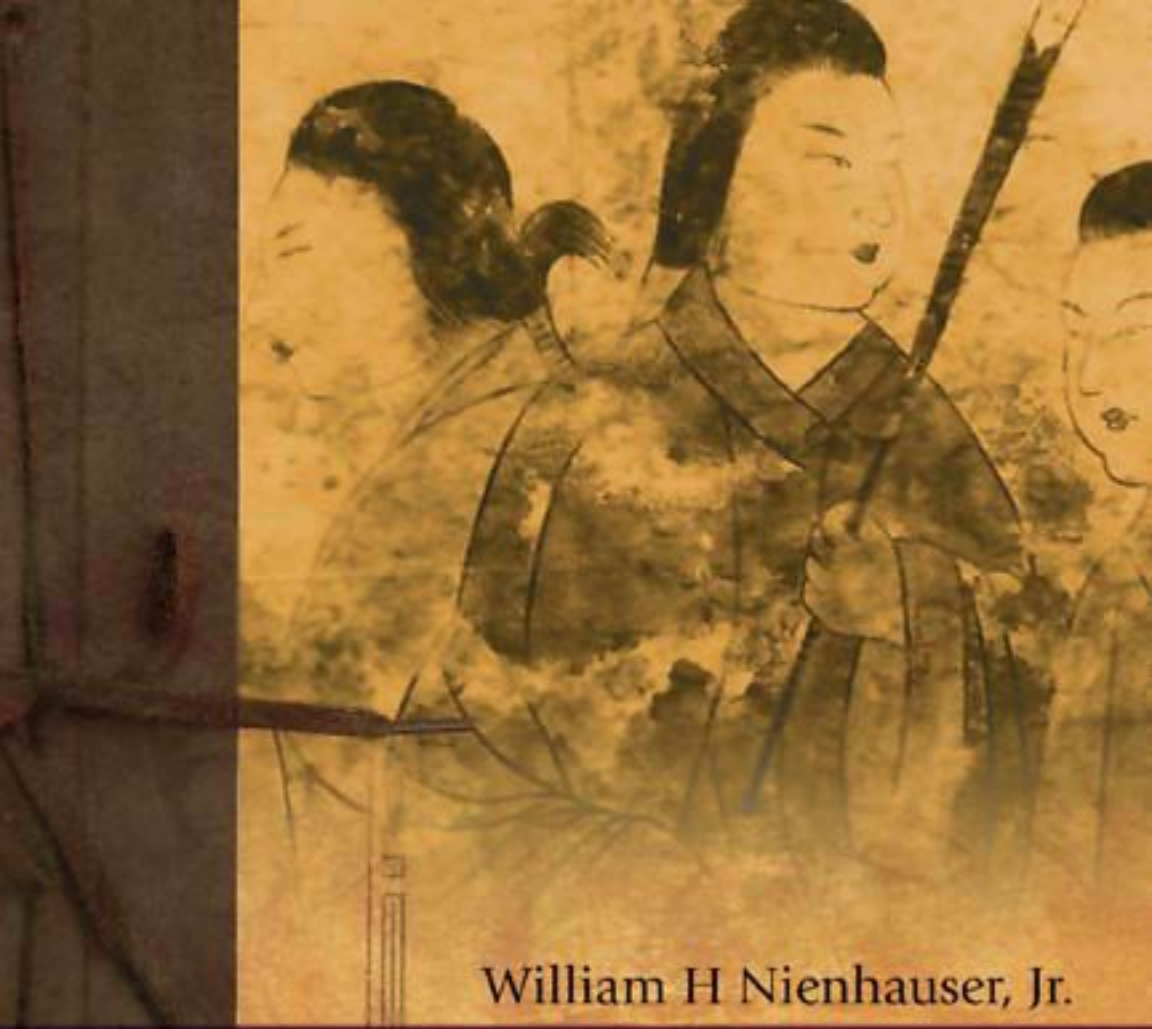


William H Nienhauser, Jr.

TANG DYNASTY TALES

A Guided Reader

World Scientific

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World Scientific

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This volume is dedicated to

Glen Dudbridge, Li Jiangguo 李劍國,

and Wang Meng'ou 王夢鷗

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Acknowledgments

This project began over a decade ago when it seemed that carefully annotated translations of Tang tales were needed. A number of seminars were devoted to reading various tales and a corresponding number of draft translations produced. There were also two Workshops on Tang Tales. My thanks to all the students who participated in classroom discussion and to the scholars who joined us in workshops — especially to Daniel Hsieh, Rania Huntington and Kawai Kōzō. With the exception of "Du Zichun" which Rania Huntington has kindly provided us, the other translations here were done some years ago. It is hoped that the remaining draft translations may be polished and published at some time in the near future.

A word of thanks is in order to Dianna Xu of the Memorial Library at the University of Wisconsin for her help in acquiring various materials. The translators themselves were dedicated to their work and patient with their editor. Thanks also to my two project assistants, Wang Xiaoyang and Zou Xin 鄒, and to Lü Xiang and Wu Chen, all of whom have helped immeasurably with the final preparation of this manuscript.

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The volume is dedicated to Glen Dudbridge, Wang Meng'ou, and Li Jianguo, three scholars who have done so much to shape the study of these tales.

Contents

Acknowledgments vii

List of Abbreviations xi

Introduction:
Notes for a History of the Translation of Tang Tales xiii

Note on the Translations xxv

1. Weiguo Cao, "The Tale of Hongxian" 1
2. Rania Huntington, "Du Zichun" 49
3. Bruce J. Knickerbocker, "Record within a Pillow" 73
4. William H. Nienhauser, Jr.
"An Account of the Governor of the Southern Branch" 131
5. Jing Wang, "The Tale of the Curly-Bearded Guest" 189
6. Zhenjun Zhang, "The Tale of Huo Xiaoyu" 233

Biographical Sketches of the Translators 277

Bibliography 279

Index 303

About the Author 311

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List of Abbreviations

BSOAS	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
CLEAR	*Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews*
comp.	compiler
Hanyy da cidian	*Hanyy da cidian* 漢語 . 13v. 5th printing, Shanghai: Hanyu Da Cidian Chubanshe, 1995.
HJAS	*Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*
Hucker	Charles O. Hucker. *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985.
Jiu Tang shu	*Jiu Tang shu* . 20v. Beijing: Zhonghua, 1975.
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JAS	*Journal of Asian studies*
JOS	*Journal of Oriental Studies*
MS	*Monumenta Serica*
n. (nn.)	note(s)
no.	number

OE	*Oriens Extremus*
des Rotours	Robert des Rotours. *Traité des fonctionnaires et Traité de l'armée.* 2v. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1947.
Shiji	*Shiji* 記. 10v. Beijing: Zhong hua, 1959.
TkR	*Tamkang Review*
TP	*T'oung Pao*
TPGJ	*Taiping guangji* 廣記. 10v. Beijing: Renmin Chubanshe, 1961.
Tan Qixiang	Tan Qixiang (1911-1992). *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* 國. 8v. Shanghai: Zhong guo Ditu Chubanshe, 1982.
TS	*T'ang Studies*
v. (vv.)	volume(s)
Wang Meng'ou	Wang Meng'ou 鷗 (1907-2002). *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi* 釋. 2v. Taibei: Zhengzhong Shuju, 1983.
WYYH	*Wenyuan yinghua* 英. Rpt.; Taipei: Huawen Shuju 書局1965.
Xin Tang shu	*Xin Tang shu* 書. 20v. Beijing: Zhonghua, 1975.

Introduction

Notes for a History of the Translation of Tang Tales

The study of the tale-literature from the Tang dynasty began less than one hundred years ago with May Fourth scholars, especially Lu Xun 迅 (1881-1936). His anthology, *Tang Song chuanqi ji* 奇 , prepared in the late 1920s, was the first modern critical edition of the texts and helped to initiate the generic term by which they are now often known: *chuanqi* 奇 or "transmissions of the strange." Glen Dudbridge, the doyen of T'ang-tale studies in the West, has argued that the label *chuanqi* is essentially a creation of May Fourth critics and should not be used to refer to narratives such as those translated in this volume. At the other extreme, Li Jianguo , one of the masters of this genre in contemporary China, suggests that several hundred texts deserve to be labeled *chuanqi*.[1] Lu Xun 迅 steers a middle course in his *Tang Song chuanqi ji* 奇 ,[2] which includes some thirty tales. Sarah Yim, in one of the earliest Western studies of these tales, based her claim that there were about seventy Tang tales on

[1] See Li Jianguo, *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu* 五 怪 (2v.; Tianjin: Nankai Daxue Chubanshe, 1993).

[2] First published in 1927 by Beixin Shuju in Shanghai and revised several times (our edition was that of Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe published in Beijing in 1954).

Wang Pijiang's anthology.[3] However, Wang had carefully avoided the term *chuanqi*, titling his book *Tangren xiaoshuo* ,[4] precipitating a discussion in China over the genre that continues to this day. Whatever generic label one may give to these accounts in Chinese, the term "Tang tale" is widely accepted in the West.[5]

There is something distinctive about what are now considered the major tales, those generally written in the first decades of the ninth century. Many deal with the trials of the literati in the capital, their love lives or political vicissitudes. In addition to the normal conventions of verisimilitude, such as expositions that resemble the 'historical biography,' these tales are often capped by colophons noting the origin of the piece, origins that are often claimed to have been via oral transmission.[6]

Long before Lu Xun, however, Western scholars began to take an interest in classical-language fiction, with translations from the *Soushen ji* 搜神記 (Records of Searching for the Strange)[7] that date to the 1840s. Several renditions of stories from Pu Songling's (1640-1715) *Liaozhai zhiyi* 聊 (Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio) then appeared in the 1870s. The first translation of Tang tales seems to have been that of Georges Frederic Leon Wieger (1856-1933) in the early years of the twentieth century.[8]

[3] Yim's dissertation, "Structure, Theme, and Narrator in T'ang *Ch'uan-ch'i*," was accepted by Yale University in 1979.

[4] Preface 1929 (Rpt.; Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1978 [1936]).

[5] Patrick Hanan was perhaps first to suggest the dichotomy between "classical-language tale" and the "vernacular story" in his studies of the *huaben* genre.

[6] A variant coda, in imitation of the historian's comments following a biography that first appeared in the *Shiji* 記, can also be found, especially in the works of the *guwen* 文 writers like Han Yu (768-824) and Liu Zongyuan (773-819).

[7] Cf. Martha Davidson, ed., *A List of Published Translations from Chinese into English, French, and German* (2v.; Ann Arbor, Michigan: J. W. Edwards, 1952), 1:85-87.

[8] These were a few selections from the *Guang yi ji* 記 which appeared in Wieger's *Folk-lore chinoise moderne* (Ho-kien fou: Mission Catholique, 1909).

Arthur Waley's (1889-1966) renditions of "Li Wa zhuan" ("The Story of Miss Li") and "Yingying zhuan" ("The Story of Ts'ui Ying-ying") which appeared in Waley's *More Translations from the Chinese*[9] certainly drew a wider audience.

But the serious study, teaching and translation of these texts began shortly after Lu Xun completed his anthology in the late 1920s. Sung-nien Hsu's (1904-1981) *Contes choisis des T'ang*,[10] the first collection of translations of these texts, was published only a few years thereafter,[11] but Hsu based his sixteen renditions on Wang Pijiang's *Tangren xiaoshuo* . A close friend of Wang, Hsu used a translation of Wang's "Tangren xiaoshuo zai Zhongguo wenxue shang zhi diwei" 國 as his introduction (pp. 1-23).[12]

For English readers, however, it was Evangeline Dora Edwards' (1888-1957)[13] *Chinese Prose Literature of the T'ang Period,*

[9] Published in New York by Alfred A. Knopf (1919) on pp. 113-36 and 101-13 respectively.

[10] Pekin: Imprimerie de la politique de Pekin, 1935 (128 pages). Hsu's original name was Zhongnian 仲 (Songnian was his penname). He published half a dozen works in French on Chinese literature, including the well-known *Anthologie de la littérature chinoise* (Paris: Delgrave, 1933), and a number of works in Chinese. Among numerous posts in China, Hsu served at the Shanghai Waiyu Xueyuan 海外 语 for twenty years (1956-1976).

[11] Hsu was the first to translate Lu Xun's story collection "Nan han" into French.

[12] The idea of such a collection had come from a conversation between Henri Maspero (1882-1945) and Hsu in May 1930. It seems Hsu was also able to consult Wang Pijiang as he translated the tales. Although the resulting translations generally hold up well in comparison to other early renditions, some errors are readily apparent, such as Hsu's romanization of the protagonist of "Nanke Taishou zhuan", 梦, as "Tch'oen-yu Wen."

[13] After spending six years in China from 1913-1919, Edwards returned to the University of London where she studied and then taught in the School of Oriental and African Studies, serving as Acting Head of the Far East Department in 1939 (See Walter Simon, "Obituary: Evangeline Dora Edwards," *BSOAS* 21 [1958]: 220-4).

A.D. 618-906 in the late 1930s that provided the first widely read collection of Tang tales.[14] Edwards notes her indebtedness to Lu Xun in her preface, but she chose the *Tangdai congshu* as her base text. Edwards translated (or paraphrased) and analyzed a great number of Tang tales. Although she has been criticized for errors in translation and for the selection of the original base text,[15] her work contributed immensely to the early study of Tang tales.

A few years later, the noted translator Chi-Chen Wang (1899-2001), who had given Western readers the first (abridged) English version of the *Honglou meng* in 1929, published his *Traditional Chinese Tales*.[16] Although Wang appends a bibliographic note, he gives no information on which base text he used for his translations.

Yang Xianyi 憲 (1915-2009) and his wife Gladys B. Tayler (Dai Naidie , 1919-1999) offered the next collection of Tang tales, ten works titled The *Dragon King's Daughter* (Beijing: Waiwen Chubanshe, 1954).[17] Their short introduction, while introducing some ideas similar to those that Lu Xun had offered in his *Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilue* 說 in the early 1920s,[18]

[14] London: Arthur Probsthain, 1937 and 1938 (2 vols.).

[15] Review of Edwards by Lü Hsiang in *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiu huikan* 中國文 彙 (Bulletin of Chinese Studies) 1 (September 1941), pp. 291-301.

[16] Containing fourteen Tang tales and five *huaben* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944).

[17] Yang was in England for the period 1936-1940 and met his Beijing-born wife while studying French at Oxford (in 1940 she became the first graduate in Chinese at that university). Whether Yang or his wife had any contact with E. D. Edwards is not known, but it is likely either Yang or his noted friends of the time–including S. I. Hsiung, Xiao Qian, and Qian Zhongshu–were well aware of her work.

[18] Lu Xun's history was first published in two volumes in 1923 and 1924, and later revised; many modern reprints are available. On the evolution of the text of this famous history, see John C. Y. Wang, "Lu Xun as a Scholar of Traditional Chinese Literature," in *Lu Xun and His Legacy*, Leo Ou-fan Lee, ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 93-94.

does not specify which texts they used. The translations, although free, often offer a clearer rendition than those of other translators.[19]

The favorable reception of the Yangs' translation led Foreign Languages Press to issue a second, similiar anthology of twenty-two stories titled *Stories of Old China* (1958). These texts, including six Tang tales (four not previously available in English) had been translated in 1942 by the scholar-official W. W. Yen (Yan Huiqing , 1877-1950) during house arrest in Hong Kong. There is no indication of what texts Yen used.[20]

Just two years after W. W. Yen's translations appeared, Elizabeth Te-chen Wang presented free renditions of twenty-two tales in her *Ladies of the Tang* (Taibei: Heritage Press, 1961). Although the accuracy of these versions was widely criticized, the collection was important (1) because it reached so many Western scholars during the 1960s and 1970s and (2) because it contained the only English-language translation of several tales. Wang apparently based her renditions on the *Taiping guangji*.[21]

[19] The translations of a number of tales in Bruno Belpaire's *T'ang kien went se, Florilege de literature des T'ang* (2v. Paris: Editions Universitaires, 1959), renditions based on the *Tangren shuohui* (alternatively titled *Tangdai congshu*) are not significant; Belpaire translated the same texts that Edwards had, but seems genuinely unaware of her renditions–see James R. Hightower's review in *HJAS* 21 (1958): 187-90.

[20] Yen, a graduate of the University of Virginia, had served for a little over a month as President of the Republic of China in 1926. His translation of "Zhenzhong ji" seems to follow the text of the *Taiping guangji*, but his attribution of the tale to a certain, unspecified Li Mi [did he mean the well known scholar-official Li Mi 密 who lived from 722-789??]) is puzzling.

[21] Zhang Youhe's annotated versions of nearly forty tales (*Tang Song chuanqi ji* , first published in 1963; rpt. Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1998) had an impact on scholarship within China, but because it was published shortly before the start of the Cultural Revolution, and was eclipsed by the work of Wang Meng'ou and Li Jianguo after that decade, exerted little influence on Western translations.

The next important collection of translations–nine tales from the Tang[22]–resulted from the cooperation of two major figures of twentieth-century German Sinology, Herbert Franke and Wolfgang Bauer (1930-1997) and was titled *Die goldene Truhe*.[23] The volume, which contains many of the same stories Chi-Chen Wang included, was translated into English by Christopher Levenson and published by Penguin Classics in 1964. In the following two decades, it enjoyed a wide readership in both the German original and the English translation.

Just a year later, Ch'u Chai (1906-1986) and Winberg Chai, who had made their reputation in studies of Confucianism, presented five of their own tale translations in their *A Treasury of Chinese Literature; A New Prose Anthology including Fiction and Drama* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1965).[24] Thus by the late 1960s a number of versions of the major Tang tales were available in English, French and German. But there was little scholarship on either the original texts of these tales or of their translations.

The situation was to change significantly with the publication of James R. Hightower's "Yüan Chen and the 'The Story of Ying-ying'" in 1973. Although this article was intended to be a thorough study of the relationship between Yuan Zhen the author and Yuan Zhen the protagonist of the tale, it contains (pp. 93-103) a careful, heavily annotated translation of "Yingying zhuan"
, and is therefore the first scholarly rendition of a Tang tale. Published in the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*,[25] Hightower's translation continues to have a broad impact on students and scholars even today.

[22] In all Bauer and Franke included nearly fifty tales, ranging from excerpts from the *Shiji* 記 to the Ming *chuanqi* by Qu Yu 佑 (1341-1433) and others to *Liaozhao zhiyi* 誌 .

[23] Munich: Carl Hanser, 1959.

[24] "Huo Xiaoyu," "Renshi zhuan," "Wushuang zhuan," "Nanke Taishou zhuan," and "Qiuran ke zhuan."

[25] *HJAS* 33 (1977): 93-123.

Three years later, William H. Nienhauser's "An Allegorical Reading of Han Yü's 'Mao Ying chuan' (Biography of Fur Point)," *Oriens Extremus,* 23.2 (1976): 153-174 attempted, without the grace and style of Hightower's translation, to explore the subgenre of Tang pseudo-biographies[26] through a complete translation and close reading of Han Yu's "Mao Ying zhuan."[27]

Yet if it was Hightower who prepared the foundation for the scholarly study of Tang tales in the West, Glen Dudbridge was the scholar who established the first edifice on that foundation. Dudbridge's *The Tale of Li Wa* (London: Ithaca Press, 1983) set all the norms: from the first line of its "Introduction" to the last sentence of the appendix on "Musical contests in Ch'ang-an," *The Tale of Li Wa* is a model of texual criticism, annotated translation, and organization. Dudbridge's careful attention to the details of the history of the "Li Wa zhuan" tale, to its author, and to its dating, are juxtaposed to his inspired reading of the work as a veiled attack on the three sons of Zheng Hu 鄭 (708-777).[28] The book also adumbrates future study, its fifth chapter including a discussion of "Renshi zhuan" , pointing to the *you wu* 尤 (beautiful creatures) of these tales as women who often lead the male protagonists to the "dangerous edge" of life. All this serves as background for Dudbridge's translation and analysis of two versions of "Li Wa zhuan"(the *Taiping guangji* 廣記 and of the *Lei shuo*) that complete the volume. The two original texts are printed on the verso pages facing his English translation. By

[26] Cf. Franke, Herbert. "Literary Parody in Traditional Chinese Literature: Descriptive Pseudo-Biographies," *OE*, 21 (1974): 23-31.

[27] Two more recent translations of this pseudo-biography are in Hightower, "Han Yü as Humorist," *HJAS* 44 (1984), and in Elling O. Eide, "Another Go at the *Mao Ying chuan*," *T'ang Studies*, 8/9 (1990-1): 107-11.

[28] Dudbridge published a reconsideration of his approach to allusions in "A Second Look at *Li Wa chuan*," in Eugene Eoyang and Lin Yao-fu, eds. *Translating Chinese Literature* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1995), pp. 67-76.

comparing these texts, Dudbridge shows that the *Lei shuo* version preserves elements of an alternative, no-longer extant, version of "Li Wa." Modeled on the Arden Shakespeare editions (in particular on Frank Kermode's edition of *The Tempest* [1954]), Dudbrdige believed that his book would inspire other monographs on other Tang tales, a hope that has not been fulfilled.[29]

Instead, translations of the tales continued to be aimed at a general audience. The next important collection was that selected and prepared by H. C. Chang in his *Chinese Literature 3: Tales of the Supernatural* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), which presented several tales that had not been previously translated. His extensive introduction to the genre (pp. 14-27) also contributed to a burgeoning interest in these tales among Western students.

That interest was recognized by Y. W. Ma and Joseph S. M. Lau, who for the first time assembled a team of translators–including James R. Hightower, Jeanne Kelly, Peter Rushton, Donald Gjertson, and the present author–to render twelve tales (in addition to a number of vernacular stories and some *zhiguai*) in their *Traditional Chinese Stories, Themes and Variations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978). Although they appended a still useful set of "Biobibliographic Notes" (pp. 575-85) in which they took note of Wang Meng'ou's early annotations of these stories (in his *Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu, erji* [Taibei: Yiwen Yinshuguan, 1978]), these translations relied primarily on versions found in the *Taiping guangji*. The renditions are lightly annotated and, despite the considerable editorial efforts of the two editors, vary in reliability.

[29] Perhaps the only publication since 1983 of a Tang-tale translation that attempted to match the standards of *The Tale of Li Wa* can be found in Dudbridge's own "A Question of Classification in Tang Narrative: The Story of Ding Yue," in Alfredo Cadonna, ed. *India, Tibet, China: Genesis and Aspects of Traditional Narrative* (Florence: L. S. Loschki, 1999), pp. 151-80.

Karl S. Y. Kao, following the model and suggestion of his teacher Joseph Lau, also organized a team of translators to help him gather the next important group of translations of Tang tales in his *Classical Chinese Tales of the Supernatural and the Fantastic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986). This collection contained thirty-six Tang tales and sixty *zhiguai*, making it the single most important source of translations of this genre even today. The translations were done by colleagues at the University of Wisconsin (where Kao did his graduate work) and Yale University (where Kao was teaching). Major contributors included Pedro Acosta, Paula Varsano, Laurie Scheffler, Douglas Wilkerson, and Cordell Yee. Kao also provides useful bio-bibliographic notes and an bibliography that reaches beyond his model. A major contribution, however, is the excellent, lengthy "Introduction" (pp. 1-51) which endeavors to apply modern narrative theory to Chinese tales.

A few years later and several thousand miles away, André Lévy, who had made a name in his work on vernacular stories, was preparing a two-volume collection of Tang tales in translation to rival Kao's: *Histoires d'amour et de mort de la Chine ancienne, Chefs-d'oeuvre de la nouvelle (Dynastie des Tang. 618-907)* and the subsequent *Histoires extraordinaires et récits fantastiques de la Chine ancienne*.[30] Following lengthy introductions to both volumes, Lévy offers renditions of twenty-four tales with notes, a list of previous translations, and commentaries that include textual notes, introductions to the authors, parallel texts (some translated in full), and Lévy's own insights.

The early 1990s Madeline Spring gave us another careful study and translation of the fictional biographies and fables, found primarily in the writings of members of the *Guwen* 古

[30] Paris: Aubier, 1992 and 1993. If there is a drawback to these volumes it is the lack of Chinese characters.

Movement, in her *Animal Allegories in T'ang China* (1993).[31] That same year Victor H. Mair included several similar works (including "Mao Ying zhuan"), as well as five classical-language tales (by Hightower, Dudbridge, and Nienhauser), in his *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature*. Pauline Bentley Koffler's heavily annotated rendition of "Gujing ji" 古鏡記, also appeared in 1993.[32]

Since 1993 translations of Tang tales have appeared in various anthologies. Stephen Owen published his own translations of four Tang tales in his *Anthology of Chinese Literature, Beginnings to 1911* (1996).[33] This was followed by nine translations John Minford and Joseph Lau included in their *Classical Chinese Literature, Volume 1: From Antiquity to the Tang Dynasty*.[34] Although several are older translations (from Cyril Birch, E. D. Edwards, James R. Hightower, and Chi-chen Wang), there are new translations by Hightower ("The Alchemist"), Robert Joe Cutter ("The Betrothal Inn"), John Minford ("Liu Yi") and Nienhauser ("Mid-River"). Monika Motsch's study of Tang tales ("Tang-Dynastie: Vom Mythos zur Literatur," 2003) does not contain full translations of tales, but the extensive excerpts and commentary she provides still merit

[31] Published by the American Oriental Society (New Haven, Connecticut). See also Spring's "Roosters, Horses, and Phoenixes: A Look at Three Fables by Li Ao," *MS* 39 (1990-1): 199-208.

[32] Koffler's "The Story of the Magic Mirror (*Gujingji*) by Wang Du" was published in *Hommage à Kwong Hing Foon, Études d'histoire culturelle de la Chine*, Jean-Pierre Diény, ed. (Paris: Collège de France, Institut des Hautes Études, 1993), pp. 165-214.

[33] "New York and London" W. W. Norton, pp. 518-49; two of these translations ("Yingying's Story" and "Huo Xiaoyu's Story") were also included in Owen's *End of the Chinese 'Middle Ages,' Essays in Mid-Tang Literary Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp. 178-204.

[34] Published as "Chapter 28: The World in a Pillow," by Columbia University Press (pp. 1019-1076).

mention.[35] Finally, in 2004, Jacques Pimpaneau gave us four tales into French in his *Anthologie de la littérature chinoise classique*.[36]

The translations included in this volume have benefitted from many of the above renditions. They have evolved over the past fifteen years in seminars, Saturday morning meetings in my dining room, and several workshops. Although they may not match all of the high standards set by Glen Dudbridge, they attempt to provide the first annotated versions, relying heavily on Wang Meng'ou's *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi* 釋 (2v.; Taibei: Zhengzhong Shuju, 1983), of six tales. Moreover, through the translators' note, they will allow students of Tang tales a closer look into the meanings, both within and beyond the texts, of these wondrous narratives.

William H. Nienhauser, Jr.
Madison, Wisconsin
14 February 2010

[35] In her *Die chinesische Erzählung vom Altertum bis zur Neuzeit* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 2003), pp. 80-131. Volume 3 of Wolfgang Kubin, ed., *Geschichte der chinesischen Literatur*.

[36] Arles: Philippe Picquier, 2004. The tales are: "Kunlun nu" (pp. 478-482), "Changhen ge zhuan" (pp. 482-89); "Yingying zhuan" (pp. 489-98); "Li Wa zhuan" (pp. 499-511); and "Qiuran ke zhuan" (pp. 511-18; all with light annotation).

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Note on the Translations

The translations are intended for both the general reader interested in Tang fiction and for student who study the original texts. Each tale-translation is followed by an analysis (translators' notes), a short glossary of difficult or unusual terms, and a bibliography providing directions for further study.

Most of these texts were translated before the appearance of Li Jianguo's 國 *Tang Song chuanqi pindu cidian* 奇品 (A Dictionary of Critical Readings of Tang and Song Tales),[1] and use therefore Wang Meng'ou's 鷗 (1907-2002) *Tangren xiao shuo jiaoshi* 釋[2] as a base text.

The woodblock prints appended to the tales are from *Hongfu ji* 紅 記 and *Mohan Zhai chongding Handan meng chuanqi* 憨齋重 邯 奇 in *Quan Ming chuanqi* 奇 (Taibei: Tianyi Chubanshe, 1983; vv. 57 and 100 respectively); from Yue Duan (1671-1704), *Yangzhou meng* 揚 , *Guben xiqu congkan wuji* 戲 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1986), v. 39; from *Hongxian zhuan* in *Bai bu congshu jicheng* (Taibei: Yiwen Chubanshe, 1968; v. 32); and from a rare edition (1618) of Tang Xianzu's (1550-1616) *Nanke ji* 南 記 held in the Memorial Library at the University of Wisconsin.

[1] Two volumes; Beijing: Xinshijie Chubanshe, 2007, pp. 265-79.

[2] Two volumes, Taibei: Zheng-zhong Shuju, 1983.



Hongxian steals the golden box under the cover of night

Tale 1

"Hongxian" 紅線[1]

by Yuan Jiao 袁郊 or Yang Juyuan 楊巨源[2]
translated by Cao Weiguo

Hongxian [Red Threads][3] was a maid[4] of Xue Song 薛 (?-773),[5] the Military Governor of Luzhou .[6] She was good at playing

[1] This translation is based on the text edited by Wang Meng'ou , *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi* (Taibei: Zhengzhong, 1983), pp. 277-80. Although Wang's collation is based on a number of major versions of the story (Wang Meng'ou, p. 288), he only discusses some of the variants in his apparatus. Thus, the translator has added collational notes. For a discussion of the major editions consulted, see "Translator's Note."

[2] This is one of the eight stories collected in Yuan Jiao's (fl. 868) *Gan ze yao* 甘 [Ballads of Timely Rainfall]. For an account of the author's life as well as the textual history of this story, see "Translator's Note."

[3] *Gujin shihua* 詩話 as quoted in *Shihua zonggui* 詩話總 (41.6a), compiled by Ruan Yue 閱 during 1086-1100, records a different origin for Hongxian, which seems to have circulated in a separate tradition: "At the age of 13, a little maid was presented to Xue Song, a Military Governor in the Tang. On both of her hands there were faint lines like red threads, hence she was named 'red threads.'" *Tangshi jishi* 詩 also indicated that Hongxian was named because the lines of her palm looked like red threads. See Wang Zhongyong 仲 , ed. *Tangshi jishi jiaojian* 詩 (Chengdu: Ba Shu, 1989), p. 852.

[4] The word *qingyi* 青衣 means "maid." With its literal meaning "a person with dark color clothes," it may also foreshadow that Hongxian was a heavenly servant. As William H. Nienhauser points out, "a heavenly female dressed in blue brings a solution" is one of the basic motifs in the story-complex of early texts such as *Shanhai jing* . This motif had a great influence on the later fictional writing. See William H. Nienhauser "The Origin of Chinese Fiction" *MS* 38 (1988-89): 208-15.

[5] Xue Song was a grandson of Xue Rengui 薛 (614-683), the famous Tang general and later legendary hero of folk tradition. Xue Song originally participated in the An Lushan Rebellion, but eventually surrendered to the court. In 763 he was appointed Military Governor of Xiang 相 (its seat is in modern Anyang 安陽, Henan), Wei (with its seat in modern Ji County, Henan), Ming 洺 (its seat is southeast of modern Yongnian , Henan), and Xing (with its seat in modern Xingtai , Hebei). In 766 his army was granted the title of Zhaoyi "Brightness and Righteousness." See his biography in *Jiu Tang shu* , 124.3525-26, *Xing Tang shu* , 111.4144-45. There is also a story recorded in *Langhuan ji* 記 (11.21a-b) about how Xue Song was once nearly murdered by an assassin, suggesting that there may have been a number of such stories.

[6] Luzhou had its seat at modern Changzhi , Shanxi (Tan Qixiang, 5: 38).

The opening sentence in *TPGJ* (195: 1460) is a little different, it reads 州 薛 家青衣 線 for 線 州 薛 青衣. *Yu chu zhi* (2.11), *Jindai mishu* 秘 (17a), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) and *Yanyi bian* (24.1a) all have the word *jia* 家 in the opening sentence. Only *Shuo fu* (19. 25a) does not have the word *jia*. It is very likely that the editors of later editions tried to explicate the text and added the word *jia*. According to the principles of textual criticism, the short reading is generally preferable for the reason that the scribes "occasionally added a word or a phrase to clarify a thought." See Harold Greenlee. *Scribes, Scrolls, and Scripture: A Student's Guide to New Testament Textual Criticism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1985), p. 60.

Bai Kong liutie 孔六 (24. 5a) has another important variant, it reads 帥薛 有歌 線. *Lei shuo* (36: 21a) and *Gan zhu ji* (11.19a) agree with this version and also identify Hongxian as a singing girl. According to this synoptic version, Hongxian was a singing girl, instead of a maid.

The Military Governor of Luzhou during this period was actually Li Baoyu 報 , not Xue Song. Xue Song was appointed as the Military Governor of Xiangwei and four other prefectures, and his army was titled Zhaoyi. Thus, he was also called the Military Governor of Zhaoyi. However, after 780, the seat of the Zhaoyi Army was moved to Luzhou, and it is only after that time did the leader of the Zhaoyi Army become the Military Governor of Lu-chou. Since Hsüeh Sung had already died in 773, he was never the leader of a new Zhaoyi Army. The author of this story obviously confused the old Zhaoyi with the new Zhaoyi. See Bian Xiaoxuan 萱, "Hongxian Nie Yinniang xin tan" 線 , *Yangzhou Daxue xuebao* 1997.2: 29-37. The problem was also noticed by Charles A. Peterson, who wrote, "(Xue Song's province) was also known as Xiangwei 相 or "Xiangwei liuzhou" 相 六州 and, from 766 to 775, as Zhaoyi

the Ruanxian's lute,[7] and was also well versed in the classics and histories.[8] Song put her in charge of his official correspondence and memorials, and called her "the inner record-keeper."[9] Once when there was a great feast among the army, Hongxian told Song, "The sound of the Jie 羯 drum[10] is very

jun . It is somewhat confusing, however, if the latter title is used since after 776 it will be conferred on an essentially different province." See Charles A. Peterson, "The Autonomy of the Northeastern Provinces in the Period Following the An Lushan Rebellion," Unpublished PhD dissertation (University of Washington, 1966), p. 66.

The mistake about Xue Song's position further confirms my hypothesis that the author selected Xue Song as a character not because of his knowledge of him, but because of other reasons, which I will discuss in my "Translator's Note."

[7] The Ruanxian's lute was a kind of musical instrument which was named after Ruan Xian, one of the "Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove" of Western Jin dynasty. According to *Xin Tang shu*, 200. 5691, this instrument was first found in an ancient tomb and was made of copper. It resembled the *pipa* but its body was round. No one at that time knew what it was. Yuan Xingchong 行 (?-729) alone identified it as an instrument invented by Juan Hsien and he remade it with wood. Thereafter the instrument became popular and was called "Ruanxian." It can also be simply called "juan." For a description of this instrument, see Xue Zongming 薛 , *Zhongguo yinyue shi: yueqi bian* 器 (Taibei: Taiwan shangwu, 1983), pp. 768-770. A photograph of a Tang "juanxian" can be found in Yang Yinliu 楊 , *Zhongguo gudai yinyue shi gao* (Beijing: Renmin yinyue, 1980), fig. 109.

[8] The heroines of Tang tales are usually presented to the readers with a description of their stunning beauty. By contrast, in this story, the description of Hongxian's looks is kept minimal. On the other hand, her intellectual qualities are much emphasized.

[9] *Nei jishi* 記 , also translated as "private secretary." *Jishi* 記 (record keeper) was an official post designated for those who were in charge of official documents. Since Hongxian was a female and could only performed her duties in Xue Song's inner rooms, she was thereby called "inner record keeper."

[10] The Jie drum is a kind of bucket-shaped drum which became popular in Tang China. Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712-755) was fond of this drum and called it "leader of the Eight Musical Sounds." According to Nan Zhuo's "Jie gu lu" 羯 , written in 840, the Jie drum was made of the skin of deer and it originally came from the country of the Jie tribe. It was usually placed on a

mournful. Something must have happened to the drummer." Song usually had a good understanding of musical rhythm, and said, "It is just as you say." Then he summoned the drummer and questioned him. [The drummer] said, "My wife died last night. I dared not ask for leave." Song immediately released him to return home.[11]

This was a time after the Zhide era (756-758).[12] The Lianghe[13] area was still not at peace.[14] The Zhaoyi Army

big seat. The drummer used two sticks to beat both sides. Its sound is vigorous and ferocious, and is usually fit for martial music. Xue Zongming believes that the Jie drum was introduced to China from India during the Jin Dynasty. See Xue Zongming, *Zhongguo yinyue shi: yueqi bian*, p. 108. There is also a picture of the Jie drum on the same page. Edward H. Schafer says the drum was widely known in Turkestan and in India, but reached China from Kucha. See Edward H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 52, p. 292.

[11] The anecdote of listening to the drum seems to have little connection with the main story, which is an account of Hongxian heroic deeds. However, it does show Hongxian has an unusual capacity, in other words, she was an "extraordinary person" , as Xue Song later labeled her. Furthermore, by examining all the eight stories in the *Ganze yao*, we find in each story the personage has some anecdote related to music. This shows the author had an overall conception in his mind when he wrote these stories. For a discussion of the role of music in *Ganze yao*, see Lin Mingde 林 , "Yuan Jiao yu Ganze yao" 甘 , *Xiandai wenxue* 44 (1971): 169-70.

This anecdote also suggests that the *Lei shuo* version of Hongxian as a singing girl has some basis. It is hard to imagine that a maid could have the opportunity to learn the classics and became well versed in music. On the other hand, it is well known that the singing girls of Tang times were gifted in many arts.

[12] *TPGJ* (195: 1460), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487), *Yu chu zhi* (2.11) and *Yan yi bian* (24.1a) all read . *Jindai mishu* (17b) and *Shuo fu* (19.25b) read . The word *shi* must have been added by later editors to clarify the meaning.

As Wang Rutao 汝 (p. 315) points out, Xue Song was appointed as a Military Governor in 763, in the Baoying reign period (762-763). There are two reign periods--Qianyuan (758-760) and Shangyuan (760-761)--between the Zhide and Baoying reign period. Thus, the statement that the court

was first established,[15] with Fuyang [16] as its garrison seat. [The court] ordered Song to firmly hold it, so as to take control of and hold down Shandong .[17] In the aftermath of severe disaster [caused by the Rebellion], the military office had just been established. The court also made Song's daughter wed the son of Tian Chengsi ,[18] the Military Governor of Weibo ,[19]

used Xue Song to control Shandong after the Zhide era is misleading. This fact again shows that the author does not know too much about Xue Song.

[13] Lianghe 河 refers to Henan 河 and Hebei 河北, which includes most of modern Hebei and Shandong area (see Tan Qixiang, 5. 33).

[14] After the year 757, the An Lushan Rebellion was subsiding and many of his generals surrendered to the Tang court, but some still caused troubles for a few years. For a discussion of the unsettled situation after the An Lushan rebellion, see Denis Twichett, ed. *The Cambridge History of China, vol. 3* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 464-68.

[15] *Jindai mishu* (17b) reads 招 . As I pointed out, Xue Song's army was called *Zhaoyi* , not *Zhaoyi* 招 . However, since the author seems unfamiliar with the position of Xue Song and already mistakenly called him the Military Governor of Lu-chou, it is likely he makes another mistake here. Thus, the line from *Jindai mishu* may be from the original version. The editors of *TPGJ*, probably being aware of this mistake, delete this sentence. *Yu chu zhi* (2.11), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) and *Yan yi bian* (24.1) follow *TPGJ*. *Shuo fu* (19.25b) corrects this mistake and reads .

[16] Modern Ci 磁 County, Hebei (see Tan Qixiang, 5. 49).

[17] Shandong refers to the area east of Taihang Mountains 太行 , including most of Shandong, Henan, and Hebei. For a discussion of the definition of Shandong during Tang times, see Wang Mingsheng 鳴盛, *Shiqishi shangque* 十 商 , 90. 3a-b, 95. 12b., *Baibu congshu jicheng* edition. This was the most troublesome area because most of the former rebel generals became the Military Governors of this area. Xue Song's territory was just located between the court region and the Shandong area. Thus the court wanted to use him to control other Military Governors.

[18] Like Xue Song, Tian Chengsi (704-778) was also previously a rebel general under An Lushan and later surrendered to the Tang court. According to the dynastic histories, even after his surrender, he was unwilling to obey the court. He was ambitious and raised an army of 100,000 men in his region. The story here is historically correct in stating that Tian had ambition to annex the land of his neighbors. According to the historical sources, upon Xue Song's

[and] his son marry the daughter of Linghu Zhang ,[20] the Military Governor of Huazhou .[21] The three garrisons were linked by marriage with each other. Their messengers[22] came and

death, Tian Chengsi sent someone to assassinate Xue Xiong 薛 , Xue Song's nephew, the Military Governor of Wei. He finally succeeded in seizing the lands of Hsiang, Wei, Tz'u, and Ming. See *Jiu Tang shu*, 141.3837-41 and *Xin Tang shu*, 210.5923-26.

[19] The territory of Weibo covered part of modern Hebei and Shandong provinces, with its seat in Weizhou 州 (southeast of modern Wei County, Hebei). Bo refers to Bozhou (with its seat in modern Liaocheng , Shandong). See Tan Qixiang, 5: 49.

[20] Linghu Zhang (?-773) was also a former rebel general. After surrendering to Tang court, he was appointed as the Military Governor of Huabo in 761. The seat of Huazhou is Huatai (southeast of modern Hua County, Henan). The seat of Bozhou is located in modern Bo County, Anhui (see Tan Qixiang, 5: 38). See his biography in *Jiu Tang shu*, 124.3527-30, *Xin Tang shu*, 148.4765-66.

[21] *TPGJ* (195: 1460) reads "Huabo" ; *Shuo fu* (19.25b) and *Jindai mishu* (18a) read "Huazhou." *Yu chu zhi* (2.11), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487), and *Yan yi bian* (24.1a) read "Huatai." "Huazhou" is preferred, as explained in the "translator's note," the author may simply wanted to use a governor of Huazhou as his character.

TPGJ (195: 1460), *Yu chu zhi* (2.11) and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) read Linghu Zhang , *Yan yi bian* (24.1a) reads Hu Zhang , *Shuo fu* (19.25b) and *Jindai mishu* (18a) read Zhang 彰 for Zhang . Although Zhang 彰 is correct, Zhang may actually came from the original version and it seems the author again made a mistake about the identities of the Military Governors he mentioned.

[22] *Jindai mishu* (18a) and *Shuo fu* (19.25b) read *ren shi* (literally "people who serve as messengers," see Glossary). *TPGJ* (195.1460) reads *shi shi* (sent messengers). *Ren shi* is preferred, because later in this story, after Hongxian's mission is completed, there is a sentence "within one or two months, *people who serve as messengers* from both north and south of the He came one after another," which is certainly meant to echo this sentence. *TPGJ* changed the wording to *shi shi* obviously in order to make the meaning clearer, because *ren shi* can be easily misunderstood as "people and messengers." *Yu chu zhi* (2.11) and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) follow *TPGJ* as usual, but *Yan yi bian* (24.1a-b) reads 相 (the canopy of the messengers followed each other); perhaps the editor felt *shi shi* read awkward in the sentence and tried to polish it.

went [among the three garrisons] from time to time. Tian Chengsi often suffered from the disease of noxious heat[23] and when summer came it became even worse. He often said, "If I move to garrison the east side of [Taihang] mountains[24] and take in the cool weather there, I will be able to prolong my life by several years." He then recruited from his army soldiers ten times more martial and brave [than the ordinary soldiers], obtaining three thousand men. He called them "Lads of the Outer-residence"[25]

[23] *TPGJ* (195.1460), *Yu chu zhi* (2.11), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) and *Yan yi bian* (24.1b) read *feiqi* , whereas *Jindai mishu* (18a) and *Shuo fu* (19.25b) read *redufeng* 毒 .

Heat is considered by traditional Chinese medicine one of the six pathological factors which can cause disease. When the pathogenic heat was stagnated in the body, it accumulated and became noxious-this is called *redu* 毒. See *Zhongguo yixue da cidian* , p. 3950; *Zhongyi mingci shuyu xuanshi* , 100-101. Few texts, however, mention the disease of *redufeng* 毒 , except in *Yunji qiqian* (71.5a-b), where a pellet is recommended to cure this and several other diseases. Wang Meng'ou (p. 282) was obviously puzzled by this term and tried to compromise the variances between *TPGJ* and this text by proposing that Tian may have suffered a lung disease which was caused by the hot weather of the summer. But even the word *feiqi* is troublesome. There are diseases like *feiqi re* "heat of the vital energy in the lungs," *feihuo* "pathological fire of the lungs," or *feiqi zhong* 腫 "emphysema," but *feiqi* is hardly the name of a disease. Another possible reading is to simply regard *redu* as the intensive heat of the summer, and to regard *redufeng* as a kind of heat stroke, a reading that fits the context quite well.

[24] Both Xue Song's and Tian Chengsi's territories are located east of Taihang mountains. Thus, it seems absurd that Tian Chengsi, already being in Shandong, still wanted to move to Shandong. It seems that Shandong here may refers to the area just on the east side of Taihang mountains, since Xue Song's seat, Fuyang, was only about 20 miles east of Taihang mountains

[25] There is some historical basis for the establishment of the "Lads of the Outer-residence." According to the historical sources, Tian Chengsi "had at its disposal within a few years an army of 100,000 men. He than drew 10,000 of the hardiest to form his personal guard. They were called the headquarter garrison (*yabing*)." See *Jiu Tang shu*, 141.3838.

and maintained them generously.[26] He often ordered three hundred men to stand guard at his official residence at night. He divined to choose a good day and was about to annex[27] Luzhou.

When Song heard of this, he felt depressed day and night. He would talk to himself with moaning and groaning[28] but could not come up with a plan. Once, when the night watch was about to be sounded by the clepsydra,[29] and the outer gate of the headquarters was already shut, Song was walking with a stick in the courtyard. Only Hongxian walked with him. Hongxian said, "Master, for one month you have not had the time to eat and sleep.[30] You have

[26] *TPGJ* (195.1460) reads 厚 卹 , *Jindai mishu* (18b) and *Shuo fu* (19.25b) reads 厚卹 . The latter is preferred since the word *xuyang* in classical Chinese usually means "to raise or maintain" (see Glossary). *Yu chu zhi* (2.11), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) and *Yan yi bian* (24.1b) read 厚 (to give them generous salary). Obviously they still follow the *TPGJ* version but they also give a *lectio facilior* to make the meaning clearer.

[27] *TPGJ* (195: 1460), *Jindai mishu* (18b), *Yu chu zhi* (2.11), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) and *Yan yi bian* (24.1b) read *bing* 併 "annex," *Shuo fu* (19.25b) reads *qian* "to move." Here, we have an instance in which *Jindai mishu* is in disagreement with *Shuo fu*. As Wang Meng'ou (p. 282) points out, *ping* makes Tian's intention clearer.

[28] The word *duoduo* is an onomatopoeia, to indicate the sound of sighs of grief and worry. According to *Shishuo xinyu* , when Yin Hao was removed from his office. He often wrote with his finger on the air, "Duoduo! What a bizarre thing." See Yang Yong 楊 , ed. *Shishuo xinyu jiaojian*

(Hong Kong: Dazhong, 1969), p. 647. This may be used as a reference to the author's patron, Zhang Hongjing 弘 , who was demoted twice in 821 (see "Translator's Note").

[29] The night watch should be sounded every *ke* (roughly 15 minutes) after the first *geng* (about eight o'clock in the evening).

[30] Allusion to a line in the *Book of Poetry*: "My heart in sad. I have no leisure to lie down." It is said the line expresses the sadness of a son being banished from his father. See Chen Zizhan 陳 , ed. *Shi jing zhijie* 詩 (Taibei: Shulin, 1982), p. 688. The author here may allude to his nephew Yang Lao 楊 , who had just lost his father and desperately searched for his body. See "Translator's Note."

been preoccupied with something.[31] Isn't it about the neighboring region?"

Song said, "This matter is tied up with our safety and danger. It is not something you can handle."[32]

Hongxian said, "Although I am of the humble class, I am still the one who can alleviate the master's anxiety."

Song then told her the matter in detail, and said, "I have succeeded to the heritage of my grandfather and received great favor from the state. If one day I lose my territory, then the great achievements[33] of several centuries will come to an end."

Hongxian said, "This is easy and my master needn't worry about it. I beg you to let me go to the Wei commandery once to see its situation and spy out whether there are (suspicious) activities. Now at first watch I will head out, I can be back and make my report at the third watch.[34] Please first arrange a speedy horse and a messenger[35] along with a letter of greeting. As for other things, please wait until I come back."

[31] The word *zhuyi* in classical texts and Tang tales usually means "to be preoccupied with something." (see Glossary)

[32] Another reading for *fei ru neng liao* 非汝 料 can be "it is not something you can expect."

[33] *Jindai mishu* (19a), *TPGJ* (195: 1460), *Yu chu zhi* (2.11), and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) read *xun fa* ("merits and achievements," see Glossary). *Shuo fu* (19.26b) reads *xun ye* ; *Yan yi bian* (19.26b) reads *gong xun* 勛. The three versions basically have the same meaning. But since *xun fa* has the most difficult reading (*lectio difficillior*), most probably it comes from the original text. Here, we observe another instance in which *Yan yi bian* changed the word of *TPGJ* while *Yu chu zhi* and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* did not. Thus, it seems of the three Ming anthologies, *Yan yi bian* takes more liberties with its base text.

[34] Roughly at midnight.

[35] *Jindai mishu* (19a) and *Shuo fu* (19.25b) read *zouma* . *Taiping guangji* (195. 1461), *Yu chu zhi* (2.12), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) and *Yan yi bian* (24.2a) read *zouma shi* . The word *zouma* usually means a horse which can run quickly. Wang Meng'ou prefers the *TPGJ* reading and thinks the text here should be *zouma shi* , which means a messenger on horseback. Actually, the word *zouma* can also have the meaning of "messenger on horseback" (see Glossary).

Song was greatly surprised and said, "I did not know that you were an extraordinary person.[36] I was completely in the dark.[37] However, if the matter does not succeed, it will even hasten the disaster. Then what can we do?"

Hongxian said, "All my actions have succeeded."

Then [she] entered her boudoir and outfitted herself for travel. She combed her hair into a *wu man* bun,[38] clasped with a golden phoenix hairpin, dressed herself in short robe with purple embroider, tied on a pair of light shoes with green silk ribbons, strapped a dragon-patterned dagger around her breast, wrote the name of the God of Grand One on her forehead.[39] She prostrated herself twice and then left, in a flash she disappeared.

Thus, it seems to me *zouma* should be from the original text. The editor of *TPGJ* may not like the confusing meaning of *zouma* or he may be unaware of the second meaning of *zouma* and thereby added a word *shi* to make the meaning clearer.

[36] *Yiren* usually refers to a person with supernatural power.

[37] *TPGJ* (195.1460) had this sentence moved to a preceding line, after the sentence "I am also the one who can alleviate the master's anxiety." Besides, the wording is different, which reads, "Song heard that Hongxian's words was unusual, thus he said, 'I knew you are an unusual person. How benighted and ignorant I was.'" The word *anmei* 暗 is certainly to expound the meaning of the word *an* 暗, which is used in *Jindai mishu* (19a) and *Shuo fu* (19.26b). *Yu chu zhi* (2.11), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1487) and *Yan yi bian* (24.1b) follow *TPGJ*, but they also felt Xue Song's first sentence in *TPGJ* does not make sense, thus they changed it to "I did NOT know you are an unusual person. How benighted and ignorant I was."

[38] Wuman was a minority nation which lived in south-west of Tang China. The "wuman" bun is to comb one's hair into a high bun on the top of the head. See Zhou Xun , *Zhongguo gudai fushi daguan* (Chongqing: Chongqing chubanshe, 1995), pp. 76-77. Yuan Jiao's father Yuan Zi was once sent as an envoy to the south-west *man* people, it is probably because of this Yuan Jiao came to know their hair style.

[39] According to Schafer, "The brightest and most important star of the Northern Culmen was reddish Kochab, which was the visible aspect of the Theocrat (*Di*), or Grand Monad (*Tai yi*). He was one of the two greatest of

Song then turned around and shut the door. With his back to the candles, he sat up straight. Usually he could drink several *ge* [40] of wine,[41] but this night he emptied over ten cups without setting drunk. Suddenly he heard the sounds of reveille chanting in the wind, and a drop of dew falling from a leaf.[42] Startled, he made a cautious inquiry: it was Hongxian coming back. Song was delighted. He saluted her and asked, "Did it go smoothly?"

Hongxian said, "I dare not fail you on your mission."

[Xue Song] then asked, "Haven't you killed or injured anyone?"

the polar deities." See Edward H. Schafer, *Pacing the Void* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 45.

[40] *Ge* is an unit of measurement for capacity. One *ge* is equivalent to 1 deciliter, ten *ge* is equivalent to one *sheng* .

[41] Here, the author gave a vivid account of how Xue Song sat and drank while he was waiting for the result of Hongxian's mission. It is noteworthy that he did not face the light, instead he hid himself in the shadow of the candle; he did not relax himself by leaning on the chair, instead he sat upright. The description of Xue Song sitting posture makes the readers feel gloomy and somber, and it further reveals Xue Song's nervousness. The mechanical action of drinking over ten vessels of wine both reflect Xue Song's anxiety and creates a sense of monotonousness. Since Xue was alone by himself, it was unlikely that anyone else should be able to know this detail. This kind of description can be regarded as "fictional" rather than "historical." A historian would rather focus on major events and discard those "trivial" matters, but a fiction writer would choose or make up such events to shed light on the psychological depth of his persona (i.e. how nervous he became). It should also be pointed out that readers, like Xue Song, are eager to learn what happened to Hongxian after she left, and a normal historical work would immediately give such an account. But in this story, Hongxian's deeds were presented to readers by means of flashback in which Hongxian recounted her story to Xue Song after she came back. The author created a suspension: he deliberately let readers anxiously wait for the result, along with Xue Song.

[42] "A dew fell from a leaf" is certainly employed to describe the miraculous footworkship of Hongxian, i.e. she was as light as a dew, as many commentators points out. On the other hand, it also reveals how nervous Xue Song was, since he was still able to response quickly to such a slight sound after a whole night's drinking.

"I didn't go that far. I only took the golden box at the head of the bed as a token," Hongxian said. "At three *ke* [43] to midnight, I already arrived at the Wei commandery. In all I passed several gates, then I reached the sleeping quarters. The 'Lads of the Outer-residence' rested along the verandah. I heard them snoring thunderously. I saw the soldiers of the headquarters walking in the courtyard and corridors, passing on the password and shouting like a blowing gale. I opened up his left door leaf and came near his bed-curtain. I saw Tian, our father-in-law, resting inside the curtain, lying on his back, with his legs crossed and bent upwards,[44] in a sound sleep. His head was pillowed on a patterned rhinoceros horn.[45] His bun was wrapped in yellow crepe silk gauze. In front of the pillow a sword of seven-stars[46] appeared.[47] In front of the sword a golden box lay open. Inside the box there was written the time of his birth with its corresponding

[43] *ke* refers to the graduation of the waterclock. A whole day and night was divided into one hundred *ke*. Thus, three *ke* to midnight was roughly equivalent to 11:00 p.m.

[44] *TPGJ* (195: 1461) reads *fu* . All other texts read *gu fu* . *Fu* is the same as *gu* , but since the former is a difficult word, it is likely that this is from the original text.

[45] Pillows and boxes of rhinoceros horn were both regarded as precious ornaments at that time. See Schafer's discussion in *The Golden Peaches*, 241.

[46] Both Shafer (*Pacing the Void*, 157-58) and Maeno Naoaki (p. 183) point out that the sword of seven-stars had its *locus classicus* in the story of Wu Zixu . Schafer also notes that the sword was believed to have the magic power to slaughter demons in the Daoist practice of the Tang.

[47] *Jindai mishu* (19b) and *Shuo fu* (19.26a) read *lu tuo* 橐. *TPGJ* (195: 1461), *Yu chu zhi* (2.12), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1488) and *Yan yi bian* (24.2b) all omit the word *tuo*, thereby making the meaning simpler. Although *lu tuo* is a very difficult reading, it may come from the original text and may mean "to appear from a sack." Sacks (*tuo* 橐) in ancient times could be used to hold weapons and armor, see "Glossary."

Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches[48] and the name of the god of the Big Dipper.[49] In addition, famous incenses and precious jewelry were scattered on it. Displaying my prowess in the jade tent,[50] [I] only expect that my heart is connected to the life before;[51] Sleeping as usual in an orchid-scented hall, [Tian Chengsi] was unaware that his life was in my hands. Why should one tire [troops] to catch him and release him;[52] that will only add more

[48] These are the so-called "Eight Characters" (*ba zi* 字). They indicated the year, month, day, and hour of a person's birth, each consisting of one Heavenly Stem and one Earthly Branch.

[49] To put one's "eight characters" together with the name of the god is believed to have the function of talisman. Schafer (*Pacing the Void*, p. 49) points out "in a grand sense the Dipper presided over the welfare of the state and its sovereign."

[50] The jade tent (*yu zhang*) refers to the place where a chief commander resides. The word "jade" is employed to indicate that the tent is as solid as a jade.

[51] Modern commentators like Wang Meng'ou and Xu Shinian as well as English translators all regard the subject of the sentence 揚威 ，但 as Tian Chengsi. The whole sentence could thus be translated as "[Tian Chengsi] making a show of his strength in the jade tent, he only hopes he can do as he pleases in his life." However, one can hardly imagine how Tian, in his sound sleep, could show off any of his power. On the other hand, Hongxian seems to be the only person who is displaying her prowess at that time. The term *sheng qian* usually means "when someone is alive." But here with its literal meaning ("before one's life") it seems to foreshadow the ending of the story, where we learn all that Hongxian has done is to atone for the wrongdoings of her previous life. This implication becomes much clearer with the word *huo* , which means "there is something before to be connected" (*qian you suo tong* 有所) according to *Shuowen xici* , as quoted in Wang Meng'ou (p. 284) Besides, after Hongxian completed her mission, there is s a sentence . With the similar phrase *xinqi* "the expectation in my heart," the author implied that Hongxian did this to meet her own needs. Finally, if we take the next sentence "dreaming as usual in the fragrant hall, [Tian Chengsi] was unaware that his life was in my hand" into consideration, we find the author contrasts Hongxian with Tian Chengsi, while the former was active and fully aware of her mission, the latter was still dreaming and was totally in the dark.

[52] Maeno Naoaki (pp. 182-83) believes this is an allusion to the legendary story of Zhuge Liang (181-234), who captured and released one

pain and sorrow. At that time the light of candles 'congealed.'[53] The incense ash in the burner accumulated. Servant-girls were all around. Weapons of all kinds were displayed with stern looking. There were some whose heads touched the screen and who were snoring and drooping. There were some whose hands held towels or horsetail whisks and who were sleeping, stretched out.[54] I pulled out their hair clasps and ear-rings, bound together their short jacket and skirts. They were as if sick or fainted,[55] and none

enemy chieftain seven times. It seems to me the connection is not so strong, unless he has a different text here.

[53] Actually it is the guttering that congealed, but since the light of the candle became dimmer and dimmer, it almost looked like it was "congealed."

Both *Jindai mishu* (20a) and *Shuo fu* (19.26a) read *la ju guang ning* 蠟 凝. The *TPGJ* editor, obviously having difficulty with the meaning of *guang ning*, chose another word, *yan wei* (the smoke from the candles becomes less), thereby making the meaning simpler. *Yu chu zhi* (2.12), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1488) and *Yan yi bian* (24.2a) follow *TPGJ*. *Yan yi bian* even took the liberty to choose a more common phrase *la zhu* 蠟 , to replace *la ju*.

[54] From the sentence "displaying my prowess" to this line, there are altogether fourteen sentences which are parallel, most of them in either four or six characters. This is the parallel-prose style. Such prose style frequently occurred in late Tang tales, influenced by the fashionable parallel writing of the time (see Cheng Yizhong , *Tangdai xiaoshuo shihua* 話, pp. 256-57; Li Zongwei , *Tangren chuanqi* , p. 128). In Yuan Jiao's *Gan ze yao*, we can find a lot of similar examples. He was especially fond of using a succession of four-character sentences. For a detailed discussion, see Wu Dayun , "Tu *Gan ze yao*" 甘 , *Xiandai wenxue* 43 (1971): 200-201, Fanmu , "Jian lun Tangdai chuanqi xiaoshuo 'Hongxian'" 線, 57.

[55] *Jindai mishu* (20a) and *Shuo fu* (19.26b) read . *TPGJ* (195: 1461) and *Yan yi bian* (24.2a) read (as if sick or awake), which obviously did not make any sense in the context. However, *Yu chu zhi* (2.12) and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1488) give an important variant, *cheng* (to be drunk or fuddled) which fits the context very well. It shows that the reason *TPGJ* used the wrong word is that there was confusion between the two similar characters *xing* and *cheng* . My argument is further supported by Wang Rutao 汝 (p. 316), who points out that the Huang Cheng 晟 edition of *TPGJ* reads *cheng* for *xing* .

of them was able to awake.[56] Then I took the golden box and came back. I went out of the west gate of the city-wall of Wei and travelled about two hundred *li*. I saw the Terrace of Bronze [Bird][57] rising high and the Zhang River flowing eastward; morning gusts stirred [the grass of] the wilderness and the oblique moon was in the forest.[58] Feeling indignant, I left; filled with joy, I return. In a short while I forgot the fatigue of the long walk. Moved by your appreciation, I wish to repay your kindness[59] and to respectfully live up to the expectation in your heart.[60] For this

[56] Hongxian's teasing the servant-girls gives the story a comic flavor. In the previous passage, the author described in detail how she carefully dressed herself. Now she was making a mess of other girl's dress. This also accords with the character of our heroine: although she was a knight errant, she was also a young girl.

[57] The Terrace of the Bronze Bird was built by Cao Cao (155-220) in 210. It was located west of modern Linzhang 臨 County, Hebei, just between Xue Song's garrison Fuyang and Tian Chengsi's seat Weicheng (see Tan Qixiang, 5. 49). According to Wang Meng'ou (p. 285), the tower had been leveled to the ground long before Tang. Here, we observe another instance where the author used his imagination to create a fictional marvel.

[58] In the above four sentences, the author gives a montage of four pictures, which all take a vast perspective and which are all seen in rapid motion. Notice even in the last scene, readers are still able to get a sense of movement since the moon in the forest becomes "oblique" in people's visual impression only when someone is moving quickly. Although the author did not directly describe Hongxian's skill, readers almost get a feeling that they were flying with Hongxian.

[59] Here, Hongxian's action was certainly to repay her master for his kindness. But she was at the same time redeeming her wrongdoings in her previous life, as we will see at the end of the story.

[60] *Jindai mishu* (20a) reads *yang fu* , *Shuo fu* (19.26b), *TPGJ* (195: 1461), *Yu chu zhi* (2.12), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1488) and *Yan yi bian* (24.2a) read *liao fu* . *Yang* and *liao* can be very easily confused because of their similar shape. *Yang fu* is preferred because it fits the context very well. Hongxian was expressing her gratitude to her master, and, being a servant, she had to use a respectful term. Moreover, *yang fu* is a difficult term for which *liao fu* could be a simplification (see glossary).

reason within three *shi*[61] by the clepsydra, I travelled there and back seven-hundred *li*, entered dangerous regions and passed through five or six walled cities. I wish to allay my master's anxiety and dare not talk about my hardships."

Song then sent out a messenger to deliver Chengsi a letter, which read, "Yesterday evening there was a guest from the region of Wei, who said that [she] had obtained a golden box next to the head of you, the supreme commander. I dare not retain it, so I respectfully give it back, sealing it and submitting it [to you]."

The special messenger galloped by starlight and did not reach the region until midnight.[62] He saw people searching for the golden box, and the whole army was worried and apprehensive. The messenger knocked on the gate with his horsewhip and asked for an audience at an unusual time.[63] Chengsi hurriedly went out, [the messenger] gave him the golden box. Upon holding [it], he was so astounded that he fell down.[64] Then he retained the messenger and made him stay at his residence, fawning on him,

[61] *Shi* . Three *shi* are equivalent to six hours.

[62] Wang Meng'ou (p. 285) says that the term *xing chi* means "to gallop as fast as shooting star." But *xing chi* in classical Chinese has another meaning, "to gallop by starlight," which describes the traveller's hastiness rather than his speed. This meaning is strongly suggested by a line in *Bao pu zi* , (an inferior horse gallops by starlight to travel at double speed). See *Bao pu zi nei pian* 樸 (Taibei: Laogu Wenhua, 1987), p. 267. Here, from the context, the second meaning is preferred since in the next sentence, we find that it nearly took a whole day for the messenger to reach the Wei region. This is again in contrast with Hongxian, who took only four hours to finish the round-trip.

[63] The term *fei shi* 非 literally means "not an appropriate time." Since it was already midnight, it was not a time to receive guests.

[64] Although the term *jie dao* in modern times means "to roar with laughter," Zhao Yi (1727-1814) examines a number of occurrences of this word in classical texts and finds it usually meant "to faint and fall down because of extreme sadness." See Zhao Yi, *Gai yu cong kao* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1957), p. 447.

treating him with private feast and entertainment,[65] and giving him numerous gifts. The next day, [Tian Chengsi] sent a messenger, delivering thirty thousand rolls[66] of silks, two hundred fine horses, along with other things of similar value and presenting them to Xue Song, saying, "My head and neck are tied up with your favor and kindness.[67] It is necessary [for me] to know my faults and have a fresh start. I will no longer bring sorrow to myself.[68] I will wholly follow your order and instruction. How dare I talk about our marital relationship.[69] If you go out,[70] I should hold the hub behind your carriage;[71] if you

[65] The term *Yan si* 宴 usually refers to private and informal parties and entertainments in one's leisure hours. See "Glossary."

[66] I.e., *pi* 疋. In Tang measurements, one *pi* of silk is equivalent to a piece 1.8 *chi* in width, 40 *chi* long. One *chi* is slightly less than one English foot. See *Cambridge History of China. vol. 3* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), xx.

[67] This means whether he can keep his head is subject to the will of Xue Song.

[68] Karl Kao (p. 368) translates the sentence 復 as "I will give you no cause for concern." But here the phrase *dai yi qi* is an allusion to a line in the *Book of Poetry* "My heart is sad. I give myself nothing but distress." See Chen Zizhan 陳 , p. 421. It is noteworthy that in both of the author's allusions to the *Book of Poetry*, the idea of sadness dominated. This poem is normally understood as expressing one's concern about one's friends and the current situation. This may also reflect the author's mental state. The circumstances under which he wrote the story are that he lost his friends and relatives and was worried about the rebels among the Military Governors. See "Translator's Note."

[69] This means from now on Tian will not share the same status as Xue Song, since he is treated as only a subordinate of Xue, not a relative by marriage.

[70] *Jindai mishu* (21a) and *Shuo fu* (19.26b) read *yi* (to serve as a servant). *TPGJ* (195: 1461) reads *bi* (there). As Wang Meng'ou (p. 286) points out, this sentence and the following sentence are parallel. Thus, he suspects the original character might be *wang* , which matches the word *lai* , the first word of the following sentence. Actually, if he had consulted *Yu chu zhi* (2.13) and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1489), he would have noticed that the word in these two texts is *wang*. Here, we find another instance in which *Yu chu zhi* and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* give the best reading.

come, I will wave the whip in front of your horse.[72] The reason that I organized these chief servants[73] and called them 'the Lads of the Outer Residence' was originally to guard against bandits and it is not that I have inordinate ambitions. Right now I have made them take off their armor and let them return to the lands." Because of this, within one or two months, messengers from both north and south of He[74] came one after another.

Suddenly one day, Hongxian asked to leave. Song said, "You were born in my household. Right now where do you want to go? Besides, currently I am counting on you. How can you talk about leaving?"

[71] The meaning of the term *peng gu* is obscure. Wang Meng'ou (p. 286) says that whenever there is some obstacle on the road, people will hold up the hub to let the carriage pass through. In the "plain narratives" (ping hua 平話) of Yuan dynasty, there is a phrase *peng gu tui lun* 輪 "to hold up the hub and push the wheel", which indicates a special courteous reception accorded to honored person. See *Qiguo chunqiu pinghua* 秋平話 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1959), p. 23.

[72] This may be a reference to a passage from *Zhuang zi* , "The Yellow Emperor set out to visit Great Clod at Ju ci Mountains. Fang Ming was his carriage driver, Chang Yu 萬 rode at his right side, Zhang Ruo 若 and Xi Peng stood in front of the horse, Kun Hun and Gu Ji 稽 followed behind the carriage." See Chen Guying 陳 , *Zhuang Zi jin zhu jin yi* 注 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1983), p. 633.

[73] *Ji gang pu* 仆 literally means "servants for [maintaining] order."

[74] Xu Shinian (p. 387) says Xue Song's garrison area was in Hedong and Hebei Circuits; whereas Tian Chengsi's area was in Hebei Circuit. Based on these facts, Xu Shinian was puzzled by the statement about Hebei and Henan here and suspected that "Henan" was a mistake for "Hedong." However, at the beginning of the tale, there was already a reference to the Henan and Hebei areas in the sentence "the Lianghe area was not at peace." Secondly, Linghu Zhang's garrison was in Henan Circuit. Thirdly, if we believe Xue Song's garrison did not include Luzhou, as that argued in note 6, then Xue Song's area was entirely in Hebei. Thus, it is clear that the author is stating that Hongxian's efforts reverse the whole situation and eventually bring peace to these three garrison areas.

Hongxian said, "I was originally a man in my previous incarnation.[75] I wandered among the rivers and lakes, read Shennong's 農 (the Divine Farmer) herbal,[76] and rescued people of the world from misfortune. There was once in a village a pregnant woman who was suddenly stricken with a disease of *gu* .[77] I used medicinal liquor of lilac daphne genkwa[78] to beat them [the parasites] down, but the woman and the two unborn infants all died. Thus,[79] with one act, I killed three people. The netherworld punished me by demoting me to be a woman,

[75] Here, the author once again used the narrative mode of flashback to recount Hongxian's deeds in her previous life. The flashback also serves to answer the question what she expects on completing her mission, as hinted in the previous statement (see note 50). This narrative mode is again different from a historical account, which would certainly relate Hongxian's previous life at the beginning. Through the fictional narrative mode, the author deliberately conceals some crucial information about Hongxian in order to create a special artistic effect. Thus, readers, along with Xue Song, were in the previous passage surprised to learn that Hongxian was an "extraordinary person," just as here they are once again surprised to learn that she was originally a man.

[76] Shennong was a legendary emperor in ancient China. It is said he tasted many kinds of herbs and became the founder of traditional Chinese herbal medicine. A book called *Shennong bencao jing* 本 , which is no longer extant, reputedly records some of his prescriptions.

[77] *Gu* is a legendary venomous insect. According to traditional Chinese medicine, the disease of *gu* is a kind of tympanites due to parasitosis in the bowels. See *Zhongguo yixue da cidian* (Shanghai: Shangwu, 1921), p. 4619.

[78] As Lévy (p. 123) points out, *Yuanhua* 芫 is also called "fisherman's poison" and is used by fisherman to poison fish. Thus, he was wondering whether Hongxian had made the wrong prescription. Actually, on *Shiji*, 105.2809, we find lilac daphne could be used to eliminate the parasite. Thus, it was only an overdose that could be fatal. A pregnant woman especially must not take this medicine. See *Zhongyao da cidian* (Hong Kong: Shangwu, 1978), pp. 1047-49.

[79] *Jindai mishu* (21a), *Shuo fu* (19.27a), *TPGJ* (195: 1462), *Yu chu zhi* (2.13), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1489) and *Yan yi bian* (24.3b) all read *shi* (thus); Wang Meng'ou (p. 279) alone reads *dan* 但 (however), which must be an error.

making me live as a humble servant, and bear the spirit of the evil star.[80] Fortunately I was born in your household. Up to now it has been nineteen years. I have been fed up with clothes of silk gauze, and I have eaten up all kinds of delicious foods. You have granted me more and more favor and generous treatment, and my honor has reached the utmost level. Moreover, since our state has established the right way,[81] its fortune will be boundless. This man[82] turns his back on the heavenly principles. I should remove all the troubles [caused by him]. Last time I went to[83] the Wei commandery, so as to repay you for your kindness. Right now the

[80] The term *zei xing* appeared in *Shi ji*, 27. 1334. It usually refers to an evil star and looks like a comet. Here, the word *zei* (thief) may specifically refer to Hongxian's stealing the golden box.

[81] The term *jian ji* comes from a phrase from *Shang shu* , "establish and use the august correctness." See Bernhard Karlgren, *Glosses on the Book of Document* (Stockholm, 1948), p. 233.

[82] *Jindai mishu* (21b) and *Shuo fu* (19.27a) read *ci bei* 此輩. Most people translate this term as "people like Tian" or "Tian and his like," i.e., those Military Governors who dominated the local government and who went against court rules. However, throughout the story, the author mentioned no other ambitious Military Governor besides Tian. Moreover, if the word *ci bei* refers to a group of people, then the next sentence 弭 must indicate that Hongxian wanted to alleviate troubles caused by ALL these troublesome Military Governors; yet Hongxian only punished ONE Military Governor, Tian Chengsi. Thus, from the context, *ci bei* must refer to Tian Chengsi only. This argument is further supported by Wang Ying 瑛, who discussed the occurrence of the word *bei* in the literary sketches of Tang and Song and found that although *bei* usually means "a group of people," in some cases it can mean "a single person" (Wang Ying, *Tang Song bi ji yu ci hui shi* 記 [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1990]), pp. 2-3). On the other hand, it is very likely that the author played on the double meaning of this term and although "this person" fits well into the context here, in a larger sense, it also has the implication of "this group of people," referring to the recalcitrant Military Governors of his own time. *TPGJ* (195: 1462), *Yu chu zhi* (2.13), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1489) and *Yan yi bian* (24.3b) changed the term into *ci ji* 此 (this man is), obviously puzzled how Tian Chengsi, a single person, could be referred to as *ci bei* (a group of people).

[83] Wang Meng'ou (p. 279) reads *zhu* 住 for *wang* , an obvious error.

two regions have preserved their city walls and moats, thousands of people have kept their lives. I cause the treacherous subjects to come to know fear[84] and the heroic person to bring peace through their plan. As a woman, my meritorious service was not small. It can certainly atone for my previous wrongdoings so that I can return to my original [male] body. Then I should withdraw myself from the mundane world and rest my heart on that which transcends secular affairs. I will cleanse and purify my single and unified vital spirit[85] and make it exist forever, beyond life and death." Song said, "That is not good.[86] I will give you one thousand pieces of gold so as to build a dwelling while living in the mountains."[87] Hongxian said, "This matter is related to the next life. How can one plan it in advance?" Song knew that he could not retain [her], then he gave a large farewell dinner for her.

[84] A reference to *Mencius* , "Confucius completed the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and struck terror into the hearts of rebellious subjects and undutiful sons." See D. C. Lau, *Mencius* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 115.

[85] According to the Daoist teaching, "one" is the "vital spirit." Everything in the world is nourished by this "one spirit." See Qing Xitai 泰, *Zhongguo daojiao shi* (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin, 1992), 201, 241.

[86] Another reading for the short phrase *bu ran* 然 may be: "if you do not want to stay."

[87] *Jindai mishu* (21b) and *Shuo fu* (19.27a) read 金 居 所 (give you one thousand pieces of gold for the expenses of living in the mountains), *TPGJ* (195: 1462), *Yu chu zhi* (2.13), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1489) and *Yan yi bian* (24.4a) read 金 居 所 (use one thousand pieces of gold to make a dwelling place to live in the mountains).

Here, the *TPGJ* tradition is preferred, although nearly all translators think the one thousand gold pieces were for Hongxian's living expenses (with the exception of Herbert Franke, who correctly translates it as 'your dwelling place' see *The Golden Casket*, p. 142. Not only do words such as *yi'er* , *suo ji* 所 suggest later interpolation, but also from the context, we find Xue Song was actually trying to detain Hongxian. Thus, he promised to build a dwelling, which would certainly take a long time, in order that Hongxian would not leave immediately. Thus, after Hongxian refused his proposal, he felt desperate and "knew that he could not retain her."

He gathered all the guests and retainers and held a night feast at the central hall. Song presented a cup of wine to Hongxian with a song.[88] He asked Leng Chaoyang ,[89] one of his guests, to write a lyric, which reads:

> Picking waternuts, with a song so sad,[90] in the magnolia boat.
> Seeing you off, with a heart so broken, at a tower of a hundred feet.
> Just like the goddess of Luo 洛 [River],[91] she left, riding on the mist.

[88] *Jindai mishu* (22a), *TPGJ* (195: 1462), *Yu chu zhi* (2.14), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (1489) and *Yan yi bian* (24.4a) read 歌 線 , *Shuo fu* (19.27a) alone omits the final word and the meaning of the sentence becomes "Song bid farewell to Hongxian with a song." Almost all the modern translators agree with the *Shuo fu* reading, which, I believe, is an error. If Xue Song really bid farewell to Hongxian at this time, why later on did Hongxian have to pretend to be drunk in order to leave? Wang Rutao (p. 320) alone adheres to *TPGJ* version, but he does not explain the meaning of *Song jiu* .

Song jiu presents a difficulty because readers (especially modern readers) may wonder why Xue Song gave wine to Hongxian during a feast. However, this term in Tang times had a special meaning: it is part of the courtesy of a banquet, and it means "to toast somebody," or "to present wine to somebody," usually accompanied by songs and music (see Glossary). This meaning fits the context very well because we find Xue Song toasted Hongxian with a song.

[89] Leng Chaoyang was a native of Jinling 金陵 (modern Nanjing, Jiangsu). He passed the *jinshi* examination in 769. He was famous for his poetic writing and associated with those "ten talented poets" of Dali era (766-779). He became a Proofreader of the Heir (*taizi zhengzi* 太 字) in 784 (see Hucker, p. 125) and served as assistants of local officials as late as Zhenyuan period (785-805). See Fu Xuanzong 璇琮, ed. *Tang caizi zhuan jiaojian* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1989), pp. 106-109. *Quan Tang shi* 全 詩 records eleven of his poems. See *Quan Tang shi*, 305: 3471-73.

[90] The song of "Cai ling qu" 採菱 was written by Xiao Yan 衍 (464-549). See *Liuchao shi ji* 六 詩 (Taibei: Guangwen, 1972), 16.

[91] Luofei , or Fufei , was the goddess of Luo River, a tributary of the Yellow River in modern Shensi Province (Tan Qixiang, 5: 41). According to

The azure sky, boundless, and the water, flowing forever.[92]

When the song was over, Song was overwhelmed with sadness. Hongxian prostrated herself and wept. Pretending to be drunk, she availed herself of the opportunity to leave the dining table. After that her whereabouts were unknown.

Shi ji, 117.3040, she was a daughter of Emperor Fuxi 羲. She drowned herself in the Luo River and thereafter became the goddess of that river. During the Three Kingdoms period (192-232), Cao Zhi wrote his famous "Rhapsody on the Goddess of Luo." From then on, the image of goddess of Luo becomes a symbol of a beautiful female celestial whom human beings in vain search after.

[92] This line may have come from one of Li Bai's poem, "On seeing off Meng Haoran," "The lonely sail in the distance, vanished at last beyond the blue sky. And I could see only the river, flowing along the border of heaven." See Shigeyoshi Obata, *The Works of Li Bai* (New York: 1922), p. 68.

Translator's Note

1) Authorship

Most modern scholars believe this piece is from the story collection of *Ganze yao* (Ballads of Timely Rainfall) written by Yuan Jiao . Yuan Jiao was a man of Langshan 朗 of Caizhou (modern Runan 南 County, Henan). His father Yuan Zi (ca. 748-818)[93] once studied with Yuan Jie (719-772) and his official rank reached as high as the Director of Board of Finance (*hubu shangshu*). It is noteworthy that Yuan Zi served as a Military Governor several times. He was appointed as the Military Governor of Jiannan 南,[94] but was soon demoted because he was weak in suppressing bandits. In 806 he was appointed as the Military Governor of the Yicheng Army, with its seat in Huazhou ,[95] which adjoins the province of Weibo just to the north. He stayed there for seven years (806-812) and it is said Tian Ji'an ,[96] a grandson of Tian Chengsi, then the Military Governor of Weibo, "submitted to him in fear" (*weifu zhi*). It should be pointed out that Yuan Zi was basically a civil official and was not good at military affairs. On the other hand, the Tian family has dominated the Weibo territory by the strength of their military force for several generations. Tian Ji'an was especially famous for his cruelty and ferocity — it is said that he feared nothing.[97] How could such a person come to fear Yuan Zi? Could it be that he, like Xue Song, also got some magical help from someone and thereby caused Tian Ji'an to be obedient? If

[93] See his biography in *Jiu Tang shu* 185. 4830.

[94] In part of modern Sichuan province, with its seat in Chengdu (Tan Qixiang, 5. 38-39).

[95] See Tan Qixiang, 5: 38.

[96] See his biography in *Jiu Tang shu*, 140.3846-47.

[97] Ibid, 3846-47.

that is the case, then it well serves as a motivation for his son to write the "Hongxian" story.

Yuan Jiao was the youngest son of Yuan Zi.[98] Yuan Jiao was active during the reign of Yizong 懿 (r. 859-873), serving as the Director of the Department of Sacrifices (*cibu langzhong*) and the Inspector of the Prefect of Guozhou (modern Lingbao 靈 County, Henan).[99] He was a close friend of the famous *ci* poet, Wen Tingyun 筠 (ca. 812-870), who presented a poem to him in 840.[100]

According to the *Zhizhai shulu tijie* , there are altogether nine pieces in the *Ganze yao*, plus a preface which states that the book was written in the spring of 868, when there was a timely rainfall, hence the title of the book.[101] The *Junzhai dushu zhi* says that he was confined to bed while compiling the work.[102]

Besides the *Ganze yao*, he also wrote a number of books including *Eryi shilu fuzhuang mingyi tu* (Illustrated Explanations of the Clothes in the *Records of the Two*

[98] According to *Xin Tang shu*, 74.3166, Yuan Zi had five sons, Yuan Jiao was the youngest.

[99] See Wang Zhongyong 仲 , ed. *Tangshi jishi jiaojian* 詩 (Chengdu: Ba Shu, 1989), pp. 1743-44. According to *Zhizhai shulu tijie* , his position is Senior Secretary of Board of Justice. See Wang Zhongyong, p. 1744. *Xin Tang shu* (58: 1492) states that Yuan Jiao was a Hanlin Academician during Zhaozong's reign (889-896). This seems to be a mistake. Yuan Jiao was most likely born before 810 (his father reached the age of 62 in 810), thus, if he were still alive even in the beginning of Zhaozong's reign, he would have been at least eighty years old. How could he still be a Hanlin Academician? See also Li Jianguo , *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu* (Tianjin: Nankai Daxue, 1993), pp. 798-99; Chen Shangjun 陳 , "Yuan Jiao wei ren Hanlin Xueshi" 林 , *Zhonghua wenshi luncong* 33 (1985): 168.

[100] See *Quan Tang shi* 全 詩, 580. 6732.

[101] Chen Zhensun 陳振孫. *Zhizhai shulu tijie* (Taibei: Guangwen, 1968), p. 695.

[102] *Junzhai dushu zhi* , *zhi san xia* 三下, 6a. *Sibu congkan* edition.

Powers).[103] Of his poems, only four are extant. They are entitled "Moon," "Frost," "Dew" and "Clouds."[104] It is noteworthy that all of these poems have a political meaning behind the description of natural scene. This is certainly in agreement with the strong concern for the current political affairs manifested in the story of "Hongxian."

Although Yuan Jiao may be the author of "Hongxian" story, there is a tradition of attributing the authorship of "Hongxian" to Yang Juyuan (755-?).[105] Modern scholars tend to discredit this view and claim that it is merely a mistake by Ming editors.[106] On the other hand, E. D. Edwards states that there is still no strong evidence to prove Yang was not the author of "Hongxian" "in view of the fact that the present editions of *Ganze yao* were recovered from the other books after the loss of the original."[107] Liu Ying believes "Hongxian" may have been written by Yang Juyuan, but he merely claims that the writing style of "Hongxian" appears different from that of other pieces of *Ganze yao*, without presenting strong evidence.[108] My point is it is very likely that "Hongxian" is a piece from the original *Ganze yao*, given the fact that the editors of *Taiping guangji*, *Lei shuo* and *Gan zhu ji*, who were still be able to see the original version, all claimed that "Hongxian" was from *Ganze yao*. However, there remains the

[103] *Xin Tang shu*, 58.1492.

[104] See *Tang Shi jishi jiaojian*, p. 1743.

[105] Almost all the editors of the "anthology group" (i.e. the group which includes "Hongxian" story in the fiction anthology, such as *Yu chu zhi* , *Wuchao xiaoshuo* and *Tangdai congshu* , etc.) identified the author of "Hongxian" as Yang Juyuan.

For a discussion of the birth year of Yang Juyuan, see Fu Xuanzong 璇琮, ed. *Tang caizi zhuan jiaojian* , pp. 401-2.

[106] See Wang Pijiang 疆, *Tangren xiaoshuo* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1978), p. 263. Lin Mingde, "Yuan Jiao yu *Ganze yao*," p. 170.

[107] E. D. Edwards, *Chinese Prose Literature of the Tang Period*, p. 114

[108] Liu Ying 瑛. *Tangdai chuanqi yuanjiu* (Taibei: Lianjing, 1994), p. 395.

question whether Yuan Jiao collected and edited the "Hongxian" story, which was written by Yang Juyuan, while compiling his work.[109] Yuan Jiao may well have had some notes on the origin of the story, but as his original version was lost, today we are not able to see his notes (if there were any). It may also have happened that some Ming editors had seen these notes and thereupon attributed the authorship to Yang Juyuan.

Yang Juyuan was a native of Puzhou .[110] He passed the *jinshi* examination in 789. From 811-814, he served as an assistant of Zhang Hongqing , who was then the Military Governor of Hezhong .[111] In 814 Chang became the chancellor. Yang followed him to the capital and was appointed as an Assistant in the Palace Library (*Mishu lang*), most probably because of Zhang Hongqing's recommendation. Later he became Erudite of the Court of Imperial Sacrifice (*Taichang Boshi*). It is said[112] that he asked to leave his office of Vice Director of National University (*Guozi siye* 司) at the age of seventy, but the chancellor still did not want him to retire and thereby appointed him as Vice Governor (*Shaoyin*) of his hometown Hezhong .[113] His friends include Yuan Zhen 稹 (779-831),[114] Bai Juyi, Wang Jian (ca. 767-830) and Han Yu (768-824).[115] He has

[109] This question is also raised by Ye Qingbing , although he still prefers Yuan Jiao to be the author. See Ye Chingbing, "Tan 'Hongxian zhuan,'" 48-49.

[110] West of modern Yongji County, Shanxi (Tan Qixiang, 5: 47).

[111] Hezhong was actually the same place as Yang's hometown, Puzhou.

[112] See Han Yu, "Song Yang shaoyin xu," 楊 尹序, in *Han Changli ji* (Taibei: Xinxing, 1970): 7a-9a.

[113] For an overview of Yang Juyuan's life, see Fu Xuanzong 璇琮, ed. *Tang caizi zhuan jiaojian* , p. 401. See also Sun Yingkui 孫 , ed. *Tang caizi zhuan jiao zhu* 注 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue, 1991), pp. 478-79.

[114] Yuan claimed he was a friend of Yang since childhood. See Sun Yingkui, p. 480.

[115] See note 112 above.

one *juan* of poems in *Quan Tang shi* .[116] It is interesting to note that Yang Juyuan once wrote a poem "Cuiniang shi" , which is about Cui Yingying , the heroine of his friend Yuan Zhen's famous *chuanqi* story "Yingying zhuan."[117] One source says that a famous singing girl was especially fond of singing the poem by Yang Juyuan.[118] In another instance, Yang wrote two poems about a courtesan, feeling moved by her decision to became a Daoist priest.[119] The above evidence leads us to believe that Yang himself may be fond of *chuanqi* writing and it would not be surprising that he used a singing girl as the heroine of his story.

Although there is no indication in early sources that Yang Juyuan had any direct connection with the writing of "Hongxian," a close examination of his biographic information does show that his life was implicated in the turmoils caused by the Military Governors of his time. It is especially interesting that one incident in his life seems to involve him with all the three major parties in the "Hongxian" story, i.e. the Tian family, the Military Governors of Luzhou and Huazhou. If this is the case, it will certainly serve as a motivation for him to write the story. In the following passage, I will try to reconstruct this incident and raise a hypothesis on the circumstances which drove him to create the "Hongxian" story.

From one of his poems, we know that he had a cousin named Yang Maoqing ,[120] who passed the *jinshi* in 810. According

[116] See *Quan Tang shi* , 333.3714-3742.

[117] The poem is included in "Yingying zhuan." See Wang Meng'ou, *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, p. 86.

[118] See Liu Ying, *Tangdai chuanqi yanjiu*, p. 396.

[119] *Quan Tang shi*, 333. 3739.

[120] The poem is titled "Zeng tudi Maoqing" 贈 (A poem presented to my cousin, Maoqing). In the poem, Yang bid farewell to his cousin, who was going to Youzhou 州, where he was eventually killed by rebels. See *Quan Tang shi*, 333, 3717.

to the *Xin Tang shu*, Maoqing served as an assistant in the headquarters of the Tian clan. Upon a rebellion of the army of Zhao , both Tian and Maoqing were killed.[121] Although the text does not mention who this Tian was and when this rebellion happened, an examination of the primary sources shows this Tian must be Tian Hongzheng , who was a nephew of Tian Chengsi.[122] In 821, he was appointed as the Military Governor of Chengde .[123] In the seventh month, the troops of Chengde rebelled[124] and killed Tian Hongzheng, along with hundreds of his subordinators, one of whom must have been Yang Maoqing.[125] It should be immediately pointed out that Tian Hongzheng, unlike Tian Chengsi, was loyal to the court. He had for many times urged Tian Ji'an not to indulge in wanton and cruel behavior, so that eventually the latter dreaded him and wanted to kill him. Upon the death of Tian Ji'an, Tian Hongzheng became the Military Governor of Weibo and started a sharp reversal of his predecessors' policy: he led the whole territory of Weibo to pay tribute to the court; moreover, he helped the court to fight against other rebellious Military Governors. It is noteworthy that Yang Juyuan was a close friend of Tian Hongzheng. In his extant poems in *Quan Tang shi*, three of them mentioned a Tian *Shangshu* (Minister Tian) or Tian *puye* (Vice Director Tian).[126] This person must be Tian Hongzheng. My evidence is that, first of all,

[121] See *Xin Tang shu*, 118.4291.

[122] See his biography in *Jiu Tang shu*, 141. 3848, *Xin Tang shu*, 148. 4781.

[123] The Zhengde military province was located in modern Hebei province, with its seat in Zhenzhou 鎮州 (northeast of modern Shijiazhuang 家 , Hebei; see Tan Qixiang, 5: 38). This area is traditionally called the region of Zhao, hence the name "the army of Zhao" in *Xin Tang shu.*

[124] Tian Hongzheng was originally a military leader of Weibo. The army of Zhengde was not his troops. Actually he previously fought against them. Thus, he led his troop of 2,000 men to go to Zhengde with him. Eventually a confrontation broke out and led to the final disaster.

[125] For an account of this incident, see *Xin Tang shu*, 148.4783.

[126] See *Quan Tang shi*, 333.3714, 3740.

Tian had served as both *Gongbu Shangshu* (Minister of Department of Works) and *Jianjiao Yu Puye* (Acting Vice Director of the Right). Secondly, one poem is entitled "He Pei Sheren guan Tian Shangshu chulie" 裴 出 (Responding to the Poem by Nobleman Pei on the Minister Tian's Hunting). Nobleman Pei must have been Yang's close friend Pei Du 裴度 (765-839).[127] Of the Tian clan members, Pei had only met Tian Hongzheng, when he was sent by the court to take greetings and gifts to the latter's army.[128] One more piece of evidence can be found in the *Xin Tang shu* (118.4783), where it is said that the emperor gave official titles to each of Tian Hongzheng's children and thereby his honor was matchless at the time. This fits in well with the context of one poem, which offers congratulations to Tian and his children, all of whom received illustrious positions.[129] In another poem, Yang Juyuan expressed gratitude to Tian, apparently for the reason that the latter wrote a letter of recommendation for him.[130] This suggests Tian was one of Yang's patrons, we may further speculate that it is due to this connection that Yang's cousin was able to obtain a position in Tian's office. If the above speculation is true, then we may understand that the incident of 821 would surely give him a terrible blow: he lost both his cousin and his patron. Actually, the misfortune is more than

[127] See Fu Xuanzong, p. 404.

[128] See *Xin Tang shu*, 148.4782.

[129] Fu Xuanzong (*Tang caizi zhuan jiaozhu*, p. 409) believes that Tian *puye* in this poem refers to Tian Bu 布, the son of Tian Hongzheng. This is a mistake. Tian Bu was conferred the title of *shangshu you puye* only after his death in 821. How could Yang congratulate a deceased person? Furthermore, Tian Bu died at the age of 38, his children did not enter the official career until the reign of Xuanzong (847-859), by that time Yang Juyuan must have already died. Thus, it seems only Tian Hongzheng can be the Tian *puye* of the poem.

[130] "Ci Weibo Tian Shangshu chujing hou gan'en liande yin deng congtai" 博 感 登 . *Quan Tang shi*, 333.3715.

that, since in the same seventh lunar month, there was another mutiny at Youzhou ,[131] and Zhang Hongqing, another patron of Yang, was captured and imprisoned. In the mean time, Zhang was demoted by the court two times in one month.[132] After a short while, the troops of Weibo rebelled and it is said "the three garrisons were once again occupied by the bandits and they kept on fighting against each other."[133] This turmoil would certainly bring his memory back to the An Lushan rebellion and its subsequent uneasiness in the military provinces in the Hebei area, notably Tian Chengsi's expansionist ambition toward his neighbors, all of which Yang had witnessed. Being deprived of his relatives and patrons, he had no recourse to avenge them. He could only use his imagination to make up what he had lost and to realize what he could not achieve in reality. It is probably under these circumstances that he created the knight-errant Hongxian, who was able to pay back his master's favor by suppressing the recalcitrant Tian Chengsi and bringing peace to the country.

Another interesting aspect of this incident is that after the death of Yang Maoqing, Yang Lao , his second son, was determined to bury his father's corpse properly and, having walked for two-thousand *li*, he finally reached the camp of the rebel army. There he prostrated himself and kept on crying, until eventually even his enemy felt sympathy for him and returned his father's corpse. This incident reminds us of Hongxian's travel to Wei. Once again, the ideal and reality is in sharp contrast: ideally, the author hoped people could run as quickly as Hongxian, who covered seven hundred *li* with such a ease that she was almost like flying; in reality, his nephew staggered along the mountain road, with bleeding feet. However, both have accomplished

[131] Youzhou was the seat of the Lulong 盧龍 military province. It is located southwest of modern Beijing (Tan Qixiang, 5: 38).

[132] See *Jiu Tang shu*, 16. 490.

[133] *Jiu Tang shu*, 17. 1329-30.

a difficult mission: Hongxian, with her supernatural power, obtained the golden box from the enemy's bed, whereas Yang Lao, with his stunning courage, retrieved his father's body from the enemy's hands. The story of Yang Lao certainly spread quickly and people were so moved by his deeds that upon the burial of his father, the Military Governors' of Luzhou and Huazhou all contributed him money. The occurrence of Military Governors of Luzhou and Huazhou is certainly another coincidence to the story of "Hongxian." I have already pointed out that the author in several places in the story gives misleading information about Xue Song and Linghu Zhang. The true case might be that the author was already determined to use the Military Governors of Luzhou and Huazhou as his characters when he came to write the story, without knowing too much about them.

2) Textual History

The original *Ganze yao* was lost, probably sometime during the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368).[134] Thus, the earliest source we can trace is from Song texts. *TPGJ* collected eight entries of the *Ganze yao*, including "Hongxian." The *TPGJ* text has a tremendous influence on the full-text tradition of later period, however, the later full-text tradition was by no means solely influenced by *TPGJ*, as shall be discussed below. First, let us begin with the synoptic tradition of the Song text.

2.1. The Song Synoptic Tradition

The "Hongxian" story was partially preserved in Song "classified books" (*lei shu*), thereby formed a synoptic tradition of the text. Since the Song editors were still able to see the original version of the *Ganze yao*, their texts, albeit fragmentary, are still valuable for textual collation. Dudbridge has already discussed some important Song texts such as the *Lei shuo*

[134] Both *Xin Tang shu* and *Song shu* list one *juan* of *Ganze yao*.

and the *Lüchuang xinhua* .[135] Within the "Hongxian" textual tradition, there are still two more texts worthy of mentioning. One is called *Gan zhu ji* , which was probably compiled by Zhu Shengfei (1082-1144). The earliest extant edition is dated 1137, with a preface stating that it is uncertain when the manuscript came out, suggesting the original compilation may have been much earlier than that of *Lei shuo*.[136] Another text is from *Bai Kong liu tie* , which was initially compiled by Bai Juyi (772-846) and then continued in a sequel by Kong Chuan , probably at the beginning of Southern Song dynasty.[137]

Although the texts of synoptic tradition are all short and do not give many variants, in one instance we find an important variant with regard to Hongxian's identity. As pointed out in note 6 above, *Lei shuo*, *Gan zhu ji* and *Bai Kong liu tie* all called Hongxian "a singing girl" rather than "a maid," as which she is identified by versions in all the full-text tradition. It is noteworthy also that according to some other Song sources, Hongxian was brought to Xue Song's household at the age of thirteen, and she got her name because of the red lines of her palm (see note 3). This is again different from the full-text tradition, which unanimously claims that Hongxian was born in Xue's household and did not explain why she was called "red threads." Such confusion of Hongxian's identity leads You Zhicheng to claim that the role of Hongxian in the synoptic tradition was invented during the

[135] See Glen Dudbridge. *The Tale of Li Wa* (London: Ithaca Press, 1983), pp. 1-8.

[136] See Huang Lin , ed. *Zhongguo lidai xiaoshuo cidian* , vol. 2 (Kunming: Yunnan ren-min, 1993), p. 423. Chang Bide argues that the format of *Lei shuo* follows that of *Gan zhu ji*. See Chang Bide , "*Lei shuo*" , *Guoli Zhongyang Tushuguan guankan* 1.2 (1967): 74-78.

[137] The preface says that it was compiled between the Jianyan (1127-1130) and Shaoxing (1131-1162) period. See *Siku quanshu*, 891.3.

Song.[138] However, since the original version of the story was lost, we simply cannot be sure whether the story of full-text tradition really came earlier than that of synoptic tradition, given the fact that we are only able to see *TPGJ* editions from the Ming dynasty. Furthermore, it has already been pointed out that the *TPGJ* editors did not do careful work and often they distorted the original text,[139] whereas in the case of synoptic tradition, we still have the Song text. On the other hand, Cheng Yizhong , based upon the variants in the synoptic tradition, suspects that the current story of "Hongxian" in the full-text tradition is no longer the original version.[140] At any rate, it is evident that there had been several versions of Hongxian's origin at the time of Song dynasty. It is not until the Ming dynasty, with the firm establishment of the full-text tradition, that the origin of Hongxian became fixed.

2.2. The Full-text Tradition A: "Yang Yi 楊 Group."

One common feature of the "Yang Yi" textual group is that the "Hongxian" story of this group was all included in *Ganze yao*, whereas in the "anthology group," "Hongxian" was presented in the large fiction anthology. As I mentioned above, the original *Ganze yao* was lost, thus one may ask how the book was recovered. During the Jiajing period of the Ming dynasty (1522-1566), Yang Yi compiled "A Newly Collated *Ganze yao*." In his preface, dated 1553, Yang Yi claimed that he had searched for the book for thirty years and finally obtained an old edition of *Ganze yao* in 1548. Since it had too many errors, he collated it by consulting other texts.[141] Later, when Mao Jin (1599-1659) compiled his

[138] You Zhizheng, p. 112.

[139] Ye Qingbing already points out the editors of *TPGJ* often took great liberties in changing the original text. See Ye Qingbing , *Gudian xiaoshuo lunping* 評 (Taibei: Youshi wenhua, 1985), pp. 28-32.

[140] Zheng Yizhong, *Tangdai xiaoshuo shihua*, p. 255.

[141] See *Ganze yao* 1a. *Baibu congshu jicheng* edition.

Jindai mishu between 1630-1642, he also included the *Ganze yao* in his collection, claiming he was using Yang Yi's edition.[142] As Li Jianguo points out, Yang Yi's edition became the base text for all the later editions of the *Ganze yao*.[143] A close examination of the "Hongxian" texts in three notable editions of this group, namely, the *Jindai mishu* edition, the *Siku quanshu* edition, and the *Xuejin taoyuan edition*,[144] reveals that out of the twenty significant variants which discussed in footnotes above (nn. 6, 12, 15, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 32, 34, 36, 43, 46, 52, 54, 59, 69, 81, 86, 87), the *Siku* edition is in total agreement with *Jindai mishu* edition, whereas the *Xuejin taoyuan* edition differs from *Jindai mishu* edition only in two instances, in both cases *Xuejin taoyuan* either avoids a difficult term or adds some word to make the meaning clearer, suggesting a revision by later hands. This shows that the editions of this group all share a significant number of characteristic variants, and we may further conclude that with the printing of these three editions, the "Yang Yi text" was established as a standard text of the *Ganze yao*.

It should also be pointed out that the *Shuo fu* , originally compiled by Tao Zongyi (fl. 1396), also included "Hongxian" and another piece from the *Ganze yao*. The text of *Shuo fu* is so close to those of "Yang Yi group" that Li Jianguo claims that Yang Yi must have used *Shuo fu* as his base text.[145] A comparison between *Shuo fu* and "Yang Yi" text shows that they share fourteen characteristic variants out of twenty (see nn. 12, 21, 22, 23, 26, 34, 36, 43, 46, 52, 54, 69, 81, 86). This certainly shows that

[142] A modern photocopy of this edition was published in 1922 by Boguzhai 博谷 of Shanghai.

[143] Li Jianguo . *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu* , p. 801.

[144] The *Xuejin taoyuan* collection was compiled by Zhang Haipeng (1755-1816), first printed during 1802-06. It reprinted many titles from the *Jindai mishu*, with additions. The edition I consult is from *Baibu congshu jicheng*.

[145] Li Jianguo, p. 801.

Shuo fu is much closer to the "Yang Yi group" than it is to the "*TPGJ*-anthology group," given the fact that *Shuo fu* and *TPGJ* only share one significant variants out of twenty (see n. 59). The question remains whether the "Yang Yi text" is copied from *Shuo fu*. It should be pointed out that the textual history of *Shuo fu* is itself very complicated and today we are only able to see the critical edition of *Shuo fu* based upon Ming manuscripts.[146] Thus, we cannot be sure whether the current *Shuo fu* text is identical with that of the original version. Furthermore, an examination of the seven variants between *Shuo fu* and the "Yang Yi text" shows that in four cases (see nn.15, 32, 59, and 87), it is most likely that "Yang Yi" variants are from the original version or at least came earlier than *Shuo fu*, whereas in one case (see n. 6), *Shuo fu* suggests an original reading. This indicates that even if Yang Yi had consulted *Shuo fu*, he must have consulted other books. At any rate, I think the "Yang Yi text" and *Shuo fu* can be put in the same textual group and that they are most likely the "sub-texts" of the same origin.

The *Siku* editors argued that Yang Yi actually had not seen the old edition of *Ganze yao* and that he copied the pieces from *TPGJ*.[147] On the other hand, both Li Jianguo and Li Zongwei have observed that there are variants between *TPGJ* and the "Yang Yi group," but the variants of *Ganze yao* are better than those of *TPGJ*.[148] My opinion is that *TPGJ* did have great influence on the later full-text tradition and it forms an independent textual group, the "anthology group," which is quite different from the "Yang Yi" group.

[146] See Chang Bide , "*Shuo fu* kao" , *Bulletin of the China Council for East Asian Studies* 1 (1962): 29-30.

[147] *Siku quanshu*, 1042: 823-4.

[148] Li Zongwei. *Tangren chuanqi* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1985), p. 126; Li Jianguo, *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu*, pp. 80-1.

2.3. Full-text Tradition B: "the Anthology Group."

This group is named "anthology group" because the "Hongxian" story in this grouping is not a piece from the *Ganze yao*, but rather from one of the anthologies of early tales. The *TPGJ* was certainly the first anthology to include "Hongxian" story. During the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), however, "Hongxian" appeared in several anthologies, including the *Yu chu zhi* , *Yan yi bian* , and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* . Dudbridge labeled this group "a later Ming group" and pointed out its version of "Li Wa zhuan" is clearly based on *TPGJ*.[149] This statement is also true in the case of "Hongxian." On the other hand, it may be arguable to put *Shuo fu* in this group as well, as Dudbridge did. As far as the "Hongxian" text is concerned, it is quite clear the variants in *Shuo fu* can only lead us to believe that it belongs to the "Yang Yi" group, rather than this group (see above discussion). The texts of later Ming anthologies share a number of characteristic variants with *TPGJ* out of the twenty variants I have discussed, *Yan yi bian* shares variants with *TPGJ* in fifteen instances. It is interesting to note that in four instances (see nn. 22, 26, 36 and 52), although the *Yan yi bian* differs from the *TPGJ* version, its variants are obviously derived from the *TPGJ* reading. The *Yu chu zhi* and the *Wuchao xiaoshuo* texts are identical in these twenty instances, and both share sixteen variants with *TPGJ*. Although the later Ming anthologies basically follow *TPGJ*, they do have some distinct features. One is that all of them attribute the authorship of "Hongxian" to Yang Juyuan, as pointed out above. Secondly, *Yu chu zhi* and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* contribute two important variants, which are most likely from the original version (see nn. 54 and 69). The above two facts indicates the editors of Ming anthologies must have known something beyond *TPGJ* (or they may use a text different from the current edition

[149] Glen Dudbridge, *The Tale of Li Wa*, pp. 10-11.

of *TPGJ*). Another feature is that there are always some commentaries attached to each story, and sometimes the words of the text have been changed in such a way that one feels someone must have taken liberties in revising the words in order to polish the sentence or to make the meaning clearer (see nn. 22, 26, 32, 36, 52). It is said the stories in these anthologies had been read and commented by the renowned scholars of the time: such as Tang Xianzu (1550-1616), Wang Shizhen (1526-1590) and others.[150] It is most likely that these scholars might have provided some information such as the authorship of "Hongxian" through their extensive reading. And, being literati themselves, they would not hesitate to revise the text if necessary.

The final question is how the "Yang Yi group" is related to the "anthology group" and whether the text of Yang Yi is copied from *TPGJ*. A comparison between *TPGJ* and the "Yang Yi" text immediately shows that there are variances almost in every sentence. Thus, had Yang Yi copied *TPGJ*, he must have been a very careless copier. Of the twenty variants I have discussed, *TPGJ* only share six variants with the "Yang Yi" text. In eleven instances (see nn. 12, 15, 21, 22, 26, 34, 36, 46, 52, 59, and 81), the "Yang Yi" text strongly suggests an earlier version, whereas *TPGJ* was preferred only in two instances (see nn. 43 and 86). As Li Zongwei points out, in another story "Tao Xian" , there were in the ending sixty-one characters in the "Yang Yi text" which the *TPGJ* version does not have.[151] The above evidence clearly shows that it

[150] For a discussions of these anthologies and its editors, see Ye Dejun , "*Yu chu zhi de bianzhe*" , in his *Xiqu xiaoshuo congkao* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1979), pp. 516-19, Hou Zhongyi 忠 , *Zhongguo wenyan xiaoshuo shigao* , (Beijing: Beijing Daxue, 1993), p. 122. Ye Dejun suspects the commentaries were forged by Ling Mengchu (1580-1644) and Ling Xinde , but he has no strong evidence.

[151] Li Zongwei, *Tangren chuanqi*, 126.

is very unlikely that the "Yang Yi text" was copied from the *TPGJ* and it is indeed "better" (to use Li Jianguo's word) than the *TPGJ* version. Yang Yi might be true in stating that his base text is from an old edition of the *Ganze yao*, which he had sought for years.

Glossary

bei **pron.** usu. "a group of people," sometimes, "a single person." . "This man turns his back on the heavenly principles" (Wang Meng'ou, p. 279, line 15 [hereafter as 279.15]). Examples: "Among them there was one person called Zhang Yin" 間 (*TPGJ*, *juan* 257); Wang Ying , *Tang biji yuci huishi* (Beijing: Zhunghua Shuju, 1990), 2-3.

duoduo **onomatopoeia.** "to sigh with a bad feeling." 憂 . "When Song heard about that, he felt depressed day and night, he would talk to himself with deep sighs." (Wang Meng'ou, 277.9). Examples: "Alas! I am old. How can I do about that?" 何. (*Yiwen leiju* 聚, 341).

fei shi **adv.** "not in proper time, at an unusual time." . "[The messenger] asked for an audience at an unusual time." (Wang Meng'ou, 279.5).

jian ji **v.** "[of an imperial house] to establish the right way, to establish the august correctness." 家 . "Our state has established the right way" (Wang Meng'ou, 279.15). Examples: "to established and use the august [middle way] correctness" (*Shang shu*) and also "King Wen is the lord who established the august correctness" (*Jiu Tang shu*, 25. 968).

juedao **v.** "to fall down, to faint because of terror, deep grief, or stroke." "to roar with laughter." 驚 絕 . "He was so astounded that he fell down" (Wang Meng'ou, 279.6).

Examples: "He lamented for the dead day and night. Every time he started to cry, he would always fall down" 每 聲 絕 (*Sui shu*, 71. 1659) and "[he said,] 'Let's perform monkshood and angelica (both are Chinese medicine) to bid farewell to our guests.' Everyone roared with laughter" 當 · 座絕 (*Xiao lin* , in *Gu xiaoshuo gouchen* , p. 64); Zhao Yi 翼, *Gai yu cong kao* 陔 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1957), p. 447; "The king is afraid that it will be fruitless since it is not a good timing to start it" 無 (*Shiji*, 58.3093).

renshi **n.** "people as messenger; messenger." 浹 . "Their messengers came and went from time to time." (Wang Meng'ou, 277.6). Examples: "[He] sent messengers to Meng Haigong to form an alliance with him for outside help" (*Sui shu*, 85. 1893).

song jiu **v.** "to toast sb. to present wine to sb. usually accompanied by a song." . "Song presented a cup of wine to Hongxian with a song." (Wang Meng'ou, 280.4). Examples: "Then he summoned Shang and others to have a feast. [An] Lushan personally toasted people with a song" 召 等 祿 (*Jiu Tang shu*, 200. 5375); "Let's send Green Bamboo to bring *pipa* to play. My daughter will present wine to the commandant [with a song]" 琵 府 ("You xianku" 窟).

tuo **n./v.** 1) "sack"; 橐 . "in front of the pillow a sword of seven-stars appeared from the sack" (Wang Meng'ou, 278.13); 2) "to put into a sack," "[He] ordered all the commanders to put the bow and arrow in the sack and to use short weapons (for close combat)" 將皆橐弓 , . (*Xin Wudai shi*, 46. 510).

xing chi 馳 **v.** "to gallop [even] by starlight," i.e., "to gallop day and night." 專 . "The special messenger galloped by starlight" (Wang Meng'ou, 279.5). Examples: "An inferior horse gallops by starlight to travel at double speed" 弛 (*Baopuzi neipian* 樸 , 267.)

xunfa 伐 **n.** "merits and achievements"; 伐 矣. "then the merits and achievements of several centuries will come to an end." (Wang Meng'ou, 278.1). Examples: "Subjects sometimes wrote the merits and achievements of their sovereigns on it [the stele]" 伐 (Feng Yan , *Wenjian ji*).

xuyang **v.** "to raise, to maintain." 卹養 . "[he] maintained them generously." (Wang Meng'ou, 277.6); Examples: "If someone dies, he would raise his orphan" 卹養 (Ouyang Xiu , "Gu Bazhou Wen an xian zhubu Su Jun muzhiming" 蘇 墓).

yang fu **v.** "to respectfully live up to [one's expectation]." 仰 . "[I] respectfully live up to the expectation in your heart" (Wang Meng'ou, 279.2). Examples: "Although your subject is stupid and ignorant, he can live up to your august expectation" 愚 仰 情 (*Jiu Tang shu*, 139. 3791) and "Yet Gao Kai can still exert himself to choose scholars and respectfully fulfill your august order" 然高 仰 (*Jiu Tang shu*, 168. 4388).

yansi 宴 **n.** "private feast and entertainment," in contrast with "official feast or official party." . "[he] treated him with private feast and entertainment" (Wang Meng'ou, 279.7). Examples: "Private feasts and entertainments at one's leisure, music and dance at the imperial palace, these things existed

also in ancient times" 後 伎 (*Xin Tang shu*, 119. 4298); "Even though he was at a private feast, he did not speak or laugh inordinately" (*Sui shu*, 80.1811).

zhuyi 意 **v./n.** "intention, to be intent on something, to think highly of somebody, to fall in love with somebody."
寢食 屬. "Master, for one month you have not had the leisure to eat or sleep. You have been intent on something" (Wang Meng'ou, 277.10). Example: 屬
. "This shows that their intention was more than that." (*Shiji*, 10. 413). Other examples are "Yu's son Qi was worthy. People of the world fixed their hope on him"
屬 (*Shiji*, 2. 83 and the translation in the *Grand Scribe's Records* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002], 2:36) and also "Lady Liu then fell in love with him" [ ] 屬 ("Liu shi zhuan").

zou ma **n./v.** 1) "messenger on horseback," "speedy horse," "to ride a horse." 走 . "Please first arrange a messenger on horseback and a letter of greeting" (Wang Meng'ou, 278.3). Examples: "[He] simply asked the messenger on horseback to come and ask for rewards every day" 走 給 (Han Yu , "Yu Ezhong Liu Zhongcheng shu") and also "To carry a lot of treasure and speedy horses" 齎 走 (*Han shu*, 63. 2754).

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Guarding the elixir

Tale 2

"Du Zichun" 杜子春

from Niu Sengru 牛僧孺 (779-847), *Xuanguai lu* 玄怪錄[1]
translated by Rania Huntington

Du Zichun 杜 was a person of the era between the Zhou and the Sui.[2] When he was young he was undisciplined and did not work for his family's livelihood, but because of his loose and idle nature,[3] he caroused and whored until all his fortune was squandered. He asked his relatives and friends for aid, but because he didn't apply himself to work, they all refused him.

[1] This translation relies on the edition Cheng Yizhong 中, ed., *Xuan guai lu* and *Xu xuan guai lu* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2006), pp. 3-8. Cheng bases his edition on the four *juan* Gao Chengyan 高 edition preserved in the Beijing Library, using the Chen Yingxiang 陳 edition and the *Taiping guangji* for comparison. I have also consulted the notes in Li Jianguo 國, ed., *Tang Song chuanqi pindu cidian* 典 (Beijing: Xin Shijie Chubanshe, 2007), 1:502-510. [Hereafter cited as Li Jianguo, *Cidian*.] For textual issues and references to antecedent and descendent texts, see Li Jianguo 國, *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu* 五 怪 (Tianjin: Nankai Daxue Chubanshe, 1993) 2:609-613. [Hereafter cited as Li Jianguo, *Xulu*.] "Du Zichun" is included in the *xian bu* 仙 , *juan* 16 of *Taiping guangji*, but attributed to Li Fuyan's 復 *Xu xuanguai lu* 續 怪 . The story has previously been translated by James R. Hightower, "Tu Tzu-ch'un," in Y.W. Ma and Joseph S.M. Lau, eds, *Traditional Chinese Stories: Themes and Variations* (Reprint Boston: Cheng and Tsui, 1996), pp. 416-419.

[2] The Northern Zhou 北 (557-581), one of the Northern Dynasties, and the Sui (581-618).

[3] *Taiping guangji* has 閒 instead of 閒縱. *Xuan guai lu*, p. 6, n. 2.

At that time it was winter. With tattered clothes and an empty belly, he wandered alone in Chang'an. By evening he had not yet eaten. He paced back and forth, not knowing where to go. At the west gate of the East Market,[4] his expression of cold and hunger palpable, he looked up to heaven and gave a long sigh.

There was an old man leaning on a staff before him who asked "What are you sighing about, sir?" Zichun said what was in his heart and raged against his relatives' shabby treatment of him, his agitation revealed on his face. The old man said, "How many strings of cash[5] would be plenty to use?" Zichun said, "If I had thirty to fifty thousand I could live."

The old man said, "Not quite, say it again."

"One hundred thousand," and he said, "Not quite."

Then Du said "A million," and he again said, "Not quite."

Du said "Three million," then he said, "That's all right." Then he took a string of cash from his sleeve[6] and said, "I'll give this to you tonight, tomorrow at midday[7] I'll wait for you at the Persian shop of the West Market.[8] Be careful not to be late." When the time came, Du Zichun went there, and the old man indeed gave him three million,[9] and left without telling his name.

[4] Chang'an had two markets, East and West, both of which had two gates at each of the cardinal directions. Li Jianguo, *Cidian*, p.506, n. 5.

[5] Each string of cash had ten coins. Li Jianguo *Cidian*, p. 506, n. 7.

[6] This initial small gift should provide Du Zichun with something to eat before he meets his benefactor the next day, and by contrast implies the value of the larger gift.

[7] *Wu shi* , 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

[8] Merchants from the Western regions serve as conspicuous landmarks in the Tang tale. In "Renshi zhuan" and here they seem to serve as markers of borderlines with the other world.

[9] In his *huaben* 話本 (vernacular short story) Feng Menglong 龍 (1574-1646) makes arrangements for the transport of an amount of cash physically impossible for one man to carry, but that does not seem to be of concern to Niu Sengru. "Du Zichun sanru Chang'an" 三入 安 , *Xingshi hengyan* 37 (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1987) 2:816-839.

After Zichun was rich, his wastrel urges flared up again, and he thought he would not be a traveler far from home again his whole life long.[10] He rode sleek horses and wore light clothing, met with drinking companions, hired wind and string musicians, singers, and dancers in the brothels, and gave no more thought to making a living. But within a year or two it was all gradually spent. For his clothes and his conveyances, he exchanged the expensive for the cheap. He got rid of the horse for a donkey, then got rid of the donkey and walked, and in no time at all he was back to the way he was at the beginning.

Soon he once again had no plan, and sighed for himself by the market gate. As soon as he uttered a sound the old man arrived, holding his hand saying, "How strange that you are like this again! I will aid you again, how many strings of cash will be enough?" Zichun in shame did not reply. The old man then pressed him, but Zichun only refused ashamed. The old man said, "Tomorrow at noon, come to the appointed place from before." Zichun endured his mortification and went, and got ten million cash. Before he got it, in rage he was determined that from this time on he would make a living, and make Shi Chong 石崇[11] or Yi Dun 猗[12] look like boys. But once the money entered his hands, his heart relapsed again, and his passion for extravagance was again just as before. In less than three or four years, he was poorer than the old days.

He met the old man again at the place he had before. Zichun could not overcome his shame, but covered his face and fled. The old man tugged on his hem and stopped him, saying, "Alas! Our

[10] In Feng Menglong's version it is made explicit that Chang'an is not home, though Du Zichun has many relatives there.

[11] Shi Chong (249-300) was a Jin dynasty figure known for his extravagant wealth.

[12] Yi Dun 猗頓 was a rich merchant of the Warring States period, who rose from poverty to great wealth through his industrious animal husbandry. *Hanyu dacidian* 5:74.

plans have failed!" Then he gave him thirty million[13] and said, "If this cannot cure you, then you are poor down to the place no medicine can reach."[14]

Zichun said [to himself], "I was out of control and caroused until my livelihood was entirely spent. Among my relatives and the great families, none pay me any heed. Only this old man has saved me three times. How can I deserve this?" So he said to the old man, "Receiving this, I can settle my affairs in the human world. The widows and orphans can have enough to eat and wear, and I can fulfill the obligations of moral instruction. Moved by your great favor, once I have my settled my affairs, I will be entirely yours to command."

The old man said, "This is my intention. When you have finished managing your affairs, on Zhongyuan next year,[15] come to see me beneath Laozi's two cypress trees."[16]

Because most of the widows and orphans [of his clan] lodged in Huainan 南, Zichun transferred his resources to Yangzhou 揚. He bought one hundred *qing*[17] of good land, and built a

[13] The Chen edition says ten million. *Xuan guai lu*, p. 6, n. 7.

[14] See the glossary entry on *gāohuāng* . Although this is a common phrase for an incurable illness, the choice to place the source of Du's ailment in the heart seems significant.

[15] Zhongyuan, the 15th (full moon) day of the seventh month, was a significant holiday on which Daoist temples made vegetarian offerings, Buddhist temples held the Ghost Festival, and people made offerings for the dead. This date is the first explicit marker of Du Zichun's mysterious benefactor's Daoist identity.

[16] The text in Li Jianguo *Cidian* is ammended to read "the Laozi shrine" and argue it must refer to the two cypress trees in front of the Fayun shi . Li Jianguo, *Cidian*, p. 506, n. 22. This place is the second strong Daoist marker in the tale. A Qing play retelling the story make the old man into the transformed Laozi himself, his true identity revealed to audiences in the third scene. Yue Duan , *Yangzhou meng* 揚州 in *Guben xiqu congkan wuji* 本 五 , 39:1.3b-4a.

[17] Approximately 1600 acres.

residence within the city, established more than a hundred guest-rooms along an important street, and summoned all the widows and orphans of the clan to live separately in the residence. He tended to the marriages of nieces and nephews, moved coffins and completed burials; those who he owed favors he rewarded, and those whom he bore grudges he repaid.

Once he had finished all these matters, it reached the appointed date and he set out. At that moment the old man was whistling beneath the two cypresses.[18] Then together they climbed the Yuntai peak 台 of Mount Hua .[19] They entered the mountains for forty or more *li*,[20] and saw a lodging, its chambers imposing and pure, not the abode of ordinary people. From a distance it was concealed by colored clouds, simurghs and cranes soared into the air. At the top there was the main hall, in the midst of which was an alchemical stove, more than nine *chi* high,[21] casting off purple sparks, blazing against the doors and windows. Several jade maidens[22] stood surrounding the brazier. A green dragon and a white tiger supported the front and the rear.[23] At the

[18] Whistling is an expression of Daoist transcendence and unconcern with the world. The date of Du Zichun's meeting with his mysterious benefactor was the first indication of the tale's Daoist content, the location is the second, and this act is the third. See E. D. Edwards, "'Principles of Whistling'– Hsiao Chih– Anonymous Author(s)," *BSOAS*, 20:1/3 (1957): 217-29.

[19] Mount Hua is the West Mountain of the Five Mountains 五 , about sixty miles from Chang'an, with a long history as an important Daoist site. Yuntai peak is the northern peak of Mount Hua.

[20] A bit over thirteen miles.

[21] Almost three yards. Based on the conversions table in *Hanyu da cidian* supplemental index volume, 5.

[22] The Jade Maidens are minor Daoist protective spirits.

[23] These are two of the four directional animals, representing the east and the west respectively. In the *Huangtian shangqing jinque dijun lingshu ziwen shangjing* 金 帝 靈 文 (*Upper Scripture of Purple Texts Inscribed by the Spirits*), visualizing the Jade Maidens and the directional animals is one way to prevent the whitesoul from wandering out of the body, whether before

time the sun was about to set, and the old man was no longer wearing worldly clothes, but instead was a Daoist master in a yellow cap and red kerchief. He carried three pellets of white stones[24] and one pitcher of wine which he gave to Zichun, having him finish it all quickly. He took out a tiger-skin and spread it on the inner west wall, and had Zichun sit facing east, warning him, "Be careful not to speak. No matter whether it is an honored deity, a baleful ghost, a yaksha,[25] a fierce beast, or a creature from hell, or your kin are bound and imprisoned by them, none of these myriad sufferings are real. But you must neither move nor speak, calm your heart and do not fear, and in the end there will be nothing to make you suffer. You must think of what I say with all your heart." He finished speaking and left.

Zichun looked at the hall, and there was only a large vat, filled with water. Just as the Daoist had left, a thousand chariots and ten thousand riders came bearing war banners, dagger-axes, and armor , filling up the cliffs and valleys, their war cries shaking heaven and earth. There was one man called the great general, taller than a *zhang*,[26] both horse and man wearing golden armor, its brilliance dazzling the beholder. His several hundred personal bodyguards, drawing swords and stretching bows, went straight into the hall, yelling, "What man are you, to dare to not make way for the great general?" The followers raised their swords and advanced, threatening him to ask his name, and what thing he was making, but gave no answer. The questioners were greatly

or after death. Cf. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 287 and 324-325.

[24] White stones, probably particularly milky quartz, were a legendary food of immortals. See "Bai shi sheng." 先 in Ge Hong , *Shen xian zhuan* 仙 (Beijing: Xueyuan Chubanshe, 1998) 1.19-20. Translated in Robert Ford Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 292-294, especially p. 292 n. 4.

[25] A Buddhist demon turned protective spirit.

[26] Approximately three yards.

angry, and rushed to behead him and vied to shoot him, their voices like thunder, but still he did not respond. The general left seething with rage.

Suddenly fierce tigers, venomous dragons, lions, and pythons numbering more than ten thousand, all came forward roaring and fighting, vying to seize and swallow him, some leaping over him. Zichun's spirit and expression were unmoved. After a while they scattered.

Soon rain poured down, the sky darkened and thunder and lightning came, wheels of fire running to his right and left, the flash of lightning striking ahead and behind him, so that he could not open his eyes. In an instant, the water at the edges of the room was already more than a *zhang* deep.[27] The flashing lightning and the booming thunder had enough force to shatter mountains and streams, impossible to stop. A moment later the waves reached to the bottom of his seat. Zichun sat properly and paid no attention. Before long the storm dispersed.

The general came back, leading cow-headed soldiers of hell and ghosts and spirits with strange faces, who brought a boiling cauldron and placed it before Zichun. They held spears and pitchforks, surrounding him on four sides. [The general] conveyed the command, "If he is willing to say his name then release him immediately. If he is not willing, then immediately stab and pull out his heart, and put it in the cauldron." Still he did not answer.

Then they dragged his wife in, and held her beneath the steps. The general pointed at her and said, "If you say your name then she will be spared." Again, he did not answer. Then they beat her until blood flowed, sometimes shooting and sometimes chopping, sometimes boiling and sometimes frying, so that the pain was unbearable. His wife cried out weeping, "I am truly base and

[27] Approximately three yards. The fact that the threatening general and the threatening floods are the same height/depth is suggestive.

crude, an insult to a gentleman. But I have been fortunate enough to carry the kerchief and comb for you,[28] I have served you for more than ten years. Now I have been seized by these honored spirits, and cannot bear the pain. I dare not hope that you to crawl and beg, but with one word from you, my life is saved. What person is without feeling? Please grant me this one word!" Her tears fell like rain in the middle of the hall, and she railed and cursed. Zichun to the end paid no attention. The general said, "I cannot harm your wife?" He commanded that the rack for chopping be fetched, and sliced her inch by inch beginning at her feet. The wife screamed and wept even more desperately, but to the end Zichun paid her no heed.

The general said, "This bandit's black arts are already complete, we cannot allow him to remain long in the world." He bid his followers to behead him.

Once the beheading was done, his soul was brought before King Yama.[29] The King said, "Is this the monstrous citizen[30] of Yuntai peak?" He was rushed[31] into Hell. Then he tasted to the fullest the agonies of the molten copper, the iron rods, the mortar and pestle, the grindstone, the pit of fire, the sea of molten metal, the mountain of knives, and the forest of swords.[32] But in his heart he thought of the Daoist's words, so it still seemed bearable, and he never moaned or cried out. The infernal guards reported

[28] A humble term for serving as a wife, meaning carrying the kerchief to wipe the husband's hands and the comb for his hair. *Zuozhuan* , 22nd year of Duke Xi, explained in annotations by Yang Bojun 楊 .

[29] Literally it is both his heavy and light souls, his *hunpo* 魂 but in the image of being hauled before the infernal authorities a person's soul is nearly always singular.

[30] *Yaomin* 妖民 *Yao*, when applied to a human, has mixed associations of rebellion and sorcery.

[31] The text in *Taiping guangji* has *zhuo* , to be capture, instead of *cu* , to rush. Li Jianguo, *Cidian,* p.506, n. 48.

[32] This catalogue of the torments of hell is apparently familiar enough to the Tang audience that listing them without elaboration was sufficient.

that he had finished receiving his punishment, and the King said, "This man was a secret bandit. He does not deserve be a man again, and fitting to let him be a woman." He was arranged to be born in the family of the district official Wang Qin in Shanfu 單 county in Songzhou .[33]

From her birth she was sickly, and hardly a day went by without the sufferings of acupuncture, moxibustion, treatment, and medicine. She also slipped in the fire and fell from the bed, with no one to save her from the pain, but she never let out a sound. When soon she grew up, her face's beauty was the greatest of her generation, but her mouth had no voice, so her family regarded her as a mute girl. Her kin and intimates insulted her in a thousand ways, and she could never reply.

In the same hometown there was a *jinshi* graduate, Lu Gui 珪, who heard of and admired her beauty, so he sent a matchmaker to ask for her. Her family refused because of her muteness, but Lu said, "If she is virtuous as a wife, what need she to speak? She can also be a warning to talkative women." So they consented. Lu prepared gifts[34] and received her as his bride.

After many years, their affection was truly devoted. They had a son, only two years old and incomparably clever. Lu held his son and spoke with her, but she did not reply. He tried to coax her by many methods, but she said nothing. Lu was furious and said, "In the past Lady Jia held her husband in contempt, and she merely refused to laugh. But when she saw him shooting pheasants, she finally relented in her resentment.[35] Now I am base and no match for Jia. However my literary accomplishments are not merely shooting pheasants, but you still do not speak. When a

[33] Contemporary Shan County , under the administration of Heze City in southwestern Shandong province.

[34] *Taiping guangji* has "the six rites" *liu li* 六 of traditional marriage. *Xuan guai lu* p. 7, n. 24.

[35] The story is in the *Zuo zhuan,* 28th year of Zhaogong .

great man is despised by his wife, what use is her son?" Then he raised the boy's two feet and struck his head on the stone. It shattered instantly, blood splattering many paces away. Love swelled up in Zichun's heart, and he suddenly forgot his promise, unwittingly crying out, "Ay!"[36]

Before the sound of his "Ay" had faded, his body was sitting in its old place, and the Daoist was also before him. It was only the fifth watch. Purple sparks were bursting through the roof up to the heavens, fire rising on four sides, the rooms of the house all burning. The Daoist sighed, "You good-for-nothing scholar, you fail me like this!" Then he pulled Zichun up by the hair and threw him in the urn of water.

Before long the fire went out. The Daoist went forward and said, "Go out. My son, in your heart joy, anger, sorrow, fear, hatred, and desire can all be forgotten.[37] But what you have not yet reached is love alone. If you had not had that cry of 'Ay,' my elixir would have been complete, and you too would have ascended to transcendence. Alas, transcendent talent is hard to come by! My elixir can be refined again, and you can again be accepted by the world. Do your best with it!"[38] He pointed at the road in the distance and made him go back. Zichun insisted on going up the platform to look. The great brazier was already broken, and in the middle of it was an iron pillar as thick as an

[36] This is the same cry Confucius made when learning of the untimely death of his favorite disciple Yan Hui, saying that heaven was destroying him. *Lunyu* XI.9 *Xianjin* 先 .

[37] The seven passions *qi qing* are listed in this order, with love in the fifth place, in the *Li ji*, "Li yun" .

[38] In her translation of this passage Chiang renders this as "Make the best of it." Sing-chen Lydia Chiang, "Daoist Transcendence and Tang Literati Identity in *Records of Mysterious Anomalies* by Niu Sengru" *Chinese Literature: Essays, Articles, Reviews* 29 (December 2007): 18.

arm, several *chi* long.[39] The Daoist took off his robe, and cut it with a knife.

Once Zichun went home, he was ashamed by the Daoist's generosity, and vowed to dedicate himself to his service again in order to seek forgiveness for his error. He went to Yuntai peak, but there were no signs of men. He sighed in regret and returned home.

[39] A *chi* was approximately a foot.

Translator's Note

"Du Zichun" is the first story of the influential tale collection *Xuan guai lu* (*Records of the Mysterious and Strange*) by Niu Sengru (779-847).[40] Niu was a *jinshi* graduate who held a series of important political offices, and a member of the social circle of Bo Juyi and Yuan Zhen. He is perhaps most famous for his political conflicts with Li Deyu (787-850), with "Niu/Li" naming the decades-long factional struggle which defined his generation.[41]

Different interpreters place the collection at different points in Niu's life. In the Song, Zhao Yanwei (fl. 1195) cites it as an example of the practice of "warming scrolls" *wenjuan* , distributing one's writing to earn patronage. This assumes it was a work from his early years, before passing the *jinshi* examination in 805.[42] However, based on dates in the included tales, Li Jianguo argues the collection was probably composed in the Taihe reign (827-836).[43] The latter dating places it approximately two decades later than many of the most celebrated individually circulating tales (included elsewhere in this volume). That a man of this status would make his collection public marks a high level of social acceptance for the practice of composing tales. Li Jianguo

[40] Although both extant Ming editions include "Du Zichun" as the first story, the attribution of the tale to *Xuan guai lu* is not unquestioned. Before widespread knowledge of the two Ming-era editions, many authors accepted *Taiping guangji*'s citation of *Xu xuan guai lu*. Stories from *Xuan guai lu* and *Xu xuan guai lu* seem to have been mixed together frequently in the two collection's publication history, making determinations difficult. Li Jianguo, *Xulu,* 2:612.

[41] Niu has biographies in the *Jiu Tang shu* and *Xin Tang shu*.

[42] See Cheng Yizhong, introduction to *Xuan guai lu,* p. 23 note 1.

[43] Li Jianguo, *Xulu,* 624. Cheng Yizhong is skeptical whether Niu would have had time at that juncture in his political career to assemble the collection. *Tangdai xiaoshuoshi,* p. 186. As Cheng points out, the uncertainty about which tales really belong in the collection makes arguments of dating difficult.

places *Xuan guai lu* in the context of the rise of collections of well-developed *chuanqi* tales, and judges it, although not the first such collection, one of the finest.[44] His work was imitated, both by one that names itself explicitly as a continuation (Li Fuyan's *Xu xuan guai lu* 續) and other collections.

The tale has two parts, the three rescues of the profligate Du Zichun and his trials standing guard over the brazier. The first is set in the world of markets, money, and worldly temptation, the second in the mountains of transcendence and supernatural trials. When Du Zichun is tested with generous gifts, two failures lead to ultimate success; but the series of supernatural trials ends in ultimate failure. However, as the frequent recurrence of the character heart/mind *xin* suggests, the all-encompassing stage of both worlds and all the trials is the heart of Du Zichun himself.

The two halves of the story are tightly constructed for contrast. Although the tale is told from his point of view, from his introduction Du Zichun is a character seen from the outside: his feelings are visible on his face, and he speaks out his complaints. This rage is replaced, in the subsequent encounters, by shame, which renders him unwilling to speak or let his face be seen. By the end of the tale he has control over both expression and sound, until the final failure. Du Zichun's sigh when he first meets the old man is answered with his final outcry when he fails the test.

Each time Du Zichun is rescued, the money changing hands increases: three million, ten million, thirty million. Are these numbers sums that the Tang audience could realistically imagine, or do they belong primarily to the realm of literary effect? Any amount could be consumed by Du Zichun's appetites; it is not the amount itself, but the successive, expanding amounts with no rebuke, which prompt Du's transformation from self-justifying rage, to shame, to the resolution to repay.

[44] Li Jianguo, *Xulu,* pp. 624-625.

The threats to Du Zichun exhaust a catalog of horrors, the violence of men, the heavens, and beasts, but although they keep drawing close they do not touch his body until the moment of his beheading. A completed beheading is the extreme of what one should not be able to perceive. Even the beheading is not described in terms of pain. But after this violation, it is in hell, and then in his second life, that he experiences pain of the body. The obstacles to Daoist self-cultivation are imagined in terms of an explicitly Buddhist hell and punishment by rebirth. In the end, however, it is not pain of the body that defeats him. There is another sharp contrast between Du's impassivity in the face of his wife's prolonged torture and his immediate outcry seeing his son.

The final section of "Du Zichun", his imagined life as a mute woman, makes an interesting contrast with the more famous tales of life in a dream, Shen Jiji's "Zhen zhong ji" and Li Gongzuo's "Nanke Taishou zhuan" (both translated elsewhere in this collection.) Unlike the others, Du Zichun is warned in advance that everything he will perceive is not real. In those tales the protagonist dreams as himself, and enjoys all the fruits of worldly, male success only to have them taken away from him. Du Zichun's trial is in a changed identity, and his other life is one of pain and privation in the humble status of a woman. His illusory experience is a series of nightmares, alleviated only by temporary happiness as wife and mother. It is that interlude of happiness which makes the moment of loss and violence all the more cruel. The dreams end with orderly waking, emphasizing that the waking world is unchanged by the dream's transformations. Du Zichun's outburst not only dispels his illusory life but sets the real world on fire.

My students in classes on Chinese literature in translation found the tale disconcerting, more disturbing than either "Zhen zhong ji" or "Nanke Taishou zhuan". They were inclined to be sympathetic to, rather than condemning of, the one emotion

Zichun could not root out, and would have found a story in which he/she remained silent ghastly. I do not think their reaction was entirely the result of cultural distance. In the Ming, Qian Xiyan (fl. 1613), a *zhiguai* collector and critical reader of the *zhiguai/chuanqi* tradition, alludes to the story when describing his overwhelming grief at the death of his young son,[45] seeing in it a source of justification.

When one examines Du Zichun in contrast to its antecedent and parallel texts, the differences that stand out are precisely those of gender and perspective.[46] In Xuanzang's (602-664) *Datang xiyu ji* 記, the comparable tale is an explanation of the name of a place near Benares, the pool where the failed man was saved from the fire. It is narrated from the point of view of the aspiring transcendent, who searches for a long time in vain for the man who can stand guard when he gains immortality. On the fateful night they have almost made it to dawn when the man cries out. When the hermit questions him, only then is it revealed: his former master had killed him. He was reborn in a Brahmin household in South India. Always keeping former favor in mind, he endures birth, coming of age, marrying, losing his parents, and having children all without making a sound. But at the age of sixty-five, his wife threatens to kill his son unless he speaks, and he thinking that in his old age he has only this son to rely on, he speaks out to stop her.[47] Similarly, a tale in *Youyang zazu* 俎, which quotes the *Datang xiyu ji* piece for comparison, gives the Daoist who needs to find an assistant to watch silently all night a

[45] Qian Xiyan, *Ting lan zhi* in *Songshu shijiushan* 十 (Wanli edition), 8:1.2b.

[46] Carrie Reed makes a detailed comparison of the tale to its Indian and Chinese antecedents and parallels. Carrie Reed, "Parallel Worlds, Stretched Time, and Illusory Reality: The Tang Tale Du Zichun" *HJAS* 69.2 (December 2009):309-342.

[47] *Datang xiyu ji* juan 2:7.242 in *Shiliao sanpian* 料三 (Taibei: Guangwen Shuju, 1969.)

name, but not the watcher. Here, too, a male in his second lifetime cries out when his wife kills his sons.[48] Duan Chengshi 式 (803?-863) speculates his sinified version is a result of errors of transmission. In comparison with the failed adepts in the antecedent and parallel texts, Du Zichun is placed at the center from the beginning,[49] and is more greatly transformed.

As the mixed cultural markers in the *Datang xiyuji* tale, a Daoist adapt in an Indian setting, suggest, this tale presents a complex case of the blending of Indian and Chinese narrative elements. The crucial element, transformation in gender leading to the end of illusory trials, seems related to another popular Indian dream story, the tale of the sage Narad turned into a woman by Vishnu. To prove to Narad that he has not overcome illusion as he imagines, Vishnu submerges him in water. Narad emerges in a female form, having forgotten both his/her former identity and spiritual cultivation. She marries a king, has sons and grandsons, and when all her sons and grandsons are killed in an attack by an enemy king, she laments over their corpses. Vishnu reappears and points out to her that she has lost sons and grandsons in countless incarnations, why should she mourn only for these? He leads her to perform the ritual bath before the funeral rites, and she emerges from the bath as Narad once more, his memory restored.[50] Submersion in water is key to the beginning and end of this tale; only a final submersion is present in Du Zichun and the *Datang xiyuji* text. The version of Narad's story I have read is thought to have been composed in the eleventh or twelfth century, so it could not have been a direct source for "Du Zichun"; but as Reed argues perhaps both draw on an earlier, shared oral sources. In Narad's

[48] *Youyang zazu xupian* 陽 續 (*Siku quanshu* edition) 1075:4.9b-11b.

[49] Reed, p. 332.

[50] *Devībhāgavata purana* book 6 chapter 28-29. Quoted and translated in Wendy Doniger, *Dreams, Illusions, and Other Realities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 81-82. Reed, pp. 312-314.

story experience in female form teaches that even the sage cannot overcome illusion, and in Du Zichun the emphasis is on the difficultly of overcoming emotion, but both are tales teaching the protagonist and the readers their limitations. In both a mother's loss of a child (or children) marks at the same time the depths of illusion, and the moment of waking.

The tale is an exploration of the limits of the self and transformation. The man who lacked all self-control becomes a figure of extreme control, but he is still incapable of the total transformation demanded of him. When Du Zichun believes himself reborn in another shape and cannot bear the loss of a child of that new body, does that love still spring from the heart of Du Zichun? After the extravagant but superficial lists of horrors, from the wild beasts to the torments of hell, it is the specificity of the child's crushed skull which moves the reader, too, to forget. Reed argues that the story is a demonstration of the relationship between time, illusion, and human attachment; both Du Zichun and the audience experience stretched time, a new lifetime in a single night, with a resulting disproportionate effect on the heart. As a result Du Zichun's trial is also ours: can we also remember that we are still within an illusory test?[51]

Although not as ubiquitous as some other Tang tales, "Du Zichun" is retold as well as reprinted in later dynasties. In Feng Menglong's (1574-1646) vernacular retelling in *Xingshi hengyan* the psychological complexity and plausible detail of the three tests by money is expanded greatly, but there is comparatively little expansion of Zichun's trials while guarding the brazier. After his failure Du Zichun is allowed to return again and succeed, also bringing his wife to immortality with him, suggesting the vernacular tradition's dissatisfaction with the bleak

[51] Reed, pp. 335, 338.

ending.[52] Unsurprisingly its dramatic adaptations also end with final ascent to immortality.[53] Although Pu Songling marks "Xu Huangliang" 續黃 ("A Sequel to the Yellow Millet Dream") as a continuation of "Zhen zhong ji" with its title, the protagonist's final descent into nightmare in a woman's form seems inspired by "Du Zichun" instead.[54] In 1920 Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 川 (1892-1927) wrote his own version of "Du Zichun," but fatal moment of emotion is a son's cry for his mother who has been reborn as a horse and tormented. He reverses both the direction of the sympathy, and which of the kinship pair has been transformed.[55]

What is the appeal of tales of failed transcendence? A tale like "Du Zichun" might promote the value of transcendence by making it seem all the more difficult to obtain. Chiang notes that of the eighteen tales of transcendence in *Xuan guai lu,* eight are failures.[56] She argues that the tale is a consideration of what it means to be human, and to come to full maturity.[57] Cheng Yizhong concurs, arguing that in contrast with the Indian version in which love is an illusion, in the Chinese version love has triumphed over the Way.[58] Reed argues that Du's failure should

[52] "Du Zichun sanru Chang'an" 三入 安, *Xingshi hengyan* 37 (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1987) 2:816-839.

[53] See plot summaries: Hu Jiezhi 祉, *Guangling xian* 陵仙 in *Quhai congmu tiyao* 海總目 (Tianjin: Tianjin guji chuban she, 1992) 2:23.3b-6b. Yue Duan , *Yangzhou meng* 揚州 in *Quhai congmu* 2:40.11a-12a and Guo Yingde 英 , *Mingqing chuanqi zonglu* (Shijiazhuang: Hebei Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1997) 2:816-18. *Yangzhou meng* is reprinted in *Guben xiqu congkan wuji* 本 五 vol. 39.

[54] Pu Songling , Zhang Youhe ed., *Liaozhai zhiyi huijiao huizhu huiping ben* 誌 注 評本 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1992) 1:4.518-527.

[55] "Toshishun" , *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke shō* 龍 (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1969) 259-267.

[56] Chiang, p. 14.

[57] Chiang, p. 18.

[58] Cheng Yizhong, *Tangdai xiaoshuo shi* (Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 2003), p. 189.

not be seen as failure at all, but rather proof of his success at becoming a worthy human being.[59] The ending is an ambivalent one, as the readers descend with Du Zichun back down the mountain to the human world.

[59] Reed, p. 342.

Glossary

cuòdà a impoverished and unsuccessful scholar (p. 6, line 2).[60]

gāohuāng 膏 The *gao* was the fat and the tip of the heart, and the *huang* was in the space of between the heart and the diaphragm. In the *Zuo zhuan*, Tenth Year of Duke Cheng , a doctor decrees an illness which is above the *huang* and below the *gao* is impossible to treat, as no medicine can reach it (p. 4, line 2).

luòtuò can be either unrestrainedly self-indulgent (usually with alcohol and women) or poor and abject. In this story it is used in the former sense to describe Du Zichun twice, first by the narrator to describe Du Zichun, and then at the moment of his reform by Du Zichun himself (p. 3, line 1 and p. 4, line 2).

Yánluówáng . Yánluó 羅 is the shortened form of the translation Yánmòluóshé 羅 for "Yamaraja" King Yama, the ruler of the underworld in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions (p. 5, line 8).

[60] The page and line number here refer to the Cheng Yizhong edition of "Du Zichun."

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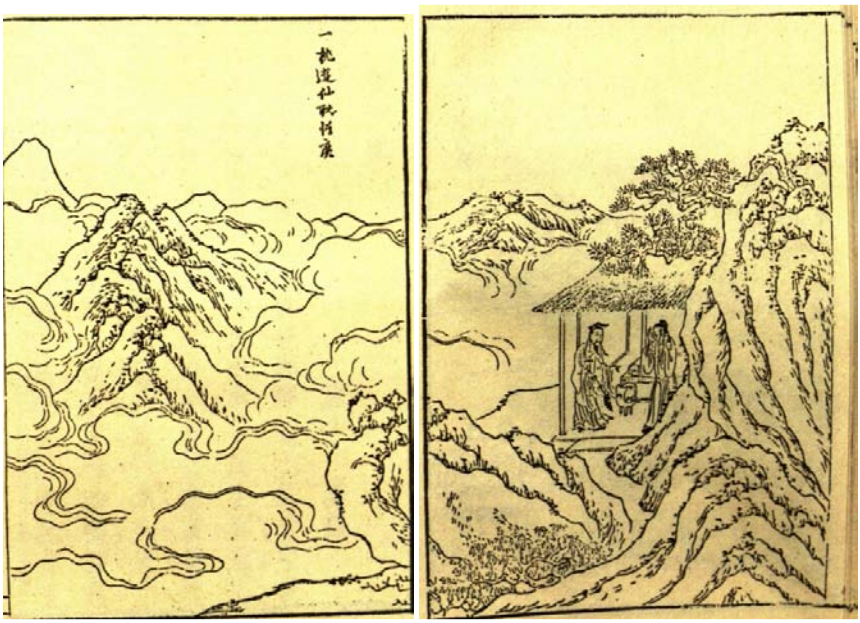
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Scholar Lu was enlighted after dreaming on Master Lü's pillow

Tale 3

"Zhenzhong ji" 枕中記[1]
(Record within a Pillow)

by Shen Jiji 沈既濟
translated by Bruce J. Knickerbocker

In the seventh year (719) of the Kaiyuan era (713-742),[2] there was Lü Weng (Old Man Lü), who was a Daoist priest who had acquired the arts of the divine immortals.[3] While travelling on

[1] This translation is based on the text edited by Wang Meng'ou, *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, pp. 23-25. Wang's text is closely based on the text collected in *Wenyuan yinghua,* 883.7b-10a (presented to the throne in 987; hereafter *WYYH*), which is entitled "Zhenzhong ji" . For reasons beyond our scope here, this is the preferred, authoritative text. Another text collected in the *Taiping guangji,* 82.526-28 (presented to the throne in 977-78; hereafter *TPGJ*) is entitled "Lü Weng" , and, rather than being attributed to Shen Jiji (as it is in the *WYYH*), a note appended to the end of the *TPGJ* text alleges that it was taken directly from the *Yiwen ji* (*ca.* 874). In addition to these texts, other editions which have been consulted are listed under "Texts" in the bibliography following the "Translator's Note." I have carefully consulted William H. Nienhauser, Jr.'s translation of this tale as well as the others listed in the bibliography below.

[2] Changed from the reign title Xiantian 先 ("Preceding Heaven," 712-13) in the twelfth month of 713, Kaiyuan ("Opened Prime") is the second reign title of Emperor Xuanzong's rule (r. 712-756). For unknown reasons, *TPGJ* has "the nineteenth year of the Kaiyuan era (731)" as the date when this dream-tale takes place. *Lei shuo,* 28.5a simply reads "during the Kaiyuan era" 開 .

[3] Like *Lei shuo,* 28.5a, which refers to Lü as Lü Gong (Master Lü), the old Daoist is identified simply by his surname in this tale. As often happens in the process of the historical evolution of a story, later writers and story-tellers feel the need to supply the character with a name. In our case, in works such as

the road to Handan 邯鄲,[4] he stopped at a rest-lodge. He straightened his cap, loosened his sash, and, leaning against his sack, sat down. Presently, he saw a youth travelling along.[5] It was Scholar Lu 盧,[6] who was wearing a plain-cloth jacket[7] and riding a

Tang Xianzu's 湯顯祖 (1550-1617) play entitled "Handan ji" 邯鄲記 (Record of Handan), the character of the Daoist priest came to be transformed into that of Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 (also known as Lü Yan 呂巖), who since the Song dynasty had joined the group of the eight Daoist immortals and arguably became the most popular among them (on the legendary figure of Lü Dongbin and the propagation of his cult, see Farzeen Baldrian-Hussein, "Lü Dongbin in Northern Song Literature," *Cahiers d'Extréme-Asie* 2 [1986]: 133-69).

[4] During the Spring and Autumn period (722-468 B.C.), the city of Handan was first located in the state of Wei 衛 and was later part of the state of Jin 晉 (Tan Qixiang, 1.24). In the Warring States period (403-221 B.C.), it was the capital of the state of Zhao 趙 (Tan Qixiang, 1.38). During the Tang dynasty, it was located in the southwestern part of Hebei circuit (*Jiu Tang shu*, 39.1498), as it is today, at the site of the modern city bearing the same name (Tan Qixiang, 5.49).

[5] *TPGJ* has *yizhong shaonian* 一中少年, "a youth from the village," and *Lei shuo*, 28.5a paraphrastically reads 一少年, "a youth."

[6] *Sheng* 生, "scholar," was commonly used to designate literate men who did not possess degrees (see *Tangren chengwei* 唐人稱謂, [Xi'an: San Qin Chubanshe, 1987] 唐人稱謂, p. 53). This echoes an early usage of the English term "scholar" describing "one whom the speaker regards as exceptionally learned. Often merely, one who is able to read and write" (see *The Oxford English Dictionary* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971], p. 2665). Lu 盧 was one of the great aristocratic surnames of the day (see n. 18 below).

[7] Reading *shu* 褥 for *duan* 褐. Early texts often portray impoverished commoners wearing this type of clothing, and, as we can see in *Shiji*, 75.2353, such clothing is usually depicted in stark contrast to the longer robes of officials and the privileged retainers of early lords: "Now [the women of] Your Lordship's back palaces tread on damask silk gauze, while your knights cannot (even) obtain plain-cloth jackets" 今君後宮蹈綺縠，而士不得褐 (this translation is slightly modified from William H. Nienhauser, Jr., *et al.*, *The Grand Scribe's Records, Volume VII: The Memoirs of Pre-Han China*, p. 192). For more information on this clothing, see Zhou Feng 周汾, ed. *Zhongguo gudai fuzhuang cankao zuliao: Sui Tang Wudai bufen* 中國古代服裝參考資料：隋唐五代分 (Beijing: Beijing Yanshan Chubanshe, 1987) and the illustration on p. 117; and Shen Congwen 沈從文, ed. *Zhongguo gudai fushi yanjiu* 中國古代服飾研究 (Hong

black colt. He was on his way to reach the fields, and he also stopped in at the rest-lodge. He sat down with the old man on the mat, and they talked and laughed with extraordinary gusto.

After some time, Scholar Lu looked at his clothing and baggage,[8] which was worn-out and lowly, and then heaved a long sigh, saying, "As a great man living in a world not in harmony with him, I have come to such distressing straits as this!"

The old man said, "I observe that your body is without pain and without illness. Just now we were talking, laughing and reaching contentment, and yet you sigh over your straits. Why is this?"

The Scholar said, "This life of mine is simply insignificant. How can reaching contentment be spoken of?"

The old man said, "If this cannot be spoken of as reaching contentment, then what can be spoken of as reaching contentment?"

Kong: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1981), which contains on p. 173 a painting from Dunhuang that portrays this type of plain-cloth jacket.

[8] By using this rare noun-compound, Shen Jiji is arguably linking this tale with a story in the Daoist collection, the *Lie Zi* , and he elucidates shared thematic content and parallel linguistic terms, events and concepts. The fundamental meaning of *zhuang* in early Chinese sources is "to wrap," and then it can also be used for many kinds of "wrapped bags" and those things people wrap themselves in–i.e., clothes. The isolated usage of *zhuang* in the sense of "travelling baggage" is quite common in early texts including *Hou Han shu*, 81:2670, *Jin shu*, 95:2476, and many others. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽 (1007-72) and his team continued to use *zhuang* in this way in *Xin Tang shu*, 213:5995 and 225:6432. The pre-Tang usage of *yizhuang* 衣 as a noun-synonym compound meaning "clothes" is very rare, and one early occurrence is in *Hou Han shu*, 72:2332. On the other hand, *yizhuang* occurs as the noun-compound with the meaning "clothing and baggage" in passages in the *Lie Zi* (see *Lie Zi jishi* , *ch.* 8, [Hong Kong: Taiping Shuju, 1965], p. 166), *Hou Han shu* , 77.2491 as well as in Yan Shigu's (581-645) commentary to the *Han shu* , 94:3770 and 94.3825.

[Lu] replied, "A gentleman living in the world ought to establish meritorious deeds and sow a name (for himself),[9] to be out [on the battlefield] as a general and in [the palace] as a minister,[10] to have rich caldrons arranged to dine from,[11] to select

[9] The linking of establishing merit with enduring fame has some very ancient roots in Chinese cultural history, and it finds its most pronounced and mature expression in the Confucian tradition. One very early source is a well-known story collected in the *Zuo zhuan* in which Mu Bao 豹, while visiting the state of Jin , is asked the meaning of the ancient saying, "to die but not to perish" (*si er buxiu* 死而), to which he answers:

I have heard that uppermost there is establishing virtue; next after that there is establishing merit; and next after that there is establishing words. If even after a long time these are not obliterated, then this is what is meant by the saying "not to perish" 豹 ， 有 ， 有 ， 有 廢，此 (Yang Bojun , *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhu* 秋 注 [Taibei: Hongye Wenhua, 1993], Xiang 24, pp. 1087-8.)

[10] The expression *chujiang ruxiang* 將入相–"being out (on the battlefield) as a general and in (the palace) as a minister"–is found only twice in the standard histories, both times in the *Jiu Tang shu* (see 106.3239-40; 174.4528). The first passage is particularly valuable for its listing of five chief ministers, two of whom–Zhang Yue (667-730) and Xiao Song (*ca.* 669-749)–Shen Jiji uses as partial models on which to base the character of Lu, as I will discuss below. *Chujiang ruxiang* was hardly a rare pattern of official advancement during this period of the mid-Tang dynasty: some twelve of the total thirty-six chief ministers during Xuanzong's reign had attained the highest position in the central government by way of their successful careers as military governors on the frontier (see E.G. Pulleyblank, *The Background of the Rebellion of An Lushan* [London: Oxford University Press, 1955], Appendix V; and Pan Yihong, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan*, p. 154). Obviously, this career pattern had become an ideal and much aspired-to recipe for success and power, for the *Jiu Tang shu* passage goes on to say that, from 748 on, the powerful dictator Li Linfu (?–752) tried and eventually succeeded in persuading the Emperor to appoint all non-Chinese generals as military commissioners. Lin's goal was to halt this pattern of official advancement by preventing military commissioners from gaining even more power in the central court which enabled them even greater political influence through their military success. Within three years, all frontier commands were under the control of foreign generals, the most powerful and famous of which was An Lushan 安 , setting the stage for the forthcoming rebellion (see also Twitchett, "Xuan Zong," pp. 426-27).

[beautiful] sounds to listen to,[12] and to have the clan increasingly prosper and the family grow increasingly rich. Only then can you use the words "reaching contentment!" I once had my ambition set on learning, and enriched myself by roaming in the arts,[13] and I myself believed that during those years the green and the purple [robes of the official] were for the taking.[14] Now I have already reached my prime,[15] but still I labor in the ditches and the fields. If this is not being in straits, then what is it?" As he finished speaking, his eyes became misty and he longed to sleep.

At the time, the host [of the rest-lodge] had just begun to steam millet.[16] The old man then groped within his sack, took out a pillow and gave it to him (Lu), saying, "Recline yourself on my

[11] According to Wang Meng'ou, the intent of the phrase *lieding er shi* 鼎而食 is like that of a passage in *Shiji*, 112.2961, which reads: "Now if a (real) man does not live and have the five caldrons to dine from, then he will die by being boiled in them" 且夫五鼎食，死五鼎 (Wang, p. 27).

[12] *Tangren xiaoshuo xuanxi*, p. 4 reads *sheng* as "beautiful music;" and Fu Jifu translates it as "the singing of women" (p. 39).

[13] The *WYYH* text 遊 paraphrases *Lunyu*, 2/4: "ambition set on learning" and 7/6: "roaming in the arts" 遊. The *TPGJ* text was evidently edited to more precisely replicate the maxims of the *Lunyu*, reading: 而遊.

[14] As is understood from Yan Shigu's commentary to the *Han shu*, 87.3566, in the Han dynasty *qingzi* 青 referred to the colors of the ribbons attached to the seals carried by officials holding the most eminent positions. However, by the time of the Tang dynasty the term had come to signify the color of the robes donned by high-ranking officials, with specific colors referring to specific positions (for more information, see *JTS*, 42.1785; 45.1951-53; for illustrations of T'ang official clothing, see *Zhongguo gudai fushi shi wuqian nian* 國五 [Hong Kong: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1984], pp. 79-80 and *Zhongguo gudai fushi shi* 國 [Shanghai: Zhongguo Xiju Chubanshe, 1984], pp. 86-7.

The *TPGJ* reads *zhuzi* 朱 ("vermilion and purple") for 青, but, for all intents and purposes, the thrust of the meaning is the same.

[15] Zhuang 壯 indicates thirty years of age (see Wang Meng'ou, p. 27).

[16] For *shu* *TPGJ* reads *huangliang*, another variety of millet. The importance of this textual variant, and its role in determining the authorship and textual history of this tale, will be discussed in the "Translator's Note."

pillow. It ought to allow you a glory and contentment like that of your ambitions."

This pillow was of green porcelain, and holes were at both of its ends. As the Scholar lowered his head towards it, he perceived[17] that its holes were gradually becoming larger, brighter and clearer, he thereupon raised up his body, entered and then arrived at his home.

After several months, he married a girl from the Cui Clan of Qinghe .[18] The girl's appearance was extremely beautiful, and the Scholar's wealth became greater and greater.[19] He was greatly pleased. From this time on, his clothes, baggage and equipage grew daily more attractive and magnificent.

[17] The texts of both the *WYYH* and the *TPGJ* read *jian* "seeing." However, immediately prior to this graph in the *TPGJ* text, there are the two graphs *meizhong* , "while asleep" strongly suggesting that Lu is not in a waking state when he "sees" the pillow's holes gradually becoming larger, brighter and clearer, but rather that he is already beginning his dream at this point.

[18] During the Tang dynasty, the Cui clan of Qinghe was included among the seven powerful and prestigious clans of the old nobility. In an essay in his *Mengxi bitan* , Shen Kuo (1031-95) enumerates these clans as follows:

Eventually, taking the registers of officials from previous generations as a basis, the Cui Clan of Boling 博陵, the Lu 盧 Clan of Fanyang 陽, the Li Clan of Longxi , and the Zheng 鄭 clan of Yingyang 陽 were designated as the "Lineages of the First Class." During the reign of Gaozong 高 under the Tang (r. 650-83), the Wang clan of Taiyuan , the Cui clan of Qinghe 河, and the Li clan of Zhaojun were added to them to form the "Seven Great Surnames" (translated by Denis Twitchett, "The Composition of the Tang Ruling Class," in *Perspectives on the Tang* pp. 55-6).

Qinghe was situated a few miles west of modern Qinghe in south-central Hebei (Tan Qixiang, 5.49).

[19] As Wang Meng'ou points out, Lu becomes wealthy with the dowry which the girl brings, which must surely be very great when considering the power and wealth of the prestigious Cui clan (p. 28). The *TPGJ* text confirms this reading: "The girl's appearance was extremely beautiful and her property was extremely abundant" 而產 .

During the next year, he was elevated as a presented-scholar examination and was entered on the list of graduates. He cast off his plain-cloth jacket and became Palace Library Editor.[20] After taking part in the special examination established by imperial decree,[21] he was transferred to be Commandant of Weinan 渭 .[22] Presently, he was promoted to Investigating Censor,[23] and transferred to be Imperial Diarist[24] as Drafter in Charge of

[20] The official position *mijiao* 祕 , an abbreviated form of the title *jiao-shu lang* (editor) in the *mishu sheng* 祕 (the Palace Library), entailed editorial work on imperial documents. In the Tang dynasty, such appointments were typically reserved for new graduates of the presented-scholar examination. There were eight such positions which were of the ninth rank (see Hucker, pp. 375-6 and 142, entries 1575 and 742, respectively; Wang Meng'ou, p. 28; and *JTS,* 43.1855).

[21] The *WYYH* text has *ying zhi* 制, which is more clearly read in the *TPGJ* text as *ying zhiju* 制 . *Zhiju* 制 refers to a special interview or examination given to very few choice presented-scholar graduates who are summoned by imperial decree. This examination was intended to determine individuals of outstanding ability for promotion to higher-ranking official positions (see *XTS,* 44.1159: 44.1169). The examination was sometimes personally attended by the Emperor (as in *JTS,* 8.182). The translation of the term is based on Robert des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens* (Paris: Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1932), p. 41.

[22] Although the position of *wei* was a common military one of the ninth rank which involved responsibilities more administrative than military in nature, this transfer certainly represents a promotion. Being posted at Weinan county was particularly prestigious since it was located in the capital region (see Hucker, p. 564, entry 7657 and Xu, p. 30), approximately thirty miles northeast of Chang'an, at modern Weinan in Shaanxi province (Tan Qixiang, 5.41).

[23] *Jiancha yushi* 察 was a position of the eighth rank which gave the holder broad-ranging responsibilities in that upper-echelon government agency, the Censorate (*Yushi tai* 臺). This agency maintained disciplinary surveillance over the whole of officialdom as well as regulated complaints and transgressions of a legal, military, economic, or religious nature (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #795, pp. 145-46; Wang, p. 29; and Xu, p. 30).

[24] The holder of the sixth-rank position of *qiju sheren* 起居 shared the duty of recording the daily activities of the Emperor together with other Imperial Diarists called *qiju lang* 起居 . The information which they recorded was later included in Imperial Diaries, which were used by scribes to compile official histories (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #622, p. 135; Wang, p. 29; and Xu, p. 30).

Imperial Edicts and Proclamations.[25] After three years, he went out [of the capital] to take charge of Tongzhou 同 ,[26] and [then] promoted to Shepherd of Shan 陝 [prefecture].[27] By nature the Scholar was fond of construction projects, and from Shan (prefecture) he dug a canal for eighty *li* westward that aided the inaccessible [areas]. The local people profited from this and engraved a stone (stele) commemorating his virtues. He moved to govern Bianzhou 汴 , assuming [the position of] Investigation

[25] *Zhizhi gao* 知制 was a prestigious position in the Secretariat (*zhongshu sheng*) which an official often held together with another position. The Drafter in Charge of Imperial Edicts and Proclamations had the special duty of presenting the edicts and proclamations to the Emperor (see *XTS,* 47.1211; Hucker, *Official Titles,* #955, p. 156; Wang, p. 29; and Xu, p. 30). The translation is modified from that of Robert des Rotours, *Traité des fonctionnaires et traité de l'armée* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1947), p. 182.

[26] Several commentators believe that the force of this phrase, "dian Tongzhou" 州, conveys the meaning of taking up the position of *cishi* 刺 , Prefect–the head of a prefecture–which during the Tang was a position of the third or fourth rank, depending on the land and population size under jurisdiction (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #7567, pp. 558-59; Tan Qixiang, p. 328; Wang, p. 29; Xu, p. 30).

Tongzhou 州 prefecture was located just outside the capital region about forty-five miles northeast of Chang'an at modern Dali prefecture in Shaanxi province (Tan Qixiang, 5.41).

[27] The ancient title of Shepherd (*mu*) originated in the Zhou dynasty when it referred to the official who oversaw one of the kingdom's Nine Regions (*jiu zhou* 州). By the time of the Tang, there were only a few positions which officially retained this title as it had been displaced by others such as Prefect (*Cishi* 刺) or Area Commander (*Dudu*). As in this case, prefects, area commanders and other comparable administrative officials were still sometimes unofficially referred to as shepherds (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #4041, p. 336 and #7110, p. 531; Wang, p. 29; Xu, p. 30). During the Tang, the prefecture of Shanzhou 陝州 was alternatively led by prefects, area commanders and military governors (*Jiedu shi*) (for example, see *XTS,* 4.89; 38.985; 50.1332; 71.2245; 217.6119). Shanzhou was located approximately 120 miles to the east of Chang'an at modern Shan 陝 county in the west part of Henan province (Tan Qixiang, 5.38; 5.44).

Commissioner of Henan circuit.[28] [Thereafter] he was summoned to be Metropolitan Governor of Jingzhao .[29]

That year, the Spiritual and Martial Emperor[30] had just engaged the Rong and the Di peoples[31] to increase the extent of the border territories. It happened that Tufan's[32] Ximeluo

[28] Investigation Commissioner (*Caifang shi* 採) was one of several titles of the delegates of the central government who were in charge of the newly demarcated units of land called *Dao* (circuits), each of which had jurisdiction over several prefectures (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #6826, p. 515; Xu, p. 31). In 733, the entire country was divided into fifteen such circuits. The Investigation Commissioner of Henan 河 circuit was posted at Bianzhou 州 prefecture (*JTS,* 38.1385), corresponding roughly with the location of modern Kaifeng 開 in Henan circuit. From 733 on, Henan circuit included not only modern Henan province, but also large areas of the provinces of Shandong, Anhui and Jiangsu (Tan Qixiang, 5.44).

[29] Since the Han dynasty, the title of Metropolitan Governor of Jingzhao yin 京 尹 designated the administrative chief of the dynastic capital and its surrounding areas. In the beginning of the Kaiyuan era in the Tang, the Metropolitan Prefecture was renamed Jingzhao fu 京 , and came to include the capital, Chang'an, and its environs. The position of Metropolitan Governor, which administered this region, was one of the third rank (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #1190-92, p. 170; *JTS,* 4.1915-16). Ch'ang-an and its vicinity was located at modern Xi'an (Tan Qixiang, 5.41).

[30] The Spiritual and Martial Emperor (*shenwu huangdi* 帝) was a title of reverence given to Emperor Hsüan-tsung in 739 (*JTS,* 8.171).

[31] In early texts like the *Guoyu* 國 and the *Zuo zhuan* , the many and various Rong and Di tribes are found scattered inside the Chou territories and around them. In this tale, however, the expression *rong di* refers to the Turks, Tibetans and Uighurs along the western frontier (Wang, p. 29; Hsü, p. 31). This usage is found throughout the Tang official dynasties (as in *JTS,* 120.3462; 146.5232; *XTS,* 137.4606; 215.6028). For an overview of the situation regarding the Zhou dynasty period tribes, see James Legge's prolegomena in *The Chinese Classics: Vol. 5, The Chun Qiu with the Zuo Zhuan* (rpt. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), pp. 122-35.

[32] Tibet, called Tufan or Tubo in the Chinese sources, first rose as a unified and powerful kingdom under the Yarlung dynasty around the end of the sixth century. Prior to that, no dates can be assigned securely (see R. A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization,* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972, p. 45). From the

邏 (Stagra [Konlog]) and Mangbuzhi 莽 支 (Cogro Manpoci) of Zhulong 龍 had attacked and captured Gua 瓜 and Sha 沙.[33]

end of the sixth century on, Tibet continued to expand its territory (compare Tan Qixiang, 5.32, 5.35 and 5.36) so that, by 820, Tang China had lost large tracts of land in modern Gansu and Ningxia circuits to Tibet, which at that time extended up northward into modern Inner Mongolia (Tan Qixiang, 5.76-77). For more on the kingdom of Tibet during the early middle ages, see Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia.* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987).

[33] The Tang standard histories (*JTS,* 99.3094; 103.3191-93; 196A.5229; *XTS,* 101.3953; 133.4547-48; 216A.6083-84) narrate that in 727 the Tibetan generals Ximeluo 悉 (written there as Xinuoluo 悉) and Mangbuzhi 布 attacked, plundered, burned and took hostages from garrison towns in the prefecture of Guazhou 瓜州 (which was located in the eastern part of modern Anxi 安 county in Gansu province [Tan Qixiang, 5.61]). Shazhou 沙州, the adjacent prefecture to the west (and better known as its later name of Dunhuang 敦 , [Tan Qixiang, 5.61]) is not mentioned explicitly; however, later in that year the Tibetans did also attack–although unsuccessfully–the county of Changle , which was located near the border of Shazhou (Tan Qixiang, 5.61). Combined Tibetan forces then went on to raid throughout the region (*JTS,* 194B. 5191; *XTS,* 215B.6067). Perfectly mirrored in our tale, this situation continued until the Emperor appointed Xiao Song (*c.* 669-749) the new military governor of Hexi. Like Scholar Lu, Xiao Song effectively organized defenses against the Tibetan incursions.

The names for Ximeluo and Mangbuzhi have also been rendered Stag sgra khon lod and Cog ro Manporje, respectively (see Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, p. 101). Ximeluo hailed from the Supi 毗 area of the kingdom of Tibet (*XTS,* 216.6087; Tan Qixiang, 5.77), where he was apparently a prince (*JTS,* 110.3316; *XTS,* 216A.6087). Later on, a Chinese spy allegedly had been sent to Tibet to slander him, and this led to his execution during the winter of 729 (*JTS,* 196a.5229; *XTS,* 216A.6083).

Mangbuzhi's home seems to be indicated by his surname, Zhulong 龍. Zhulong was a Tang-controlled prefecture since 646 (previously Uighurian), and it was located at the modern city of Cita (Chita) in the Buryat Autonomous Republic in the southeastern part of the Russian Federation in Asia (*JTS,* 38.1415; 191.5196; Tan Qixiang, 5.43). This Tibetan general continued to lead the combined Tibetan army for at least another decade (see Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, pp. 110, 114, 116, 118).

Furthermore, Military Governor[34] Wang Junchuo [35] had recently been killed, and the He Huang [36] was shaken into turmoil. The Emperor, desiring a commander of talent, consequently appointed the Scholar Vice Censor-in-Chief [37] and Military Governor of Hexi circuit.[38] Lu crushed the Rong rabble, cut off seven thousand heads, and opened up the land for

[34] The position of Military Governor (*jiedu shi*), particularly from the Kaiyuan era on, came to supplant and militarize the functions of the position of Area Commander (*dudu*) in the northern, western and southwestern frontier regions where more militant policies were being implemented against non-Chinese border peoples (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #777, p. 144; Xu, p. 31). For a capsule summary of the development of this position and its growing importance during the post–An Lushan era, see Pan Yihong, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan*, pp. 151-66.

[35] Wang Junchuo (d. 727) was a native of Changle county in Gua prefecture (see n. 33 above). While holding a lower rank at a frontier post, he was not treated respectfully by Uighurs and other Tiele tribes in the region. After becoming military governor of Hexi, he adopted a bellicose policy towards the Tibetans and these tribes, who in turn sent secret envoys to the Tang court to complain of him. When Wang heard of this, he reported that these tribes were planning to rebel. Emperor Xuanzong had the matter investigated, and the Uighurs were found guilty and their chieftains were exiled. Therefore, when Wang returned from attacking the Tibetans after their raids of 727 (during which Wang's father had been taken hostage), a nephew of one of the exiled chieftains organized his people and killed Wang (*JTS*, 8.191; 103.3191-93; 195.5198; *XTS*, 5.133; 133.4547-48; 216.6083-84; 217A.6114).

[36] He Huang 河 specifically refers to the lands lying between and around the He 河 (Yellow River) and the Huang River in modern Gansu and Qinghai provinces (Tan Qixiang, 5.61-62), and was generally used in the Tang to refer to "the land of the Western Rong " (地 河 ; *XTS*, 216.6104)–that is to say, the land of the non-Chinese peoples living along the western frontier (see n. 31 above).

[37] *Yushi zhongcheng* , a position of the fourth rank, was the second highest administrative position in the Censorate during the Tang (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #8174, p. 592; Xu, p. 32).

[38] Hexi 河 circuit was west of the Yellow River and covered areas of the modern provinces of Shaanxi, Gansu and Inner Mongolia (Tan Qixiang, 5.40-1 and 5.67-8).

nine hundred *li*. He built three great walled cities to shield the important strategic areas. The people of the frontier region erected a stone [stele] on Juyan 延 Mountain[39] to praise him.

He returned to the court, and was awarded an imperial document commemorating his meritorious service.[40] He was shown imperial favor and ritual treatment which was extremely

[39] There is no mention of a Juyan 居延 Mountain in the historical or geographical sources. In the Han, an outpost city called Juyan 居延 was established, and it was located near modern city of Ejin Qi in Inner Mongolia (Tan Qixiang, 2.33-34). In the Later Han, the regions surrounding this city and the lands extending far to the southwest were referred to as Juyan shuguo 居延 國 (Tan Qixiang, 2.57-58), and this entire area was included in Gan circuit 甘州 during the Tang. (*JTS*, 25.1641; Tan Qixiang, 5.61-2; 5.75). Xu Shinian suggests that the Yanzhi mountain range which was located in the southeastern part of Gan circuit (and southeast of modern Shandan) was at the time called Juyan (p. 32). I have not found any conclusive evidence which supports this contention, however. Incidentally, the area in Tang dynasty Gan circuit called Juyan is not to be confused with the area command bearing the same name which was established northeast of modern Bejing (*XTS*, 217.6145; 219.6174; Tan Qixiang, 5.42-43).

[40] At this time, the ritual commemoration called *cexun* entailed an imperial ceremony at which the Emperor personally conferred the official being honored with the documents. More general imperial documents known as *ce* (often written as , as in the *TPGJ* text and in other Tang sources) were used to confer appointments, emoluments and enfeoffments; however, *cexun* specifically bestowed honor on the meritorious servant, and seems to have followed a celebratory drinking ritual (*JTS*, 11.277; 120.3460; see also *XTS*, 173.5212 and *JTS*, 121.3483 where an appointment was indeed made; also helpful is the commentary of Wang, p. 30 and Xu, p. 32). These conditions are likewise found in the *locus classicus* occurrence of the term *cexun* in a passage in *Zuo zhuan* where Duke Huan of Lu (r. 711-694 B.C.) returns from a triumphant, peace-strengthening meeting with a Rong tribe. The passage continues:

Whenever the Duke sets out, he announces it in the ancestral temple. When he returns, he drinks [in celebration] of that. He sets down his drinking cup, and commemorates the merit of that on bamboo slips. This is the ritual. 行，

行， ， ， 也

The reading of *cexun* as a verb-noun compound is confirmed by Yang Bojun and Du Yu (222-284; see Yang Bojun, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu*, Huan 2, p. 91).

magnificent. He was transferred to be Vice Director in the Board of Civil Office,[41] and was [later] promoted to be the Minister of the Ministry of Revenue,[42] as well as the Censor-in-chief.[43] His renown at that time was pure and honorable; and many wished to closely associate [with him].

He was greatly envied by officials of the time, who employed ungrounded rumors to strike at him. He was demoted to became the Prefect of Duanzhou prefecture.[44] After three years, he was summoned to become Policy Advisor[45] and, not long after, Joint Manager of Affairs with the Secretariat-Chancellery.[46] He joined Secretariat Director Xiao Song [47] and Director of the

[41] During the Tang, the Board of Civil Office (*li bu*), one of the major agencies in the Department of State Affairs (*shangshu sheng*), was in general charge of appointments, evaluations, promotions, demotions, titles and honors of officials. The position of *li bu shilang* , Vice Director in the Ministry of Personnel, was one of the fourth rank (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #3630 and 5278, pp. 306 and 426-27; Wang, p. 30; Xu, p. 32).

[42] *Hu bu shangshu* , a third-rank position, was the head of the Ministry of Revenue (*shangshu*), a major central government agency responsible for land and population censuses, tax assessment and collection, and the storage and distribution of government revenues (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #2789, p. 258; Wang, p. 30; Xu, p. 32).

[43] *Yushi dafu* 夫, head of the Censorate, was a position of the third rank (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #8181, p. 593; Wang, p. 30-1; Xu, p. 32-3).

[44] Duanzhou 州 prefecture, very remote from the Tang political and cultural center, was located northwest of modern Hong Kong in Gaoyao 高 county in Guangdong province (Tan Qixiang, 5. 69-70).

[45] *Changshi* is an abbreviated form of *sanqi changshi* , the title of two positions of the third rank in the Chancellery (*menxia sheng* 下), the top government agency responsible for remonstrating and advising the Emperor about proposals and policy decisions (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #3939, p. 329; Wang Meng'ou, p. 31; and Xu, p. 33).

[46] The position, also referred to by the unwieldy title *tong zhongshu menxia pingzhang shi* 下 , was essentially that of Senior Chief Minister (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* # 1617, p. 193; Wang Meng'ou, p. 31; and Xu, p. 33).

[47] See n. 10 above and his biographies in *JTS*, 99.3093-5; *XTS*, 101. 3949-52.

Chancellery Pei Guangting 裴光 [48] in together controlling major government policy for over ten years. He received [the Emperor's] excellent plans and secret orders three times a day; presented revisions[49] when explaining and enriching;[50] and he was designnated as a worthy Minister.

Those of equal rank were jealous of him[51] and once more made false accusations, [claiming] he had contacts with frontier commanders whose plans were lawless. An imperial edict ordered his imprisonment, and functionaries from [Metropolitan] Headquarters[52] led followers to his gate and quickly detained him. The Scholar was frightened and astounded by these unfathomable

[48] The biographies of Pei Guangting (676-733) are in *JTS*, 84.2906-8; *XTS*, 108.4089-91. On the ministry of Xiao Song and Pei Guangting (729-33), see Denis Twitchett, "Xuan Zong (Reign 712-56)" (in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 3, Sui and Tang China, 589-906, Part 1*), pp. 393-95.

[49] *Xianti* 獻 recalls the words of the famous minister Yan Ying 嬰 (d. 500 B.C.) to Duke Jing 景 of Qi 齊 (r. 547-490 B.C.): "Thus it is between rulers and ministers. When there is that which will not do in what the ruler says is to be done, the minister presents [i.e., points out] those things which will not do so as to correct those things which are to be done. When there is that which will do in what the ruler says is not to be done, the minister presents those things which will do so as to remove those things which will not do" 亦然 所 而有 ， 獻 所 而有 ， 獻 (Yang Bojun, *Chunqiu Zuo Zhuan zhu*, Zhao 20, p. 1419).

[50] *Qiwo* 沃 echoes a phrase in the Yin dynasty (*ca.* 1600-*ca.* 1028 B.C.) King Wuding's admonition to his newly appointed minister Fu Yue in the *Shang shu*: "Open your mind, and enrich my mind" ，沃 (see James Legge, *The Chinese Classics, Volume 3*, "Shuo ming" 1, p. 252).

[51] The phrase *tonglie haizhi* recalls an episode in the *Shiji* biography of Qu Yuan (340?–278 B.C.), the famous poet and minister of the state of Chu: "The Grand Master Shangguan held the same rank as [Qu Yuan]. He strove for favor and was secretly envious of his abilities" 夫 ， 而 (*Shiji*, 84.2481; the translation is that of William H. Nienhauser, Jr., *et al.*, *The Grand Scribe's Records, Volume VII: The Memoirs of Pre-Han China*, p. 295). Much like Scholar Lu, Qu Yuan was slandered by the Grand Master and subsequently banished.

[52] Following Wang Meng'ou, p. 32.

events. He spoke to his wife, saying, "At my home East of the Mountains,[53] there are five *Qing*[54] of fine fields–enough to withstand cold and hunger. Why suffer pursuing an official's salary? And now that it has been brought to this, I long to wear that plain-cloth jacket and ride that black colt while travelling on the road to Handan 邯 . Yet this cannot be won back." He drew a knife to cut his own throat, but his wife came to his aid, seizing him, and sparing [his life]. Those who were implicated [in the plot] all died. Only the Scholar was protected by the eunuchs[55] so that his death sentence was commuted, and he was cast out to Huanzhou .[56] After several years, the Emperor learned of the injustice and once again sought him out to be Secretariat Director, enfeoffed him as Duke of Yanguo [57] with favor and purpose that was extraordinarily unusual.

[53] The term Shandong refers to the area east of the Taihang 行 Mountains and covered large parts of the modern provinces of Shandong, Henan and Hepei (Hsü, p. 31; Fu, p. 41).

[54] One *qing* of land is equivalent to one hundred *mu* , which in the Tang was roughly approximate to thirteen acres (*JTS,* 48.2088; Denis Twitchett, *Financial Administration under the Tang Dynasty* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963], p. xi). As pointed out by Uchiyama Chinari, under the Tang "equal land allocation system" (*Juntian*), each able-bodied adult man (*dingnan*) is–in theory, at least–to receive one *qing* of arable land (*Zui To shosetsu kenkyu*, p. 341; confirmed in *JTS,* 48.2088, where it is recorded that this system was implemented in 624). Having five times the amount of land as the next Tang peasant would seem to indicate the relative fortune of Lu's original life.

[55] *Zhongguan* (literally, "palace official") is a generic term for eunuch (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #1574, p. 191; and Wang, p. 32.).

[56] The prefecture of Huanzhou was located in the extreme southeast corner of the Tang empire in modern Vietnam (see Tan Qixiang, 5.73).

[57] Duke of Yanguo was merely a formal title unconnected with the Yan that was located in the vicinity of modern Beijing (see, Tan Qixiang, 3.41). By this time in the Tang, "feudal" (*fengjian* 建) appointments were made to honor officials, and rarely involved the actual bestowal of territorial enfeoffments (see Xu, pp. 34-5; *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 3, Sui and Tang China, 589-906, Part 1*, pp. 210-12).

He begot five sons. They were called Jian , Chuan , Wei , Ti and Yi . All were talented and capable. Jian was entered on the list of graduates as a presented-scholar, and became an Auxiliary Secretary in the Bureau of Evaluations.[58] Chuan became an Attendant Censor,[59] Wei became an Assistant Minister in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices,[60] and Ti became Commandant of Wannian 萬 .[61] Yi was the worthiest–at the age of twenty-eight, he became Rectifier of Omissions.[62] Their marital alliances were all with the world's renowned clans, and he had over ten grandsons.

Twice he was exiled to desolate borderlands, and both times he [was recalled to] ascend as a pillar of state.[63] Going out and

[58] Essentially a Vice-director, the Auxiliary Secretary (*Yuanwai lang* 外) worked with the Director of the Board of Evaluations (*Kaogong*) in maintaining personnel records of all officials whose service was being evaluated. This position was of the sixth rank (see Xu, p. 35; Wang, p. 32; Hucker, *Official Titles,* #3159, p. 278; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, pp. 28 and 59).

[59] *Shi yushi* was a position of the sixth rank in the Tang. It was the third highest-ranking post in the Censorate and held broad-ranging surveillance and impeachment powers (see Xu, p. 35; Hucker, *Official Titles,* #5350, p. 431; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p. 296).

[60] *Taichang cheng* was a position of the fifth rank in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices, one of the nine courts charged with overseeing the conduct of state sacrificial ceremonies (see Wang, p. 33, Xu, p. 35; Hucker, *Official Titles,* #6145, p. 476; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p 318-19).

[61] Wannian county was located just south of the Tang capital in modern Shaanxi province (see Tan Qixiang, 5.41).

[62] The term *Zuo xiang* is not found in the standard histories. Commentators have put forth various conflicting interpretations about its significance here, but the most reasonable appears to be that it refers to the position, *Zuo buque* , a position of the seventh rank in the Chancellery. Although not very highly-ranked, this post was considered prestigious because of its proximity to the Emperor (see Hsü, p. 35; Wang, p. 33; Hucker, *Official Titles,* #4777, pp. 391-92; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p. 151).

[63] *Taixuan* 臺 (sometimes written as) is a metaphor used to describe an important high-ranking official, often chief ministers. *Tai* refers to three stars in Ursa Major (*santai*) as well as to the three legs of a tripod, both of which

entering, in court and out, he wound and soared through the halls of state[64] for over fifty years with exalted magnificence and glorious brilliance. By nature he was inclined to extravagance and indulgence, and he was extremely fond of comfort and pleasure. The sounds and sights of his harem were all of the topmost beauty and elegance. From beginning to end, he was bestowed with fine lands, excellent mansions, beautiful women and famous horses–innumerable beyond count.

In his later years, he gradually grew feeble and old, and repeatedly requested his resignation,[65] but this was not allowed. He became ill, and people from the imperial palace, in inquiring after him, followed in one another's footsteps on the roads. There was no famous physician or superior medicine that did not reach

are metaphors for the three highest dignitaries of state, the *san gong* (“three Dukes,” see n. 73 below). *Xuan* refers to the rings attached to tripods which are used to raise the vessels (see Wang, p. 33; Xu, p. 35). In the Tang histories, *taixuan* is used in an imperial reply to describe Guo Ziyi (697-781), Shen Jiji's elder statesman (*JTS,* 120.3461), and in the concluding remarks of the biography of Shen's friend Lu Zhi (754-805; *JTS,* 139.3818).

[64] *Taige* 臺閣 has been used throughout the official histories to designate both the departments of state affairs and the highest ranking dignitaries who were positioned there (see des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p. 185 n. 2). In the Tang histories it is used primarily to refer to the three major departments of the central government: the Censorate (*yushi tai* 臺), the Secretariat (*zhongshu sheng*), and the Chancellery (*menxia sheng* 下) (see, for example, *XTS,* 47.1211; 116.4231; 123.4372; 203.5785).

[65] *Qi haigu* 骸 (literally, “begging for one's skeletal bones”) is a term which has been long used by high-ranking vassals and officials to request resignation and return to their homelands to lay their bones to rest (Wang, p. 33; Fu, pp. 38-9). Wang Meng'ou cites the relevant example in the *Shiji* (112.2952) of a memorial submitted to the throne by the Marquis of Pingjin , Gongsun Hong 孫弘 (*ca.* 200-121), who was of advanced age, very ill, and believed that he had warranted no merit to the Emperor as a marquis. The passage in his memorial reads:

The conduct and ability of Your vassal, Hong, has not been adequate of praise . . . . I wish to return the seals of the marquisate and request my resignation (*Qi haigu* 骸) so that the road will be cleared for those who are worthy.

him. On the verge of death, he submitted a memorial to the throne, which read:

> Your servant was originally a common scholar from East of the Mountains, with fields and gardens as his pleasures. By chance he encountered sagely fate, and obtained a series of official posts in succession. Beyond measure, he has received extraordinary rewards, special positions, and extensive favors. While out [of court], he held caducei and imperial *jing* banners;[66] and on entering [court], he was elevated to be the Chief Bulwark of the State.[67] In handling affairs[68] in and out [of court], he has passed through the many seasons of many years. He has disgraced Heavenly favor[69] by not augmenting Your sagely influence. He has been responsible for the chariot, but has bequeathed [only] plunder;[70] treading on thin [ice] has

[66] The phrase *chu yong jiejing* 擁 refers to Lu's appointments outside the capital and particularly to his appointment as Military Governor. During the Tang, military governors were given a pair of caducei (*jie*) and a pair of banners (*jing*) upon commission. The *jing* banners were often ornamented with tassels made with feathers or oxtails. For more information, see des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, pp. 165-68; 646-48.

[67] *Taifu* 臺輔 was an unofficial reference to one of the highest-ranking officials in the central government, such as a chief minister (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, # 6160, p. 477).

[68] *Zhouxuan* 旋, which can also be translated "Touring around" (see Xu, p. 42).

[69] *Tianen* for which *TPGJ* reads *enzao* 造, "favor brought upon him."

[70] The self-depreciatory phrase *fusheng yikou* 乘 寇 derives from the section on the "Jie" hexagram in the *Classic of Changes* (*Yijing* 易 , Hexagram 40, 6/3), which reads: "Burdened and riding a chariot will cause plunder to arrive" (且乘，致寇), which the *TPGJ* version once more matches more closely (cf. *fusheng zhikou* 乘致寇). The famous Han literati, Dong Zhongshu 仲 (*ca.* 179-*ca.* 104 B.C.), elucidates this classical phrase as follows:

Those who ride in chariots have the position of a gentleman. Those who bear burdens have the affairs of lesser people. This means those who occupy the position of a gentleman and yet behave as a common person will certainly find calamity arriving upon them.

increased his worries;[71] and each day he dreads another day so that he does not notice that old age has arrived.[72] This year he passes eighty [holding] the position highest among the three [in charge of] affairs.[73] But the bell and the clepsydra are simultaneously ceasing, and his tendons and bones are all aged. Lingering for a long time and drowning in dire straits, his time to tarry is swiftly being spent. Looking back, he has no successful achievement to submit to repay [Your Majesty's] radiant blessings, and he has fruitlessly carried Your profound favor. [Now] he is forever taking leave of this sagely dynasty. With unbearable feelings of attachment to the ultimate, he respectfully offers this declaration to express his gratitude.

An imperial mandate replied:

My Excellency has with eminent virtue performed as Our Primary Bulwark: when out [of court] you upheld Us as hedge and pillar; when in [court] you assisted in harmony and

乘車 ， 也 ， 也 此 居 ，而 行 ， 也 (*Han shu*, 56.2521).

[71] The image of treading on thin ice (*lü bo*) alludes to Mao, #195 and #196, both of which close with the following admonishing couplet (although #195 does insert one more in line between):

We should be apprehensive and careful,
As if we were treading on thin ice.

The *TPGJ* text accords with the penultimate line of the poem by reading *lü bo zhanjing* ("treading on thin [ice], he is apprehensive and careful") for *lü bo zeng you* 憂 ("treading on thin [ice] has increased his worries") in the *WYYH* text.

[72] *Bu zhi lao zhi* 知 , an echo of a passage in *Lunyu*, 7/19 in which Confucius describes himself as one who "does not notice that old age is about to arrive" 知 將 . *TPGJ* once again more closely mirrors the classical source, and in this instance does so exactly.

[73] "The three (in charge of) affairs" (*san shi*) is an expression extending back to the *Classic of Poetry* (Mao #194) and refers to "the three Dukes" (*san gong*) who are traditionally regarded as the three most powerful officials in the central government.

> prosperity. The ascending peace of [the last] two dozen years has truly relied on My Excellency. Recently you have contracted this illness, and We have daily spoken of your recovery. How is it that this is such a deep-seated chronic illness? We are very much taken up with sympathy for you. Now We have ordered Calvary General-in-chief Gao Lishi [74] to go to your mansion to inquire after and visit you. He will make efforts in contributing stone needles.[75] For Our sake, take care of yourself. We especially hope for nothing rash,[76] and look forward to your recovery.

That evening he passed away.

Scholar Lu yawned, stretched, and awakened to see that he himself was just then lying down in the rest-lodge. Old Man Lü was sitting by his side and the host [of the lodge] was steaming the millet which was not yet cooked. [Everything] that he sensed was as before. The Scholar was startled, but got up, saying, "Could it all have been a dream in my sleep?"

The old man said to the Scholar, "The contentments of human life are surely like that."

The Scholar was lost in thought for a great while. [Then] he thanked the old man and said, "Now, the ways of favor and disgrace, the fatefulness of failure and success, the principles of

[74] Gao Lishi served Hsüan-tsung as a loyal and trusted eunuch for nearly fifty years. His biographies are in *JTS,* 184.4757-59 and *XTS,* 207.5858-61. *Piaoqi da jiangjun* 將 is an honorary title of the first rank for military officers (see Hucker, *Official Titles,* #4620, p. 380; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p. 99). On Gao Lishi's appointment as Calvary General-in-chief, see *JTS,* 9.222.

[75] *Zhenshi* are implements used in therapeutic acupuncture. In this context, however, the term connotes Gao Lishi's trying to help out medically in a broader sense and not specifically with regard to the particular medical techniques that are indicated here (see Hsü, p. 37; Tan Qixiang, p. 328).

[76] *Wu wang* : The allusion here is to the *Classic of Changes* (*Yijing*, 25/9/5) which reads: "When there is illness without recklessness, there is joy without medicine" (*wu wang zhi ji, wu yao yu xi* , 有).

gain and loss, and the emotions of death and life–I have thoroughly known them. This is how you, venerable sir, have checked my desires.[77] Dare I not accept this lesson?"

He touched his forehead to the ground, bowed twice, and left.

[77] *Zhi wuyu* 吾 : The allusion here is once again to the *Classic of Changes* (*Yijing*, 41) once again which reads "The superior man accordingly restrains his anger and checks his desires" (*Junzi yi cheng fen zhi yu* 懲).

Translator's Note

Historicizing the Dream World and Parabolizing the Waking World: Shen Jiji and His "Zhenzhong ji" (Record within a Pillow)

Why did an official historian, Shen Jiji (*ca.* 740-*ca.* 803), write a tale such as "Zhenzhong ji" (Record within a Pillow)? His biographies, contained in the Tang dynasty standard histories, seem to lend a few clues in offering the following information about his life:[78]

> Shen Jiji was a native of Wu County in Su prefecture.[79] He was broadly versed in a multitude of texts, and his historical writing was particularly fine. Attendant Gentleman Yang Yan 炎 (727-81) of the Board of Civil Office met and praised him. In the beginning of the Jianzhong 建 era (780-84), Yang Yan became Chief Minister and recommended [Shen] Jiji as "a talent worthy of the historian's post." [Shen Jiji] was summoned and appointed as Reminder of the Left[80] and as Senior Compiler in the Bureau of Historiography.[81]

[78] These biographies are in *JTS,* 149.4034-39 and *XTS,* 132.4538-42. Three excellent studies of Shen's life which I have also made use of are Wang Meng'ou's "'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," pp. 7-16; Wang's "Shen Jiji shengping ji qi zuopin bushu;" and Uchiyama Chinari's, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû,* pp. 326-49.

[79] Modern Suzhou 州 in Jiangsu 江 province (see Tan Qixiang, 5.55).

[80] *Zuo shiyi* was a position of the eighth rank in the Chancellery. There were six Reminders in this department, and they were responsible for the regulation and distribution of proposals and for monitoring neglected affairs in imperial policy. See *XTS,* 47.1207; des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires,* pp. 151-2 and 187; Hucker, *Official Titles,* #3939, p. 329.

[81] The Bureau of Historiography (*Shiguan* 館) was established in 629. It was operated under the auspices of the Chancellery and was responsible for both the compilation of the histories of previous reigns as well as the continuing compilation of the current reign. During Shen Jiji's day, there were usually very

The official accounts also relate that Shen's patron, Yang Yan, committed criminal offenses less than two years after his appointment as Chief Minister. Yang Yan was subsequently demoted and banished to the remote and undesirable region of Ya 崖 prefecture.[82] Shen Jiji was likewise exiled and demoted to a minor position in the Bureau of Finances[83] in Chu prefecture.[84] Then, after a period of time left unspecified in the official biographies (but very likely during the general amnesty of 785), he was once again brought into the capital, where he took what was apparently his last position as Vice-director of the Board of Rites.[85]

We know that Shen Jiji was a scion of the well-known, influential Shen family of Wukang in Wuxing . This branch of the Shen family also produced such significant historical figures as Shen Junliang , a chief minister during the reign of Empress Wu Zetian (r. 690-705), the mother of Emperor Dezong (r. 779-805), as well as literary notables like the poet Shen Yüeh 約 (441-513) and Shen Yazhi (781-832), the poet and writer of tales who was Shen Jiji's cousin. Shen Jiji's own

few Senior Compilers ( ), most likely between two and four. See *JTS,* 43.1852-53; *XTS*, 47.1208, 1212, 1214; Hucker, *Official Titles,* # 5272, p. 426; des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires,* pp. 189 and 199-204; McMullen, *State and Scholars,* pp. 20-21.

[82] Located on modern Hainan 海 island (Tan Qixiang, 5.69).

[83] *Sihu* 司 was a local administrative agency responsible for a wide range of day-to-day financial matters. See *XTS,* 49.1317-18; des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires,* pp. 694-96; Hucker, *Official Titles,* # 2798, p. 259.

[84] Located in modern Zhejiang 江 province (Tan Qixiang, 5.55).

[85] The Board of Rites (*Libu*) was the central administrative agency responsible for overseeing and codifying all rituals and sacrifices, for regulating visits of foreign ambassadors, and for managing the civil service examination recruitment system. This organization was supervised by a Director (*Langzhong*) and a Vice-director (*Yuan wailang* 外), a position of the sixth rank. See *XTS,* 46.1185; Hucker, *Official Titles,* # 3631, pp. 306-07; des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires,* pp. 80-87.

grandfather, Shen Qijia , had once served as an assistant in the imperial library and later as a provincial administrator at the Bureau of Finances in Quan 泉 prefecture.[86] A collection of writings, now lost, is attributed to him in the standard histories.[87] As for Shen Jiji's father, Shen Chaozong , it is known that towards the end of the Tianbao era (742-756) he held the relatively petty position of master of records in Wuyi 義 county in Wu 婺 prefecture.[88] This was probably his final post; Shen Chaozong seems to have had a somewhat less than illustrious official career. Compared with towering figures which the Shen family of Wuxing had produced, this particular branch of the family had fallen on hard times. Thus, given these rather dismal prospects, Shen Jiji presumably had to rely largely on himself. Without an active network of official contacts, his best chance of entering the desired realm of officialdom was to immerse himself–perhaps totally untutored–in an extensive number of readings. Wang Meng'ou has therefore suggested that this might well be the meaning behind the standard histories' claim that Shen "was broadly versed in a multitude of texts."[89]

Very little is known for certain about Shen Jiji's early life. We know that his son, the poet and official historian Shen Chuanshi (d. 827), was born in 769 when Shen Jiji was nearly thirty years of age.[90] We also know from the colophon of his only other extant tale, "Renshi zhuan" ,[91] that he was living in

[86] Located in modern Fujian 福建 province (Tan Qixiang, 5.56).

[87] The title *Shen Qijia ji* 齊家 a collection in ten *juan* which bears his name, is listed in the bibliographical catalogues of the *JTS,* 47.2073 and the *XTS,* 60.1597.

[88] Located near modern Jinhua 金 city in Zhejiang province (Tan Qixiang, 5.55).

[89] "'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," p. 9.

[90] *JTS,* 149.4037. The official biography of Shen Chuanshi is linked with his father's.

[91] In Wang Meng'ou, ed. *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, p. 47.

Zhongling 鐘 (modern Nanchang city in Jiang 江 circuit) during the Dali era (766-780), sometime before heading to the capital in 788 to take a position in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices.

There is one phrase not translated above which is contained only in the *New History of The Tang dynasty* biography. It states that Shen Jiji's "classical learning was extensively clear" (*Jingxue gaiming* 該).[92] This suggests that Shen may have entered officialdom by passing the clarification of the classics (*mingjing*) examination. In Shen's day, this examination was second in prestige only to highly-coveted presented-scholar (*jinshi*) examination. The clarification of the classics examination tested the examinee's exegesis and rote knowledge of the classical Confucian canons,[93] subject matter which Shen Jiji was very comfortable with. It is highly unlikely that he ever passed the presented-scholar examination, since his name is not among the names of the successful graduates listed in the standard histories. In this connection, Wang Meng'ou points out that there is not one piece of poetry attributed to Shen Jiji, nor is there one poem that has been presented to him by a friend, as was the custom among literati poets. Since the presented-scholar examination contained a section which tested skills in the literary composition of poetry (*shi* 詩) and prose-poetry (*fu*),[94] Shen, who was apparently at a disadvantage with respect to *belles-lettres* composition, may very well never have sat for this examination.[95] Shen's dissatisfaction with the official examination system and the methods of selecting officials current in his day is clearly borne out in several of his other pieces of writing, including the *Treatise on Selection* (*Xuanju*

[92] See *XTS,* 132.4538.

[93] See *JTS,* 43.1829 and *XTS,* 44.1161-62.

[94] See *JTS,* 43.1829 and *XTS,* 44.1166-69.

[95] See Wang Meng'ou, "'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," p. 9; and his "Shen Jiji shengping ji qi zuopin bushu," p. 2.

zhi),[96] which he submitted to the throne in 779 when he held the post of Chief Musician in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices.[97] In this piece, Shen Jiji historically reviewed the function of composition skills in the official examination and selection process. His highly critical proposal was to de-emphasize *belles-lettres* and stress the classics and more practical genres instead. This placed Shen in eminent company: around this time, other scholar-officials who put forth similar proposals for reform included Jia Zhi (718-772), Lu Zhi (754-805) and Shen's friend, Du You (735-812). Du, perhaps under Shen's influence in these matters, preserved quite a few of the memorial submissions by Shen and the others in his *Tong dian*.[98]

By the time Emperor Dezong ascended the throne in 779, Shen Jiji had produced two memorials that he had submitted to the court. In addition to the already mentioned *Treatise on Selection*, his other memorial criticized the Tang national history which had been compiled by Wu Jing (670-749), proposing that Empress

[96] *XTS,* 58.1477 lists it in ten *juan*. Fragments of this work have been preserved in *Zizhi tongjian*, 226.7268.779.3 and *Tong dian,* 18.101.1-102.1. Some of Shen's other later writings which treat these subjects include *Deliberations on Selection Presented to the Throne* (*Shang Xuanju yi*), *Miscellaneous Deliberations on Selection* (*Xuanju zayi*), and *Discourse on Composition in Examinations* (*Cike lun* 詞). Fragments of these writings have been preserved in *Complete Prose of the Tang* (*Quan Tang wen*), 476.14a, together with a few other of Shen's official compositions.

[97] This date and the post are given in *Zizhi tongjian,* 226.7268.779.3; the position is confirmed in *XTS,* 45.1178. The position of Chief Musician (*Xuelü lang*) in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*Taichang si*) was of the eighth rank and was responsible for harmonizing musical notes (see des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires,* pp. 323-24; Hucker, *Official Titles,* # 6145, p. 476). Wang Meng'ou and Uchiyama both suggest that, since this is most likely not an entry-level position, Shen Jiji probably had been in officialdom for some time before 779 (see Wang, "Shen Jiji shengping ji qi zuopin bushu," p. 2; Uchiyama, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû,* p. 331).

[98] See McMullen, *State and Scholars,* pp. 203-4, 241-42.

Wu be downgraded in the Tang official records.[99] It is reasonable to assume that it was the strength of these writings which attracted the appreciative attention of reform-minded court officials like Yang Yan, who recommended Shen and his fine historical talent for promotion. Shen had finally reached a highly-valued milestone of the Tang scholar community. After striding onto this sovereign historical stage, Shen Jiji held his posts in the Chancellery and the Bureau of Historiography for about a year and a half, from early 780 to the end of 781. During this time, he compiled historical records of the new reign period. The result was the *Veritable Records of the Jianzhong Era* (*Jianzhong shilu*), a work in ten *juan*[100] which the Emperor and his Chief Minister, Yang Yan, no doubt assigned to the historian to enshrine their glorious actions. However, it was not long before the glorious events of the drama unfolding on the stage turned into those of tragedy.

Before the new Emperor personally installed him as Chief Minister in 779, Yang Yan had been a well-known financial administrator.[101] His patron was the brilliant but supremely corrupt Yuan Zai (d. 777),[102] who, having served as chief minister for both Emperors Suzong (r. 756-763) and Daizong (r. 763-779), had the ways and means to support and successively promote Yang Yan. When Yuan Zai's corruption and abuses of power reached unbearable proportions in 777, he was apprehended, prosecuted and executed largely through the machinations of his protégé and former friend, Liu Yan 晏 (*ca.*

[99] Fragments of this memorial, *Deliberations on the Inappropriateness of Raising [Empress Wu] Zetian in the Basic Annals* (*Zetian buyi cheng benji yi* 本), are contained in *Complete Prose of the Tang*, 476.14a and in Shen's official biographies (*JTS*, 149.4034-36 and *XTS*, 132.4538-39.).

[100] *JTS*, 149.4037; *XTS*, 58.1472.

[101] Yang Yan's official biographies are in *JTS*, 118.3418-26; *XTS*, 145.4722-29.

[102] Yuan Zai's official biographies are in *JTS*, 118.3409-14; *XTS*, 145.4711-15.

715-80).[103] Yuan Zai' scorpse was mutilated, his mansion razed to the ground, his family members slaughtered, and even his ancestral temple was levelled. Yang Yan had been very intimate with Yuan Zai–they were both from the district of Fengxiang and Yang Yan's mother was Yüan's relative. According to another source, the two were so close that, when Yüan in his later years took a new concubine, he allowed only Yang Yan to watch her dance and sing; the two men then extemporized matching poems to celebrate the occasion.[104] In the aftermath of Yuan Zai's downfall, Yang Yan faced the further humility of being demoted to a minor provincial post. However, with the passing of some two years and of Emperor Daizong, the new Emperor, Dezong, who had always appreciated Yang Yan's literary and calligraphic pieces, as well as his landscape paintings, summoned him back to court as Chief Minister. The vigorous new Emperor was fully prepared for Yang's outpouring of far-reaching ideas and proposals on economic and political reform, but this was not the case with the Chief Minister who had gained sole ascendancy in the vacuum that followed Yuan Zai's death–Liu Yan, Yang's detested archenemy.

The Emperor desired immediate proposals to rectify pressing economic and political problems, and Yang Yan responded in kind with a series of memorials, seeking to curb the enormous power wielded by imperial eunuchs and, toward the end of 779, to replace Liu Yen's fiscal policies with his own well-known "two-tax system" (*liangshui*).[105] Undoubtedly, Yang Yan did sincerely want to improve the current conditions of the empire, but he was also certainly motivated to avenge the inglorious and

[103] Liu Yan's official biographies are in *JTS,* 123.3511-16; *XTS,* 149.4793-99.

[104] *Tangshi jishi* 詩 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1965), 32.504.

[105] On this system, see Denis C. Twitchett, *Financial Administration under the Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 39-48, 157-60; for the dating of the memorial, see p. 337 n. 50.

ignoble demise of his benefactor, Yuan Zai. Shen Jiji probably appeared at the imperial court right in the middle of this vendetta, just as an edict was issued in early 780 which implicated Liu Yan in a eunuch scheme to replace the heir to the throne. Liu Yan was removed from office and banished to Zhong circuit where Yang Yan arranged for his murder.

Not long after, news of the unjust death of Liu Yan was in the air at the court. In a state of consternation, Yang Yan sent members of his coterie out among the circuits to disseminate a message slandering Liu Yan and attempting to justify his being put to death by attributing it to the Emperor's loathing of him. The Emperor soon discovered this. He considered Yang Yan's execution, but had him demoted instead in mid-781. The uneducated and unpleasant-looking Lu Qi 杞 (*fl.* 780-83)[106] was brought in as a new Chief Minister. He and Yang Yan feuded incessantly and disagreed about all sorts of personal and professional matters. Moreover, it is a distinct possibility that Lu Qi's object was to avenge Liu Yan's death.[107] Events thus came to a head when in the tenth month of 781 an edict was issued accusing Yang Yan of financial corruption and of usurping imperial power. He was subsequently prosecuted and banished to Ya prefecture.

Members of Yang's faction were banished as well, and Shen Jiji was among those who were banished. In the colophon at the end of "Renshi zhuan," Shen identifies some of his travelling companions on the journey to the southeast late in 781. Among them were Pei Ji 裴 (*fl.* 777-81)–who had also belonged to Yuan Zai's faction–and Sun Cheng (*fl.* 779-81), both of whom were at the very heart of Yang Yan's faction and were among the men

[106] Lu Qi has no official biography in the standard histories. He is throughout referred to as a "treacherous official," and was unscrupulous and very unpopular (as an example, see *XTS,* 52.1352-53).

[107] See Wei Chuhou 韋 厚 (773–828), "Qing ming cha Li Fengji pengdang shu" 察 吉 黨 , in *Complete Prose of the Tang,* ch. 716.

he had dispatched to elude the blame for Liu Yan's murder. The very famous and influential prose writer, Lu Chun 淳–better known by his later name, Lu Zhi (754-805)–was also on the journey.[108] While they were going into political exile, these men evidently tried to divert their attention from their unpleasant predicament and from the enormous problems at the imperial court by entertaining one another in a spirit of literary camaraderie. Shen Jiji recalls that:

> as we were floating down the Ying River and crossed the Huai River,[109] the boats were side by side and we flowed with the current. We feasted by day and talked all night, with each of us asking the other for another bizarre yarn.[110]

Under these conditions, Shen Jiji told the tale of Renshi, and his companions urged him to commit it to bamboo and silk.

Yet, however distracted Shen may have been on his journey into exile, he was no doubt utterly devastated when the news reached him that his benefactor, Yang Yan, had been murdered some one hundred *li* from the destination in Ya prefecture where he was to be banished. Yang Yan's fleeting career as chief minister, which dazzled with power, fame and glory, was abruptly cut short after a mere two years — together with his life. Shen Jiji, coming from a relatively impoverished family and being rather disadvantaged academically, had struggled for years to realize the most sought-after and highly-valued goals of his day, and all of his efforts seem to have been rewarded when he was finally

[108] For more on the identities of Shen's travelling companions, see Wang Meng'ou, "'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," pp. 11-13; and Uchiyama Chinari, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, pp. 333, 335-36.

[109] These rivers provided a waterway to the southeast, flowing–as they do today–from the center of modern Henan 河 province down through Anhui 安 province (Tan Qixiang, 5.32-33).

[110] In Wang Meng'ou, ed. *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, p. 47.

appreciated and recognized by Yang Yan. Shen could take advantage of this fortunate stroke of fate by riding on the crest of Yang Yan's success and further develop his skills and abilities and make a name for himself. He obviously felt very intimate with Yang, and he eulogized him and was probably responsible for the glowing parts of his official biographies.[111] But in less than two years, everything that he had eagerly aspired to suddenly vanished with the untimely end of his patron. Shen was left not only embroiled in the fickle stream of ups and downs characterizing officialdom, but presumably also left keenly questioning the meaning of his past endeavors. All the ideals which he held dear, all the splendor, fame and glory of officialdom, must surely have seemed illusory, evaporating with the elusive quality of a dream. Wracked with the profound psychological despair that attends the stripping away of life's greatest hopes and most cherished ambitions, Shen Jiji was doubtless intensely disoriented by a state of confusion which radically challenged his own deeply-rooted values and convictions. Thus, banished and in a state of mind akin to this, in late-781 or early-782[112] Shen composed "Record within a Pillow" with the intention of "checking the desire" of the many young men in his day who aspired to the lofty goals of officialdom.[113] Composing this tale may also have had a much-needed cathartic effect on Shen, for he probably was very grateful to have conjured

[111] For an analysis, see Wang Meng'ou, "'Zhenzhong ji' zai Tang chuanqi zhong diwei zai rending" 在 地 *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu tongxun* 1.1 (1991), pp. 14-5.

[112] The most thorough discussion of the dating of the tales's composition is that by Wang Meng'ou, "Du Shen Jiji 'Zhenzhong ji' bukao" *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan (chuangkan hao)* (1991), pp. 4-10.

[113] Cf. Wang Meng'ou, *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, p. 36; Wang Meng'ou, "'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," p. 16; Uchiyama Chinari, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, pp. 334, 342, 346; and Bian Xiaoxuan 萱, "Zhenzhong ji" , in *Tangdai wenshi luncong* , pp. 24-5.

up some wise man like the old Daoist Lü to guide him on his way and, as in the tale, say, "The contentments of human life are all like that."

Certainly Shen Jiji's son, Shen Chuanshi , seems to have heeded his father's warning to curb the desire for honored, powerful and eminent official positions. He passed the presented-scholar's examination in 806 (at least three years after Shen Jiji's death),[114] and went on to become a Hanlin scholar and a grand secretary. But when he was offered the more powerful position of scholar-in-attendance in the Hanlin, he declined because he believed that the appointment would lead to a chief ministership, a position which he politely claimed he was not capable of[115]–and which he was probably admonished to keep away from.

"Record within a Pillow" tells of an alternative world. Writers of early Chinese literature commonly employed this device.[116] In this particular tale, the alternative world is the dream world which is experienced by the Scholar named Lu. Lu's dream world is framed by the actual waking world which he and the old man Lü participate in. This world-within-a-world creates a tripartite structure in which the primary waking world embodies the secondary dream world. The two worlds are clearly separated,

[114] Wang Meng'ou, "'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," p. 14.

[115] *JTS,*149.4037; *XTS,* 132.4540-541.

[116] In a study of alternative worlds in Six dynasties and Tang fiction, Ye Qingbing 葉慶 distinguishes four types of early stories which make use of this structural device: stories about the netherworld (*mingjie*), stories about the world of the immortals (*hsien-hsiang* 仙), stories of pure fantasy (*huanjing*), and dream stories (*mengjing*). The following discussion of the structure of "Record within a Pillow" is indebted to some points made in Ye's article ("Liuchao zhi Tangdai de dajie jiegou xiaoshuo" 六 結 , *Taida Zhongwen xuebao* 3 [1989]: 7-28) and in Y. W. Ma's article, "Fact and Fantasy in Tang Tales," *CLEAR* 2.2 (July 1980): 167-81, which contains a discussion of this tale (see pp. 171-73; 175-77).

and Lu leaves the waking world of the rest-lodge on the road to Han-tan and enters the dream world through the Daoist priest's ceramic pillow. The dream world comprises the transitional stage, and the inner and outer waking world frames are rejoined when Lu awakes to discover that his dream had elapsed in less than the time it takes the host of the rest-lodge to steam some millet.

Although the passing of time in the waking world was fleeting, the dream world which Lu experiences seems to him to unfold as the palpable events of a monumental historical life lived for more than fifty years. As Lu lives out the desired life of his ambitions in the dream world, the events occur linearly over time, and a good many of them appear historically accurate, involving actual locations, conditions and people. In narrating Lu's experiences in the dream world, Shen Jiji adopted the prosaic, matter-of-fact writing style which had come to characterize official biographies in the standard histories.[117] He adheres to the various conventions of this style, accounting for Lu's examination successes, his marital alliance, his military and official successes and setbacks, the noteworthy achievements of his male heirs, and even memorials to and from the throne. In fact, the dream world section of the tale so closely reproduces the dynastic biographic style that, were it included in an official history, a seasoned reader would possibly not notice the difference. Unlike the fictitious, parable-like quality which marks the waking world narrative in the tale, Shen consciously attempted to lend such historical verisimilitude to the dream world that it would impress the reader as an account that might truly appear in the histories. Li Zhao (*fl.* 806-820) was struck by the historiographical nature of the dream section that is embodied within the very different

[117] For an excellent recent study on Chinese official biographies, or *liezhuan* ("arranged traditions"), see Denis C. Twitchett, "Biographies," in *The Writing of Official History under the Tang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 62-83.

waking world narrative; for, not long after Shen Jiji's death, he remarked in his *Supplements to the Tang National Histories* (*Tang guoshi bu*):

> Shen Jiji composed "Record within a Pillow" in the genre of Zhuangzi's allegories. Han Yu (768-824) composed "An Account of Mao Ying" (Mao Ying zhuan), and his writing is particularly lofty and not inferior to [that of] the [Grand] Scribe, [Sima] Qian 馬 (*ca.* 145-*ca.* 85 B.C.). Both pieces truly have the talent of excellent historians.[118]

As a professional historian, Shen Jiji no doubt understood very well that the past is largely known through written history, and that a record of a meritorious life which the historian passes on to the future generations is what comes to define the real fabric of that life. For the average literati in traditional China, historical biographies often served as inspirational models to aspire to. The Tang historian, Liu Zhiji (661-721) expressed these concepts very vividly, as follows:

If the professional historian is not forgone, and the bamboo and silk of their records survive, then even though a man himself has perished and vanished into the void, his deeds are as if they still survive, bright and clear as the stars of the Milky Way. As a result, scholars who come after can sit and open the wrappers and boxes [which hold the histories] and encounter in spirit all the men of antiquity; without leaving their own houses they can exhaust [the lessons of] a thousand years. When they read about a worthy exemplar, they think of emulating him. When they read of an unworthy one, they inwardly examine themselves.[119]

[118] In *Biji xiaoshuo daguan* (Taibei: Xinxing shuju, 1962), 1.3.4a.

[119] *Shitong* [Generalities on History], 710; *SPPY* edition, 11.303. The translation is slightly modified from Denis Twitchett, "Biographies," p. 77; who in turn slightly modified his translation from E. G. Pulleyblank, "Chinese

Scholar Lu also understands that a meritorious life can achieve everlasting future renown. Hence, when the Daoist priest asks him for his definition of contentment and success, the very first thing which the Scholar thinks of is "to establish meritorious deeds and sow a name." In other words, in establishing merit, his name would be enshrined in the histories and passed on in renown to future generations. Shen Jiji knew of this powerful effect of the otherwise often flat and dry dynastic biographic style, and he knew how it traditionally impacted on the reader, who, in reading it as authentic history, participates in it by reliving his own ambitions and dreams.[120]

Of course, it is not only writing style which sways readers, but also other additional aspects such as narrative form and content. The allegorical nature of "Record within a Pillow" has long been noticed and the search for the "true" allegorical identity of Scholar Lu has recently become the subject of a rather heated debate.[121] The character of Lu has been variously interpreted as representing Shen Jiji's patron, Yang Yan, Yang Yan's patron, Yuan Zai, their contemporary elder statesman Guo Ziyi, the chief

Historical Criticism: Liu Zhiji and Sima Guang," in W. G. Beasley and E. G. Pulleyblank, *Historians of China and Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 144.

[120] For this last point, I am indebted to Daniel Hsieh's article entitled "Induced Dreams, Reading, and the Rhetoric of 'Chen-chung chi'" *TkR* 27.1 (Autumn 1996), p. 88. In this article, Hsieh further elaborates the power of the orthodox style of official biographical writing on educated readers and its relation to "Record within a Pillow" (see especially pp. 79-89).

[121] In this connection, see especially Bian Xiaoxuan 萹, "'Zhenzhong ji' zhujiao yuanxing sanshuo zhiyi" 主角 *Xibei Shida xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* (1993.6), pp. 49-55. Bian Xiaoxuan argues vigorously against identifying the character of Scholar Lu with Zhang Yue (as in Ding Fanzhen 鎮, "'Zhenzhong ji' de zhujiao yanjiu" 主角 , in *Tangdai wenxue yanjiu* [Guangzhou: Guangxi shifan daxue Chubanshe, 1994]), with Guo Ziyi (as in Wang Meng'ou, "Du Shen Jiji 'Zhenzhong ji' bukao"), and with Yuan Zai (as in various Wang Meng'ou studies and in Uchiyama Chinari, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû,* pp. 341-45).

minister and poet from two generations earlier, Zhang Yue, or a composite of various Tang historical figures.

The overall career pattern of the dreaming Lu certainly bears many similarities with that of Zhang Yue,[122] as Uchiyama Chinari has noticed.[123] Like Lu, Zhang Yue's first post in officialdom was Palace Library Editor, and he rose all the way up to great prominence in the Kaiyuan era, becoming Chief Minister and the Duke of Yanguo in appreciation of his meritorious services. He also had a checkered career. He was demoted to a series of posts in the circuits, and then was transferred to the northeastern frontier to supervise military operations. Later on, despite several years of forced resignation, he was restored to high-ranking posts in the capital and basked in great imperial favor until the end of his life. When he passed away, the Emperor honored him by ordering three days of official state mourning.

Very specific parallels between Lu's dreamed experiences and events in the life of Xiao Song (*ca.* 669-749)[124] have been noted by nearly every scholar who has written on "Record within a Pillow." Xiao Song embodied Scholar Lu's cherished ideal of "being out (on the battlefield) as a general and in (the palace) as a minister" (*chujiang ruxiang* 將) to an even greater extent than did the more literary-minded and relatively pacifistic Zhang Yue. His early life did not resemble Lu's in the least, as he was a descendent of the royal house of Liang, entering officialdom through hereditary privilege and with little learning. He, however, held several posts similar to Lu such as Commandant, Investigating Censor, and Prefect. The most striking parallel passage in Xiao Song's biography is the description of the Tibetan incursion into the He and Huang River valley region in 727, and Xiao's role in quelling it. Although the account in the official

[122] Biographies in *JTS,* 97.3049-57; *XTS,* 125.4404-11.

[123] *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû,* p. 342.

[124] Biographies in *JTS,* 99.3093-95; *XTS,* 101.3949-52.

history is more detailed, the major events, persons and places are reflected in Shen Jiji's tale, and some phrases are even repeated verbatim. After the murder of Wang Junche, Xiao Song, like Lu, was appointed Military Governor of Hexi circuit. He strengthened defenses in the region by building great walled cities, rallying the people and making key changes in military personnel. In the following year, he personally led one of the attacks to crush the Tibetan army, and was rewarded by the pleased Emperor Xuanzong with unparalleled favors and an appointment as a chief minister at the very end of 728, and then finally becoming Senior Chief Minister (Jointly Manager of Affairs with the Secretariat-Chancellery) — a post which had been vacant since Zhang Yue's retirement — shortly before the death of Zhang Yue. Later on, Xiao Song too was enfeoffed as Duke of Yanguo and lived out his life to an age beyond eighty.

On one level, Scholar Lu's more literary (*wen*) side is represented by Zhang Yue, and his more martial (*wu*) side by Xiao Song. Shen Jiji seems to have designed his portrait of the Lu character by partially basing it on the lives of these towering historical figures of the two previous generations, thus combining the literary with the martial. But we also ought to consider the parallels between the careers of Zhang Yue and Xiao Song against those of Guo Ziyi and Yang Yan. Just as Xiao Song was appointed Chief Minister around the time of Zhang Yue's death, so Yang Yan's Chief Ministership was terminated at the time of Guo Ziyi's death. Inversely, Yang Yan's more literary and administrative talents parallel those of Zhang Yue, and Guo Ziyi's more military achievements those of Xiao Song. Furthermore, the transfer of power in both cases marked a new era at the inner court, with Xiao Song's new ministry being wholly aristocratic for the very first time during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong,[125] and with the

[125] See *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 3, Sui and Tang China, 589–906, Part 1*), p. 392.

new, practical policies advocated by Yang Yan displacing the old ones symbolized by Guo Ziyi and Liu Yan.

As an official historian, Shen Jiji had direct access to the historical archives, and therefore knew well the historical events of the Kaiyuan era almost exactly fifty years before. Yet, as Bian Xiaoxuan has pointed out, there are several minor historical inconsistencies in the tale, particularly in the Xiao Song "layer." Shen may have deliberately injected these inconsistencies into the narrative to make the reader aware that the events in the tale do not actually reflect the history of the Kaiyuan era, but instead reflect the events of Shen's own day during the ministership of Yang Yan.[126] As a writer of literary tales, Shen was supremely aware that if he were to explicitly base the character of Lu on the lives of his patrons, Yang Yan and Yuan Zai, all allegorical power would be lost on the reader. To effectively drive home his point, he rooted Lu's dream experiences in parallel conditions fifty years earlier and changed the ill-fated ends which befell his patrons to one more fortunate for Lu.[127]

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that there are several similarities between the life of the character, Lu, and the lives of Yuan Zai and his protégé , Yang Yan. Lu's life before entering the dream world resembles Yuan Zai's early life as attested to in his official biographies.[128] Although the reasons given in the two biographical accounts differ, Yuan's family became impoverished, and he spent much of his youth working in the fields. Also like Lu, he was fond of learning, good at composition, and liked to roam the philosophies and histories. He entered officialdom not through the presented-scholar's examination but through the less usual channel of the special examinations on the Daoist classics given under the reign of Xuanzong. As Chief Minister, he sent Liu

[126] "Zhenzhong ji, " p. 21.

[127] Wang Meng'ou, "'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," p. 16.

[128] Yuan Zai's official biographies are in *JTS*, 118.3409-14; *XTS*, 145.4711-15.

Yan to successfully restore the canal transportation system. Previously, he had been a prefect in the northwestern frontier region and, thus, one of his primary concerns was defence against foreign incursions. In 773, he proposed that walled towns be built in Yuan prefecture and that the Tang capital be moved to the south to assure better defence. Although his proposals were rejected, these actions must have influenced Shen Jiji in his description of the tale's Lu as "by nature being fond of construction projects…" and as "digging a canal for eighty *li* westward that bypassed the inaccessible [areas]." Yuan Zai's proposal of building walled cities in the northwest may even have reminded Shen of Xiao Song's construction of great walled cities and his stemming of the Tibetan incursion decades earlier, and particularly so when considering that it was Yang Yan himself who reinstated the exact same proposal in the second month of 781.[129]

The first part of Yang Yan's official biographies reads very much like the life Lu dreams, and some expressions and official titles are exactly replicated. Sometime after Yang "casts off his plain-cloth jacket, … he was appointed as Imperial Diarist … He was (later) promoted to be Director of the Board of Civil Office and Drafter in Charge of Imperial Edicts and Proclamations." Among other posts held in common with Lu, Yang Yan was, of course, appointed Chief Minister, and "the world unanimously looked upon him as a worthy (Chief) Minister." Also as with Lu, there were those who slandered of him with "ungrounded rumors," and he was demoted and banished twice. Yang Yan was murdered on his way to his second post of banishment. Lu, however, luckily escaped this fate by having his death sentence commuted, and, after several years of banishment, was restored to high-ranking posts in the capital, and was enfeoffed as Duke of Yanguo, living out a life long past the age of eighty.

[129] Yang Yan's official biographies are in *JTS*, 118.3418-26; *XTS*, 145.4722-29.

Whether or not one agrees with Bian Xiaoxuan that Shen Jiji exalts his lost benefactor in "Record within a Pillow" by restoring to him a perfect life, whole and without disgrace,[130] Shen would have been hard put to find a better model than Guo Ziyi[131] to complete the life Lu lives. Guo Ziyi was the preeminent loyalist general of the post-rebellion period and a highly-admired senior statesman when Yang Yan and Shen Jiji entered the inner court. In fact, he was so highly-admired that his portrait was included in the military temple of the semi-legendary Chou figure of Taigong [132] only a few months after his death, and the Emperor himself compared him to Taigong. Like many others in his day, Shen Jiji was no doubt greatly moved when this gigantic and glorious figure passed away during the sixth month of 781, less than one month before Yang Yan was demoted. The third and final shock of Yang's murder in the tenth month of that year prompted Shen to compose "Record within a Pillow," when the image of Guo Ziyi still loomed fresh in his mind.

Hence, the style and content of the final part of Shen's tale very closely mirrors Guo Ziyi's biography. Among his descendents, his eight sons and seven nephews all became important officials of the inner court, and he had dozens of grandsons. His residence in Chang'an occupied one-quarter of the ward it was in, and three thousand of his family members dwelt there. Then his biography relates the following passage which is strikingly similar to the matching one in the tale:

> From beginning to end, he was bestowed with fine lands, beautiful vessels, renowned gardens, excellent lodges, music and women, valuable trinkets… innumerable beyond reckoning.

[130] "Zhenzhong ji," pp. 23-4.
[131] Guo Ziyi's biography is in *JTS,* 120.3449-66.
[132] See *Shiji*, Chapter 32.

There is also the series of memorials submitted by Guo Ziyi to the throne requesting his resignation, and these are accompanied by several imperial replies. The tone, content and style of these documents apparently stirred Shen Jiji; for, from them, he seems to have appropriated a good number of phrases and expressions. Guo wants to "beg for his bones and preserve his remaining teeth." He humbles his conduct and virtue as unworthy of the imperial kindness that has been shown him. "He has been responsible for the chariot, but he has bequeathed (only) plunder." The Emperor's reply is a kind refusal which also notifies Guo that a eunuch will visit him with medicines and needles. This continues several times until the new Emperor Dezong allows him to retire. When Guo Ziyi did pass away, the Emperor ordered five days of state mourning, and praised him in a memorial with such honorific designations as "pillar of state."

There are, of course, dream stories which predate Shen Jiji's tale, but "Record within a Pillow" is the earliest example we have of a well-developed dream story in Chinese literature.[133] It seems that Shen Jiji derived the basic structure of his tale from a Six Dynasties anecdote.[134] In this anecdote, a merchant named Yang Lin visits a temple where a priest directs him to a jade pillow.

[133] See, for example, the remarks by Ye Qingbing, "Liuchao zhi Tangdai," pp. 17-18.

[134] This anecdote is entitled "Yang Lin" in *TPGJ*, 283.2254, where the original source is attributed to Liu Yiqing's 慶 (403-444) now extant work *Youming lu* . It is also recorded in Yueshi later (930-1007) *Taiping huanyu ji* 寰 (N.p.: Jinling Shujü, 1882), 126.6a, which gives an additional source as Gan Bao's (*fl.* 320) *Soushen ji* 搜 . However, the anecdote does not exist in modern editions of *Soushen ji.*

Wang Meng'ou ("'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," pp. 5-6) and David Knechtges ("Dream Adventure Stories," pp. 108-09) are among those scholars who have noted the connection between "Record within a Pillow" and the "Yang Lin" anecdote. *Youming lu* was certainly circulating during Shen Jiji's time. See Wang Meng'ou, "'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," p. 5 for a brief sketch of the transmission of *Youming lu* through the Sui, Tang and the Five Dynasties.

Yang Lin enters the pillow through a crack, and sees magnificent buildings and palaces. He meets a powerful official inside one of the buildings, and the official marries him to his beautiful daughter. The couple have six children, and each becomes a Palace Library Editor. Several decades pass, and Yang Lin finds that he has no desire to return to his native land. Then, suddenly, as if awakening from a dream, he finds that he is still next to the pillow, where he sits for a long time in distress.

Although Shen Jiji retained some elements of this matter-of-factly narrated anecdote and much of its rudimentary structure, he breathed new life into the original story by adding a large number of details, embellishments and changes, one of which is obviously the character of Lu. As we have seen, the Scholar, Lu, embraces the lofty hopes and dreams which very much reflect some of the achievements of Shen Jiji's contemporaries, Yang Yan, Yuan Zai and Guo Ziyi as well as the historical figures of Xiao Song and Zhang Yue from two generations earlier. In essence, Lu is the embodiment of the Tang scholar community's primary focus of ambition: to succeed in an official career as a powerful military leader and an influential policy advisor in the Tang imperial court. Shen Jiji himself wrote in 779 of this ambitious pursuit:

> Becoming an official is like ascending as an immortal; not becoming an official is like sinking to the abyss. The delights and pleasures (of the official) and the grief and suffering (of the other) are as far from one another as heaven and earth.[135]

[135] A passage from *Treatise on Selection*, preserved by Shen's friend, Du You 佑 (735-812) in *Tong dian* , (*Guoxue jiben congshu* ed. [Taibei rpt.: Xinxing Shuju, 1962], 18.101.1). This passage can also be found in *Complete Prose of the Tang* (*Quan Tang wen*), 476.14a. Fragments of this work of Shen's have also been preserved in *Zizhi tongjian*, 226.7268.779.3. On the friendship between Shen Jiji and Du You, see Du Mu (803-852), ed. *Fanchuan wenji* (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1978), 14.11a-b.

Lu represents the pursuit of these Tang scholar-official ideals and his dream the fulfillment of them. The fabric of Lu's overwhelming desire to pursue the fame, fortune and glory of an official career is woven into his realistic dream–complete with its grave setbacks–in which he ascends resplendently to the divine heights of officialdom.

The old Daoist priest, Old Man Lü, represents the wise man who can penetrate the meaning of human life. He allows Scholar Lu to dream and guides him toward enlightenment. For the dream to be effective, the dreamer must be a young person like Lu; for if he had already travelled too far along the road of life toward old age, then the full significance of the dream may have been lost upon him. Because Lu is in the very prime of his life, just setting out on his adult life-path and still very innocent regarding what may lie ahead, Old Man Lü permits him to experience a dream which inevitably has full effect on him. By having Lu live out a complete lifetime during the time it takes to steam millet, the Daoist allows the Scholar to fathom very quickly and very clearly the actual face of human reality. If Lu were an older man whose life journey was nearly over, then the dreamed experience might simply have been or seemed to be a recollection of his own past rather than of future possibilities.

At the climax of the tale, when Lu re-enters the waking world to find himself still lying down next to the pillow in the rest-lodge with Old Man Lü by his side and the millet not yet done — finding all things precisely as they were before he entered the dream world — he realizes that the entire life he had experienced was but a dream. He becomes agitated after awhile and asks, "Could it all have been a dream in my sleep?" And the old Daoist's response is perhaps the most surprising of all: "The contentments of human life are all like that." A concealed awareness seems to underlie Old Man Lü's words, which seem to express that all which Scholar Lu had experienced in the dream

world was as clear to him as the back of his hand. It is as if Lü had been part of an audience observing the dramatic events of Lu's dream-life unfold on a stage. It could only be that the dream which the Scholar experienced was akin to that which the old man had already experienced in some manner in the past–that all the ups and downs, successes and failures, pleasure and pain which Lu experienced were also those which he had encountered. On the basis of this uncanny empathy with Lu's dreamed experiences, the old priest is able to instruct the younger man in a law previously undisclosed to him. Otherwise unable to communicate this lesson verbally, Old Man Lü could only instruct Lu through the medium of a vivid and thoroughly realistic dream experience reinforced by his own shared empathetic experiences.

At the very end of the tale, Scholar Lu evidently becomes totally aware of the awe-inspiring and tragic nature of the human condition. He is lost in thought for a long time before he thanks the old man and says:

> Now, the ways of favor and disgrace, the fatefulness of failure and success, the principle of gain and loss, and the emotions of death and life — I thoroughly understand them. This is how you, venerable sir, have checked my desires. Dare I not accept this lesson?

Then he bows and departs, leaving the reader to pause in thought.

The two waking world frames are set entirely in a rest-lodge on the road to Handan. Shen Jiji uses this place-name to allude to a story in the Daoist classic, *Zhuang zi.*[136] This story tells of a young boy who goes to Handan to learn its inhabitants' wonderful way of walking. But he fails to fully master the Handan walk and also forgets his original way of walking. When he

[136] 17.79-80. *SPPY* edition. This allusion has been pointed out by Uchiyama, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, p. 341, and by William H. Nienhauser, Jr., "The World inside a Pillow," p. 435.

realizes that he has lost the ability to walk, he is forced to crawl all the way back to his home in Shouling 壽 (in the state of Yan). Scholar Lu in the dream world resembles the boy from Shouling in several respects. Just as the boy is overly presumptuous in going a way that differs from his true nature in attempting to learn another way of walking, so Lu is presumptuous in considering himself a gentleman worthy of what he perceives is a wonderfully prestigious and prosperous life. In Handan, the boy finds himself having lost his natural and original way of walking; and in the dream world (*his* Handan), Lu finds himself having traded in his miserable plain-cloth jacket for luxurious official robes, his black colt for magnificent chariots, and his fine farmland for spectacular mansions. In the dream world–even *before* he is ultimately afforded enlightenment–he realizes that he has lost the simple nature and plain innocence of his true, original life. When his career plunges to its lowest point and he faces the greatest danger and disgrace in the dream world, he is about to commit suicide and he cries out to his wife in fear and desperation:

> At my home East of the Mountains, there are five *qing* of fine fields — enough to withstand cold and hunger. Why do I suffer by pursuing an official's salary? And now that it has come to this, I long to wear that plain-cloth jacket and ride that black colt while travelling on the road to Handan. Yet this cannot be won back.

But in the dream world, Lu apparently does not take the lesson to heart. He is saved and eventually restored, and lives out his lengthy life as a powerful and honored official.

There remains one other very significant allusion in the tale. Shen Jiji uses clothing and baggage (*yizhuang*) as a symbol of Lu's ascent as he crosses over from the waking world to the dream world. First, there is the old Daoist who sits down in the rest-lodge and leans on his baggage. Then, after enjoying each other's

company for a while, the Scholar realizes how dirty and shabby his clothes and his baggage are. It is this realization which puts him in a discontented mood and which leads Old Man Lü to offer the pillow and the dream world to Lu. Lu's clothes and baggage not only signal his entry into the dream world but also trace his rise there when, after marrying into a wealthy and prestigious family, "his clothes, baggage and equipage grew daily more attractive and magnificent." The rare term for "clothes and baggage," *yizhuang*,[137] is also an allusion to a story in another Daoist classic of the third or fourth century, *Lie Zi* .[138] Neatly corresponding with "Record within a Pillow," this story takes place on the road to Handan where the great Confucian scholar Niu Que meets some bandits. They take everything he has: his clothes and baggage (*yizhuang*), and his chariot and horses — the sort of things that Lu had first come to acquire during his rise in the dream world. But Niu Que, unruffled, walked away showing no worry or regret. The curious bandits ran after him to find out why, and Niu told them that a gentleman does not risk his life for possessions. Afterwards, the bandits talked it over with one another and decided, "With his worthiness, if he goes to see the Lord of Zhao , he will certainly get us into trouble. It would be best to kill him," which they did. Niu Que, like Lu, proudly considered himself a worthy gentleman, and, while Lu loses the simplicity of his original nature, Niu indeed loses his life. Perhaps Shen Jiji intended for his readers to take this warning to heart, and (unlike Niu Que) react appropriately and spontaneously to the conditions and times one finds oneself in, rather than trying to mold them according to one's self-estimation or desired ambitions. The catastrophe of Niu Que, furthermore, somewhat resembles the demise of Shen's benefactors, Yang Yan and Yuan Zai. All considered themselves worthy scholars, and all were murdered by

[137] See n. 8 above.

[138] Yang Bojun 伯 , ed. *Lie Zi jishi*, 8.166.

(in Shen Jiji's eyes) petty bandits. The way the bandits talked with one another, fearful of retribution from Niu and the Lord of Zhao, may have been the way Yuan Zai and Yang Yan's political adversaries spoke with one another. The bandits let Niu Que go and then, on second thought, they decide to pursue and kill him. This echoes the demise of Yang and Yen, who were both demoted and, in entering banishment, murdered.

Nonetheless, the dream world finally comes into contact again with the waking world precisely when the aged Lu passes away and Scholar Lu awakens. The boundary between dream-sleep and waking mirrors that between death and life, and Lu crosses back over carrying with him the experiences and memories commemorating a rich fifty-year life full of power, fame and glory, all of which have instantaneously vanished, and all of which have occurred, paradoxically, in a fleeting instant. Lu's lofty desires are "checked" after he has experienced the fulfillment of his ideals, lived out a full lifetime, and dies. Now he thoroughly understands life's vicissitudes, its gains and losses, successes and failures–and, most of all, death. Old Man Lü has led the Scholar on a journey towards death's wisdom. On awakening, Lu by no means experiences the slightest sense of "rebirth," but rather an intense form of psychological death, and this experience is reconfirmed by the sight and the words of the aged Daoist. The Scholar has experienced the one basic and unalterable fact of life: that of the inevitable, unrelenting process from birth to death.

Glossary

chi haigu **vo.** "to request resignation" (literally, "to beg for one's skeletal bones"; sometimes abbreviated to *chi hai* 骸); a term which has been long used by high-ranking vassals and officials to request resignation and return to their homelands to lay their bones to rest. "Zhenzhong ji": 骸 "(He) repeatedly requested his resignation" (Wang Meng'ou, p. 25, line 3). Other examples: *XTS,* 137.4608: …衰 骸 "Your servant (Guo Ziyi)…is old and feeble and is requesting his resignation."

chiwo 啟沃 **v.** "to explain and enrich"; "Zhenzhong ji": "He presented revisions while explaining and enriching so that he was said to be a worthy minister" (Wang Meng'ou, 24.9); Other examples: *JTS,* 120.3459: … … "Your servant (Guo Ziyi) has participated in the explaining and enriching of plans . . ."

chujiang ruxiang **idiom.** "to go out (on the battlefield) as a general and come into (the palace) as a minister"; "Zhenzhong ji": … 將 …"A gentleman living in the world ought to…go out (on the battlefield) as a general and come into (the palace) as a minister…" (Wang Meng'ou, 23.6); Other examples: *JTS,* 106.3240: [ ] … 欲 將 "[Li] Linfu (d. 752) . . . was determined in the desire to nip 'going out (on the battlefield) as a general and coming into (the palace) as a minister' at the source."

duanhe 褐 **n.** "plain-cloth jacket" (also written as *shuhe*); a type of clothing worn by poor commoners in the Tang and in previous dynasties. "Zhenzhong ji": 乘

"(Scholar Lu) was wearing a plain-cloth jacket and riding a black colt" (Wang Meng'ou, 24.11); Other examples: *Shiji* , 75.2353: 後 綺 "Now (the women of) Your Lordship's back palaces tread on damask silk gauze, while your knights cannot (even) obtain plain-cloth jackets."

fusheng zhikou **idiom.** "to be responsible for the chariot, and to bring about plunder" (also expressed as *fusheng zhikou* 乘貽); derived from *Yijing* 易 , 40, 6/3: 乘 "Burdened and riding a chariot will cause plunderers to arrive"; "Zhenzhong ji": 忝 乘貽 …"He has disgraced the Heavenly favors by not augmenting Your Majesty's civilizing influence. He has been responsible for the chariot, but he has bequeathed (only) plunder…" (Wang Meng'ou, 25.5); Other examples: *JTS,* 120.3460: 難 乘 . . . "His virtue is slight but his position is eminent, and it is difficult to evade his duties to the Son of Heaven. He has been responsible for the chariot, but he has brought about (only) plunder . . . ."

jiangong **vo.** "to establish merit, meritorious deeds"; "Zhenzhong ji": … "A gentleman living in the world ought to establish meritorious deeds…" (Wang Meng'ou, 23.6); Other examples: "Haoshi fu xu" (Preface to Prose-poem on Stalwart Gentlemen) by Lu Ji (261–303): "There is not only one road (which leads) to establishing merit" (*Jin shu* , 45.1473; *Wen xuan* , *ch.* 46, p. 2043).

jingzhao yin 兆 **n.** "Metropolitan Governor of Jingzhao"; the administrative chief of the dynastic capital and its surrounding areas.

lieding er shi 列 **idiom.** "to have rich caldrons arranged to dine from," signifying an abundance of sumptuous food and drink; "Zhenzhong ji": 生 當…列鼎而食… "A gentleman living in the world ought to . . . have rich caldrons arranged to dine from…" (Wang Meng'ou, 23.6); Other examples: *Kongzi jiayu* 孔 家語, 2/8, p. 17: 後…累 而坐 列鼎而食…"After the death of one's parents…one is to have piles of cushions to sit on and rich caldrons arranged to dine from."

lubo **idiom.** "to tread on thin (ice)" (also *lubing* 履); derives from *Shijing* Mao, numbers 195 and 196: 兢兢 履 "We should be apprehensive and careful/As if treading on thin ice"; "Zhenzhong ji": 履 增憂… "…treading on thin (ice) has increased his worries . . . ." (Wang Meng'ou, 25.5); "Xizheng fu" 征賦 (Prose-poem on the Punitive Expedition to the West) by Pan Anren 潘 (Jin dynasty): 而履 。 "…as if on the brink of the abyss and treading on thin (ice)" (*Wen xuan, ch.* 10, p. 442).

qing **n.** Banners given to officials such as military governors; often ornamented with feather or oxtail tassels.

qing **measure word** for area; one *qing* of land is equivalent to one hundred *mu* , which in the Tang was roughly equal to fourteen acres.

qingzi 青 **n.** "green and the purple (official robes)"; colors of the ribbons attached to the seals held by high-ranking officials in the Han dynasty; in the Tang "green and purple" referred to the color of the clothing worn by high-ranking officials; "Zhenzhong ji": 當 。 "I myself believed that during those years the green and purple (robes of the official) were for the taking." (Wang Meng'ou, 23.7).

Rong Di 戎 **n.** "the Rong and the Di peoples"; generic terms for the non-Chinese peoples living along the western and northern borders of China; "Zhenzhong ji": 方事 "(The Emperor) was going to engage the Rong and the Di peoples." (Wang Meng'ou, 24.3); Other examples: *XTS*, 137.4606: 信 "The Rong and the Di are of savage disposition and are not to be trusted."

san shi 三 **n.** "the three (in charge of) affairs," referring to "the three Dukes" *san gong* who are traditionally regarded as the three most powerful officials in the central government; from Mao number 194: 事 "The three (in charge of) affairs and the Grand Masters/Are unwilling to (attend to their duties) morning and night"; "Zhenzhong ji": 八 事 "This year he passes eight (holding) the position highest among the three (in charge of) affairs." (Wang Meng'ou, 25.6); Other examples: *JTS*, 171.4423: 事 議 "Now the three (in charge of) affairs, the Grand Masters and the hundred officials are assembling and deliberating."

shandong 山 **n.** "east of the mountains"; in the Tang indicated the area east of the Taihang Mountains which covered large parts of the modern provinces of Shandong, Henan and Hebei.

shuming 樹 **vo.** "to sow a name, establish fame, reputation"; "Zhenzhong ji": . . . 樹 . . . ; "A gentleman living in the world ought to . . . sow a name (for himself) . . ." (Wang Meng'ou, 23.6).

taifu **n.** "Chief Bulwark of the State" (also written as 台); an unofficial reference to one of the highest-ranking officials in

the central government such as a chief minister; "Zhenzhong ji": … "…entering (the court) he was elevated to be Chief Bulwark of the State" (Wang Meng'ou, 25.5); Other examples: *Sanguo zhi* , 6.208: … "(These men) had successive positions among the nine ministers, and were then raised to become Chief Bulwarks of the State."

taige **n.** "the halls of state"; has been used throughout the official histories to designate both the departments of state affairs and the highest-ranking dignitaries who were positioned there, and in the Tang it was used primarily to refer to the three major departments of the central government: the Censorate (*yushi tai*), the Secretariat (*zhongshu sheng* 省), and the Chancellery (*menxia sheng* 省); "Zhenzhong ji": "He wound and soared through the halls of state for over fifty years" (Wang Meng'ou, 25.1); Other examples: *XTS,* 123.4372: 充 "Inside the halls of state it is completely filled with the vermilion and the purple (clothing of officials)."

taixuan **n.** "pillar of state" (also written as 台); a metaphor used to describe an important high-ranking official, often a chief minister; "Zhenzhong ji": "He (was recalled to) ascend as a pillar of state" (Wang Meng'ou, 25.1); Other examples: *JTS,* 120.3461: "Your Excellency has come in acting as pillar of state and gone out leading military flags."

wu wang **idiom.** "nothing rash, reckless, expected"; from *Yijing*, 25, 9/5: 疾 勿 "Even an illness without recklessness will have joy without medicine"; "Zhenzhong ji": 猶 … "We especially hope for nothing rash…" (Wang

Meng'ou, 25.10); Other examples: *Zhanguo ce* , Chu , 4.578.79: "In the world there is unexpected fortune and there is also unexpected misfortune."

xianti 替 **vo.** "to present revisions"; "Zhenzhong ji": … "He received (imperial plans) three times a day, and he presented revisions…" (Wang Meng'ou, 24.9); Other examples: *JTS,* 174.4514: 猶 "Even when far away, he still thinks about presenting revisions."

yizhuang **n.** "clothing and baggage"; "Zhenzhong ji": 顧 … "Scholar Lu looked at his clothing and baggage…" (Wang Meng'ou, 23.3); Other examples: *Liezi* , *ch.* 8: "(The bandits) took all that Niu Que had, clothing and baggage, carriage and horses" (*Liezi jishi* 釋, *ch.* 8, p. 166).

youyi **(or *you yu yi*) idiom.** "to roam in the arts" (to take recreation in the arts); derived from *Lunyu,* 7/6; "Zhenzhong ji": 吾 . . . . . .; "I once…enriched myself by roaming in the arts . . . " (Wang Meng'ou, 23.7); Other examples: *JTS,* 147.3983: . . . . . .; "Your servant (Du You) . . . , when young, ascended to the official ranks and, taking office, he did not roam in the arts . . . ."

zhi yu xue 學 **idiom.** "to have ambition set on learning"; derived from *Lunyu,* 2/4: 吾 "At fifteen, I had my ambition set on learning"; "Zhenzhong ji": 吾 . . . ; "I once had my ambition set on learning . . ." (Wang Meng'ou, 23.7); Other examples *JTS,* 189.4952: ( ) 晚 尤 . . . ; "In his later years, (Xiao) Deyan (Tang dynasty) was particularly diligent in setting his ambition on learning…"

zhizhigao 制 **n.** "Drafter in Charge of Imperial Edicts and Proclamations"; the official assigned to this prestigious post in the Secretariat had the special duty of presenting the edicts and proclamations to the Emperor.

zhongguan **n.** (literally, "palace official") a generic term for eunuch.

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___."Shen Jiji shengping ji qi zuopin buxu" 既 品 . *Guoli Zhengzhi Daxue Xuebao* 26 (1972): 1–7.

——. "Du Shen Jiji 'Zhenzhong ji' bukao" 既 . *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan (zhuangkan hao)* (1991): 1–10. Most thorough discussion of the date of composition; analyzes the influence of the life and biography of Guo Ziyi on the tale.



Chunyu Fen saw two envoys clad in purple kneeling before him

Tale 4

"Nanke Taishou zhuan" 南柯太守傳 (An Account of the Governor of the Southern Branch)[1]

by Li Gongzuo 李公佐 (c. 778-848)
translated by William H. Nienhauser, Jr.

Chunyu Fen [2] of Dongping [3] was a knight-errant who wandered about the Wu and Chu [the lower Yangzi]. He was too fond of drinking and given to impulse,[4] paying little

[1] The base text used for this translation is Wang Meng'ou , *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi* (Taibei: Zhengzhong Shuju, 1985), 2:171-99 [hereafter "Wang Meng'ou"]. Li Jianguo's text (*Tang Song chuanqi pindu cidian* [Beijing: Xin Shijie Chubanshe, 2007; hereafter cited as "Li Jianguo, *Cidian*"] and the *TPGJ* edition (475.3910-5) have both been consulted regularly. For other modern critical editions and Western-language translations of this tale, see the Bibliography following the Translator's Note.

[2] The surname of Chunyu in addition to the ancestral home in Shandong causes the reader to think of two earlier men from the same area: Chunyu Kun and Chunyu Yi , both of whom have biographies in the *Shiji* (chapters 126 and 105, respectively).

[3] This reference, as common in Tang tales and other fictional narratives, is anachronistic, referring to the small State of Dongping in early Han times (located about 35 miles northern of modern Jining City in Shandong; Tan Qixiang, 2:19). Similarly Wu and Chu in the following phrase are names of states that ceased to exist after the Qin unification, but continued to be identified with the regions they once ruled.

[4] Wang Meng'ou (2:179, n. 1) points to the similar language in the *Jiu Tang shu* biography of Guo Yuanzhen (656-713). There are indeed parallels between Guo's life and Chunyu Fen's dream. As the *Jiu Tang shu* (9:97.3042)

attention to the finer points of convention. He had amassed a great deal of property and supported a retinue of gallants.[5] Once, because of his military skills, he had been appointed a deputy general in the Huainan Army.[6] He drank too much, so that he gave rein to his passions and offended his commander. Thus he

relates (parallel language is italicized), "Guo Yuanzhen . . . after passing the *jinshi* examination, was made Commandant of Tongquan [a Tang county in Zizhou 梓 about eighty miles east-northeast of modern Chengdu, Sichuan]. He lived by the codes of the knights-errant and *was given to impulse, paying little attention to his duties* and troubled in his thoughts; over time he captured and sold more than one thousand people, to give [the profits?] to his retainers, so the common people suffered with him"; . . . 泉 氣 所 姓 . Nevertheless, Empress Wu summoned him and sent him to fight the Tibetans. After a distinguished military career, Guo mismanaged a military review shortly after Xuanzong took the throne and was sentenced to death. Only the intervention of Zhang Yue (667-730) saved him. But Guo ended up dying en route to exile, an unhappy man (cf. *Jiu Tang shu*, 97.3049). Perhaps readers were expected to see the similarities between Chunyu Fen's dream and Guo Yuanzhen's career.

[5] This description of Fen as someone who had "amassed a great deal of property and supported a retinue of gallant men" (*lei ju chan* 累 產) as well as the expression *shi jiu* , "he indulged himself in drinking" which follows shortly in the text both resemble passages describing Guan Fu 夫 in the accounts of Guan in the *Shiji* (107.2847). Indeed, there are other parallels between the Fen's character and that of Guan Fu, such as the fact that slander led to each of their downfalls.

[6] Huainan (South of the Huai) was a Tang province, centered on Yangzhou , that stretched from the seacoast in the east about 240 miles westward, with the Han River as its western border, the Huai River as its northern limit, and the Yangzi to its south (see Tan Qixiang, 5:54). Huainan remained loyal to the Tang during the provincial upheavals under emperors Dezong (r. 779-805) and Xianzong (r. 806-820). Du Yu 佑 (735-812) served there from 789-803. The Huainan Army refers to the troops under the command of the military governor of Huainan (see Zhou Shaoliang 良, "'Nanke Taishou zhuan' jianzheng" 證, in Zhou Shaoliang, *Tang chuanqi jianzheng* 證 [Beijing: Renmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 2000], p. 200).

was dismissed and drifted about with nothing to do, spending all his time in unrestrained drinking.

His family lived a few miles east of the seat of Guangling Commandery.[7] To the south of the house in which they lived was a grand, old locust tree, its branches and trunk long and interwoven, its cool shade spreading for nearly an acre. Chunyu and his hearties would drink profusely beneath it every day.

In the ninth month of the seventh year of the Zhenyuan 貞 reign period (791 A.D.),[8] Chunyu drank so heavily that he became ill. The two friends who were seated with him at the time carried him into his house and laid him in the gallery to the east of the main hall.

"You should get some sleep," they said to him. "We'll feed the horses, wash our feet,[9] and wait for you to recover a bit before we go."

When Chunyu took off his headband and put his head on the pillow,[10] everything went dark and seemed to spin about, as if in a dream. He saw two envoys clad in purple,[11] kneeling before him,

[7] A commandery established in 758 that approximated the eastern portion of Huainan province. Yangzhou was also its seat.

[8] Because the chronology in the text of the tale presents problems, Wang Meng'ou (n. 5, p. 179) that *qi* "seven" here is a scribal error for *shi* 十 "ten" here, making the date 794. The *TPGJ* (475.3910) reading of Tang before the date seems to have been an addition by the *TPGJ* editors and is not followed in either Wang Meng'ou or Li Jianguo.

[9] Presumably they washed their feet so that they could lie down on a couch to wait for Chunyu to improve.

[10] Pillows were a means of entry into the dream world as can be seen in "Zhenzhong ji" 枕 (Record with a Pillow), translated in this volume.

[11] Li Jianguo, *Cidian* (p. 271, n. 15) points out that although high-ranking officials wore purple in the Tang, the reference here is to according to those minor officials in charge of receiving and entertaining guests who dressed in a purple coarse-silk shirts as the *Tang hui yao* (*juan* 31) notes.

who said: "The King of the Huaian Guo[12] (The State of Locust Tranquility) has sent us to deliver his message of invitation to you."

Chunyu got down off the couch unconsciously, straightened his clothing, and followed the two envoys toward the gate. There he saw a black-lacquered carriage driven by four steeds with seven or eight attendants to the left and right.[13] They helped him up into the carriage and departed, pointing after they went out the main gate to an opening under the old locust tree and immediatley speeding into the opening. Chunyu found this most strange, but he didn't dare to ask any questions.

Suddenly he saw that the landscape, climate,[14] vegetation, and roadways were not at all[15] different from those of the world

[12] The *huai* 槐 tree, *Sophora Japonica* or Chinese Scholar Tree, is rendered here as "locust." It is not identical to the American locust tree (Robinia Pseudacacia), but very similar, both being hardwood used for ornamentation, both having white flowers (the *huai* also has yellow flowers). The *huai* tree is written with a graph which, when broken into its basic components (and 鬼), means "tree of ghosts." Like its Western cousin, the Bullhorn Acacia (*Acacia cornigera*), the tree is often host to ant nests (cf. Caryolyn Wanger and Sharon Cybart, *Touring the Tropics, How Plants Adopt to Their Environment* [Madison: Olbrich Botanical Gardens, 1991], p. 12). On the association between the tree and death, see Carrie Reed, "Messages from the Dead in 'Nanke Taishou zhuan,'" *CLEAR* 31 (2009): 124-5.

[13]As Wang Meng'ou points out (p. 179, n. 6) according to Tang ritual a black-lacquered carriage was intended for the crown prince. This foreshadows the announcement that Chunyu Fen is to marry to king's daughter.

[14] The translation follows a number of modern Chinese translations here in rendering *feng hou* as "landscape and climate" (cf., for example, Zhang Wenqian et al., Tang Song chuanqi xuan zhuyi ben [Fuzhou: Fujian Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1983], n. 24, p. 103 and translation on p.111). Some modern Chinese translations understand *feng hou* as "customs and climate" (Zhang Youhe , *Tang Song chuanqi xuan* [rpt. Beijing: Jenmin Wenxue Chubanshe, 1998 (1963)], n. 14, p. 86). André Lévy's translation reads "Soudain lui apparurent montagnes et rivières: vents et climats, arbres et plantes . . ." (*Histoires extraordinaires et récits fantastiques de la Chinese ancienne, Chefs d'oeuvre de la nouvelle [Dynasties des Tang, 618-907], II* [Paris: Aubier

he knew. After they had gone a dozen or so miles they came to the ramparts and parapets of a city wall. [There] vehicles and people both flowed along the road. To the left and right of him those who attended his carriage called out orders very sternly and passersby on either side strove to give way. Farther on they entered a great city wall with red gates and double gate-towers. On the gate-towers "Da Huaian Guo" (The Great State of Locust Tranquility) was written in golden letters. The gate guards made haste to pay their respects and perform their attendant duties. After a short period of time a man on horseback called out, "Because the [future] royal son-in-law has traveled far, the king has ordered that you rest a while in the Donghua Guan (Eastern Flowery Lodge)." Then he went ahead to lead the way. All of a sudden Chunyu saw a wide-open door. He descended from the carriage and went in. There were many-colored railings

Domaine, 1993], p. 80. Lévy's "winds and climes" is certainly a possibility. Li Jianguo's (*Cidian*, p. 271, n. 20) reading of *fengwu qihou* 物 "scenery and climate" seems to make the "mountains and rivers" in the preceding phrase redundant. The translation by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang (*Tang Dynasty Stories* [Beijing: Panda Books, 1986], p. 57) seems to follow a similar understanding as Li Jianguo, but tortures the syntax of the original: "The scenery along the road–the mountains and rivers, trees and plants–looked different from the world of men. The climate too had changed."

[15] Reading *wu* for *shen* following Wang Meng'ou (pp. 179-80, n. 7; Wang's revision is based on Ming mss. of the *Taiping guangji* and Feng Menglong's 龍 [1574-1646] *Taiping guangji chao*). André Lévy's translation also adopts Wang's reading (*Histoires extraordinaires*, p. 94, n. 7. The rather free rendition in Elizabeth Te-chen Wang's *Ladies of the T'ang* (Taipei: Mei Ya Publications, 1973; p. 242) also follows the reading *wu* . Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang (see the preceding note) retain the original *shen* . Following Wang's suggestion, the text allows Chunyu Fen to remain unclear whether he is still in the "real world" — often confused by events such as the correspondence with his father whom he had presumed dead — until he wakes up back in his home in Guangling and discovers that he has been living in an ant colony in his dream.

next to carved columns, flowering trees with rare fruits, row upon row beneath a dais. Benches and tables, cushions and mats, curtains and a feast were all arranged on the dais. In his heart he was most pleased.[16] Again someone called out, "The Chief Minister on the Right[17] is about to arrive." Chunyu then descended the stairs to receive him respectfully. A man wearing a purple robe[18] and holding an ivory court-tablet came forward quickly, and they greeted each other according to all the rules of propriety of host and guest.

"My Liege has not considered our humble land too far out of the way to receive Milord," the Chief Minister on the Right began, "He is hoping to contract a formal marriage with you."

"With such a lowly, humble body, how could this humble person dare to hope for such a thing?" Chunyu replied.

The Chief Minister on the Right thereupon asked that Chunyu accompany him to where the king was. After they had gone about one hundred paces, they entered a red gate. With spears, lances, axes, and halberds arranged [in front of the gate] to

[16] Chunyu Fen's inability to speak here recalls a like-named predecessor, Chunyu Kun . Kun was an advisor to both King Wei of Qi 齊 (r. 378-343 B.C.) and King Hui 惠 of Liang (r. 370-335 B.C.). Although Kun was known for his eloquence, he, like Fen, was silent the first two times King Hui first granted him audience (see the two biographical sketches on *Shiji*, 74.2347 and 126.3197). It may also be that in this early, transitionary phase from the real world to the dream world Fen has not yet acquired the power to speak.

[17] In Tang officialdom *You xiang* 相 referred to the head of the Secretariat (Neishi sheng) and the *Zuo xiang* 相, Chief Minister of the Left, to the head of the Chancellery (Menxia sheng 下); cf. Robert des Rotours, *Le traité des examens* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1932), p. 266. Both held the second-degree rank.

[18] According to Tang rites officials of the third-degree (of nine levels) and above were allowed to wear purple. Thus the reader understands both that this is a high official and that the worlds of Locust Tranquility and the Tang empire were strikingly similar (cf. Li Jianguo, *Cidian*, n. 31 on p. 271).

the left, several hundred guards stepped back to let them pass.[19] Zhou Bian , a lifelong drinking companion of Chunyu, hastened to be among them. Chunyu was secretly pleased to see him, but did not dare to step forward and ask him [about things]. The Chief Minister on the Right led the way up into a spacious hall, heavily guarded as if it were the king's. There he saw a man, large and imposing, sitting on the throne, dressed in a white silken gown and wearing a crimson-flowered crown. Chunyu Fen trembled and didn't dare to look up. The attendants to the left and right told him to bow down.

Then the king said, "Sometime before, I received your father's word that he wouldn't despise our small nation out of hand and he agreed to allow my second daughter, Yaofang (Jade Fragrance), to serve you respectfully as your wife."

Chunyu could only bow his head and prostrate himself on the ground, not daring to say anything.

The king went on, "For now go back to the guest lodge, we will carry out the ceremony later!" There was also a formal edict [to this effect].[20] In addition the Chief Minister on the Right went back with him to the guest lodge.

Chunyu thought this over. As far as he knew, his father had commanded [troops] on the border and because of that had fallen captive to the enemy, so that it wasn't known whether he was dead or alive.

[Chunyu] for the time being suspected that his father through the friendly intervention of the the northern barbarians this matter

[19] Spears, lances and other weapons were commonly arrayed before a gate of a rich or powerful home during the Tang.

[20] *You zhi* 有 , translated here as "there was a formal edict," is ignored in the Yang's translation (p. 18: "You may go back to the guest house and prepare for the ceremony.' As the minister accompanied him back, Chunyu was thinking hard."). Lévy offers "cette décision rendue, le minister raccompagna Chunyu, songeur, à la hotel" (p. 82).

had been concluded.[21] [But] he was very confused and he didn't really know how it had come about.

That evening everything for the ceremony was in complete readiness: the gifts of lambs, geese, money, and silk[22] were awe-inspiring and grandiose, the female singers and musicians, wines and savory foods, lamps and candles, carriages and riding horses.[23] There was a group of women: Huayang Gu (Miss Flowery Slope), another Qingxi Gu (Miss Green Stream), another Shang Xian Zi (Lady Higher Transcendent), and yet another Xia Xian Zi (Lady Lower Transcendent).[24] There seemed to be a large number of them, each with several

[21] Li Jianguo (*Cidian*, p. 271, n. 44) points out that the *jiao tong* in early texts of the tale read *jiao xun* , "friendly relations."

[22] Traditional wedding gifts provided by the groom. Lambs were considered "humane" (*ren*) and with good deportment; geese were supposed to keep a single mate for life. The gifts are typical of those given by upper class gentlemen in early China. The money was for various expenses connected to the ceremony (cf. Li Jianguo, *Cidian*, p. 271, n. 45).

[23] The syntax here is notable. *Weirong yidu* 威 (here "awe-inspiring and grandiose") is sometimes seen to modify the entire ceremony, as in the Yangs' rendition (*op. cit.*, p. 19): "That evening, amid pomp and slendour, betrothal gifts of lambs, swans and silk were displayed . . . ."

[24] Herbert Franke and Wolfgang Bauer argue that "the names [of these women] allude to the various groups inside the ant state, to the ants with and those without wings" (*Die Goldene Truhe*, p. 430, n. to p. 94; translation by Levenson, *The Golden Casket*, p. 117, n. 2). Cai Shouxiang 蔡 (1934-1998) points out that Huayang Gu refers to the Goddess of the Southern Slope of Mount Hua (Huayang Shan Xiangu 仙 ; Mount Hua was a home to Daoists from at least as early as the Han dynasty), that Qingxi Gu is a variant of Qingxi Shennü 青 , and that the other names seem to have been constructed by Li Gongzuo to suggest other goddesses [*Tangren xiaoshuo xuanzhu* [3v., Taibei: Liren Shuju, 2002], 1:278, n. 34]. Li Jianguo says these names are all *yijing minghao* (names which express the spirit of the ants; *Cidian*, p. 271, n. 48), but gives no example. The present writer can only see such a relationship with the name *ling zhi* 靈芝 (mithridate) which grows out of the ground especially around tree roots. See also the comments in André Lévy's comments in his apparatus (*Histoires extraordinaires*, p. 95, n. 14).

thousand attendants. They wore kingfisher and phoenix hats,[25] golden-cloud cloaks, gems of all colors, and golden jewelry, so that they overwhelmed the eye. Roaming about and enjoying themselves, they stopped by his door, striving to trifle with Master Chunyu. Their manner was very bewitching, their speech seductive, so that he did not know how to respond. One of the girls said to him, "Once on the third day of the third lunar month[26] I went along with Lingzhi Furen 靈 (Madame Mithridate) to the Chanzhi Si 禪 寺 (Wisdom of Zen Temple).[27] In the Tianzhu Yuan (Hindu Courtyard) we saw Shi Yan [28] dance the Poluomen (Brâhmana [Dance]).[29] I sat on

[25] Some modern Chinese translations believe these refer to feathered hats, others argue that phoenix and kingfisher indicate the headdresses were jade-green color.

[26] This is the spring purification festival, Shang si ri , one of the three major holidays of the Tang. People went out of the cities into nature, supposedly to rid themselves of miasmas of the winter by bathing. It was therefore one of those rare opportunities when men and women mixed in public. See also Derk Bodde, "The Lustration Festival," *Festivals in Classical China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 273-88.

[27] A famous Chan (Zen) temple in Tang-dynasty Yangzhou.

[28] A famous dancer from Sogdiana (Shi guo , approximating modern Uzbekistan) in Central Asia. As Li Jianguo (*Cidian*, p. 271, n. 51) points out the royal house were surnamed Shi and many of those Sogdianians who came to Chang'an during the Tang had (or adopted) that surname. As Edwin G. Pulleyblank notes, they did not have far to come, since the Sogdian were settled not too far north of the Tang capital and Shi was "one of the Ordos Sogdian surnames" (see also Pulleyblank's comments on the Jiuxing Hu 九 [Hu of the Nine Surnames] in his "A Sogdian Colony in Inner Mongolia," *TP* 41 [1952]: 320-1). The natives of Sogdiana were famed for their dancing skills.

The juxtaposition of obviously made-up names for the women with the realistic name for the dancer is striking. Perhaps they are all meant to convey the diversity and excitement of a spring-festival day in the Wisdom of Zen Temple.

[29] *Tianzhu* was a transliteration of the Indian term Hinduka ~hinkdukh employed at least as early as the *Hou Han shu* (cf. *Hanyu* da cidian, 2:1420). *Poluomen* is the transliteration of the Indian surname given to the Brahman

the stone bench under the north window[30] with some of my companions. At that time you were still young, but just you dismounted and came to watch,[31] trying to force yourself on us, teasing and flirting. My little sister Qiongying (Hortensia Flower) and I knotted a red scarf and put it on a bamboo branch.[32] How could you have just forgotten? Another time on the sixteenth of the seventh lunar month I was in the Xiaogan Si 感寺 (Temple of Filial Feelings) attending Shangzhen Zi (Lady Higher Purity) and listening to Monk Qi Xuan (Bound to Mystery),[33] lecture on the *Guanyin jing* 音 (*Avalokiteśvara Sutra*).[34] I left a pair of golden-phoenix hairpins as an donation

(priest) clan or caste. The *Poluomen* dance was performed in the whirling style of Central Asian dance tradition (see Zhou Shaoliang, pp. 204-5).

Li Jianguo (*Cidian*, p. 271, n. 52) cites Du You's 佑 (735-812) claim that the Poluomen dance was revised by Emperor Xuanzong's musicians to become the Nishang yuyi qu 衣 (Tune of the Feathered Rainbow Dance).

[30] Presumably the most secluded part of the temple (the main doors would have been on the south side).

[31] The inference seems to be that Chunyu came to the temple with a group (friends, family?), but he alone took notice the women.

[32] This is similar to dropping a handkerchief for a gentleman to pick up in Western society

[33] Li Jianguo (*Cidian*, p. 271, n. 55) cites a poem by Lu Lun (738-798) written to Qi Xuan. Lévy notes (*Histoire extraordinaires*, p. 95, n. 21) that his 'sermons' were popular in the final quarter of the eighth century, but this seems to be simply an inference drawn based upon this tale and Lu Lun's poem. These sermons, known *su jiang* 俗 (popular lectures), mixed reciting of Buddhist scriptures and storytelling and were particularly popular among women in the early ninth century (see Zhou Shaoliang, pp. 206-7).

[34] Avalokiteśvara is the bodhisattva who vowed to listen to the prayers of all sentient beings in times of difficulty. This may resonate with Chunyu Fen's relationship with the ant kingdom, especially his concerns after he awakens from his dream. Analogues of the tale also emphasize the sensitivity of the protagonist for the ants (see the discussion of the tale of Dong Zhaozhi and the Lu Fen tales in Section II., "The Text and Its Sources" of the "Translator's Note" below).

beneath the podium and Lady Higher Purity left a box made of rhinoceros horn. At the time you were also on the lecture mat and you asked the monk for the hairpins and the box to examine them, sighing repeatedly with appreciation and uttering cries of admiration for some time. Turning to look at us you said, 'Both you and your things are not the sort we have in this world.' [Then] whether you asked about my family or where I lived, I would not respond. Your heart was filled with love and you were loath to take your eyes off us. How could you not remember?"

"In my heart it's set, how could I ever forget,"[35] Chunyu replied.

The women in one voice said, "Who would have imagined that today we would become your guests?"

Three men, very grand in their official hats and sashes, also came forward and bowed to the young man: "We have received a command to serve the royal son-in-law as best men." Among them was a man who was also an old friend of Chunyu Fen. Fen pointed to him and said, "Aren't you Tian Zihua of Pingyi ?"[36]

"Yes, I am," Tian replied.

Fen came forward, took his hands, and talked over old times for long while. Then he asked, "How have you come to live here?"

"I was wandering about at large, when the Chief Minister on the Right, Mr. Duan , the Marquis of Wucheng (Martial

[35] These are the last two lines of "Xi sang" (The Mulberry of the Lowland), Mao No. 228 in the *Shi jing* 詩 . Arthur Waley (*The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove Press, 1960 [1937]) classifies the poem as one of marriage and translates the lines as "To the core of my heart I treasure him, / Could not ever cease to love him" 何 ?

[36] The seat of Tong Prefecture during the Tang, some sixty miles east-northeast of Chang'an (modern Dali in Shaanxi province, Tan Qixiang, 5:41).

Completion),[37] recognized my abilities, so I've become dependent on him."

"Zhou Bian is here. Did you know?" Fen went on to ask.

"Mr. Zhou," Zihua replied, "is a honored man. He is serving as Metropolitan Commandant,[38] and great are his power and influence. Several times I have benefited from his protection." And so they chatted and laughed very joyously.

In a short time a messenger called out, "The Royal Son-in-law may go in now!" The three men then outfitted him in a sword, a belt, a cap, and clothes.

"I never thought the day would come when I could personally witness such a marriage," said Zihua. "Don't forget me [once you're married]!"

Then several dozen of those transcendent beauties played the most extraordinary music for them, insinuating and subtle, bright and pure, but with a melancholy melody, such as never had been heard in the human world.[39] There were also several dozen of them holding candles and leading the way for him. To the left and right appeared cloth partitions of various hues and lusters [screening the walkway], embroidered with kingfisher feathers and golden thread, which ran on for over a mile.[40] Fen sat upright in the carriage, his mind swirling, unable to settle down. Tian Zihua several times offered a remark or joke to help dispel the tension. Those women he had previously [spoken with] each rode

[37] Wucheng is an honorific title, not a place name. This was the noble title of the Chief Minister of the Right whom Chunyu Fen met above (cf. Li Jianguo, *Cidian*, p. 272, n. 66).

[38] *Sili* 司 was a Chou-dynasty official title (Wang Meng'ou, p. 182, n. 30).

[39] After the initial depiction of mountains, rivers, climate and customs that are the same as the human world, this is the first of several descriptions which remind the reader, and perhaps should have alerted Chunyu Fen, to the fact that this is a preternatural state in which he is living.

[40] The partitions protected the royal procession from the eyes of the common people.

in phoenix-wing carriages and were also coming and going in the palace. They came to a gate which was called "Xiuyi Gong" (The Palace for Cultivating Proper Ceremony).[41] Those transcendent women all gathered on either side of the gate, allowing him to get out of the royal cart and bowing to him. [Then] there was polite gesturing, deferring to one other, and ascending and descending according to etiquette–all just as it is in the world of men. When they removed the screen [from the other carriage that had arrived] and took away the fan [carried by her attendants to shield the princess from view],[42] he saw a young woman who was called Jinzhi Gongzhu (Princess of the Golden Branch).[43] She was about fourteen or fifteen and seemed just like an immortal. All the rites for this wedding night were indeed clearly on display.

From this time on, with each day Chunyu Fen's affection for her grew deeper daily as his fame and glory increased day by day. The carriages and vestments in which he went about, the guests and attendants with whom he went on excursions or to banquets, were always second only to those of the king. The king ordered Chunyu Fen and his fellow officials to ready the palace guard to go on a grand hunt at Linggui Shan 靈 (Efficacious Tortoise

[41] Apparently a fictional palace. The name is probably intended as a segue to Fen's introduction to the proper ceremonies of court life (and the marriage) which immediately follow.

[42] Each action was part of the marriage ritual. Wang Meng'ou (p. 182-3, n. 31) cites several Tang-dynasty texts that detail this second ceremonial step of a Tang marriage. Zhou Xianshen argues that *shan* here refers not to a "fan," but to a silken cap which was attached to a veil covering the bride's face (see Zhou, "Nanke Taishou zhuan," in *Gudai xiaoshuo jianshang cidian* 古 , v. 1 [Shanghai: Shanghai Cishu Chubanshe, 2006], p. 365, n. 40).

[43] Perhaps a play on the expression *Jinzhi yuye* 金 葉 (Jade Leaf/Leaves of the Golden Branch) which referred to descendants of a royal house (cf. Morohashi, 11:463, entry 49152.492).

Mountain)[44] to the west of the capital. There were mountains and hills steep and lofty, streams and marshes far and wide, forests of trees in abundance and luxuriance, and of the birds that fly and the beasts that run, there were none which were not bred there. The soldiers had a huge catch, and only when the night was spent did they go home.[45]

One day, Chunyu Fen asked the king for instruction. "On that day not long ago when I got married, Your Majesty said he was following my father's orders. Not long after my father was caused to serve as an assistant frontier commander, he was defeated in battle and fell into Tartar hands.[46] Since then I haven't had a letter from him in seventeen or eighteen years. As Your Majesty knows his whereabouts, I beg to be allowed to visit him."

"My daughter's father-in-law," the king quickly replied, "is serving guard over the northern lands. We haven't lost contact with him. You need only prepare a letter letting him know [of your whereabouts]. There's no need to go to see him immediately!"

He [the king] ordered his wife to prepare presents congratulating [Fen's father] on gaining a daughter-in-law to send along with the letter to his father. After a few nights,[47] a reply arrived. As Fen examined the basic ideas in this letter, he found

[44] This hunt, as most royal hunts in traditional China, was intended as a test of the military capabilities of the State of Locust Tranquility. The place name Linggui Shan is aptly chosen, since the God of War, Xuan Wu , was supposed to have taken the form of a tortoise (or a hybrid snake-tortoise; see *Hanyu da cidian*, 2:3707b).

[45] There are a number of references to "nights" rather than days in this text, perhaps suggesting the way time was measured in this darker, dream world (see also n. 57 below).

[46] E.G. Pulleybank has argued that the word *hu* (translated here as "Tartar") from the end of the sixth century on referred to "the Iranian peoples of Central Asia, or even specifically the Sogdians" (see his "A Sogdian Colony in Inner Mongolia"). See also n. 28 above.

[47] Cf. n. 45 above.

that they all contained traces of those [ideas] his father had held all his life.[48] In the letter his concerns and instructions were set in indirect expressions of affection, all as in the past. He also asked whether their relatives were still alive and about the prosperity of their village. And he said that the road between them was separated by some distance and blocked by winds and mists.[49] The tone [of his letter] was sad and there was distress in his language. Further, he would not allow Fen to come to visit him, explaining, "In the *dingchou* 丗 year,[50] I will meet you again." Fen clasped the letter and choked back a sob, overcome with emotion.

Some days later, Fen's wife said to him, "Why don't you ever think about serving in the government?"[51]

"I am a reckless sort who has no experience in governmental affairs," Fen replied.

"Just do it and I will support and assist you," she said. Then she reported [this conversation] to the king. After some time had passed, the king said to Fen, "In our Nanke (Southern Branch [Commandery]) governmental affairs are not well managed. The governor has been dismissed and I'd like to rely on your talents. If you would condescend to take such a limited position, you could go there forthwith with our young daughter!"

[48] Wang Meng'ou (p. 183, n. 35) suggests that *zhi* could be a copyist error for *shou* which would then read "he found they followed closely his father's handwriting." But he offers no textual support for his hypothesis. An alternate translation might read "When Fen examined the letter he found that the topics were all those of his father's daily habits."

[49] *Feng yan* "winds and mists" in Tang texts could also refer to the fires and disorder of rebellion. Given the instability of Dezong's reign (780-805) and the possibility that this tale has political overtones, this reading is also possible (cf. *Hanyu dacidian*, 12:623A, gloss 4 and texts).

[50] 797 A.D.

[51] *Wei zheng* "to serve in the government, exercise governmental affairs" is the title of the second section of the *Lun yu* (*Confucian Analects*).

Fen respectfully accepted these instructions. The king then ordered those in charge of such things to outfit the new governor for his journey. For this reason they arrayed gold and jade, brocades and silks, baskets and boxes, servants and maids, carriages and horses along a broad thoroughfare as a way to bid farewell to the princess on her journey.

As a youth, Fen had been a knight-errant and had never dared to have such hopes, so when he achieved this position he was greatly pleased. Accordingly, he submitted a memorial, saying:

> Your subject is the remaining descendant of generals, just an ordinary man with no cultural refinement or administrative craft. It would be improper for him to serve in such an important position and would certainly disrupt the regulations of the court. I would be saddened to ride in a carriage with a burden on my back or would easily overturn the pottage [in the cauldron].[52] Now I want to search far and wide for the

[52] Two allusions to the *Yi ching* 易 (Book of Changes). The first, *fu cheng* 乘, found in the commentary on the images (*xiang*) under hexagram 40 (Xie , "To Release") reads: "If one bears a burden on his back yet also rides in a carriage, it will attract robbers to him" 且乘, 致寇 (*Yi jing yin te* 易 [A Concordance to the *Yi Ching*; Rpt. Taibei: Chinese Materials and Research Aids Service Center, 1966], p. 25; translation by Richard John Lynn, *The Classic of Changes* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1994], p. 383). The *Xi ci* commentary expands on this: "The Master said, 'Do you think that the makers of the *Changes* did not understand what robbers were!' The *Changes* says, "If one bears a burden on his back yet also rides in a carriage, it will attract robbers to him." Bearing burdens on the back, this is the business of a petty man; a carriage, this is the rig of a noble man. When one is a petty man, yet rides in the rig of a noble man, robbers think to take his things by force. When the one above [the sovereign] is careless and those below are harsh, enemies will indeed think to attach it [such a state]" , 作易 知盜 .易 且乘 致寇 』 也 也 乘也 器也 而乘 器 盜 下 盜 (*Yi ching yin de*, p. 42; Lynn, pp. 59-60). The second allusion is *fu su* which refers to hexagram 50, Ding 鼎 "The Cauldron": "The cauldron

> worthy and the sagacious to assist me in areas I am unable to manage. Your Subject has found that the Metropolitan Commandant, Zhou Bian from Ying chuan ,[53] is loyal, upright, law-abiding, and has the talents to assist me. Tian Zihua from Pingyi, a gentleman still unemployed, is honest, prudent, and keeps in step freely with change.[54] He thoroughly comprehends the origins of governmental effectiveness. I have been friends with these two for ten years. I completely understand their talents and can rely on them in governmental matters. I'd like to request that Chou be appointed Minister of Justice of Southern Branch and Tian be appointed Minister of Agriculture. This would allow my administration to achieve merit and fame and our legal system to maintain order.

The king made the appointments completely in accordance with the memorial.

That night, the king and his wife gave them a farewell banquet in the southern part of the capital. The king said to Fen, "Southern Branch is a large commandery in our state. Its land filled with rich soil,[55] its people and goods abundant. Without

breaks its legs and overturns all its pottage, so its form is drenched, which means misfortune." 鼎 渥 . The *Xi ci* commentary explains: "This speaks of someone who is unequal to his responsibilities" 也 (*Yi Ching yin de*, pp. 31 and 47; Lynn, pp. 455 and 84).

[53] A commandery and also the seat of Xuzhou (Xu Prefecture) near modern Xuchang in Henan (Li Jianguo, *Cidian*, p. 272, n. 98).

[54] Another allusion, *tong bian* , to the *Xi ci* commentary of the *Yi jing*: "The means to know the future through the mastery of numbers is referred to as 'prognostication,' and to keep in step freely with change is referred to as 'the way one should act'" 知 , (*Yi jing yin de*, p. 41; translation by Richard Lynn, p. 54).

[55] Zhang Youhe believes that *rang* "rich soil" (which he argues is redundant following *tudi* 地) is a scribal error for *rang* "abundant harvest" which together with *feng* suggests a rich harvest: "its land producing abundant harvests"; this would also parallel the following line, "its people and goods abundant" (*Tang Song chuanqi xuan*, p. 89, n. 78).

your kindly administration, there will be no way to govern it. Moreover, there are your two assistants, Zhou and Tian–may you do your utmost to meet the nation's expectations!"

[Then] his wife admonished the princess, "Mr. Chunyu is by nature inflexible, intemperate with wine, and in addition he is young. The way to be a proper wife is to honor a yielding and compliant nature.[56] If you can serve him well, I will not have any worries. Although the border to Southern Branch is not that far, mornings and nights we'll be separated.[57] [Thus] today as we part, how could I hold back my tears?"

Chunyu Fen and his wife paid their respects and left for the South, mounting their carriage and urging on their horses, all the while talking and laughing in great happiness. After a few nights[58] they reached the commandery. At the commandery officials, clerks, Buddhist monks, Daoist priests, local elders, musicians, carriages, military guards, and horses with bells pressed forward to welcome and attend them. People clamored about them, bells and drums sounded, without stopping for about five miles. They could see city walls, parapets, towers, and lookouts. There was an abundance of good auras.

As they entered the grand city-gate, it also had a large plaque written in golden characters which read: "Nanke Jun Cheng"

(The Seat of Southern Branch Commandery). The homes

[56] *Roushun* 順 recalls the commentary on the judgments to the hexagram *kun* 坤 in the *Yijing* (*Yijing yinde*, p. 3; translation by Lynn, p. 143): "For one who is yielding and complaint, it is fitting to practice constancy here, and the noble man who sets out to do something, if he takes the lead, will be in breach of the Dao, but if he follows and is compliant, he will find his rightful place" 順利 , , 先 , 順 .

[57] The queen was reminding her daughter that by traditional ritual children were expected to call on their parents every morning and evening.

[58] Both the *Taiping guangji* version (475.3913) and the *Lei shuo* text (*Biji xiaoshuo daguan* ed. [Taibei: Xinxing Shuju, ca. 1985], p. 1854) read *lei ri* 累 "days" for *lei xi* 累 "nights." See also nn. 45 and 47 above.

with red gates and ornamented halberd before their doors were imposing and set back [from the streets].[59]

After Chunyu Fen "got out of his carriage,"[60] he examined the local customs, healed disease, and put an end to suffering. Political matters he entrusted to Zhou and Tian and throughout the commandery a grand order reigned. Twenty years after he took the position of governor, morals and teaching spread widely, the people sang his praises, erecting a Meritorious Virtue Tablet and setting up a shrine for him.

The king greatly valued him and bestowed upon him a fief town, conferred him with rank and position, and had him occupy the position of Prime Minister.

Zhou and Tian both became famous because they governed well and were successively promoted to higher positions. Chunyu Fen had five sons and two daughters.[61] The sons received official positions through the hereditary rank system and the daughters were all married to members of the royal clan.

[59] *Zhu xuan* 軒 have been identified both as "red windows" (by Wang Meng'ou, p. 184, n. 6, citing Li Shan's *Wen xuan* commentary) and as "red doors" (Zhou Shaoliang, pp. 212-3). Whether windows or doors, it is agreed that they indicated wealth. The ornamented halberds before the door (*qi hu*), made of either painted wood (Wang Meng'ou, *ibid*.) or red and black silk cloth (Zhou Shaoliang, p. 212, citing Yan Shigu's [581-645] commentary to the *Han shu*) arranged before the door were a sign of high rank (see also Li Jianguo's detailed discussion in n. 123, *Cidian*, pp. 272-3).

[60] A figurative expression indicating an official arriving to take up a new post. One of the first duties of such officials was to look into "local customs" to determine that the moral influence of the government was in force.

[61] The mention of Fen's children completes a structure that in many ways resembles a typical Tang-dynasty biography: name, ancestry, youth, writings, children, death and posthumous titles (if the coda by Li Zhao can be understood as a "posthumous titling"). Cf. Denis Twitchett, "Chinese Biographical Writing," in E. G. Pulleyblank and W. G. Beasley, eds., *Historians of China and Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 95-114.

His fame and glory were radiant beyond that of all his contemporaries.

In that year the Tanluo Guo (State of Sandalwood Creepers) came to launch a military campaign against this commandery. The king ordered Chunyu Fen to train his commanders and exhort his armies so that they could overcome the invaders. Fen submitted a memorial asking that Zhou Bian be put in command of thirty thousand soldiers to defend against the bandit host at Jade Tower City. Chou was bold but inflexible and underestimated the enemy, so his troops were defeated. Under the cover of night he returned alone on horseback, having cast off his armor to flee the enemy. The bandits also collected the provisions and armor his troops had abandoned and withdrew. Chunyu Fen for these reasons imprisoned Zhou Bian and asked that he be punished as well, but the king pardoned them both.

In the same month the Minister of Justice, Zhou Bian, got an ulcer on his back and died.[62]

Chunyu Fen's wife, the princess, became ill and after ten days she also passed away. Chunyu Fen therefore asked to be relieved of his governorship to escort her body back to the capital; the king granted his request. Then [the king] entrusted the Minister of Agriculture, Tian Zihua, with the duties of Governor of Southern Branch. Moved by his sadness, Chunyu Fen set out, accompanying her hearse. As they moved in a dignified manner along the road men and women wailed, people set out offerings of food, and those who grasped the carriage shafts or blocked the

[62] Zhou Bian's death, having been caused by an ulcer on his back (*ju fa bei zu* 背) following his dismissal, recalls the similar story of Xiang Yu and Fan Zeng in the *Shiji* (7.325). After Liu Bang tricked Xiang Yu into believing that he had induced Fan Zeng to work in secret with him, Xiang Yu stripped Fan of his power. Fan became enraged and asked to dismissed. After his request was granted, an ulcer broke out on his back and he died (*ju fa bei er si* 背而死). In Tang Xianzu's "Nanke ji" (pp. 358-9) it is made clear that the ulcers were caused by the anger these men felt after their dismissals.

road were too numerous to count. When they finally reached the capital city, the king and his wife, in white mourning clothes, were in the suburbs, weeping and awaiting the arrival of the hearse. The princess received the posthumous title of Shunyi Gongzhu 順 (The Princess of Compliant Bearing). An honor-guard to carry a feathered canopy and beat drums had been prepared, and she was buried a few miles east of the capital city at Panlong Gang (Coiled Dragon Tumulus). The same month the son of the former Minister of Justice, Zhou Rongxin 信,[63] also escorted his father's remains back to the capital city.

Though Chunyu Fen guarded the outer marches for a long time, he had close friends in the capital city, and all the noble and prominent families were on good terms with him.[64] Since he had been dismissed from his position as governor and returned to the capital city, he came and went constantly, going out with friends and followed by retainers, so that his prestige and fortune increased daily. The king began to suspect and fear him. At that time someone from the capital city submitted a memorial, which read[65]:

> In the mysterious heavenly signs blame appears[66]; in the state[67] there is great fear of a disaster. The capital will be moved, and

[63] Zhou Bian's son.

[64] Readers of the early ninth century would have recognized that this kind of relationship between powerful provincial officials and groups in the capital as a contemporary problem (cf. Zhou Shaoliang, pp. 211-2).

[65] In Tang Xianzu's "Nanke ji" (pp. 406ff.) is is Chief Minister Duan who uses this memorial to arouse the king's fears further and to cause Chunyu Fen's downfall.

[66] In "Nanke ji" this mysterious sign is explained as a *ke xing* (nova; Tang Xianzu, *Dream*, pp. 448-9.

[67] In the *Lei shuo* version (p. 1855) there is no *guo you* 有 causing the passage to be read: "In the mysterious heavenly signs blame appears; it is greatly feared the capital will be moved, and the royal ancestral temple will collapse."

> the royal ancestral temple will collapse. The cause of this strife will come from another tribe of people, but the matter lies within Your Majesty's own officials.[68]

At the time deliberations at court [determined] that this was an omen corresponding to Fen's extravagance. In the end Fen's bodyguard was taken away, he was forbidden to see his band of friends, and he was placed under house arrest. Fen, certain that in his many years as governor of the commandery he had not failed in his policies and that rumors unjustly found fault with him, was melancholy and unhappy. The king understood this and said to Fen, "You have been related to us by marriage for more than twenty years. It was unfortunate that my daughter died early and wasn't able to accompany you in your old age. This must be exceedingly sorrowful!"

For this reason his wife, the queen, kept her grandchildren in her charge to care for and to educate.

[On another occasion] the king also said to Fen, "You have been separated from your family for a long time. You ought to go home to your village for a time and see your relatives. You can leave your children here. There is nothing you need to be concerned about. After three years[69] we shall welcome you back."

"This is my home," Fen replied. "Where should I return to?"

The king laughed and said, "You originally come from the world of men. Your home is not here!"

[68] Literally "within the screen of increased reverence" (*xiao qiang* 牆), i.e., the screen behind which the ruler sat. Officials were expected to become more reverential when they reached this screen. The term alludes to *Lunyu*, 16.1 in which Confucius warns against advisors causing the downfall of a ruling family (cf. James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 1:309 and notes). *Xiao qiang* is used here metonymically for one of the king's own officials, i.e., Chunyu Fen.

[69] I.e., in the *Dingchou* year, 797, as Chunyu Fen's father had predicted in the letter cited above.

Suddenly Fen grew groggy with sleep[70] and with tears in his eyes his sight was blurred for a long while until he became aware of his former life again. Then he wept and asked to go back. The king turned to his attendants indicating they should see him off.[71] Bowing twice, Fen left, and again saw the two purple-clad envoys from before following him.

Once he had gotten beyond the main palace gate, he was astonished to see that the carriage he was to ride was dilapidated and there were no personal attendants or palace servants [as when he had come]. He got into the carriage and after they had gone a few miles they again emerged from the great city walls. It seemed to be the road along which he had in past years come [to the capital] from the east. The mountains, streams, plains, and fields were the same as of old. But his two attendants were not at all as awe-inspiring, leaving him even less pleased. He asked the envoys, "When will we arrive at Guangling Commandery?" The two went on singing and paid him little heed, until, after a long time, they answered, "Be there soon."

Suddenly they emerged from a hole and he saw the lane through his own village which had not changed from past days. Secretly moved, he could not hold back his tears. The two envoys helped Fen out of the carriage, into his gate, and up his stairs, where his own body was already lying in the gallery east of the main hall. Fen was shocked and fearful and did not dare to advance farther. The two envoys thereupon called out his name in a loud voice a few times and Fen then came back to his senses as before. He saw a young household servant sweeping the courtyard with a broom and one of his friends[72] sitting on a bench

[70] *Hun shui* ; in dream tales the dreamer is often depicted in a groggy state entering (as above) and leaving the dream.

[71] As Li Jianguo (*Cidian*, p. 273, n. 159) points out, this shows that the king, and later his envoys, have begun to treat Fen with disrespect.

[72] The *Lei shuo* version (p. 1855) reads *er ke* "two friends."

washing his feet. The setting sun had not yet sunk behind the western wall of his compound and the wine left in their goblets was still clear and fresh by the eastern window. In the dream which flashed by him it was as if he had passed an entire lifetime.

As Fen recalled [his dream], he was moved to sigh. Then he called his two friends to him and recounted what had happened. Amazed, they then went out with him to search for the hole beneath the locust tree. Fen pointed to it and said, "In my dream, this is the place where I entered." The two friends supposed [the place] must have been possessed by fox spirits or tree sprites.[73]

In the end they ordered servants to shoulder axes, cut through the knotted roots, break off the newly sprouted secondary branches, locate the mouth of the holes, and explore them to their ends.[74] Nearby running north to south for about ten feet there was a hole which penetrated through to the other side and was well lit, large enough to have accommodated a couch. On the roots there was soil piled up in a form that one could take for city walls, escarpments, towers, and palaces. There were several bushels of ants hiding together among them. In their midst was a small, raised platform, its color a kind of crimson. Two large ants about three inches in length with white wings and red heads[75] were positioned upon it. Several dozen large ants assisted them there, and all the other ants dared not to approach them. This was

[73] *Mu mei* (alternately *mu mei*) were tree sprites which often did harm to humans. They were closely associated in early texts with *shan jing* (mountain spirits / ghouls / wraiths).

[74] The language here and in the following lines resonates clearly with Liu Zongyuan's (773-819 "Yongzhou baji" (see Ni Haoshi [William H. Nienhauser, Jr.], "'Nan-k'o T'ai-shou chuan' 'Yung-chou pa-chi' yü T'ang-tai ch'uan-ch'i chi ku-wen yün-tung te kuan-hsi" , , 動 ("Governor of Southern Branch," "Eight Essays of Yung-chou," and the Relationship between the Classical Tale and the Ancient-prose Movement), *Chung-wai wen-hsüeh* 外 , 16.7 (1987) : 3-14.

[75] Recalling the "crimson-flowered crown" of the king depicted above.

their royal pair and none other than the capital city of Locust Tranquility.

Farther on they explored to the end another hole which ran straight up nearly forty feet into a southern branch. Twisting and turning until it reached the center, there were earthen walls and small towers [there]. A colony of ants was also there. This was none other than the Southern Branch Commandery which Fen had commanded.

Farther on was another hole, going west for over twenty feet, broad and expansive with tightly packed walls and a deep pit of strange shape. In its midst was a rotting turtle-shell as big as a peck measure. It was immersed in rainwater that had gradually permeated it. Small plants growing thick and luxuriant weeds overshadowed the old shell. This was none other than the Efficacious Tortoise Mountain where Fen had hunted.

Farther on they explored to the end another hole which ran east for more than ten feet: old roots twisted about, shaped like dragons and snakes. In its midst there was a small earthen mound, a little over a foot tall. This was none other than the grave at Coiled Dragon Tumulus where Fen had buried his wife.

When he recalled those former affairs, he gave a heartfelt sigh. Those places they had opened up, examined, explored, and searched through all fit closely with those of which he had dreamed. Not wanting his two friends to destroy them, he quickly ordered them covered up and filled in as before.

That night a violent storm broke out. In the morning, when he looked into the holes, the colonies of ants had thus disappeared–no one knew where they had gone. Therefore, what had been said earlier–"In the state there is great fear of a disaster. The capital will be moved"[76]–had its fulfillment in this.

[76] The *Lei shuo* (p. 1856) reads "In the state there is great fear that the capital will be moved" 有 , , suggesting that the omission of *guo you* above (see n. 55) was merely an abbreviation of the text.

Next Chunyu Fen remembered the events Sandalwood Creepers' campaign [against him] and again asked his two friends to look for traces of it outside. Not a mile to the east of his home was an old dried-up brook. On its bank was a huge sandalwood tree heavily entwined with vines and creepers so that looking up one couldn't see the sun. There was a small hole to the side of the trunk in which indeed a colony of ants was hiding together. Could the state of Sandalwood Creepers be anywhere else than here?!

Alas! If even the spiritual mysteries of ants is unfathomable, how much more are the transformations of those larger beings[77] who hide in the mountains or conceal themselves in forests.

At the time Fen's drinking companions Zhou Bian and Tian Zihua both lived in Liuhe County,[78] but had not come by to visit for ten days. Fen quickly sent his servant-boy to hurry and ask after them. Mr. Chou had suddenly taken ill and passed away, and Mr. T'ien was also bedridden with a disease. Feeling even more the transience of the Southern Branch and understanding man's life was only a sudden moment, Fen then settled his mind

The events of this entire prediction and fulfillment seem to echo the "Jin teng" 金 (Metal Coffer) chapter of the *Shang shu* : "In the autumn . . . Heaven sent a great storm of thunder and lightning, along with wind, by which the grain was all beaten down, and great trees torn up. The people were greatly terrified" 禾 拔 (James Legge, *The Shoo King* in *The Chinese Classics* [rpt. Taibei: Jinxue Shuju, 1969], 3:359).

[77] Echoing perhaps Zhuang Zi's famous allegory of the butterfly dream which concludes: "But he didn't know if he was Zhuang Zhou who had dreamt he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming he was Zhuang Zhou. Between Zhuang Zhou and a butterfly, there must be some distinction! This is called the Transformation of Beings" (translation revised slightly from Burton Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), p. 49; original text from "Qi wu lun" 齊物 in Guo Qingfan 慶 (1844-1896?), *Zhuang Zi jishi* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1961), p. 112.

[78] Located a little over thirty miles due west of Yangzhou near the modern county of the same name (Tan Qixiang, 5:54). Also pronounced Lühe, this was also the location for the tale "Zhang Lao" .

in the school of the Dao, giving up wine and women. Three years later in the *dingchou* 丁丑 year Fen indeed died in his home at the age of forty-seven, just fulfilling the time limit agreed upon formerly.[79]

In the fall of the eighth lunar month of the eighteenth year of the Zhenyuan 貞元 reign (802), I, [Li] Gongzuo [李公佐], having sailed from Wu [80] to Luo[yang] 洛[陽] and moored my boat for a time along the banks of the Huai [淮],[81] chanced to meet Master Chunyu face to face. I inquired about and visited what remained of these places and we went over [the story] a number of times. As the events were all verifiable, I recorded and edited them at once forming this account to provide material for those fond of such things. Although it is all searching after spirits and speaking of the strange rather than matters involving the classics, I hope it will be an admonition[82] to those young men who wish to steal their way into an official position.[83] May later gentlemen take Southern Branch as an example of how chance works and not because of fame or position act in a haughty manner in this world!

[79] As the king had predicted above.

[80] I.e., sailing up the Grand Canal from Suzhou 蘇州 (Wu) to Luoyang (see also the following note).

[81] Huaipu 淮浦 (along the banks of the Huai) refers to the terminus of that section of the Yunhe 運河 (Grand Canal) north of the Yangzi, known in Tang times as the Yancao Ju 沿漕, which extends to the Huai River (Li Jianguo, *Cidian*, p. 274, n. 186).

[82] The term *jie* 戒 (admonition) here recalls Liu Zongyuan's 柳宗元 (773-819) famous "San jie" 三戒 (Three Admonitions), fables on various animals written to comment on topical political events.

[83] *Qie wei* 竊位 "steal the way into an official position" alludes to the "Wei Linggong" 衛靈公 section of the *Lunyu* 論語 (15.13): "Was not Zang Wenzhong not one who has stolen his position? He knew the worthiness of Liu Xiahui and yet would not give him [equal] standing" 臧文仲其竊位者與？知柳下惠之賢而不與立也 (translation revised from James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, 1:298-9). The reference here is to those men who received their positions because of their marriages to imperial princesses (see Translator's Note).

Li Zhao ,[84] the former Military Adviser of Huazhou 洲,[85] composed a coda[86]:

> Honor reaching a peak in emolument and position,
> Power to overthrow capital cities of lands —
> The wise man regards these things
> As nothing different from a colony of ants.

[84] Li Zhao (ca. 780-ca. 850) probably served as *Canjun shi* 參 (Military Advisor) in Huazhou sometime between 812 and 819. During the 820s he held a number of court positions, including that of Hanlin Academician. Among his writing are the *Guoshi bu* (Supplements to the History of the State) and the *Hanlin zhi* (A Record of the Hanlin [Academy]) In the *Guoshi bu* he alludes to "Nanke Taishou zhuan" (and a number of other *chuanqi*; *Tang guoshi bu* [rpt. Shanghai: Shanghai Guji, 1979 (1957)], p. 55). See also Zhou Shaoliang, pp. 216-9.

[85] Near modern Hua County in Henan, equidistant (about thirty-five miles) from Anyang in the north and Kaifeng in the south (Tan Qixiang, 5:40).

[86] Wang Meng'ou believes that this verse coda may not have been written by Li Zhao and certainly was not added to the tale by Li. He believes that Chen Han (fl. 874-875) added the coda to the text when he collected it in the *Yiwen ji* (see Wang Meng'ou, "Chen Han *Yiwen ji* kaolun" , *Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu, erji* [Taibei: Yiwen Yinshuguan, 1973], pp. 17ff.). The *Lei shuo* version of the tale does not contain the coda.

Translator's Note

1) The Author

Li Gongzuo (style name, Zhuanmeng , after 755-before 848) is one of the best known authors of classical-language short stories during the T'ang period. In addition to "Nanke Taishou zhuan," Li wrote "Xie Xiao'e" (the heroine's name), one of the first tales in Chinese literature to involve a crime and its solution, "Lujiang Feng'ao" 江 (Mother Feng from the Lu River), which tells of an encounter with a woman whom it is later discovered had died the previous year, and "Ku *Yuedu jing*" (The Ancient *Classic of Peaks and Rivers*), the tale of a huge river creature much like an ape, reference to which Li Gongzuo later discovered in an ancient scripture in a mountain grotto.[87]

Based on what he tells of his own life in these writings, Li's family was originally from Longxi (modern Gansu).[88] In the fall of 795 he traveled from the Wu area to Luoyang. Sometime shortly thereafter, he probably passed the *jinshi* (presented

[87] See Donald Gjertson, "Li Kung-tso," in *The Indiana Companion to Traditional Chinese Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 541-3 for a basic account and the sources cited in the following notes for more details.

[88] Bai Xingjian (772-827) also addresses him as "[Li] Gongzuo from Longxi" in his tale "Li Wa zhuan" (cf. Dudbridge, *The Tale of Li Wa*, p. 185). Uchiyama Chinari 知也 provides most complete genealogy of Li Gongzuo, in what is also the most extensive biography of Li (cf. Uchiyama, "'Nanka Taiju den' ni tsuite" て, in *Sui Tō shosetsu kenkyū* [Tokyo: Mokujisha , 1976], pp. 379-95, especially p. 381). According to Uchiyama Li's father was Li Yue (740-800) and the powerful military governor Li Qi (741-807), who rebelled in 807, was a distant cousin.

scholar) examination.[89] Much of his life seems to have been spent, however, in central and southern regions of the Tang empire. The record of Gongzuo holding a minor position as early as the Dali reign (765-779) may be an error.[90] More certain is that Li moved to the far south as a young man. In 795 he visited Bai Xingjian (772-827) in Xiangyang 襄 , then went to Luoyang and Chang'an. By 797 he seems to have gone back into the provinces in search of a postion (some scholars believe he passed the *jinshi* exmaination in the mid-790s before returning to the provinces). He was in the Xiao-Xiang region (modern Hunan) that year and probably served under Wang E (740-815), who was then Military Governor of Lingnan ,[91] but was noted especially for the wealth he accumulated in a series of provincial positions. In 801, when Wang E was appointed Military Governor of Huainan, Li probably followed him, possibly serving for a brief time under Li Qi (741-807) in Runzhou .[92] Thereafter he moved to the area around modern Suzhou. In 802 he travelled to Luoyang and passed the *jinshi* (presented scholar) examination soon after, probably around 805.[93] In 811, Li had the position of *congshi* (retainer) under the military governor of Huainan, Li Jifu

[89] Wang Meng'ou suggests that Li was likely a disciple of Lü Wei (735-800) and probably passed the during the period when Lü was examiner (795-797; cf. Wang's *Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu, erji*, p. 49).

[90] See Li Jianguo , *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu* (Tianjin: Nankai Daxue Chubanshe, 1993), 1:305ff.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Uchiyama, p. 385.

[93] See also Xu Song (1781-1848), *Dengke ji kao buzheng* . Meng Erdong ed. (Beijing: Beijing Yanshan Chubanshe, 2003), 3:27.1209. The date ca. 805 (revising Gjertson's estimate of about a decade earlier) is from Jia Jinhua's 賈 entry, "Li Gongzuo," in *Zhongguo wenxue jia daci dian, Tang Wudai juan* , Zhou Zuzhuan , ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1992), pp. 265-6.

(758-814),[94] holding essentially the same position Chunyu Fen was said to hold in "Nanke Taishou zhuan." Shortly thereafter, he was appointed administrative assistant (*panguan*) to the civilian governor of Jiangnan Xidao 江 (Jiangnan Western Circuit) in Hongzhou (modern Nanchang City in Jiangxi), suggesting that he, like Chunyu Fen, was also dismissed. For the next several years he was again in the lower Yangzi Valley sometimes holding local positions. By 818 he was living in Sizhou ,[95] returning that same year to Chang'an. In the capital city he was again in contact with Bai Xingjian, whom he urged (in 819) to write up the tale of Li Wa .[96] At about this time he helped compile a no longer extant historical study titled *Jianzhong Heshuo ji* (A Record of the Heshuo Story from the Jianzhong Reign [780-783]). In 848 a man named Li Gongzuo was involved in an affair that had led to Li Shen's (772-846) execution two years earlier. Although most scholars believe this was Li Gongzuo and that he was allied to Li Shen and the Li Deyu (787-850) faction for much of his life,[97] Li Jianguo argues that this must have been a different Li Gongzuo.[98] Whether Li Gongzuo lived until the mid-ninth century or not, his career was an unstable one, filled with ups and downs. This is turn influenced his approach on how he shaped his sources

[94] Uchiyama, p. 388.

[95] Modern Si County in Anhui (Uchiyama, p. 393).

[96] Although dating varies for the composition of "Li Wa zhuan," the present author agrees with those scholars who support the date 819 (see William H. Nienhauser, Jr., "A Third Look at 'Li Wa zhuan,'" *T'ang Studies* 25 [2008]: 91-110).

[97] Li Deyu was Li Jifu's son.

[98] The son of Li Yue , Military Governor of Hedong , and the younger brother of Li Gongdu , Military Governor of Shuofang . If this conjecture is correct, then this Li Gongzuo would have been a relative of the royal family. Li Jianguo, *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu*, p. 306 (and earlier Wang Pijiang, *Tangren xiaoshou*, pp. 108-9) argue against this relationship.

materials into the narrative we know as the "Nanke Taishou zhuan" as will be seen in the third part of this note below.

2) The Text and Its Sources

We can only speculate about the origins of this story. Zhao Yanwei (fl. 1195; cited in Wu Wenzhi 吳 , *Han Yu ziliao huibian* [4v.; Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1983], 2:456) claims that the "Nanke" story, which he refers to as "Huaian Guo zhuan" (The Account of the State of the Great Locust), was based on the "Tang wen" (Questions of Tang) chapter in the *Lie Zi* 列 , apparently referring to the kingdom of Jiaoyao and the northern people called the Zheng who were respectively one *chi* five *cun* and nine *cun* in height (*Lie Zi jishi* 列 , 5.155-6). There are several stories involving ants preserved in the *Yiwen leiju* . The most relevant to "Nanke Taishou zhuan" is that concerning Dong Zhaozhi cited from the *Qixie ji* (Records of Universal Harmony).[99] It tells how Dong saved an ant from drowning while crossing the Qiantang River. That night he dreamed of a person in a black shirt, accompanied by hundred of attendants, claiming that he was the ruler of the ants and would come Dong's aid if he ever was in dire straits. Later Dong was imprionsed and the ants dug under the prison walls to free him.

A number of scholars, however, have pointed to two possible precursor tales, both attributed to the *Soushen ji* (Records of Searching for the Supernatural). The first is a brief anecdotal text which reads:

[99] Ouyang Xun 歐 (557-641), Wang Shaoying , ed. *Yiwen leiju* (2v.; Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1965), 2:97.1689.

> Lu Fen of Xiayang, style name Shiji, dreamt he entered into an ant hole, saw three halls, their appearance quite spacious. On the architrave was inscribed "Hall of the Rain Inspector."
> 陽 危豁
> .[100]

The second is a longer text that is found in the *Taiping guangji* also titled "Lu Fen" (this in a section called "Kun chong" 昆 (Insects) in *Taiping guangji*, *juan* 474.3902-3):

> *The Record of Calamitous Unusual Events*[101] reads: Lu Fen of Xiayang,[102] with the style name Shiji, was fond of study when young and [read] day and night without tiring. When on the twentieth day of the seventh lunar month of the second year of the Yong'an [reign] of Emperor Zhuang of the Later Wei [528 A.D.], [Lu] was about to go to Luo[yang], his friends feted him in his study. After night fell and the moon came out, suddenly they heard the sound of someone talking and laughing [coming] from a hole in the locust tree before the courtyard, together with the sounds of strings and pipes. Several of his friends all heard this and they were surprised. After a moment they saw women wearing blue and black robes come out from

[100] *Soushen ji* 搜 , Wang Shaoying , ed. (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1979), p. 123-4 (entry 10.255); cf. the translation by James I. Crump, Jr. and Kenneth DeWoskin, *In Search of the Supernatural, The Written Record* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 120. Li Jianguo point out that these events were placed in the second year of the Yong-an 安 era of Emperor Zhuang of the Wei 帝 (529 A.D.), and argues therefore that this story could not have been included in the *Soushen ji* (see Li Jianguo, *Xinji Soushen ji* 搜 [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2008], p. 658.

[101] The *Yao yi ji* 妖 is not extant. Moreover, there is no trace of the text in the normal bibliographic sources. Li Jianguo (*Tang Wudai Song chuanqi xulu*, 2:997) notes a *Yao guai lu* 妖 , but that seems to be a distinct collection.

[102] A few miles south of modern Hancheng in Shaanxi (Tan Qixiang, 4:55).

the locust tree and address Fen saying: "This place is not that which you, sir, can go. Why have you come?"

Fen said, "As my party had just ended; my friends heard these sounds of music. For this reason I came to make inquires and see [what is going on]."

The women laughed and said, "If your surname is really Lu, sir, then . . . ."

Then they went into the hole. After a moment there was a slight breeze which stirred the grove of trees. Lu Fen gasped in surprise, and seemed to go into a swoon. When he opened his eyes, he saw residences and rooms that were broadly spacious, gates and doors stretching into the distance. There was a woman wearing a blue jacket who came out of the door and said to Fen: "May I ask you, sir, to allow me to meet these gentlemen?"

Fen took three friends and they went in. They saw several dozen people, all twenty-some years old, standing in a huge room. The architrave over the door read "The Hall for Examining Rain." Fen and the three friends went up the steps to enter the hall and met a woman in purple jacket.

She said to Fen: "We women of this same palace had just all come gathered, to sing then to feast; when we heard that you gentlemen had come to see us, we did not dare to refuse you. Accordingly we invited you here to meet us."

The one dressed in the purple jacket then asked Fen and the others to join the banquet. Later about seven or eight women in their early twenties came out from the side-rooms to the east and west of the hall, dressed in white, green, and yellow robes, all of an incomparably bewitching voluptuousness. After they had formally greeted each other and before the merriment and feasting had gone too far, they all attained a happy mood. Suddenly they could hear that a great wind had risen and the roof-beams of the "Examining Rain Hall" collapsed and broke, in a single moment everyone scattering. Fen fled together with the three friends, then he woke up.

When he saw the old locust in the courtyard, the wind had broken off a huge branch, the tree had been uprooted and toppled down. Accordingly they took torches to shine on the place where the [branch] had broken off and [found] a huge anthill, with three or four mole crickets and one or two earthworms, all dead in the hole. Fen said to the three friends, "How strange! These things had souls. Moreover, you and I have just feasted together with them. Who knows what fated us to enter into [the tree]?"

At this dawn arrived. When they then dug out this tree, they found nothing else that was strange.

記 陽 好 庄
七月 日 闌月
語 絲 韻
衣 衣 謂 "
奈何 ?" " 韻 故來請
" " "乃
昏 豁開 迴
衣 衣 謂 "娘 "
立 號 " "
衣 謂 "
拒 請 " 衣 乃
衣 自 約七
艷 揖 歡 情
梁 時 散 乃 既
照
蚯蚓 謂 "
知何 " 是
他 [103]

The *Taiping guangji* attributes the tale to the *Yao yi ji* 妖 (cited from the *Qiong shen mi yuan* [Probing for the Supernatural in the Garden of Mysteries]). The former is an unknown text with no record in any of the standard early bibliographies.

[103] *Taiping guangji*, 474.3902-3.

The *Qiong shen mi yuan*, according to the bibliography in the *Xin Tang shu* (59.1543) was compiled in ten *juan* by Jiao Lu (d. 868).[104] According to Chao Gongwu's (1105-1180) *Junzhai dushu zhi* (3B.9b, *SKQS* ed.), the text may be a reediting of the *Ji shen yi yuan* compiled by Jiao Du 度 (423-483). Thus neither of these possible antecedent texts can be dated with certainty.[105] It may be that some parallel version of the text, circulating orally when Li Gongzuo passed by the Yangzhou region, inspired the tale.[106]

Although the date given for the composition of the story within the tale itself is 802, scholars have suggested several other

[104] Jiao Lu was the author of two other historical chronologies and a collection of supernatural tales titled *Soushen lu* 搜 , now all lost (see Chen Shangjun's entry in *Zhongguo wenxuejia da cidian, Tang Wudai juan* , Zhou Zuzhuan , ed. [Beijing: Zhonghua, 1992], p. 758).

[105] Lu Gong has argued that this text is one of the sources for Li Gongzuo (see his "'Nanke' yu 'Nanke Taishou zhuan'" , *Wenxue yichan*, 1984.1: 41-45), but other scholars such as Li Zongwei have make convincing claims that extactly the opposite is the case: i.e., that "Lu Fen" was actually compiled later than Li Gongzuo's tale and is based on "Nanke Taishou zhuan" (see Li Zongwei , "Nanke Taishou zhuan de ticai laiyuan ji zhuti sixiang–yu Lu Gong Tongzhi shangque" 主 – 商 , *Suzhou Daxue xuebao [Zhexue Shehui kexue ban]* 報 (哲 版), 1985.3: 73-76)

[106] There are other tales of the same type (dreams in which the dreamer achieved great success, sometime in the world of other creatures) which suggest that "Nanke Taishou zhuan" may be derived from an archetypical plot that was popular during the Tang and even earlier (see, for example, the tale titled "Yang Lin" attributed to the *Youming lu* [Records of the Hidden and Visible (Worlds); cited in *Taiping guangji,* 283.2254] and the translation and discussion in Zhenjun Zhang, "Buddhism and the Supernatural Tale in Early Medieval China, A Study of Liu Yiqing's [404-444] *You ming lu*," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 2007, pp. 192-212; or that titled "Shou gong" which depicts a scholar entering the world of lizards [attributed to *Youyang tsazu* 酉陽 and also cited in the *Taiping guangji*, 476.3918-19]).

dates. However, it seems safe to assume that it was written after "Zhenzhong ji" and before the end of the Yuanhe era, probably in 802 or shortly thereafter, since Li Zhao refers to it in his *Guoshi bu* as a "recent work" (*jindai zhushu*).[107]

"Nanke Taishou zhuan" must have first circulated in manuscript form (as Li Zhao must have seen it) and was first collected during the 840s by Chen Han in his *Yiwen ji* (A Collection of Strange Tales Heard), which is no longer extant.[108] Chen sometimes provided explanatory notes and also edited the texts he collected.[109] The earliest extant editions of the tale are those found in the *Taiping guangji* and the *Lei shuo*. In the *Taiping guangji* (completed in 978) the tale is titled "Chunyu Fen" , but in the *Lei shuo* (completed in 1136; 28.19b-21a, *SKQS*,) it was "Nanke Taishou zhuan." Unlike the distinct plot elements in the *Lei shuo*'s version of "Li Wa zhuan" that Glen Dudbridge has taken to indicate the *Lei shuo* drew on a different version of that tale from that in the *Taiping guangji*, the "Nanke Taishou zhuan" is merely an abridgement of the *Taiping guangji* text,[110] retaining the

[107] Although Wang Dingbao's (879-ca. 954)'s *Tang zhiyan* claims that the *[Tang] Guoshi bu* was written during the Yuanhe era (806-820), Bian Xiaoxuan ("Nanke Taishou zhuan xintan" , *Tang chuanqi xintan* [Nanjing: Jiangsu Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 2001], pp. 184-202) cites Cen Zhongmian's (1886-1961) argument that the text was compiled during the Taihe reign (827-836).

The "recent work" notation occurs in Li Zhao, *Tang guo shi bu* (2nd printing; Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1979 [1957]), p. 55.

[108] Chen Han included over forty tales, including all four of Li Gongzuo's tales, in the *Yiwen ji*, compiled during the early 840s (see Wang Meng'ou, "Chen Han *Yiwen ji* kaolun" , *Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu, erji* (Taibei: Yiwen Yinshuguan, 1973), pp. 1-35; see also Li Jianguo's discussion of the history of the "Nanke" tale (*Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu* 叙 [Tianjin: Nankai Daxue Chubanshe, 1998], pp. 305-10).

[109] Cf. Wang Meng'ou, *ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

[110] To speak of the "*Taiping guangji* text" is an oversimplification, since there are a number of important editions of this huge anthology (see Glen Dudbridge,

original wording with a few insignificant variants.[111] There are a few apparent differences in the plot, such as when Chunyu Fen arrives at the capital of the ant kingdom the *Lei shuo* reads: "There was a man on horseback who shouted: 'The Royal Son-in-law has come from a long distance,' and led him to a spacious hall" 呼 . In the *Taiping guangji* version it is the Chief Minister on the Right who eventually leads Fen to an audience with the king. But this discrepancy is easily explained by the fact that the *Lei shuo* omits the text between the horseman leading Fen through the palace up to the passage where the Chief Minister takes him in to see the king, carelessly making it seem as if it were the horseman who led Fen to the king. Other similar small changes in the *Lei shuo*'s are all due to the failure of the editor, Zeng Zao (1091-1155), to seamlessly connect the episodes he retains.

The next version of the text, titled "Nanke Taishou zhuan," is that found in the *Yu chu zhi* , first printed in the mid-sixteenth century and revised and reissued in the seventeenth.[112] The text is similar to that in the *Taiping guangji*, but contains minor variants that seem to have been inadvertently introducing in editing. Other traditional versions of the tale (such as those in the *Longwei mishu* 威 (edited by Ma Junliang ; 1794) or the *Tangdai congshu* (compiled by Wang Wengao [b. 1764] and Shao Xizeng ; 1806) seem to have been based on the *Yu chu zhi* and provide little for a general discussion. Wang Wenru's (1867-1935) *Shuo ku* 庫 (Treasury of Stories) is perhaps the most carelessly produced version of all.

The Tale of Li Wa [London: Ithaca Press, 1973], pp. 2-6). But some of the more significant variants are noted in the apparatus to the translations above.

[111] As the *Siku quanshu zongmu tiyao* 全 總 notice (873.2a) points out.

[112] See Dudbridge, *The Tale of Li Wa*, p. 10. "Nanke" appears in *Yu chu zhi* (Taibei: Xinxing Shuju 局, 1956), 3.6b-11b.

Lu Xun (1881-1936) produced the first modern "critical" edition of the tale in his *Tang Song chuanqi ji* [113] based on an earlier edition of the *Taiping guangji*. Lu Xun collated the tale with other editions and made some small emendations. Two years late Wang Pijiang (1887-1966) published his *Tangren xiaoshuo* containing another version of "Nanke Taishou zhuan" along with a short introduction and some appended textual notes.[114]

Wang Meng'ou's (1907-2002) edition of the text was published in his *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi* (2v. Taibei: Zhengzhong Shuju, 1983), pp. 171-99, supplemented by extensive notes on the text and context of the tale and followed by a long appendix on Li Gongzuo, his works, and Li Zhao.[115] Although Wang does not tell the reader what his base text was, through comparison it seems he took the Ming printed edition of the *Taiping guangji* that Tan Kai (1503-1569) prepared (1567) and collated it with other Ming editions (such as Xu Zichang's (fl. 1596) seventeenth century printed edition) and the *Yu chu zhi*.

Finally there is the equally useful annotation, text and commentary of the tale that appears in Li Jianguo's *Tang Song chuanqi pindu cidian* (A Dictionary of Critical Readings of Tang and Song Tales),[116] based on Wang Shaoying's edition of the *Taiping guangji* .

[113] Originally published by Beixing Shuju 北 局 in Shanghai late in 1927, the stories were originally selected by Xu Guangping (1898-1968) and then collated by Lu Xun himself. "Nanke Taishou zhuan" appears on pp. 77-84.

[114] On pp. 77-84 in the reprint published in Shanghai (Shanghai Guji, 1978).

[115] An earlier version of "Nanke" was edited and published by Wang Meng'ou in his *Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu*, 2:201-8 along with a few collation notes.

[116] 2v.; Beijing: Xinshijie Chubanshe, 2007, pp. 265-79; the critical reading was written by Zhang Zhenguo .

3) The Meaning of the Tale

Although there are a number of earlier translations of "An Account of the Governor of the Southern Branch," none have commented on the meaning of the text. The story belongs to a subgenre of dream stories in which the dreamer is allowed to see how his own life would develop if he could achieve his worldly goals. The form may originally have come from India in the collections of allegories which were translated into Chinese during the Period of Disunion (180-589), and it certainly has Buddhist and especially Taoist overtones. "Nanke Taishou zhuan" also shows obvious influences from "Zhengzhong ji" in both plot and language.

Irrespective of the story's possible foreign origins, its resonances are purely Chinese in the hands of its author, Li Gongzuo. Li's choice of the unusual surname Chunyu, as well as Fen's hometown in what is now Shandong, would likely call to the Tang reader's mind the figure of Chunyu Kun , a famous advisor and wit at the courts of both King Wei of Qi (r. 378-343 B.C.) and King Hui of Liang (r. 370-335 B.C.). Kun represented the state of Qi diplomatically with great success. At the height of his career, King Wei summoned him in order to confer a cup of wine on his articulate courtier. When Kun arrived, the king asked him how much he could drink before becoming drunk. Kun responded that he could drink "a barrel and become drunk or a dipperful and become just as drunk." When questioned how this could be so, Kun explained that in the king's company, surrounded by high ministers, a dipperful would make him tipsy. When entertaining a formal guest, two dipperfuls would have the same effect. But when in his hometown, drinking with men and women and completely at ease, a barrel would not be too much (*Shiji*, 126.3197). Yet when King Hui first granted him audience, he was as silent as Chunyu Fen upon his arrival in the State of Locust Tranquility (see the two biographical sketches on

Shiji, 74.2347 and 126.3197). But perhaps the implicit resonance between the two men was intended to highlight Fen's indiscriminate drinking, a practice which had lost him his position of command in the Huainan Army.[117] Ironically, however, both Kun and Fen eventually won favor with their rulers through their drinking. Kun did so through his eloquent persuasion, warning that "drinking to extreme excess will cause chaos, extreme happiness will cause sorrow" 酒 樂 (*Shiji*, 126.3197), which resulted in the King of Qi abandoning his all night drinking parties; Fen managed to visit the ant colony only after becoming sick from excessive drinking. But perhaps the most significant similarity between the two men was their dependence on their wives' families. Chunyu Kun's biography begins rather awkwardly by explaining in the first line that "Chunyu Kun was a son-in-law in [the state of] Qi who lived with his wife's family" 髡 贅 (*Ibid*.). The biographical norm in the *Shiji* would be to begin by telling the reader the origins of the person depicted and then mentioning his skills. Sima Qian's sketch of Dong Zhongshu 仲 may serve as an example: "Dong Zhongshu was a native of Guangchuan. Because he studied [or "put in order"] the Spring and Autumn Annals], he became an erudite during the time of [Emperor] Xiaojing" 仲 川 ; , (*Shiji*, 121.3127). Thus Sima Qian implies that Chunyu Kun's basic trait or "talent" was his ability to live off of his in-laws (this kind of uxorilocal marriage is known as *qun dai* or "petticoat influence"). Chunyu Fen, dismissed by his military superiors, similarly begins a second career in the world of the ants based entirely on his relationship to his wife's family. This association is one which must have occurred to most traditional Chinese readers of "Nanke Taishou zhuan," as Tang

[117] See also the translation in Nienhauser, *The Grand Scribe's Records* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 7:182-3.

Xianzu (1550-1616) suggests when he begins his dramatic retelling of the story ("Nanke ji" [A Record of the Southern Bough]) by having Chunyu Fen introduce himself as follows:

> I'm a native of Dongping [County]. I have the double surname Chunyu and my given name is Fen. My first ancestor was Chunyu Kun. Chunyu Kun was a skilled drinker. A pint as well as a barrel would make him drunk [depending on circumstances]. That is how he left a reputation as a wit. My next ancestor was Chunyu Yi, a skilled physician, who begot not a single son but did not die due to a single daughter.
>
> 平 ; , . . 善 , 斗 , , 稽 ; 意善 , , .[118]

This resonance has led the modern scholar Bian Xiaoxuan 卞 (following Liu Kairong) to read the story as a topical allegory, intended to mock the practice of marrying royal princesses to regional satraps to hold their loyalty, a practice particularly popular around between the reigns of Daizong (r. 766-779) and Xianzong 憲 (r. 806-820; see Bian, *Tangdai wenshi luncong* [Taiyuan: Shanxi Renmin, 1986], pp. 27-47).

For early ninth-century readers the theme of "petticoat influence" must have resonated with the practice noted above of marrying imperial princesses to the sons of powerful provincial satraps and then promoting the husbands, all *fuma* or royal son-in-laws like Chunyu Fen, to important provincial posts. Examples can be found in men like Zhang Maosong , the son of Zhang Xiaozhong (730-791),[119] who were married to

[118] Cited from *Nanke ji* (*A Dream under the Southern Bough*; Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2006), pp. 6-7.

[119] Zhang was a member of the Xi tribe. His father had pledged loyalty to the Tang during the Kaiyuan era, but Zhang Xiaozhong had fought with An Lushan. Thereafter he served under Li Baochen (718-781, another rebel who was rewarded with the territory he held at the end of the An Lushan

princesses.[120] This policy continued from Daizong (r. 762-779) through Xianzong (r. 806-820). Li, whose career began and was based on his success in the *jinshi* examination,[121] imagined in "Nanke Taishou zhuan" what his own life might have been like in this kind of petticoat-influence as the character Chunyu Fen. He wrote the tale, as Li Zhao claims in his note in the *Tang guo shi bu* (p. 55) to slander (*zao bang* 謗) the practice of marrying princesses to the sons of powerful provincial leaders (thus the importance of Fen's posting to "Southern Branch"). These provincial officials often defied the court, sometimes even in open rebellion. The comparison to the world of ants of such rebellions was common in earlier historical works. In "Zhou Fang zhuan" (Memoir of Zhou Fang [d. 237], Chen Shou 壽 [233-297], *Sanguo zhi* [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1964], 60.1387) Peng Shi's 式 rebellious troops are depicted as "gathering like ants to create chaos" (*yi ju wei luan*). In "Murong Wei zhuan" (Fang Xuanling 房 [578-648] *et al.*, *Jin shu* [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1974] 100.2638), Murong Wei himself refers to the rebel Suyan's army as "dogs and sheep gathering like ants" (*quanyang yiju*) suggesting that the expression "gathering like ants" (*yiju*) had strong connotations of military exploits in opposition to the ruling state.[122] This, too, would have fit Li Gongzuo's purposes nicely.

But for "Nanke Taishou zhuan" to have achieved its status as one of the best of the Tang tales, it took more than just satire, albeit ingenious satire. The dream structure was common to many earlier tales, the most notable being "Zhenzhong ji." But none of

Rebellion) and refused to join Zhu Tao and others who rebelled in the early 780s (see his biography in *Jiu Tang shu*, *juan* 141).

[120] Cf. Zhang Zhenguo's argument in Li Jianguo, *Cidian*, p. 277.

[121] Xu Song (1781-1848), *Dengke ji kao buzheng* . Meng Erdong , ed. (3v.; Beijing: Yanshan 燕 Chubanshe, 2003), 3:1209.

[122] Thanks to Mei Ah Tan for these references.

these tales had mixed in the reality and inventiveness that is found in "Nanke." Whereas Student Lu in "Zhenzhong ji" is a scholar, Chunyu Fen is a rowdy, hard-drinking knight errant. Moreover, Fen's friends and his father, as well as real individuals like the Monk Qi Xuan, all appear in the dream. If "Zhenzhong ji" teaches that human life like a dream, "Southern Branch" goes a step further to show that human life *is* a dream.[123]

The most recent study of this tale, however, takes a completely different tack. Carrie Reed, in her "Messages from the Dead" (*CLEAR* 31 [2009]: 121-30) sees several layers to the narrative, one of the deepest involving "reconciliation and reestablishment of order between a dead father and a living son." In Reed's interpretation, the troublesome date in the coda attesting to Li Gongzuo's meeting with Chunyu Fen five years after the later had died, was intentional (not an error as most modern Chinese scholars have assumed), suggested the nebulous boundary between "the fanciful, dreamlike tale proper and the historicizing proof section of the conclusion." The motivating force of the entire adventure is Chunyu Fen's deceased father's desire to "instigate change in his scalawag son" (p. 122). The ant world in which he lives and, so the king assures him, he will return to three years after he goes back to his Guangling home, is thereby associated with the world of the dead. On returning he will find his children and be able to meet his father again. Reed believes that the dream section of the story constitutes an "inner story" and the introduction and the coda an "outer story." Moreover, "Chunyu is effectively dead in both the inner story and the outer story, but this fact holds no great significance for the reader, nor does it prevent the story from being told" (p. 130). This interpretation, which Reed rather convincingly develops through both structural and textual readings, might be modified to argue that when Fen drinks so much that he becomes ill in the first part

[123] Cf. Zhang Zhenguo's remarks in Li Jianguo, *Cidian,* p. 276.

of the tale he actually dies. The relationship between the Otherworld and the "real world" he has departed is then blurred. His return to his Guangling home from the ant world might then be seen as no more than a vision or dream itself.[124]

4) Language

Although Dudbridge discovered some variants that suggested the *Lei shuo* version of "Li Wa zhuan" preserves a distinct textual tradition, the "Nanke Taishou zhuan" is an abridged version of the text found in the *TPGJ*, containing on a few variants of little consequence to the plot (pointed out above in nn. 53, 61, and 66 to the translation above). But the language of the text mixes in styles and allusions from a number of classical and (then) contemporary texts. Resonances to historical biographies are not uncommon (see the apparatus to Wang Meng'ou's edition) and the important allusions to the *Yijing* (all in official documents) have been noted in the notes to the translation. The motif of messengers clad in hues of blue or purple coming to take an unsuspecting mortal to another realm for instruction is a hoary Taoist one. Other features of the story, such as the women of the court being so attracted to our protagonist, are familiar. In fact, their names identify them as Taoist "nuns" who oft-times plied the world's oldest trade in the

[124] An anecdote about Li Gongzuo (originally written as Li Zuogong , but corrected by later scholars) found in the *Taiping guangji* (338.2682-3) may lend support to Reed's stressing the importance of death in "Nanke Taishou zhuan." In this anecdote Li Gongzuo reports a clerk named Wang Yu was returning home in Luzhou (a prefecture in Huainan Province) when he encountered a high official on the road. Yu hid behind a tree and saw several horsemen escorting a man in purple clothes. The fastener for the carriage yoke broke and the convoy stopped. After checking a register, they determined to take the sinews from the spine of a local woman who happened to be Wang Yu's aunt. After having done this, they went on their way. Wang Yu went to his aunt's house, but she was fine. However, the next morning she had a painful backache and died before the day was over.

Tang demimonde and who were especially active on holidays (such as those mentioned in the story) when men and women encountered each other on the streets (these encounters were not normal at other times).

Of interest also are the similarities between several of Liu Zongyuan's (773-819) famous landscape essays (from his "Yongzhou baji" [Eight Records of Yong Prefecture]) and the passages towards the end of "Nanke Taishou zhuan" which depict the unearthing of the formicary. Li Gongzuo portrays this as follows:

> Finally, they ordered servants to shoulder axes, cut through the knotted roots, break off the newly sprouted secondary branches, locate the mouth of the holes, and explore them to their ends. Nearby running north to south for about ten feet there was a hole which penetrated through to the other side and was well lit, large enough to have accommodated a couch. On the roots there was soil piled up in a form that one could take for city walls, escarpments, towers, and palaces.
>
> 斤　　腫　　源
> 洞　朗　　為　郭

Compare this to the following passage from Liu Zongyuan's "Shi de Xishan yanyou ji" (A Record of the Outing on Which I First Discovered Western Mountain):

> Finally I ordered servants to cross the Xiang River, and stop only when they had followed Ran Brook, cut away the thorny undergrowth, burnt the grasses and bamboo, and investigated the heights of the mountain. When we had pulled ourselves up to the top, we sat with our legs stretched out to amuse ourselves, the lands of several prefectures spread out beneath our mats. This terrain of heights and depressions, precipitous and swampy, resembling anthills and holes, hundreds of miles

in feet and inches . . . . 湘 溪 斫 止 尺 .[125]

It seems apparent that there is a relationship between the language of the two texts. Yet another of Liu's records, "Shijian ji" (A Record of the Rocky Torrent), reveals further intertextuality, the image of measuring area in terms of furniture, "the space could have been filled the space by arranging eighteen or nineteen folding chairs" , reminiscent of "Nanke's" line depicting a hole that was "large enough to have accommodated a couch" (*ke rong yi ta* ; see text cited just above):

> When I had broken off the bamboo stems, swept away the fallen leaves, and removed the rotted trees, the space could have been filled by arranging eighteen or nineteen folding chairs; 腐 胡床 九居 [126]

Although the dating of neither of these texts is certain, Liu's record must have been written after he was exiled to Yongzhou in 806 and is therefore probably the later of the two texts. If that is the case, then Liu's seeing the world of man from atop Western Mountain as "resembling anthills and holes, hundreds of miles in feet and inches"[127] can be seen as influenced by the idea expressed in "Nanke Taishou zhuan," that man's life is not only *ru meng* (like a dream), but also *ru yi* (like that of an ant).[128] The

[125] *Liu Zongyuan ji* (4v.; Beijing: Zhonghua, 1979), 3:763.

[126] *Ibid*., 4:771.

[127] This depiction, like many in these eight landscape records, is pure hyperbole; I climbed the Western Mountain in 1985 and found it to be but a second-rate hill, a *tu shan* , nothing of the sort of the craggy promontory's Liu found in his next place of exile, Liuzhou .

[128] Cf. Zhang Zhenguo in Li Jianguo, *Cidian*, p. 277.

sharing of language in these two texts makes good sense for several reasons. First, both Li and Liu were noted writers in their day, masters of their own genres. Second, both were writing about officials who had been dismissed from their positions (Li about Chunyu Fen, Liu about himself). Third, both narratives were records of journeys. Fourth, both texts intended a second level of meaning. Regardless of which text was primary, the interaction between those writers later considered part of the *guwen* (ancient-prose) movement and the compilers of Tang tales seems evident.

5) Influence

Influence of the tale is evident even in Tang times. Li Mei (fl. 830-860)[129] in his *Zuan yi ji* recorded a very similar tale titled "Xu Xuanzhi" (*Taiping guangji*, 478.3936-9) in which the protagonist also enters an ant hole and is eventually sent home by the king. In the end Xu Xuanzhi has the ants burned out to remove the evil influence they had on his home. There are also elements of the story which suggest a direct influence from "Lu Fen."[130] There was a *huaben* story originally included in Huangfu Mu's *Sanshui xiao du* titled "Da Huai guo" that was surely an imitation (the story is no longer extant). The popular influence of the tale is suggested by the fact that there was a tomb of the Governor of the Southern Branch in Yangzhou 揚 .[131] Tang Xianzu's play "Nanke ji" is the most outstanding work engendered by the tale, but Pu Songling (1640-1715),

[129] See Yuan Xingpei and Hou Zhongyi , *Zhongguo wenyan xiaoshuo shumu* (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Chubanshe, 1981), pp. 58-59.

[130] Zhang Zhenguo, p. 278.

[131] Zhang Wenqian *et al.*, Tang Song chuanqi xuan zhuyi ben (Fuzhou: Fujian Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1983), p. 101.

Fan Xingrong 范 (1786-1848), and Zhang Mingke 鳴 (1829-1908) also wrote works clearly referenced to "Nanke Taishou zhuan" during the Qing (p. 278).

6) Concluding Remarks

"Nanke Taishou zhuan" is clearly a mix of allegory and autobiography. Li Gongzuo adapted earlier versions of the story (either the "Lu Fen" that is preserved in the *Taiping guangji* or some oral, local Yangzhou version of the tale) to fit his own ideas and his own life experiences. These life experiences including his service and dismissal from the Huaian army (thus the autobiographical), as well as his observation of the many young men who made careers through their marriage to Tang princesses, being promoted almost as rapidly as they failed. Does the warning that came in the anonymous memorial submitted to the King of Locusty Tranquility — "The capital will be moved, and the royal ancestral temple will collapse. The cause of this strife will come from another tribe of people, but the matter lies within Your Majesty's own officials" — refer to the actual Tang political stage? Either to the An Lushan Rebellion, which remained a staple allegorical mode for warning of current problems among early Tang tales writers, or even to the series of rebellions and Tibetan incursions that marked the late eighth and early ninth centuries? Regardless of what Li Gongzuo's topical targets were, the overall theme of the tale deemphasizes the importance we humans give to our busy lives and vain aspirations and might best be summed up merely by repeating Li Zhao's coda:

> Honor reaching a peak in emolument and position,
> Power to overthrow capital cities of lands —
> The wise man regards these things
> As nothing different from a colony of ants.

Glossary[132]

beizhi caiyong 才用 **vo.** "to completely understand the talents" of someone (175.4)

bujue **adv.** "unconsciously, without realizing it" (171.6)

dan **adv.** "just" ("you, sir, just do it" , 174.12)

fu cheng **vo.** "to ride in a carriage with a burden on the back" (175.2), found in the commentary on the images (*xiang*) under hexagram 40 (Xie , "To Release") reads: "If one bears a burden on his back yet also rides in a carriage, it will attract robbers to him" 乘, (*Yi jing yin te* 易 [A Concordance to the *Yi Ching*; Rpt. Taibei: Chinese Materials and Research Aids Service Center, 1966], p. 25; translation by Richard John Lynn, *The Classic of Changes* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1994], p. 383). The *Xi ci* commentary expands on this: "The Master said, 'Do you think that the makers of the *Changes* did not understand what robbers were! The *Changes* says, "If one bears a burden on his back yet also rides in a carriage, it will attract robbers to him." Bearing burdens on the back, this is the business of a petty man; a carriage, this is the rig of a noble man. When one is a petty man, yet rides in the rig of a noble man, robbers think to take his things by force. When the one above [the sovereign] is careless and those below are harsh, enemies will indeed think to attach it [such a state]" , 易 . 易 乘 。 。乘 。

[132] Numbers in parentheses refer to the occurrence on the page and line in Wang Meng'ou.

而乘　　矣。慢　　伐　矣 (*Yi ching yin de,* p. 42; Lynn, pp. 59-60).

fuguo chengdie 郭　　**noun compound.** "the ramparts and parapets of a city wall" (171.9)

fuma 駙　　**n.** "royal son-in-law" (171.11); abbreviated from *fuma duwei*　　都　"commandant of the [reserve] horses accompanying [a chariot]," which Hucker (p. 219, #2083) notes was conferred on the consorts of imperial princesses during the Tang (see also des Rotours, *Fonctionnaires*, 1:374.

fu su 覆　　**vo.** "to overturn the pottage" (175.2), refers to hexagram 50, Ding 鼎 "The Cauldron": "The cauldron breaks its legs and overturns all its pottage, so its form is drenched, which means misfortune" 鼎　　渥　. The *Xi ci* commentary explains: "This speaks of someone who is unequal to his responsibilities"　　勝　　(*Yi Ching yin de*, pp. 31 and 47; Lynn, pp. 455 and 84).

hun shui 惛睡 **v.** "grow groggy with sleep" (176.13-14)

jing xi 竟　　**vo.** "till the night was spent," common in Tang tales and poetry (174.5)

men dongkai　　**adj./n.** "a wide-open door," suggesting a vast interior (172.1)

qi hu　戶　**adj./n.** "ornamented halberds before the door," (175.10), made of either painted wood (Wang Meng'ou, p. 184, n. 6) or red and black silk cloth (Zhou Shaoliang, p. 212, citing Yan Shigu's 顏　[581-645] commentary to the *Han shu* 漢　)

arranged before the door were a sign of high rank (see also Li Jianguo's detailed discussion in n. 123, pp. 272-3).

qin jia **n.** "my daughter's father-in-law" (174.7-8)

qingyi **n.** "affection, love" especially between a married couple (*fuqi qingyi* 情義; 174.3); *qingyi weiqu* 情義委 "indirect expressions of affection" (174.9)

rou shun 順 **adj.** "yielding and compliant" (175.7)

sheng **"young man, young scholar" n.** Often best left untranslated (*passim*)

shijiu shiqi **vo. compound.** "Too fond of drinking and given to impulse" (171.1)

sui **adv.** "after all, in the end, finally" (174.8)

wei **adj.** "improper, imprudent, mistaken" (175.1)

wei zheng **v.** "to serve in the government, exercise governmental affairs" and the title of the second section of the *Lun yu* ; common in Tang tales (*Confucian Analects*; 174.12).

xian zun **n.** "Your honorable father," a polite reference (literally "the worthy, honorable one"; 172.8)

xing gang 剛 **adj.** "By nature inflexible" (175.6)

yi shu **n.** "Cultural refinement or administrative craft" (175.1)

zhimenzhe **n.** "Gate guards" (171.11)

zhu xuan 朱 **adj/n.** "Red windows," according to Wang Meng'ou, p. 184, n. 6, citing Li Shan's *Wen xuan* commentary; or "red doors" (Zhou Shaoliang, pp. 212-3). Whether windows or doors they were indicated wealth.

zi yi **adj/n.** "Purple robes or coats," used to refer to both minor officials in charge of welcoming guests (171.6) and those of third-degree rank or above (172.3)

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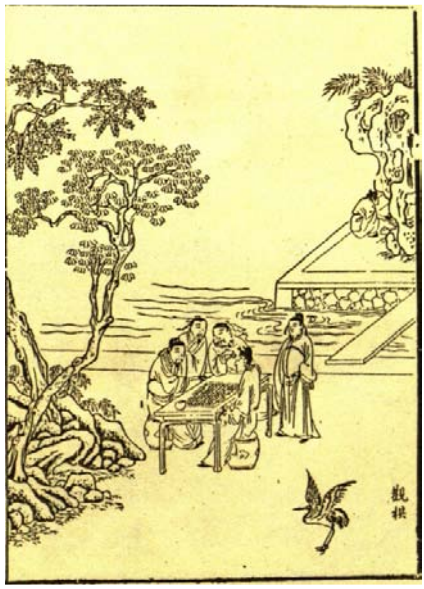
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Qiu Ranke arrives at the Lingyou Inn



The future emperor watching Qiu Ranke and the Taoist master at Chess

Tale 5

"Qiuran Ke Zhuan" 虯髯客傳
(The Tale of the Curly-Bearded Guest)

by Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850-933)[1]
translated by Wang Jing

When Emperor Yang [2] (r. 605-616) of the Sui (569-618) Dynasty favored Jiangdu 江 [3] with a visit, he entrusted Yang Su

[1] This story was included in several collections of tales. Besides the *Taiping guangji* edition on which this translation is based (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1961, 193.1445-1448), it can also be found in the *Shuo fu* (112.5168-5171), *Gushi wenfang xiaoshuo* 房 , *Yuchu zhi* 虞 (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian, 1986. pp. 30-35.), and Wang Dang's (fl. 1089) *Tang Yulin* 林 (*Tang Yulin jiaozheng* 林 證 [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1987], 5.424-427). The *Tang yu lin version* starts from where Li Jing and the singing girl fled to Taiyuan and omits all the earlier events. In the *Taiping guangji,* this tale was incorporated in the category of *Haoxia* (The Magnates and Knight-errant). However, compared to the other entries in the same category which describe personal bravery and extraordinary skills, this text is related to the founding of a dynasty, thus reflects a grander topic. The note at the end of the text claims to take it from "Qiu ran zhuan" (Tale of the Curly-Beard). The translation is collated against the text in Wang Meng'ou's *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi* (Taipei: Zhongzheng Shuju, 1983), pp. 319-338. Wang's version is originally based on Wang Pijiang's 疆 *Tangren xiaoshuo* (Shanghai; Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1978), pp. 178-181, which in turn was collated against the *Gushi wenfang xiaoshuo* edition.

[2] Emperor Yang of Sui, named Yang Guang 楊 , was the second son of Emperor Wen (541-604) of the Sui Dynasty. He had two reign titles, Daye (605-614) and Jianyuan 建 (615-616) for a total of 12 years. He was killed by Yuwen Huaji (d. 619) in 616.

(d. 606),[4] Minister of Works, to guard the western capital.[5] Yang Su was arrogan and privileged by his rank. Furthermore, because of the chaotic time, he considered that, among those with great authority and high reputation in the world, none could rival him. He treated himself extravagantly, and did not follow the [appropriate] rituals for a subject. Every time ministers and high-ranking officials came to confer with him, or retainers and guests paid visits, he would always receive them reclining on a couch.[6]

[3] Jiangdu was a commandery of the Sui Empire. It was located in the northern part of modern Jiangsu 江 province (Tan Qixiang 譚 , *Zhongguo lishi ditu ji* 地圖 [Beijing: Zhongguo ditu chubanshe, 1996], 5:21). In the ninth year (589) of the Kaihuang 開 (581-600) reign period, Nanyan Prefecture 州 was renamed Yangzhou 揚州. Later, in the beginning of the Daye reign, it was established as a commandery with Jiangyang 江揚 as its seat. Emperor Yang of Sui ordered palaces built there and made it an imperial resort.

[4] Yang Su, style name Chudao , had both literary and military talent, according to his biography in the *Sui shu* (History of the Sui) (264.784-92). He assisted the emperor of the Northern Zhou 北 (557-589) in destroying the Northern Qi 北齊 (550-577), and later joined Yang Jian 楊 , who usurped the throne of the Northern Zhou and became the first emperor of the Sui. Yang Su aided him in destroying Chen 陳 and pacifying the empire. In the closing years of Emperor Wen, he supported the enthronement of Yang Guang and was appointed Minister of Education in the second year (606) of the Daye reign period.

The time frame and official position of Yang Su are not accurately portrayed in this tale. He did not end his official career in the position of the Minister of Works. Moreover, when Emperor Yang visited Jiangdu in the twelfth year (616) of the Daye reign period, Yang Su had been dead for eleven years. It was Prince Yang Tong 楊 (r. 618-619) of Yue and Duan Da (d. 621), Grand Master for Splendid Happiness, who guarded the western capital. The time frame and facts about specific figures can not be read as historical records. They only served to provide a backstage for the story to develop.

[5] The western capital refers to Chang'an 安. In the second year of Kaihuang (582) reign period, the capital was moved to Daxing , about 5 miles southeast of Chang'an (Tan Qixiang, 5:8).

[6] "The Biography of Scholar Li" in the *Shiji* recorded a similar anecdote relating how Li Yiji 食 (d. 203 B.C.) went to visit Liu Bang (256-195

He ordered beautiful women to surround him and accompany him when he went out, and maid to line up and wait on him [at home]. His practices even exceeded the rituals and privileges of a sovereign. He became even worse in his later years.[7]

One day, Li Jing (570-649),[8] the [future] Duke of Wei , came as a commoner to pay a visit and presented

B.C.), the Magistrate of Pei at the time. Liu Bang was just reclining on a couch and had asked two maids to wash his feet. Scholar Li did not prostrate himself, but just bowed to him and said, "If you certainly want to exterminate virtueless Qin, it is inappropriate to receive an elder while reclining on a couch." At this, Magistrate of Pei rose, grasped his robe in his hands and apologized to Li. He invited Li to sit in the seat of honor. , 洗 , " 下 秦, " , , 衣 , 延 (Sima Qian 司 , *Shiji* [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1959], 97.2692). *Juzuo* in this tale means to sit with one's legs spread, which is an arrogant and impolite pose. A terracotta figure sitting in this position from the Qin Dynasty was excavated in the First Emperor's mausoleum in Lintong 臨 District and is preserved in Shaanxi Provincial Institute of Archeology (see the attached photo at the end of this translation).

[7] In Wang Meng'ou's text, there is an additional sentence thereafter. "He never realized again what he should shoulder [as his responsibility] and did not have the intention to eliminate the danger and uphold the fallen." 復知 有扶危 (Wang Meng'ou, p. 319). *Fuwei chidian* 扶危 alludes to what Xu Jing said in his letter to Cao Cao . "To eliminating danger and uphold the fallen is to make the pillars of the state" 扶危 , 柱 ("Chronicle of Shu" in *The Chronicle of the Three Kingdoms* 三 [Taipei: Hongye Shuju, 1993], 38.965).

[8] Li Jing (571-649), formerly named Yaoshi , was a nephew of Han Qinhu 擒 (538-592), who was a famous general of the Sui. Li Jing served in the Sui government as Palace Censor. At the end of the Daye reign period, Li Jing was over forty years old and was the Commandery Aide of Ma County which was located about thirty miles northwest of the Yanmen Pass in modern Shanxi province (Tan Qixiang, 5:46). He noticed that Li Yuan (566-635), who later became Emperor Gaozu 高 of the Tang, was intending to rebel. Li Jing planned to report this to Emperor Yang secretly, but was found out and caught by Li Yuan. When he was about to be beheaded, Li Jing shouted, "You raised the troops in order to rescue the world under Heaven from violence and disorder . . . . Is it appropriate to kill a virtuous man because of personal

extraordinary strategies. Yang Su again received him reclining on the couch with his legs spread. Li Jing stepped forward, bowed to him, and said, "The world is in turmoil at this moment and the heroic fellows all have risen to compete for the throne.[9] You, sir, are a mighty minister of the imperial court, with heavy responsibilities. You ought occupy yourself with thoughts of congregating and collecting extraordinary people. It is inappropriate to receive guests while reclining on a couch." Yang Su assumed a serious expression and rose from his seat.[10] He conversed with Li Jing and was greatly pleased. He accepted Li Jing's strategies and retreated [to his private chamber].

While Li Jing was presenting his arguments convincingly, a singing girl[11] with exceptional beauty holding a red whisk in her hand stood in front [of the maids]. She looked intently only at Li Jing. After Li Jing had left, the singing girl with the red whisk stood by the window, pointed [at his back], and asked an official,[12]

resentment?" Emperor Gaozu was surprised at his words, and Li Shimin 民, Prince of the Qin 秦 , and the future Taizong 太 , also interceded for him. Thus he was released and later became a meritorious official in the establishment of the Tang Dynasty. See Li Jing's biography in the *Jiu Tang shu* (*The Old History of the Tang*), 67.2754-5, and the *Xin Tang shu* (*The New History of the Tang*), 93.3811. The events narrated in this tale concerning Li Jing differ radically from the historical record and thus must be fictional creations.

[9] At the end of the Daye reign period, the empire fell into chaos, local leaders arising in many places to seek the throne. Among them were Li Mi (582-619), Wang Shichong (d. 621), and Dou Jiande 建 (573-621). Their biographies can be found in *Jiu Tang shu* chapters 53 and 54, pp. 2207-2243, and *Xin Tang shu* chapters 84 and 85, pp. 3677-3704.

[10] Wang Meng'ou's text has *xiegong* (apologized to the Duke) after this sentence. Li Jing was addressed as "Duke" rather than with his name (Wang Meng'ou, p. 319).

[11] The female protagonist was referred to as *ji* in Chinese. According to the context, she is probably one of Yang Su's household maids; therefore, *ji* is translated as singing girl here.

[12] This official should be the one who was in charge of visitors in Yang's household, thus he knew Li Jing's family rank and address.

"What is the rank of the gentleman who is leaving? Where does he live?" The official answered in detail. The singing girl nodded and left.[13]

Li Jing returned to where he lodged. That night, at the beginning of the fifth watch,[14] he suddenly heard someone knocking softly on the door. Li Jing got up and asked who it was. It was someone in purple clothes, wearing a cap, and carrying a sack tied on a stick. Li Jing asked who it was. The person said, "I am the singing girl with the red whisk from Yang's residence." Li Jing immediately invited her in. Taking off her coat and removing her cap, she appeared to be a beauty of eighteen or nineteen years old. She was in gorgeous clothes with no make-up on her face, and bowed to him. Li Jing was surprised.[15] The singing girl said, "I have served Minister of Works Yang for a long time and have seen many people in the world under Heaven. There have been none equal to you. The dodder cannot live by itself and wishes to cling to a tall tree.[16] This is the reason why I came to you."

[13] Wang Meng'ou's text (p. 319) reads, "The Duke answered in detail. The singing girl memorized it and left." This sounds like Li Jing answered the singing girl's questions directly; however, it is more likely that the girl asked an official in Yang's household privately. Therefore, when she went to visit Li Jing at night, he was surprised. Thus in the translation "the Duke" is changed to "the official" based on the *Taiping guangji* text.

[14] The night hours in the dynasties prior to the Tang were usually referred to by the watch. The night was divided into five watches, which were called *wuye* 五夜, *wugeng* 五更, or *wugu* 五鼓 in Chinese. From the Han Dynasty on, each watch period was subdivided into five smaller units. The fifth watch is the time period between 3 am to 5 am. For detailed information on telling time in ancient China, see Endymion Wilkinson, *Chinese History, A Manual* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000), pp. 198-219.

[15] Wang Meng'ou's text has an additional character, *bai* 白, inserted between *da* 大 and *yue* 曰. Therefore, the sentence reads, "[The Duke] bowed following suit, and the singing girl said..." (p. 319).

[16] The image of the dodder twined on a tall tree as a metaphor for love and marriage can be traced back as early as to the "Kuibian" 弁 (Mao# 217) in the

Li Jing said, "Minister Yang has absolute power in the capital. What to do about that?"

She said, "He lives like a corpse with only one breath left[17] and is not to be feared. There are many singing girls who, knowing that he will not achieve anything, have left him. He did not attempt to chase them, either. I have planned it out meticulously. Please do not be suspicious!"

Li Jing asked for her family name. She answered, "It is Zhang."

He also asked her rank in the family and she replied, "I am the eldest."

Observing her skin and manner, conversation and disposition, it seemed that she was indeed a lady from Heaven. Li Jing had not expected to obtain her. But the greater his delight, the greater also his fear. In the twinkling of an eye, he felt himself plunged into thousands of worries and anxieties. He walked back

Shijing 詩 . The following translation is from Arthur Waley, *The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove Press, 1937), p. 206:

、Do not the mistletoe and the dodder,
施 Twine themselves on cypress and pine?
、Before I saw my lord,
憂 My sad heart had no rest;
、But now that I have seen my lord,
What happiness is mine!

The metaphor can also be found in the "Ranran gu sheng zhu" 冉冉 from *The Nineteen Old Poems* 詩十 (Sui Shusen 樹 , *Gushi shijiu shou jishi* 詩十 [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1955], pp. 12-14):

婚、I made a new marriage with you, sir,
兔 附 Just as mistletoe and dodder attached themselves (to trees).

[17] The *locus classicus* of the phrase *shiju yuqi* 居 is in the "Tianyun" chapter in the *Zhuang zi*: "Being so, is there actually any one who is like a corpus when he stays in peace, like a dragon when he takes action?" 然 有 居而龍 … ? (Wang Shumin , *Zhuangzi jiaoquan* [Taipei: Tanwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1988], 1:536). Later the phrase is used to describe inept officials who do not carry out their responsibilities.

and fro, peeking out of the window unceasingly.[18] After several days, having not heard news that [Minister Yang had sent out people to] search for the girl,[19] he considered the situation not very serious. Only then did he have her put on men's clothes, mount a horse, and gallop [with him] out through the gate, planning to return to Taiyuan.

They stopped and lodged at an inn at Lingshi 靈石[20] on their way. After setting up the beds, they cooked meat on the stove, and it was about to be ready. Miss Zhang let her long hair drape down to the ground and stood in front of the bed, combing her hair, while Li Jing was currying the horses. Suddenly a mid-sized man whose red beard was [curled] like a dragon approached them,[21] riding a lame donkey. He threw his leather sack in front of

[18] Elizabeth Te-chen Wang (p. 198) and Christopher Levenson (p. 139) both consider the subject of this sentence to be other people instead Li Jing himself. Their translations read, "People kept on peeping at the girl through the door" and "People would not stop peering inquisitively through his door at every opportunity." However, since Li Jing was so concerned about being pursued by the Minister, it seems more reasonable that he went to the window and watched out for possible danger.

[19] The original text in the *Taiping guangji* reads the opposite, "He indeed heard some news of them being chased or searched for" (193.1446). The translation follows Wang Meng'ou's commentary that *yi* 亦 is a scribal error for *bu* (Wang Meng'ou, p. 326).

[20] Lingshi was located about eighty miles southwest of Taiyuan (Tan Qixiang, 5:47).

[21] There have been different explanations for why the protagonist was depicted with a curly beard. Some argued that this image represents Emperor Taizong. It was said that the emperor "had a curly beard and often found entertainment in drawing a bow and putting an arrow to it" 太 , 弓 挂 (Duan Chengshi 式 [d. 863], *Youyang zazu* 陽 [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1981], p. 1). Du Fu in his poem "Song chong biaozhi Wang Li pingshi shi Nanhai" 表 評 海 also depicted Emperor Taizong with a curly beard (Qiu Zhao'ao , *Dushi xiangzhu* 詩 注 [Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2007], pp. 2043-2044. The couplets were quoted in the *Rongzhai suibi*, p. 205):

, Next she inquired about the youngest man,
十 Only eighteen or nineteen of age with a curly beard.

the stove, fetched himself a pillow, and laid down on his side, watching Miss Zhang comb her hair. Li Jing got very angry, but he had not decided what he should do, and still kept currying the horses. Zhang stared at the guest's face for a while. She held her hair with one hand and hid the other hand behind her body,

……
秦　在，The Prince of Qin was among the guests
His true charisma astonished everyone within the house.

The image of Li Shimin 民 (Emperor Taizong) being a *zhen ren* (Realized Person) with extraordinary appearance at a young age was quite established at least during the High Tang era. His distinctive facial feature, the curly beard, could have been borrowed by the author of the tale and applied to the protagonist in order to define him as a unique and ambitious hero.

In another of his poems, "Zeng taizi taishi Ruyang jun wang Jin" 贈太　太汝陽　　, the fourth of a series of eight poems entitled "Ba ai shi"　　詩, Du Fu compared Prince of Ruyang to Emperor Taizong, because the prince also had a curly beard (Qiu Zhao'ao, *Du shi xiangzhu*, p. 1390):

汝陽　帝，The Prince of Ruyang, son of the emperor who yielded [the throne].
Judging from between his eyebrows, he is a real heavenly man.
似太，His curly beard is like that of Emperor Taizong,
色印　外　His countenance brightens the spring beyond the frontier.

But Wang Meng'ou also does not believe that the Curly-Bearded Guest alludes to Emperor Taizong, because the Guest is unsuccessful in the tale. Wang suggests that the protagonist might have been based on the rebellious military commissioner Li Keyong (856-906) and his son Li Cunxu whose family originally came from the Turks and thus might have had curly beards (Wang Meng'ou, "Qiuran ke yu Tang zhi chuangye chuangshuo" in *Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu siji* [Taipei: Yiwen chubanshe, 1978], pp. 264-5). Although the Curly-Bearded Guest did not succeed in this world, he finally realized his ambition in another place. Throughout the story, he was not depicted as a vicious enemy, but an opponent who was wise enough to analyze the situation and make the right decision. These factors undermine Wang Meng'ou's argument, as do Li Keyong's dates.

waving and signaling to Li Jing not to get enraged.[22] She finished combing her hair in haste, organized herself, and came up to ask for his name.

The reclining guest answered, "My last name is Zhang."

She replied, "My last name is also Zhang. I ought to be your younger sister."

She bowed to him immediately and asked for his rank in the family.

He said, "I am the third."

He asked the younger sister about her rank and she replied, "I am the eldest."

Then he said with delight, "It is so fortunate today to meet the first younger sister."

Miss Zhang called out from a distance: "Master Li, come to bow to our third brother!"

Li Jing bowed to him at once. Then they sat in a circle and the guest said, "What kind of meat are you boiling?"

Li Jing said, "It is lamb. I think it should be ready by now."

The guest said, "I am starving."

Li Jing went out to buy some tartar bread. The guest pulled out a dagger from his waist, cut the meat, and ate with them. After they finished eating, he chopped off what was left of the meat and brought it to the donkey to feed it. All this was done quickly.[23]

The guest said, "Master Li, judging from your behavior, you are a poor scholar. How could you obtain such an extraordinary person?"

[22] *Hunu* (got angry suddenly) must be a typo for *wunu* (not to get angry).

[23] The original *Taiping guangji* text reads 肉 食 "He chopped off what was left of the meat in front of the stove and fed it" (p. 1446). It is unclear what *zhi* "it" refers to.

Li Jing said, "Although I am poor, I am also a man with ambition. When I was asked this question by other people, I purposely did not talk about it. But since you, brother, ask about it, I will not conceal it."

He explained the reason [for his being with the lady] in detail.

The guest said, "Given this situation, what can you do?"

Li Jing said, "We will simply move to Taiyuan to stay away from trouble."

The guest said, "So that's the case, I always knew that she was not someone that you would able to obtain [on your own]."

He added, "Is there wine?"

Li Jing said, "To the west of the inn is a wine shop."

Li Jing went to get one pint of wine.

After one round of drinking, the guest said, "I have a little something to go with the wine. Master Li, would you like to share it with me?"

Li Jing said, "I dare not [disobey your order]."

At this, the guest opened his leather sack and took out a man's head, heart, and liver. He put the head back into the sack, cut the heart and liver with the dagger, and ate it with Li Jing.

The guest said, "This is the heart of an unfaithful[24] person to the world. I hated him for ten years, and was not able capture him [and kill him for revenge] until recently. I am relived and have no regret anymore."

He further said, "Master Li, judging from your appearance and demeanor, you are a real man. Have you also heard of any extraordinary person in Taiyuan?"

[24] *Fuxin* is usually used in a romantic relationship, such as in the "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" . The male protagonist was described as an unfaithful man because he abandoned Xiaoyu. Xiaoyu said right before her death, "You, sir, are a man, but your heart has been unfaithful like this!" 夫， 若此 (Wang Meng'ou, p. 199). The phrase can also be used to criticize a disloyal subject.

Li Jing said, "I used to encounter a person and I would call him a true man. The rest are only to be generals or ministers."

The guest said,[25] "What is his last name?"

Li Jing said, "He has the same last name as mine."

The guest said, "How old is he?"

Li said, "He is almost twenty years old."

The guest said, "What is he doing now?"

Li Jing said, "He is a beloved son of a Commandery General."

The Guest said, "This is close to what I heard. I also must see him. Master Li, can you arrange a meeting for me to see him once?"

Li Jing said, "My friend Liu Wenjing knows him intimately. It is possible to see him through Wenjing; however, my elder brother, what do you want to do?"

The guest said, "A man who [excels in] observing the air [for heavenly signs] said that Taiyuan had an extraordinary emanation and asked me to investigate it. Master Li, if you set off tomorrow, when will you arrive in Taiyuan?"

Li Jing calculated his arrival and concluded that it was a certain date.

The guest said, "The day after your arrival, right at sunrise, I will wait for you at the Fenyang Bridge."[26]

After saying this, he hoisted himself onto the donkey and left as rapidly as if he was flying. He was already far away when he looked back. Li Jing and Miss Zhang were surprised and frightened.[27] After a long while, they said, "A marvelous man

[25] The word *yue* indicating the start of a speech is missing from the *TPGJ* text (p. 1446) and has been added from Wang Meng'ou (p. 321).

[26] Wang Meng'ou's text is a little different, making it into an imperative sentence, "wait for me at the Fen-yang Bridge!"

[27] The reaction of Li Jing and Zhang is *qiejing qiexi* 且 且 (both surprised and pleased) in Wang Meng'ou's text (p. 321). *Jingju* (to be frightened) in the *TPGJ* edition (p. 1447) is more appropriate here, considering the following

does not deceive people and we have nothing to fear." They simply spurred their horses with their whips and went on.

When the time for the appointment came, they entered Taiyuan. The guest had been waiting for them and they met as expected. They were greatly pleased and went to visit Mr. Liu together.

Li Jing lied to Wenjing saying, "There is a man who excels in reading face and longs to meet the gentleman. Please invite him here."

Wenjing had always considered the man extraordinary. At the time he was just discussing [with others] how to assist the gentleman [with obtaining the world], once he heard that there was someone who could read faces, there was no question about what he felt about it. He immediately set up a banquet with wine and [sent people to] invite him[28].

Shortly after, Emperor Taizong arrived.[29] He did not wear a robe or shoes, and was wearing his silk garment which partially covered his fur coat.[30] His spirit was high and his

sentence where they comforted themselves that *gu wuwei* "we intrinsically have nothing to fear" (*TPGJ*, p. 1447).

[28] Wang Meng'ou's text is much simpler here: "Once Wenjing learned that there was someone who excelled in reading faces, he immediately sent envoys to invite him" 有 相，遽致 迎 (p. 321, line 11).

[29] Li Shimin was addressed as Emperor Taizong here and only here. Later in the text, he was referred to as The August [Emperor] Wen 皇.

[30] The "Tan gong" 弓 in the *Li ji* reads, "Zeng zi went on a visit of condolence, wearing a garment covering his fur coat, while Ziyou went with his fur coat partially uncovered by his garment. Zeng zi, pointing to him, and calling the attention of others, said, 'That man has the reputation of being well versed in ceremonies. How is it that he comes to condole with his fur coat partially exposed?'" 而 ， 而 而示 :" 夫也， ， 何 而 也?" (James Legge, trans. *Li Chi Book of Rites* [New York: University Books, 1967], p. 142). It seems Taizong with his fur coat not completely covered by the outer silk garment was not properly dressed for a formal occasion such as this.

appearance different from ordinary people. The Curly-Bearded Guest sat at the end of the table in silence. When he saw the Emperor, his ambition vanished. After several rounds of drinking, he rose up and waved to Li Jing to come over, and said, "This is indeed the Son of Heaven!"

Li Jing told this to Liu Wenjing. Liu became more pleased and was proud of himself [for recognizing the true lord]. After they had come out of Liu's residence, the Curly-Bearded Guest said, "After I have seen him, I am eighty to ninety percent sure of my judgment; however, my Taoist brother has to meet him. Master Li, you had better go to the capital again with the first younger sister. At the seventh watch[31] of a certain day, visit me at the wineshop east of the horse market. This donkey and a thin mule will be there. My Taoist brother and I will both be at that place."[32]

As soon as they arrived, they saw the two animals that the Curly-Bearded Guest and the Taoist rode. Lifting the skirts of their garments, they went upstairs. The Curly-Bearded Guest and a Taoist were just sitting, facing each other and drinking. When they saw Li Jing, they were surprised and pleased, and summoned him to sit. They sat around the table and drank for over a dozen rounds. The guest said, "There is ten thousand cash in the cabinet downstairs. Choose a remote hiding place to lodge my first younger sister. After doing this, meet me again at the Fenyang Bridge on a certain day."

[31] The *wu* watch was the seventh of the day, from eleven a.m. to one p.m., i.e., midday.

[32] Wang Meng'ou's text reads a little differently, but contains only minor variations. The thin mule is a *shoulü* (thin donkey) in Wang's text (p. 321) and reads *zai qi shang* 在 "on the upper level of the restaurant" instead of *zai qi suo* 在 所 "at that place." In Wang's edition, two more sentences follow the text here: "'As soon as you arrive, go up to the upper level.' Then he again bade farewell and left. The Duke and Miss Zhang again consented to it." " 登 ." 別而 , 復 (p. 321).

When Li Jing came at the appointed time, the Taoist and the Curly-Bearded Guest had already arrived. They all went to visit Wenjing, who was playing Go at the time. He rose up from his chair and bowed to them. They told him their real intentions.[33] Wenjing sent a quick message to the August [Emperor] Wen 皇 [i.e., Li Shimin[34]] and invited him to watch a Go game. The Taoist played the game with Wenjing while the Curly-Bearded Guest and Li Jing stood aside and waited upon them.

Shortly after, the August Emperor Wen came. He made a long bow and sat down.[35] His charisma was so clear and expression so serene that everyone present was influenced and the room filled with splendor. When he looked around, he was very graceful. As soon as the Taoist saw him, he became very depressed. He moved one more of his chessmen and said, "I have lost this game! I have lost it! It is unusual to be defeated in the game at this point. There is no way to save it! What else can one say!" He quit playing and requested to leave.

After he had gone out, he said to the Curly-Bearded Guest, "This world is not your world, sir. In other places, it may be

[33] The original Chinese text reads *qi yi er yu xin yan* 而 (*Taiping guangji*, 193.1447). Wang Mengou's text reads,*qi yi er yu, shao yan* 而 , (He rose up from the chair, bowed to them and talked with them. After a short while…) (Wang Meng'ou, p. 322).

[34] Wenhuang (The August Cultured [Emperor]) refers to Li Shimin, i.e. Emperor Taizong, and should be differentiated from the later Emperor Wenzong (r. 826-840). "Wen" is the original posthumous title given to Li Shimin following his death in 649. The title was expanded to "Wenwu Sheng Huangdi" 帝 (The Cultured Military Sagacious August Emperor) in 674 and was later again changed to "Wenwu Dasheng Daguangxiao Huangdi" 帝 (The Cultured Military Grand Sagacious Grand Extensive Filial August Emperor) in 754 (*Jiu Tang shu*, 3.62-63).

[35] There is another sentence that precedes this one in Wang Meng'ou's text (p. 322): *jingcai jingren* His spirit and appearance were astonishingly splendid.

possible. Try your best, and don't burden yourself with this on your mind." Thereafter, they entered the capital together.

The Curly-Bearded Guest said, "Master Li, calculating your itinerary, you won't arrive until a such-and-such a day. The day after your arrival, you may visit a small residence in a certain quarter with the first younger sister. Master Li, I regret that you had to follow us to and fro, and the first younger sister had nothing in her possession [as her dowry]. I would like my humble wife[36] to meet you and chat with you at ease. Please do not decline." After saying this, he sighed and left.

Li Jing whipped his horse and headed back, after a short while, arriving in the capital. When he then went to visit the Curly-Bearded Guest with Miss Zhang, there was a small plank door. He knocked on the door and there was someone who answered the door and bowed, saying, "The Third Master has ordered me to wait for Master Li and Lady the First for a long time."

He invited them to go through several doors, which became grander and grander. Over thirty maids spread out in front of the yard and twenty male servants led Li Jing to enter the east hall. [The display of furnishings in the hall was resplendent with extraordinary treasures. Chests, jewelry boxes and mirrors were so glamorous that] they were not things that belonged to the human world.[37] After Li Jing and the lady had washed and organized themselves, they were invited to change into clothes which were again precious and extraordinary. After finishing this,

[36] *Xinfu* may have different meanings in different context. It could refer to a new wife, the wife of one's younger brother, a daughter-in-law, or it could refer to one's own wife in a humble way.

[37] In the *Taiping guangji* text, the sentence *Fei renjian zhiwu* 非 物 (they were not things that belong to the human world) stands alone and is not connected to the context. There must be something missing between the lines. The text in square brackets in the translation was added based on Wang Meng'ou's text (p. 322).

a message was passed on that "The Third Master has arrived." It was the Curly-Bearded Guest, who came in wearing a gauze cap and brown fur coat. He demonstrated the bearing of a dragon and a tiger. He was joyous to see them and urged his wife to come out and bow to them. She was a heavenly person. Then they were invited into the central hall, where a grandiose feast had been set up. Even the households of grand ministers could not reach up to it. The four of them took seats facing each other. After they ate and drank, twenty female entertainers lined up before them and played music. The music and songs were as though they were descended from Heaven, not be found in the human world. After eating, the Curly-Bearded Guest poured wine for the guests. Meanwhile, the house servants carried out twenty couches from the west hall, each covered with an embroidered brocade cloth. After presenting them, the servants removed all the cloth, and what was left turned out to be registers and keys.

The Curly-Bearded Guest said, "These are all records of my precious treasures and money. I will give all that I have to you. In the past,[38] I originally intended to pursue my career in this world. I would have fought for the throne for a couple of years and gradually established achievement and merit. Now that there has been a lord, why should I detain myself here? That Mr. Li from Taiyuan will indeed be an eminent ruler. Within three to five years, the world will be at peace. Master Li, with your exceptional talent, you will assist a ruler of serenity and peace. If you exert yourself to perfection, you will certainly reach the highest position of a minister. First younger sister, with her heavenly beauty, possesses aptitude beyond this world. She will become honored through her husband. Her carriages and clothes will be extremely

[38] The *Taiping guangji* edition reads *he zhe* 何 "why is it" (4.1448) instead of *xiangzhe* "in the past" which is used in the *Tang yu lin* text (*Tang yulin jiaozheng*, 5.426). The Curly-Bearded Guest talked about his previous intention to fight for the throne in the text; thus, "in the past" makes more sense here.

splendid. No one else other than first younger sister would be able to recognize Master Li, and no one else other than Master Li would find his match with first younger sister. You are like a goose gradually advancing to the dry plains, and the right occasion of encounter [between you and the lord] is determined like this.[39] When a tiger roars, the winds blow; when a dragon bellows, clouds congregate. This is the way it intrinsically should be. Use what I gave you to aid the true lord and to assist you in gaining merit and achievement. Do your best! A dozen years hereafter, there will be an extraordinary event in the southeast, several thousand miles away. That is the time when I will realize my ambition. My younger sister and Master Li may congratulate me by dripping wine onto the ground towards the southeast."[40]

He looked around at his servants and said, "Master Li and the first younger sister are your masters." After he had said this, he and his wife put on military attire and mounted horses. A servant

[39] *Jihui* 際 can be understood as the right occasion or good timing. Wang Chong (27-ca. 97), in the "Ou hui" Chapter in his *Lun heng* , writes: "A pious emperor soars up like a dragon all at once, and an able help-mate is found out and instated in the very nick of time." 主 倉 , 良輔 拔 際 (Alfred Forke, trans., *Lun Heng* [New York: Paragon Book Gallery, 1962] Volume 2, pp. 7-8). Li Jing was compared to a goose which alluding to the *Jian* hexagram ䷴ in the *Zhou yi* 易. The third line of the hexagram, undivided, shows the wild geese gradually advanced to the dry plains . The subject of this hexagram is the advance of men to offices in the state, how it should take place gradually and by successive steps (James Legge, trans. *The I Ching* [New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1963], p. 178) .

[40] Dripping wine onto the ground was a gesture to express wishes or to make a solemn vow. It may have been derived from procedures in sacrificial rites from early times. From the occurrences of this term in the *Siku quanshu* collection, it seems that the term was not widely used until the Tang and Song periods. An example from the biography of an eunuch named Yang Fuguang 楊復 in the *Jiu Tang shu* (134.4773) uses the term to describe the action of making an alliance between two courtiers to defend against a usurper: *lijiu weimeng* 瀝 盟 "dripped wine on the ground to make an oath [or covenant]."

followed them riding on a horse. They disappeared within a few steps.

Li Jing occupied this residence and then became a powerful gallant. He was able to use his wealth to assist The August Emperor Wen in founding a new empire and therefore in aiding the emperor with his great undertaking.

During the Zhenguan 貞觀 (627-649) reign period, Li Jing reached the position of Vice Director.[41] The southeast barbarian tribe *Man* reported to the court, saying, "There were pirates with over a thousand ships and a hundred thousand armored soldiers entering the Fuyu Kingdom.[42] The leader killed the sovereign and enthroned himself. The state has been settled."

Li Jing realized that the Curly-Bearded Guest had succeeded. He returned home and told Miss Zhang. They followed the complete set of rituals and bowed in congratulations, dripping wine towards the southeast, and invoking their blessings.

Not until now did we know that the prosperity of a true man is not what a hero could anticipate, let alone those who are not heroes! Those among the subjects who wrongly thought of making chaos were like nothing more than a mantis intending to use its legs to repel a running wheel. Our royal house will spread its fortune through ten thousand generations.[43] How could this be false!

[41] Li Jing's official position was Vice Director of the Left and Manager Affairs in Wang Meng'ou's text (p. 323).

[42] Fuyu was to the southeast of the Tang Empire. Wang Meng'ou argued that this could be read allegorically. The author of this story was warning the rebellious generals who had northern barbarian origins, urging them to go back to the northwest, if they wanted to have their own realm. Southeast should be understood as northwest, its opposite direction (Wang Meng'ou, "Qiuran ke yu Tang zhi chuangye chuanshuo," p. 265).

[43] This sentence is missing from the *Taiping guangji* edition, and is taken from Wang Meng'ou's text (p. 323). It is added here to further reveals the author's intention in writing this tale.

Some say, "Half of the military strategies of the Duke of Wei [i.e., Li Jing] were imparted from the Curly-Bearded Guest."

Translator's Note

1) Authorship: a Taoist Practitioner or a Confucian Scholar?

"The Tale of the Curly-Bearded Guest" depicts three extraordinary figures: Li Jing, the young lady with the red whisk, and the Curly-Bearded Guest. Li Jing is depicted as a man talented in military strategy, the young lady as having the insight to recognize real talent, and the Curly-Bearded Guest as being able to judge a situation and eventually enthrone himself in a faraway land. Their unique experiences at the critical historical moment of the dynastic change and their exceptional characters were evidence for the legitimacy of the Tang royal house and Emperor Taizong (r. 626-249), who became the august sovereign with the Mandate of Heaven.

Yet, the text contains many obvious errors of date and historical facts which would have been obvious to any educated reader in Tang or later times. These intentional mistakes and contradictions convey an unequivocal message that the story is in fact a satire on then contemporary affairs. The author's comment at the end of the tale clearly reveals his real intention of writing the text. The passage reads

> Not until now did we know that the prosperity of a true man is not what a hero could anticipate, let alone those who are not heroes! Those among the subjects who wrongly thought of making chaos were like nothing more than a mantis intending to use its legs to repel a running wheel. Our royal house will spread its fortune through ten thousand generations. How could this be false!
>
> 冀 乎
>
> 拒 我皇家 万 [44]

[44] Wang Meng'ou, *Tangren xiaohuo jiaoshi*, p. 323.

Although there seems to be no controversy among scholars that the author intended to reaffirm or reestablish the supreme status of the Tang royal house and to criticize the rebellious subjects in the story, no agreement has been reached on such questions as who the author was, when the text was composed, and what specific political situation the author alluded to.

There are three major opinions on the authorship. The first group of scholars, including Lu Xun 迅[45] and Wang Pijiang 汪 彊, follow Hong Mai (1123-1202) in his *Rongzhai suibi* 齋隨[46] and ascribe the text to Du Guangting (850-933) who was a Taoist at the end of the Tang and later served in the court of Wang Jian (847-918) in Shu 蜀. In the *Qinding quan Tang wen* , there is a short introduction of Du Guangting. The text reads:[47]

> Guangting's style name was Binzhi 賓 . He was a native of Jinyun .[48] There was another opinion that he was a native of Chang'an . During the Xiantong (860-874) reign period, he took the civil examination on the Nine Classics,[49] but

[45] Lu Xun argued that Du Guangting wrote this piece when he served the Tang court (See "Baibian xiaozhui" 稗 appended to the *Tang Song chuanqi ji* in *Lu Xun quanji* 全 [Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1973], vol. 10, p. 502).

[46] Hong Mai (1123-1202), *Rongzhai Suibi* , 12.9, the entry on Wang Gui and Li Jing (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2006), vol. 1, p. 154.

[47] *Quan Tang wen* 全 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2001), 929.9679.

[48] It was located about thirty miles northwest of modern Wenzhou 州 in Zhejiang 江 province. See Tan Qixiang, 5:55.

[49] This refers to the nine classics of Confucian canons which were used as repertoire for the *Mingjing* examination. This examination was parallel to but usually considered inferior to the *Jinshi* examination, both of which originated from the Sui and matured in the Tang dynasty. See also Fu Xuancong 璇琮, *Tangdai keju yu wenxue* (Xi'an: Shaanxi renmin chubanshe, 2003), pp. 110-133.

did not pass it. He entered Mount Tiantai 台[50] to study Taoism. He followed Emperor Xizong (r. 873-888) to favor Xingyuan .[51] He stayed in the Shu area to serve the previous sovereign, and became Grand Master of the Palace with Golden Seal and Purple Ribbon[52] and Grand Master of Remonstrance. He was enfeoffed as Duke of Cai and was bestowed the title Master Guangcheng 廣成 .[53] He was promoted to be Minister of the Ministry of Revenue. Later when the sovereign was enthroned, he was conferred the Taoist registers in the imperial park, and was made Heavenly Master of Conveying the Truth and Academician of the Chungzhen Academy (Exalting the Truth). Later he resigned from his office and became a hermit in Mount Qingcheng .[54] He called himself Master of the Eastern Ocean 東瀛 and died at age eighty-five.

[50] Mount Tiantai is located in modern Tiantai County in Zhejiang 江 province (Tan Qixiang, 5:38). Although it was more famous as a Buddhist base, it was also a Taoist site from as early as the late second century. There is one opinion that Du Guangting was a native of Tiantai For more information on the Daoist tradition at Mt. Tiantai and Du Guangting's activities there, see Sun Yiping 孫亦平, *Du Guangting pingzhuan* 評 (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2005), pp. 62-73.

[51] Xingyuan was located in modern Hanzhong in Shaanxi 陝 province (Tan Qixiang, 5:38).

[52] *Jinzi guanglu dafu* 金 夫 was a prestigious title conferred to high officials of rank 3a in the Tang (See Hucker, p. 168).

[53] He was identified with the ancient Taoist master Guangcheng as a means of extolling his achievements. Master Guangcheng was introduced in Ge Hong's (284-363) *Shenxian zhuan* 仙 : "Master Guangcheng was a transcendent in ancient times. He lived in a stone chamber on Mount Kongtong." , 仙 也, 居崆峒 (See Robert Campany, *To Live As Long As Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong's Traditions of the Divine Transcendents* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002], p. 159).

[54] Mount Qingcheng was located about twenty miles northwest of modern Chengdu in Sichuan (Tan Qixiang, 5: 66).

Following a detour into the central government, which was later described as "shortcut through Mount Zhongnan ," Du Guangting converted himself from an unsuccessful *ru* scholar to a Taoist practitioner, thus making his name known to the imperial court. He was therefore appointed to high official positions.

The second opinion, originated from the *Gan zhu ji* 珠 [55] and accepted by Li Jianguo ,[56] Li Zongwei ,[57] and Cheng Yizhong ,[58] favors Pei Xing 裴 (fl. 860). Although Cheng Yizhong considers Pei Xing a possible candidate to be the author, he also points out that the classic diction and clear-cut writing style of this tale resemble the genre of historical writing and differ from the extravagant style of the other pieces in Pei Xing's collection of tales (titled *Chuanqi* 奇).

The third opinion originated from the *Shuo fu* and the *Gushi wenfang xiaoshuo* 顧 房 , and was supported by modern scholar Bian Xiaoxuan .[59] It propounded that Zhang Yue (667-730) was the author. Both Du Guangting and Pei Xing lived in the late ninth century when the Tang Empire declined and the state was stricken by struggles among local powers. If this theory is accepted, it is easy to understand the tale's allusions to contemporary political disorder and its purpose

[55] *Gan zhu ji* preserved some pieces of Pei Xing's *Chuan qi* including "Hong fu ji" (Wang Yunwu 五 ed., *Yingyin Ming kan hanchuanben Ganzhu ji* 印 本甘 . Vol. 12, p. 10a).

[56] See Li Jianguo, *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu* 五 怪 序 (Tianjin: Nankai daxue chubanshe, 1993), pp. 582-588. Li provides detailed information on different editions of the tale and their transmission process.

[57] Li Zongwei, *Tangren chuanqi* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2003), pp. 140-141.

[58] Cheng Yizhong, *Tangdai xiaoshuo shi* (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 2003), pp. 262-263.

[59] Bian Xiaoxuan, "Lun 'Qiu ran ke zhuan' de zuozhe, zuonian ji zhengzhi beijing" in *Dongnan daxue xuebao* 報. Vol. 7, 2005, pp. 93-98.

to warn the rebellious military commoners and to defend the authority of the Li royal family. On the contrary, the era during which Zhang Yue lived was the golden age of the Tang Dynasty. Therefore, many scholars find it difficult to make the author's final comment fit into the historical background of Zhang's lifetime. For example, Li Zongwei commented that "such words [i.e., the final comment in the tale] obviously could not come from the mouth of Du Guangting who lived at the transition of the Tang and the Five Dynasties, and also not from Zhang Yue who lived during the High Tang. They could only be said when the situation of the Tang imperial court was already very dangerous but would not fall immediately."[60] Li Jianguo offers a similar argument that "the comment aiming to warn the subjects who thought of making chaos was stimulated by the disorder of the late Tang and could not be made during the prosperous age of the Kaiyuan (713-741) reign period."[61] Bian Xiaoxuan in his article "Lun 'Qiuran ke zhuan' de zuozhe, zuonian ji zhengzhi beijing", disagreed with these two scholars and claimed that the story alluded to the struggle between Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712-756), Crown Prince at the time, and Princess Taiping (ca. 665-713) in the 710s. Zhang Yue, who was a loyal subject to Emperor Xuanzong and once persecuted by the princess, wrote the tale to caution Princess Taiping and her conspirators and to win support for his lord. Although it is true that the disorder described in the tale may not necessarily refer to the late Tang era and Zhang Yue was a good writer and fond of the extraordinary, there was no direct evidence that would persuade scholars and readers to believe that Zhang Yue was the author. Furthermore, Princess Taiping herself was a member of the Li royal family. Even if she had ascended the throne, it could have been just continuation of the Tang

[60] Li Zongwei, *Tangren chuanqi*, p. 140.

[61] Li Jianguo, *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu*, p. 582.

administration. To make her target of the criticism would contradict, or at least attenuate, the author's motivation to defend "our royal house." Bian Xiaoxuan's theory was innovative, but no more convincing than as Liu Kairong's argument that this tale was a product of propaganda for the founder the Song Dynasty (960-1127),[62] an argument which Bian Xiaoxuan criticized as farfetched. None of these three schools have presented decisive evidence to settle the argument on the authorship of the tale. Most modern editions of the text still customarily ascribe it to Du Guangting.

2) Textual Variances

The story is incorporated into Du Guangting's anthology of *Shenxian ganyu zhuan* 感 which in turn is preserved in the *Daozang* .[63] Du's text, entitled "Qiu xu ke" (The Curly-whiskered Guest) in place of the more common title "Qiu ran ke" ,[64] is quite concise compared to the text in the *Taiping guangji*, with the omission of the subplot of Red-Whisk running off with Li Jing. Wang Pijiang argued that Du's version might have come from a different source:

> The narration [of the "Qiu xu ke"] is different from the editions circulated nowadays. Moreover, it is concise and plain, and the beauty of the language is slightly inferior. In the title, "Qiu ran" was written as "Qiu xu," which is the same as the record

[62] Liu Kairong, *Tangdai xiaoshuo yanjiu* (Hongkong: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1964), p. 210-211

[63] *Daozang* , vol. 592 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng chuban gongsi, 1977), 4.7b-10a.

[64] Li Jianguo quoted previous opinions and discussed the difference of *xu* and *ran*. He agreed with other scholars that "Qiu xu ke" should be the original and correct title; however, the mistake to replace *xu* with *ran* during the process of copying and transmitting the text started as early as the Song dynasty (*Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu*, pp. 583-584).

> in the *Song shi* 宋 (History of the Song). I am quite doubtful that the *Daozang* text was the base of current versions. It was circulated in the beginning of the Song Dynasty and was further polished by scholars. Therefore, the gap between being concise and detailed is like this.[65]

Luo Zhengming in his study of the tale did not agree with Wang Pijiang's idea and pointed out that there were several artificial points in the wording of Du Guangting's version which proved it to be an abridged text based on an earlier edition. Luo's argument points to three problems:[66]

1) The opening sentence of Du Guangting's version reads, "The Curly-Bearded Guest was a Taoist brother whose name was unknown" , 兄 , .[67] On one hand, this introduction contradicts the information in later text where it mentioned that the Curly-Bearded Guest had the last name Zhang and ranked number three in his family; on the other hand, "Somebody was…." is a fixed pattern that Du Guangting used to start a story, considering the fact that almost all pieces in his *Shenxian ganyu zhuan* are opened in the same way.

2) When describing the residence of the Curly-Bearded Guest, the sentence from Du Guangting's version reads, "It was not what an imperial family would have. It was almost like a gathering in the Grotto Heaven." 家 , 迨 .[68] Dongtian is a term so imbedded in the Taoist tradition that Du Guangting obviously inserted this sentence purposely to promote the virtue of Taoists.

3) The final comment in Du Guangting's text reads

[65] Wang Pijiang, *Tangren xiaoshuo* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1978), p. 181.

[66] Luo Zhengming, 鳴, *Du Guangting daojiao xiaoshuo yanjiu* (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 2005), pp. 190-192.

[67] *Daozang*, 4.7a.

[68] *Daozang*, 4.9b.

> "Not Until now did we learn that the prosperity of a true man is what is bestowed by Heaven. Is that not what the mediocre people could make trouble and think of causing chaos!"
> , 以 !69

The final comment is where the author sets forth his real intention in writing the piece; however, the above quotation is very concise compared to the *Taiping guangji* text. It gives the impression that the author ended his writing in a rush.

A further point worth mentioning, but neglected by Luo Zhengming, is that the term *Daoxiong* 兄 (Taoist brother) is rarely used in the tale. After the Curly-Bearded Guest gave all his wealth to Li Jing, the text reads, "No one knew where the Taoist brother went." This sentence is not in the *Taiping guangjii* edition. The only other occurrence of the word "Taoist brother" comes at the beginning of the tale. This suggests that the closing line is a later insertion, and to some extent verifies the speculation that this text was a modification of some earlier text. In paying attention to the textual differences between Du Guangting's text and other versions, the differences deserve to be carefully examined; however, the significance behind the similarities that they share should not be ignored either. Almost all the details, such as the conversations among the three main characters, descriptions of Emperor Taizung's appearance, and places that involve numbers such as the display of house maids and servants in the residence of the Curly-Bearded Guest, are basically identical in the two texts.

This certainly is not enough evidence to conclude that a proto-version of the *Taiping guangji* text is the original tale that Du Guangting worked on, but it reinforces the suggestion that Du Guangting is not the original author of this tale, and that he based

[69] *Daozang*, 4.10b.

his abridged text on an earlier version of the tale and then incorporated it in his anthology to promote Taoist beliefs.

Wang Pijiang and Luo Zhengming's opinions, although different, can be regarded as the two sides of the same coin. Anyone who has read Du Guangting's version of the story will comment on its quality of being concise and plain and lacking the elegant language of other Tang tales. To use Wang Meng'ou's expression, it lacks *gandong xing* 感 (the power to move its readers).[70]

3) Philosophical Background

Scholars who considered Pei Xing to be the author of this tale often use a passage from Su E's 蘇鶚 (fl. 885-888) *Sushi yanyi* 蘇義 as one piece of evidence to support their arguments. It is the only extant discussion of the tale by a contemporary Tang literatus.[71]

> A scholar of the recent past wrote the tale of Curly-Bearded Zhang. The text has been popular and in circulation. It talks about the deterioration and disorder at the end of the Sui Dynasty. Li Jing and Curly-Bearded Zhang went to Taiyuan together to look for the emanation of the Son of Heaven. They did not identify the true lord until they paid a visit to and met Emperor Taizong.
>
> 云 李靖 鬚
> 原 治是

[70] Wang Meng'ou, "Qiuran ke yu Tang zhi chuangye chuangshuo" in *Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu siji* (Taipei: Yiwen chubanshe, 1978), p. 254.

[71] *Sushi yanyi* in *Tangren biji xiaoshuo* (Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 1994), vol. 2, p. 225.

Su E lived in the late ninth century. In the "Yiwen zhi" (Treatise on Literary Writings) in the *Xin Tang shu* , an entry reads:

> Su E wrote a ten-volume *Yanyi* and a three-volume *Duyang zabian*. His style name was Dexiang and he passed the civil examination during the Guangqi reign (885-888) period. 演 卷, 又 陽 卷, 祥, 進 .[72]

What Su E claimed as the "recent past" probably referred to the period around and after the mid-ninth century, prior to the large-scale rebellion of Wang Xianzhi and Huang Chao 黃巢 (d. 884). This was much earlier than the compilation of Du Guangting's *Shenxian ganyu zhuan*. As Wang Meng'ou argued, if Su E, a contemporary Tang scholar, did not known who wrote this tale, opinions on the authorship proposed by later scholars must also be questionable due to lack of solid evidence.

At the beginning of 881, the Huang Chao Rebellion swept through the Tang Empire, the rebel army even driving the emperor and his entourage from the capital to the Shu area. They occupied Chang'an for over two years.[73] During this time of great turmoil, the central government gradually lost its authority and control over the vast region beyond the capital area, and the literati's anxiety must have been deepened as the situation deteriorated. The literati were concerned with both the fate of the state and the future of their cultural tradition. Therefore, it is not surprising that the author, if he lived in the late Tang, would have

[72] *Xin Tang shu*, 59.1541

[73] For a detailed study of the Huang Chao rebellion, see Fang Jiliu 六, *Huang Chao qiyi kao* (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1983) and chapter 51 in Cen Zhongmian 仲 , *Sui Tang shi* (Hong Kong: Wenchang Shuju, 1950), pp. 466-522.

made such a final comment to warn those overly ambitious subjects.

Whether this story had any impact upon the vicious ministers and military commissioners is not relevant to this note. What is significant in this didactic message is the religious tone that reminds the reader of the Confucian conceptualization of a Heavenly ruler, an idea that originated in the Han Dynasty with Dong Zhongshu 仲 (179-104 B.C.). To understand what influence a macro philosophical and social background may have on our judgment of the authorship of this tale, a sketchy delineation of the route that Confucian ideas followed from Dong Zhongshu to the Tang Dynasty is in order.

In order to legitimize the reign of the Han 漢 (202 B.C.-220 A.D.) royal house over "all under Heaven," Dong Zhongshu developed an ideology that relied upon a relationship between the human realm and Heaven. Heaven bestowed upon the emperor absolute power and authority. The status of the emperor and ruling house was so sacred that it could not be challenged. The hierarchical system of the centralized bureaucratic government corresponded to an identical system in the other world. Such a theoretical frame and understanding of the cosmic forces led to intense interest in omens and portents, which were considered symbols of the ruler's virtue.

In the work of Dong Zhongshu's contemporary, the historian Sima Qian 司 遷 (145-ca. 86 B.C.), one can find traces of omens and portents. In the annalistic biography of Liu Bang (256 B.C.-195 B.C.), the Exalted Emperor of the Han Dynasty, there is a passage describing some extraordinary incidents that distinguished him from the common people:

> Gaozu was a man who had a high nose and a dragon's brow, a handsome beard, and seventy-two black spots on his left thigh. He was humane, loved people, was fond of largesse, and

> openhearted . . . . He was fond of wine and women. He regularly bought wine on credit from Mother Wang and Old Woman Wu. When he got drunk and lay down, Old Woman Wu and Mother Wang saw that there was regularly a dragon above him and marveled at it.[74]

In the several centuries of separation and chaos that followed the fall of the Eastern Han Dynasty, the authority of the sovereign was questioned and the ruling houses were overthrown and replaced. Dong Zhongshu's system gradually lost its popularity and was replaced by *Xuanxue* (School of Mysteries), which was later supplemented by Buddhist and Taoist teachings in the Six Dynasties (229-589). At the beginning of the Tang Dynasty, in order to pacify the world and impose uniformity onto the empire, scholars were organized to compile a set of proprietary commentaries to the five Confucian classics under the imperial edict of Emperor Taizong. These texts solidified the official interpretation of the Confucian canons, inherited the tradition of the Han dynasty scholars, and at the same time restricted development of thought.[75]

In the mid-late Tang period, after the An Lushan 祿 (d. 757) rebellion, the tremendous transformation of the Tang Empire from over a century of prosperity into instability forced scholars to ponder upon the reasons behind such a degradation. Was it the loss of Mandate of Heaven or it was the fault of people in power? Among them, Han Yu (768-824), Liu Zongyuan (773-819) and Liu Yuxi 錫 (772-842) were the three most distinguished scholars who elevated the discussions of the

[74] Cited from "Basic Annals of the Exalted Ancestor" from William H. Nienhauser, Jr. ed. *The Grand Scribe's Records* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), volume 2, pp. 5-8.

[75] For an overview of the development of Confucianism in the Tang, see Zhang Yue , *Tangdai houqi ruxue* 儒 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1994).

relationship between the Way of Heaven and the order of the human world to a new level. Han Yu held sages in high repute and argued that the development of society was due to the teachings of sages. In the "Yuan Dao" (Essentials of the Moral Way), the major statement of Han Yu's social and political thought written in 805, he writes:

> In ancient times, there were a lot of evils that harmed the people. The sages were established and they taught people the way of living and nurturing. They became the people's lords and became their teachers. They drove away insects, snakes, birds, and beasts for them and settled them down in the central state.
>
> 時 多 立 教 以 為
> 為 其蟲 獸 [76]

Han Yu stressed the humanitarian character of the early sages' contribution to the formation of human civilization. Thus, he argued, it is the sages' teachings that the ruler should observe to provide security and prosperity to the people, not orders from Heaven, let alone omens or portents.[77]

Liu Zongyuan also criticized Dong Zhongshu's theory on omens and considered them to be deceitful and destructive to later generations. He argued that they could not be relied upon to understand the foundation of how sages established states.[78] He set a clear division between Heaven and the human society:

[76] Ma Qichang , *Han Changli wenji jiaozhu* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1986), p. 15.

[77] For more discussion on Han Yu's social and political thought, see Charles Hartman, *Han Yü and the T'ang Search for Unity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 145-162.

[78] Preface to "Chen-fu" in *Liu Zongyuan ji* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1979), p. 30.

> Creatures and natural catastrophes are decided by Heaven. Order of law and chaos are determined by people. There are only two divisions and their matters are carried out separately without interfering with each other 制 其 .[79]

Based on Han Yu and Liu Zongyuan's ideas, Liu Yuxi went further on this topic. To him, not only were Heaven and the human world two separable entities, but they were also powerful and capable in different aspects:

> Heaven is the greatest among things with shape. People are the most excellent among animals. The capabilities of Heaven are certainly what people don't have; however, among what people are capable of, there are things that Heaven cannot do. This is why I said, "Heaven and People triumph over each other." 形 故 " 勝 "[80]

Although these three scholars had different emphases in their thoughts, what they shared in common in the Heaven-man relationship was that they all defined different functions for Heaven and the human world. The function of Heaven was to reproduce, and the function of man was to establish order. Therefore Heaven should not be held responsible for the rise and fall of human activities. To a different degree, they all criticized the belief in omens and portents handed down from the Han Dynasty. Such a revolutionary spirit in the Heaven-man relationship of the mid-late Tang scholars was not reflected in the tale of the Curly-Bearded Guest. The text resembled the founding

[79] "Da Liu Yuxi tianlun shu" in *Liu Zongyuan ji*, p. 817.

[80] "Tian lun" in Bian Xiaoxuan 萱 collated, *Liu Yuxi ji* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1990), pp. 67-68.

myth in that elements of auspicious omens were incorporated into explanations of the success of the new dynasty. Similar to the biography of Liu Bang, the Tang emperor was described as an extraordinary figure to whom the common people could not be compared. There are two places in the text where the appearance of the emperor was described:

> 1. He [the emperor] did not wear a robe or shoes, but came with the sleeves of his fur coat rolled up. His spirit was high and his appearance different from ordinary people.
> 2. Shortly after, the emperor arrived. His spirit and appearance were astonishingly splendid. He made a long bow and sat down. His charisma was so clear that everyone present was influenced. When he looked around, he was very graceful.

The reaction of the Curly-Bearded Guest after seeing the emperor was depicted in detail each time in order to form a contrast. The guest immediately lost his ambition and gave up the Go game, which was traditionally used as a metaphor for the struggle for the world. The Curly-Bearded Guest was also depicted as a hero with transcendental powers and was surrounded with elements of an advanced Taoist practitioner: riding a donkey, disappearing in just the blink of an eye, carrying a man's head in his sack, and eating the man's entrails. This story may serve well in its function as a piece of testimony to extol Taoists' deeds in Du Guangting's collection, but that was certainly not the original intention of the text. If the reader has read the memoir of the Exalted Emperor of the Han, or has heard various anecdotes associated with the establishment of a dynasty, he would not find the story a surprise or much different from other founding myths. Wang Meng'ou in his article "Qiuran ke yu Tang zhi chuanye chuanshuo" examines historical records to illustrate the close relationship between the Li royal family and the Taoists who created omens and supported Li

Yuan (566-635) and his sons in founding the new dynasty. The Taoists got rewarded in turn. He points out that the anecdote "Shen gao lu" from the *Taiping guangji* dated before the "Qiuran ke zhuan" is another piece of evidence that shows the Daoists' efforts in elevating the religion. It has a similar theme as the Curly-Bearded Guest story: a transcendental Taoist gave up fighting for the world and let the Li family take the throne.[81]

The philosophical ideas of Han Yu, Liu Zongyuan, Liu Yuxi, and their group of literati on the division between Heaven and man was not accepted by the author of "The Tale of Curly-Bearded Guest," or at least was not reflected in this text, which retreats to the old track of Confucian ideas from the Han Dynasty, the antithesis of the vanguard mid-Tang literati. The cosmological theories were incorporated into explanations of historical cycles and dynastic succession. The author of "The Tale of the Curly-Beard Guest" was not alone to adopt this approach. Similar comments can be found in the wrings of his contemporary scholars. Yuan Jiao 郊 (fl. late 9th century) in his *Ganze yao* 澤謠 recorded a Mr. Wei 's opinion of Li Mi (582-619), a rival of the Li family at the end of the Sui dynasty:

> I once observed the emanations at Fen Jin. There will be a sage emerging from there. If you can go and serve him, you will be able to obtain wealth and nobility. 望
> 貴 .

In Wei Xun's (fl. mid 9th century) *Liu Binke jiahua lu* 話 we read:

[81] Wang Meng'ou, "Qiuran ke Tang zhi chuanye chuanshuo," p. 254-281.

> We then know that the sage responds to Heaven and receives its order. He keeps the throne of the state for a long time."[82]
> 國 .

The mentality of the late Tang literati was clearly revealed in these statements. The chaotic situation in the late Tang period was a catalyst that propelled the author to re-embrace the portentous approach to deify Emperor Taizong in order to warn the rebellious subjects; however, this was only the fantasy of the author and would not change the ambition of the military commissioners.

Except for the reversionary philosophical approach, the other feature in the descriptions of the emperor is the author's emphasis on the quality of *Wen* (culture) instead of *Wu* 武 (martial). In the above two excerpts from the tale, Emperor Taizong was described to be a cultivated literatus with unusual grace, without a trace of the militant character that allowed him to take the throne in a coup he initiated in 626. In the story, he was consistently addressed by his temple title "The August [Emperor] Wen," and only once referred to by his posthumous title, Taizong. The dichotomy of *Wen* and *Wu* started as early as the Western Zhou 周 Dynasty (1050 B.C.-771 B.C.), as revealed in the Zhou founding kings Wen and Wu. As Peter K. Bol argued, the subjects during the era after An Lushan's rebellion in 755 believed the instability of government was linked to a more profound crisis of culture and *wenzhang* 章. The use of the *Wen/Wu* dichotomy "in the eighth century went together with calls to restore civil order during a time of military affairs under the leadership of men with literary and cultural attainment."[83] It must still have been the case

[82] Li Jianguo quoted these two passages in his *Tang Wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu*, p. 588.

[83] Peter K. Bol, *"This Culture of Ours" — Intellectual Transitions in T'ang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 108.

in the early ninth century. The *Hanlin* Academician Sun Qi mentioned in the preface to his *Beili zhi* , a collection of stories about courtesans in the capital Chang'an composed in 884, that Emperor Xuanzong 宣 (r. 847-59) was fond of Confucian studies and particular esteemed the civil examinations. He appointed his favorite son-in-law, Zheng Hao , Head of the Household Administration of the Heir Apparent and also placed him in charge of the examinations.[84]

"The Tale of the Curly-Bearded Guest" is just an example reflecting the effort and wish of literati to restore the situation in which "the civil is ruler over the military" or "to bring military affairs to an end and practice the *wendao*."

The undercurrent that reflected the cosmological thought of society, not just restricted to the Garden of Literary Talents, can be seen in this tale. Any piece of literary work, especially when it is of a possible oral origin, is closely intertwined with society and the cultural tradition in which the author matured and was immersed. In David Hawke's study of the relationship between Qu Yuan's (340 B.C.-278 B.C.) "Li Sao" 騷 and Sima Xiangru's 司 (179-117 B.C.) *fu* 賦 (Rhapsody), he propounded that "the patterns of thought associated with what might call the cosmological approach to art became so ingrained that they affected all literature, not only those whose themes suggested it."[85] Withdrawing from the macro-world and returning to our question of the authorship of "The Tale of the Curly-Bearded Guest," we have more reasons, besides the textual variances, that a Confucian literatus who lived in the late Tang period was a more likely author of this text than a Taoist

[84] Sun Chi, *Beili zhi* (Shanghai: Gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1957) in *Zhongguo wenxue cankao ziliao xiao congshu* 參 料 , vol. 1, p. 42.

[85] David Hawkes, "The Quest of the Goddess" in Cyril Birch, ed., *Studies in Chinese Literary Genres* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1974), p. 62, 67.

practitioner. Although there has been no solid evidence to identify who this literatus was, he should have been an inheritor of the Han cosmological interpretation of the Confucian ideas and a follower of the way of *wen*.

Glossary

digou 搆 **v**. "to create, to construct," sometimes used to refer to the establishment of a dynasty or a state.
"He was able to use his wealth to assist Emperor Wen in founding a new empire." ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1448, line 11)

kuangfu **v**. "to assist (often used in matters of grand importance, such as state administration)"; 方議 匡 "At the time he was just discussing [with others] how to assist the gentleman [with obtaining the world]." ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1447, line 5)

jihui 會 **n**. "the right occasion" or "good timing"; 際 "the right occasion for an encounter [between you and the ruler] is determined like this." ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1448, line 8)

ju **v**. "to sit with one's legs spread" or "to recline," indicating an arrogant and impolite attitude; 踞 而 "He would always receive them reclining on a couch." ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1445, line 2). Another example can be found in the *Shiji* 記: 方踞牀 使 "The Magistrate of Pei was just reclining on a couch and asked two maids to wash his feet" (*Shiji* 89.2692)

lieshi 士 **n**. "a marvelous man" or "a man with lofty virtue and high ambition" 欺 "A marvelous man does not deceive people" ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1447, line 4)

longzhan **v**., literally "dragons doing battle," originally referred to the conflict between the *yin* and the *yang*. It was later used as a metaphor for fighting for the throne; 當 "I would probably fight for the throne for a couple of years" ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1448, line 6)

paita **v**. "to push the door open"; 乘 , 而 "Only then did he have her put on men's clothes, mount a horse, and gallop [with him] out through the gate" ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1446, line 5)

shiju yuqi **v**. "to live like a corpse with only one breath left." It is often used as a metaphor for incapable officials who do not carry out their duties. 尸 , "He lives like a corpse with only one breath left, and is not to be afraid of." ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1446, line 2) The phrase first appears in the "Tianyun" 運 chapter in the *Zhuang zi*. 然 尸 而 … ? "This being the case, is there actually anyone who is like a corpse when he is at ease, like a dragon when he takes action?" (Wang Shumin 淑岷, *Zhuangzi jiaoquan* [Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1988], 1:536)

wangqi **v**. "to look for airs," "to observe emanations," is an old divining technique. Those with the special knowledge can predict the future by observing clouds. 奇 "A man who [excels in] observing the air [of heavenly powers] said that Taiyuan had an extraordinary emanation." ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1447, line 2)

xiqiu **v**. "to wear a fur coat partially covered by a silk garment" — inappropriate for formal occasions; 履, 裘而來 "He did not wear a robe or shoes, and was wearing his

silk coat which partially covered his fur coat." ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1447, line 6). See also the example in the "Tan gong" 弓 chapter in the *Li ji* 記: 襲裘而 , 裘而 "Zeng zi went on a visit of condolence, wearing a garment covering his fur coat, while Ziyou went with his fur coat partially uncovered by his garment" (James Legge, trans. *Li Chi Book of Rites* [New York: University Books, 1967], p. 142)

***zhenren* 真 n**. "the true man" or "Realized Person." Although a Taoist technical term, especially in the Shangqing (Highest Clarity) tradition, referring to adepts who have cultivated their persons so as to attain a recognized place in the hierarchy (cf. Edward H. Schafer, *Mirages on the Sea of Time* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985], p. 21)., in the context of "Qiuran ke zhuan" it is used metaphorically to refer to the one who will become the emperor. 愚 , 將 而 "I would call him a true man. The rest are only to be generals or ministers." ("Qiuran ke zhuan," *TPGJ*, p. 1446, line 16).

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Tale 6

"Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" 霍小玉傳 (The Tale of Huo Xiaoyu)

by Jiang Fang 蔣防
translated by Zhenjun Zhang

In the Dali period (766-779),[1] a scholar of Longxi[2] named Li Yi[3] was picked out for the [list of] ranks by passing the

[1] This translation of "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" is based on the text edited by Wang Meng'ou, *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, pp. 193-200, in turn based on *Taiping guangji* 平, 487.4006-11. The translator has also collated some of the other major texts, including those found in *Yanyi bian* (Taibei: Tian'i chubanshe, 1985) 29.1-8, *Leishuo* (in *Biji xiaoshuo daguan*, Taibei: Xinxing shuju, 1981), pp. 1838-39, *Tangdai congshu* (Shanghai: Jinzhang tushuju, 1921), 107.13-15, *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (Taibei: Guangwen shuju, 1979), 2.1473-79, *Jiu xiaoshuo* (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuoguan, nd.), 2.117-21, as well as in Wang Bijiang's *Tangren xiaoshuo*, pp. 77-84.

[2] Longxi County was located about ten miles northeast of modern Wushan County in Gansu Province (Tan Qixiang, 5:41). The Longxi here, however, is a traditional designation which refers to the area west of Long Mountain, which is located partly in modern Long County in Shanxi Province (Tan Qixiang, 5:40). Li Yi's home was in Guzang County which belonged to the Liangzhou 凉 of Longyou Dao. It is the modern Wuwei 威 district in Gansu (Tan Qixiang, 5:62).

[3] Li Yi (748-827), styled Junyu 虞, belonged to the clan of Li Kuai, who was the Chief Minister during the reign of Emperor Suzong (756-763). He passed the *Jinshi* examination in the fourth year of the Dali reign (769), and he was also a famous poet. He and Li He (790-816) enjoyed equal fame at the

Jinshi examination at the age of twenty.[4] In the next year there would be a *Bacui* , "The Preeminent Examination,"[5] so

end of the Zhenyuan (785-805) period. Every time he finished a poem, the court musicians got it through bribery and took it as the lyrics of a song to sing for the emperor. However, he had a suspicious nature and was jealous of his wife and concubines, a tendency that was called "Li Yi's disease" during his time. This ruined his official career. While traveling in Heshuo 河 , the area to the north of the Yellow River, the governor of Youzhou , located in modern Peking area (Tan Qixiang, 5:48), offered him the position of *congshi* (retainer). Afterwards he was recalled and offered the ranks of *Mishu shaojian* 秘 (Vice Director of the Palace Library), and *Jixian dian xueshi* 賢殿 (Academician of the Academy of Scholarly Worthies). He ended his official career as a *Li bu shangshu* (Minister of the Board of Rites). For more detailed information about Li Yi's life, see Wang Shengming , "Xin faxian de Cui Yan yiwen 'Li Yi muzhiming' jiqi wenxian jiazhi" 鄜 益 墓誌銘 獻價 , *Wenxue yichan* 5 (2009): 130-33.

[4] *Zhuodi* 第, literarily "being picked out for the ranks," refers to passing the *Jinshi* examination. It can also be called *Jidi* 第, "reached the ranks." *Luodi* 第, "dropped from the ranks," means to fail to pass the exam.

Taiping guangji, 487.4006, reads *tuidi* 第 for *zhuodi* 第, it is obviously a scribal error caused by the similar shape of the two characters.

[5] The parallel in *Leishuo* (*Biji xiaoshuo daguan*, 31.1838) reads: , 益 第, 拔 , 安, "in the Dali period, Li Yi passed an imperial examination, so he was able to take "The Preeminent" examination and wait for the test in Chang'an." This is not in accord with reality, because in the Tang dynasty it was not necessary for one to pass the *Jinshi* examination before taking the "Preeminent" exam.

Bacui 拔 , "The Preeminent" exam, was one of the two imperial examinations for selecting officials beyond the normal selection in the Tang dynasty. The "Xuanju zhi" of *Xin Tang shu* (45.1172) says, "Before the selection time, two examinations were offered: the one in which one writes three articles was called *'hongci'* , magnificent diction, the other in which one writes three written judgments was called *'ba cui.'* People who pass either of the examinations would be offered an official position right then." By passing the *Jinshi* examination, one could not become an official immediately. That was why Li Yi was waiting to take the "Preeminent" examination.

he waited for the test by the Ministry of Personnel.[6] In the sixth month, in summer, he arrived at Chang'an and lodged in Xinchang Ward.[7] The scholar was from a lofty clan, and he had a genius for writing when he was young. His fine verses and good lines were noted as matchless at the time, and the accomplished elders praised and admired him unanimously. He was often proud of his unrestrained spirit and gifts, and hoped to get a beautiful mate. He searched widely among the famous courtesans for long, but found no one suitable.

In Chang'an there was a matchmaker whose family name was Bao , and her name was Shiyiniang , the eleventh daughter of her parents. Formerly she had been a bondservant-maid[8] in the family of Commandant-escort Xue 薛,[9] [but] more than ten years ago she tore up the indenture and followed a good man.[10] Flattery by nature and with a ready tongue, she came and

[6] *Tian guan* was another name of the *Li bu* (Ministry of Personnel, Hucker, #3630). The name of *Li Bu* was changed to *Tian guan* in the ninth month of the first year of Guangzhai period (684), and changed back to the original in the second month of the first year of Shenlong 龍 period (705), See "Zhi guan zhi" 職 of *Jiu Tang shu*, 42.1788-89.

[7] Xinchang Ward was on the fifth street east of Zhuque 朱 Street, and close to the Yanxing 延 Gate. See map of Chang'an City (Wang Meng'ou, v. 2, front matter).

[8] *Qingyi* 衣 refers to a maid. In ancient China, after the Han dynasty, blue clothes were the clothes of the humble people, thus this designates a slave-girl.

[9] *Fuma*, commandant escort. This title seems always be offered to the people who married an imperial daughter. See Hucker, No. 2083, p. 219. The title has been translated as "royal son-in-law" in "The Governor of the Southern Bough" earlier in this volume (see pp. 137ff. and the glossary entry on p. 186.

Xue Fuma is unknown. According to Wang Meng'ou, he might well be Xue Boyang 薛 阳, who married the Princess of Liangzhou 凉 , the daughter of Ruizong ; or his son, Xue Tan 薛 , who married the princess of Changshan , daughter of Xuanzong .

[10] *Congliang* 良 refers to a prostitute who marries a man and starts a new life (literally it means "follow a good man").

went through all the rich and powerful families and the residences of the royal relatives. As for having a hand in romantic affairs and arranging matches,[11] she was esteemed as a great leader. When she received the scholar's sincere trust and generous gifts,[12] she felt very much indebted to him.

After several months passed, just as Li was sitting leisurely in the south pavilion of his lodgings between *shen* and *wei* in the afternoon,[13] he suddenly heard someone, who announced that she was Bao, very urgently knocking at the door. Lifting up his robe,[14] he hurried to greet her and asked: "What brings you here unexpectedly today, Bao?"

Bao said with a smile, "Haven't you, the *Suguzi* 蘇 ,[15] been having good dreams yet? There is a fairy who has been banished

[11] *Zhuifeng xiece* , literally "chase the wind and carry the books."

[12] Wang Bijiang reads *dang shou sheng cheng tuo hou luo* 受 誠 厚 for *chang shou sheng cheng tuo hou luo* 受 誠 厚 ; *Yanyi bian* (29.1) reads *chang* for *chang* . Based on the words before *Jiu er wei xie* 而 諧 and the next sentence *jing shuyue* , *dang* seems the best choice. Because Li Yi vainly searched for a long time, he trusted Bao with finding a match. Then, "a few months later," Bao came to Li's residence.

[13] *Shen wei jian* , around three o'clock in the afternoon. *Shen* refers to the period from three to five o'clock, while *wei* is from one to three o'clock in the afternoon.

[14] *She* means "to lift up." Owen ("Huo Xiaoyu's Story," p. 178) translates it as "straighten," but this seems to ignore the urgent situation in the text.

[15] The meaning of *suguzi* is unknown. Wang Meng'ou says that it may be equivalent to *sao guzi* (coquette). Another view is that it is homophone of *shu guanzi* 罐 (bookworm), a kind of mocking name for the scholars. See Tan Fengliang 譚 , ed. *Lidai wenyang xiaoshuo jianshang cidian* 詞 (Nanjing: Jiangsu wenyi, 1991), p. 367. *Tang Song chuanqi xuan* (Fuzhou: Fujian jiaoyu, 1983) says it was a mistake for *Guzangtzu* , because Li Yi's hometown was *Guzang* .

Tangdai congshu (107.13) reads *su guzi zuo haomeng ye* 好 for *su guzi zuo haomeng ye wei* 好 . *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2.1473) and *Jiu xiaoshuo* (2.117) omitted the *wei* , too.

down to this lower realm,[16] and she does not seek wealth and property, but only longs for the gifted and unconventional. With such character and appearance [she] is really a match for you."

On hearing this, the scholar leapt for joy, felt his spirit fly and his body lighter. Grasping Bao's hands, he said to her with respectful bows and thanks: "I will be your slave for the rest of my life; and I would even give my life for you."[17] He took the opportunity to ask about the girl's name and dwelling.

Bao said, "She is the youngest daughter of the former Prince Huo,[18] styled Xiaoyu. The prince was extremely fond of her. Her mother was called Jingchi , Jingchi was a favorite servant-girl of the prince. Immediately after the prince's death, all her half brothers refused to accept her [as a whole sister] because that she

[16] *Tangdai congshu* (107.13), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2.1473), as well as *Jiu xiaoshuo* (B.117) read *shi you yi xianren* 仙 for *you yi xianren* 仙 .

[17] Another possible translation is "I would like to be her slave for the rest of my life; and I would even give my life for her."

[18] Huo Wang or Li Yuangui 軌 (before 620-689), was the fourteenth son of Li Yuan . In the Chuigong reign (685-688) of Wu Zetian , he was banished to Qianzhou (in modern Sichuan Province), and died on the way. His son, Li Xu , was killed, too. For an account of his life, see *Jiu Tang shu,* 64.2729, and *Xin Tang shu,* 79.3553-54. But he lived too early to have Huo Xiaoyu's.

At the beginning of Shenlong 龍 reign (705), Li Hui , Li Xu's grandson, was offered the title of Successor to Prince Huo while Li Yuangui was offered the title Prince Huo again (posthumously; see *Cefu Yuangui* 冊 [Taibei: Taiwan zhonghua shuju, 1967], 284.3350). Li Hui has been considered the Prince Huo in the Story of Huo Xiaoyu. But his dates were also many years earlier than the chronology that is provided in the story. Thus, what the author tells concerning Xiaoyu's family is just intentionally giving her a noble family ground. See Wang Meng'ou, *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, 1:203; Zhou Shaoliang 绍良, "'Huo Xiaoyu zhuan jian zheng" 證, *Wenxue yichan* 產 (1986.2); and Li Jianguo , *Tang wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu*

(Tianjin: Nankai daxue chubanshe, 1993), p. 452.

had been born to a humble and concubinary mother; accordingly they gave her some property and money, and sent her to live outside. She changed her family name to Zheng , and few know that she is the prince's daughter. But her appearance and gestures are so beautiful and charming, such as I have never seen in my life, and her refined tastes and elegant grace are beyond compare. She is well versed too in music and the classics. Yesterday she asked me to find a good young man who would match her in nature and style. I told her all about you. She also knew the name of Li Shilang ,[19] and was filled with joy. She lives in the Old Temple Lane in the Shengye 勝 Quarter.[20] At the southern end, the yard with a gate for a carriage on the left is exactly her residence.[21] I have made an appointment for you. Tomorrow at

[19] Li Shilang , literally, Li Tenth Gentleman in line (i.e., he was the tenth son in his family) was Li Yi.

Yanyi bian (29.1) reads Shilang for Li Shilang .

[20] The Shengye Quarter was located north of the Dong shi (Eastern Market) and west of the Xingqing Gong 慶 (Xingqing Palace) in the northeastern part of Chang'an. See the map of Chang'an (Wang Meng'ou, vol. 1, front matter).

[21] *Fu shang chemen zhai* 車 has puzzled many scholars. Uchiyama Chinari suspects *fu shang* is *pu shang* (*Tangdai xiaoshuo xuanzhu* [Tokyo: Mokujisha, 1973], Dai Wangshu argues it should be *jiao shang* 角 (*Xiaoshuo xiju lunji* , p. 40), Wang Meng'ou rejects both of these theories. The reason is that *pu shang* can not mean *qu'an* 岸 as Uchiyama argued, and the *wuhou pu* which was set up near the gate of a city and at the corner of a ward cannot be called *jiao shang*. Based on the variants from Xu Song's "Residence of Huo Xiaoyu" in *Tang liangjing chengfang kao* 京 坊 (*Baibu congshu* 59), 2. 21, he considers it *pu shang* 铺 . But it still seems obscure. For *fu shang chemen zhai* 車 , *Yanyi bien* (29. 2) reads *fu shang dong xian zhai* 閒 , *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2.1473) reads *nan shang dong xian zhai* 閒 , *Jiu xiaoshuo* (2.117) reads *nan shang chemen zhai* 車 . *Tang liangjing cheng fang kao* reads *Shengye fang gusi pu, shang chemen shi ye* 坊 , 車 . From above variants we can see that a few characters have variants in different versions just because of their identical shapes, *fu* has

noon, just go to the entrance of the lane to look for [a maid], Guizi,[22] and then you will find her."

Immediately after Bao's departure, the scholar began to prepare for the visit. He ordered Qiuhong , his young servant, to borrow a black charger with a bridle of gold from his cousin Shang who was Adjutant General of the Capital.[23] That evening he washed his clothes,[24] bathed, and shaved. The combination of joy and excitement kept him from falling asleep all night. At daybreak he put on his kerchief, fetched a mirror and looked at his appearance in it, fearing only[25] that he might fail.[26]

He paced back and forth until the noon hour. Then he ordered the charger be harnessed and galloped directly to the Shengye Quarter. When they arrived at the appointed place, he saw a maid standing in wait as expected. She stepped forward and asked: "You are Li Shilang, aren't you?" Li dismounted at

an identical shape with *jiao* 角 and *nan* , *che* 車 is similar to *dong* , *men* is similar to *xian* 閒. In addition, the placing of the period and the comma too can be a problem. It seems that the sentence can be parsed differently from Wang Meng'ou; the translator set off *pu shang* with a comma. It seems that *nan* is easier to explain than *jiao* 角, and *shang chemen* 車 (carriage gate on the left) is also easier to explain than *shang dong xian men* 車閒 . The sentence should therefore be read 坊 車 .

[22] *Yanyi bian* reads (29.2) *jiazi* 佳 (nice girl or nice maid) for *guizi* 桂 . *Jia* 佳 is a mistake for *gui* 桂 because of their nearly identical shapes, and *guizi* is said clearly to be a maid in the text below.

[23] *Canjun* 參 or *Canjun shi* 參 (adjutant), the title of aides to regional military authorities. See Hucker, No. 6876.

The Provincial Headquarters of Jingzhao 京 had jurisdiction over the area around Chang'an (Tan Qixiang, 5:41). It had six departments: *gong* , *cang* , *hu* , *bing* , *fa* and *shi* , each had two *canjun*.

[24] *Yanyi bian* (29. 2) reads *han* 瀚, an error for *hua*n .

[25] Both *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2.1474) and *Tangdai congshu* (107.13) omit *wei* (only) here.

[26] Based on the text here and a poem by Li Yi, Wang Meng'ou (1:206) thinks that Li was dark complexioned and ugly.

once and ordered the maid to lead the horse to the rear of the house.[27] She locked the door hurriedly. Li found as expected that Bao came out from inside.

She smiled and said from a distance, "What kind of young fellow has broken into the house unannounced?"

Bantering with him,[28] she led the scholar through an inner gate. In the courtyard there were four cherry trees, and a parrot cage hung at the northwest corner. On seeing the scholar coming in, the parrot cried: "Someone has come in,[29] lower the curtains [30] at once!"[31]

Naturally bashful, Li still felt somewhat apprehensive. When he suddenly heard the words of the bird, he was stunned and dared not to enter. While he was hesitating, Bao led Jingchi down the steps to welcome him. They asked him to go inside and had him sit opposite them. [Jingchi] was a little more than forty, and she was graceful, charming and seductive as she talked and smiled.

She said to the young man: "I heard all along that you are gifted and unconventional, now I see that you are handsome and elegant, too. Your fame is really deserved. I have a daughter who, though lacking in proper instruction, is at least not ugly. It should be suitable if she could make a match with you. I heard your

[27] Wang Meng'ou (1:204) says that *wu di* 屋底 means "under the eaves." It does not fit the context because immediately before *wu di* there are two characters *qianru* 入, "led [the horse] to enter into."

[28] Wang Meng'ou (1:205) argues that the text here seems to require a *yu* 与 before *sheng* 笙. This seems correct, because the subject of *tiaoxiao* 笑 (bantering) is obviously Bao the Eleventh.

[29] *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2.1474) reads Li lang 李郎 for *you ren* 有人.

[30] Curtain here seems indicating the window curtains.

[31] *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2.1474) reads *ji* 急 for *ji* 急.

intention from Bao many times, and today I would like to offer my daughter to serve you with dustpan and broom."[32]

The scholar replied gratefully, "Clumsy and mediocre as I am, it is unexpected for me to get your favor. If I am really chosen as a match for her, I should take it as an honor for the rest of my life."

Then she ordered wine and dishes to be served, and asked Xiaoyu to come out from a chamber east of the hall. The scholar immediately welcomed her with bows, and felt as if all the room was filled with a forest of gems and jade trees, which shone brilliantly on all sides. So bright were her eyes and so bewitching her glances!

Then Xiaoyu sat down beside her mother, who said to her, "You once loved to repeat the lines:

> When the curtain was opened and the wind stirred the bamboo
> I suspected that my old friend was coming.[33]

[32] "Qu Li (xia)" , *Li chi* (Record of Ritual), " 夫 " (Sending the women to marry the Grand Master means to prepare for spring water and sweeping ground); see *Shisanjing zhushu* 三 (Taibei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1955), 5.101. "Gaozu benji" , in *Shi ji* (*Records of the Grand Scribe*): " , 息 季 " [Mr. Lü says, "I have a daughter, and I intend to send her to serve you as a concubine with the broom and dustpan."] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1982), 8.344.

Yanyi bian (29. 2), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2.1474), and *Tangdai congshu* (107.9.14) read *yong feng qi zhou* (to serve you with the dustpan and broom for good) for *cheng feng qi zhou*

[33] *Kai lian feng dong zhu, yi shi gu ren lai* 開簾 動 , here has a variant of two characters different from Li Yi's original line *Kai men fu dong zhu, yi shi gu ren lai* 開 復動 , . See Li Yi's poem "Zhulian wen feng zao ji miao fa sikong shu" 簾 , in *Quan Tang shi* 詩 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 1960), 283.3214; *Wenyuan yinghua* 英 (Taibei: Xinwen feng chuban gongsi, 1979), 156.734.

That is from a poem by Shilang. You have been chanting his poem and thinking of him all day long, how does it as good as seeing him?"

Xiaoyu lowered her head with a smile and whispered, "Seeing him is not as good as hearing his fame, how could a gifted scholar not be handsome?"

The scholar got up several times and said while bowing, "The young lady loves talent while this humble fellow adores beauty.[34] As the two set each other off, then we will have both talent and beauty."

The mother and the daughter glanced at each other and laughed. Then they raised cups to drink. After several rounds, the scholar stood up and asked Xiaoyu to sing a song. At first she was not willing to, but her mother persistently forced her. Her voice was clear and resonant; the melody was exquisite and wonderful.

When they had drunk their fill, it was dusk. Bao led the young man to the west courtyard to rest. It was a quiet courtyard with secluded rooms, and the curtains and screens were luxurious. Bao ordered the maids Guizi and Huansha to take off the scholar's boots and untie his belt. In a short while Xiaoyu came. She talked to him tenderly, and the tone of her speech was agreeable and charming. At the moment when her silk clothes were removed, her appearance and posture was exceedingly enchanting. They lowered the curtain and drew close to each other on the pillows, enjoying pleasure to their hearts' content.[35] The scholar thought to himself that even [encountering the

[34] *Yanyi bian* (29. 2-3), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2. 1474), and *Tangdai congshu* (107.14) read *zhong mao* (adore appearance) for *zhong se* 色 (adore beauty).

[35] *Yanyi bian* (29. 3), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2. 1474), and *Tangdai congshu* (107. 14) reads *ji shen huan ai* 歡 for *ji qi huan ai* 歡 . *Shen* here is obviously an error for *qi*.

goddess] on the Mount Wu or by the River Luo 洛[36] could not have been surpassed [what he experienced]. In the middle of the night, Xiaoyu suddenly wept. She looked at the scholar and said,[37] "I am merely a courtesan, and I know myself that I am not a match for you. Now I am loved just for my beauty, and [relying on beauty] I entrust myself to a benevolent and worthy man. What I worry about is, however, when my beauty fades, your favor will shift and love move, thus it will make the vine have nothing to cling to and the autumn fan be thrown away.[38] [Therefore] at the zenith of my joy I cannot help grieving."

[36] Wu shan (Mount Wu) and Luo pu (the banks of Luo River) were frequently used pars pro toto to indicate merry adventures of men. *Wu shan* refers to the famous love myth of King Xiang of Chu met the goddess of mount Wu, see Song Yu , "Gao Tang fu" , *Wen xuan* (Hong Kong: Shangwu yinshuoguan, 1936), 19.393-97. *Luo pu* refers to the myth of the goddess of Luo River, see Cao Zhi , "Luo shen fu" , *Wen xuan*, 19.401-05.

[37] For *gu sheng yue* (Looked at the young man and said), *Taiping guangji* (487.4007) and *Tangren xiaoshuo* (p. 78) read *guan sheng yue* (Looked at the young man and said); *Yanyi bian* (29.31) reads *wei sheng yue* (said to the young man).

[38] *Nüluo* , a kind of parasitic vine, can also be called *tusi* . See Kao You 誘, annot., "Shuoshan Xun" , *Huainan zi zhu* (Taibei: Shijie shuqu, 1962), 16.276-277. "Gu shi" 詩 (Old poems): 婚 附 (I am newly married to you, just like the vine clings to the vine). See Shen Deqian 潛, ed., *Gushi yuan* 詩 (Taibei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1966), p. 54. The vine that has nothing to cling to is a metaphor for a woman who has lost favor of a man she relies on.

Qiushan jianjuan 秋 捐 (the autumn fan is thrown away) is another allusive metaphor. Ban Jieyu in her "Yuange xing" 歌行 (*Wen xuan*, 27. 598) sang of her fan:

裂齊 White silk newly made in the State of Qi,
霜 bright and clear [it is] like frost and snow.
合歡 When it is made into a fan of conjoined happiness,
似 it is as circular as the bright moon.
入 懷 Coming out and entering into your breast and sleeves,

On hearing this, the scholar sighed with deep feeling. He then pillowed Xiaoyu's arm, and said to her gently, "My lifelong wish has been fulfilled today, I pledge not to leave you even though my bones be ground to powder and my body be smashed to pieces. Why did you, my lady, say these words? Please allow me to get a piece of white silk and write my oath on it."

Xiaoyu accordingly stopped shedding tears, and ordered a maid, Yingtao , to lift the curtain up and hold the candle, while she gave the scholar a brush and inkstone. In her spare time from playing the pipes and plucking the strings, Xiaoyu was fond of poetry and calligraphy. Her bookcases, brushes, and ink stone were all the old ones from the royal household. She then brought out a embroidered bag, from which she took out three feet of white silk lined with black, which bad been woven by the belles of the Yue ,[39] and handed it to him. The scholar, by nature much gifted, grasped the brush and finished his text in no time. In this he compared his love to the mountains and the rivers, and his fidelity to the sun and the moon. Every line was so sincere that anyone who might read it would be moved. After he finished it, Xiaoyu ordered [the maid] to put it in her jewel box. From then on they loved each other in harmony, just like a pair of kingfishers flying freely in the clouds. They lived this way for two years, together day and night.

動 the gentle breeze is produced when it is waved.
秋 She is always afraid that the fall season will come,
and the cooling wind will drive the heat away.
捐 She will be thrown into a box,
the favor [for her] will stop halfway.

[39] *Yue* is the name of a nationality. In ancient China, the modern areas occupied by the provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Guangdong, and Fujian were occupied by the *Yue* people, who were also called the *Bai yue* (Hundred *Yue*) or *bai yue* 粵.

In the spring of the next year, the scholar ascended the [selection] subject by passing "The Preeminent Examination" of written judgments,[40] and was appointed Assistant Magistrate of Zheng County.[41] In the fourth month, he was about to leave for his post and then to visit his parents in East Luo 洛.[42] Most of his relatives in Chang'an attended the farewell party for him. It was at the time in a year when the spring prospects still remained and the summer scene began to show its beauty. After the feast was over and the guests scattered, the sorrow of approaching separation occupied Xiaoyu's mind.[43]

She said to the scholar, "With your endowment, family and fame, you are admired by most people. Of course there will be many people who want to be related to you through marriage. Furthermore, you still have parents at home, but have no daughter-in-law yet in your family. Once you leave this time, certainly you are going to make a good match. The words in your pledge are but empty ones. However, I have a small wish that I

[40] *Dengke* 登 , literarily "ascend the [selection] subject", in the Tang dynasty means obtaining the status of being an official. In later time it also refers to passing the *Jinshi* examination.

[41] Zhubu 主 (Assistant Magistrate) normally, the 3rd ranking post, behind one or more vice magistrates (cheng) as well as the district magistrate (ling, zhixian). See Hucker, #1413, p. 182.

Zheng County was modern Hua County in Shanxi Province (Tan Qixiang, 5: 41).

[42] Dong Luo here refers to the Eastern Capital, Luoyang 陽. In next paragraph the author says clearly, "About ten days after he arrived at his post, Li asked leave to visit his parents at the East Capital." Based on Li Yi's ancestral home, however, Wang Meng'ou says that *Tung Luo* here refers to the area between the Song Mountain and Ying River (Wang Meng'ou, 2:208). It seems farfetched.

[43] For *li si* 思, *Taiping guangji* (487.4008), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2. 1475), and *Tangdai congshu* (107.14) read *li e* . *E* is an error for *si.*

want to tell you right now, and [hope that] you will keep it in mind forever. Would you still be willing to listen?"

The scholar was startled, saying, "What fault have I committed, that you say these words unexpectedly? Please tell me what you want to say, I will certainly follow it with respect."

Xiaoyu said, "I am just eighteen years old, you are merely twenty two; there are still eight years before you reach the prime of your life.[44] I hope to complete the joy and love of my life during this period. After that, it would still not be too late [for you] to select from a high-ranking family to harmonize the Qin and the Jin .[45] I will then abandon the affairs of this world, cut off my hair, and put on black clothes.[46] That would be enough for the long-cherished wish of my life."

The scholar was regretful and moved, and he couldn't help shedding tears. He said to Xiaoyu, "I will fulfill the pledge I made by the bright sun,[47] no matter whether I am alive or dead. [Even though] I live together with you for the rest of my life, I would

[44] *Zhuangshi* refers to the prime of a man's life (from thirty to forty). "Qu li" , *Li ji* (Record of Ritual), "三 " (At the age of thirty, one can be called entering into the robust years of his life, and he should have a wife). See *Shisanjing zhushu*, 5.16.

[45] *Xie qinjin* 諧秦晉 (harmonize the Qin and the Jin) means to get married. This idiom originated from the intermarriage for generations between the two states in the Spring and Autumn period. In "Li Wa zhuan" there is also reference to *Qin Jin zhi ou* 秦晉 "A match of Qin and Jin" (*TPGJ* 484)

Yanyi bian (29.4), Tangdai congshu (107. 14), and *Wuchao xiaoshuo daguan* (2.1475) read *yi qiu qinjin* 秦晉 for *yi xie qinjin* 諧秦晉, but *qiu* is not as good as *xie*.

[46] *Pi zi* (put on black clothes) means to renounce the family and become a nun. *Zi* is the gray black colored clothes worn by nuns.

[47] *Jiao ri zhi shi* , from "Daju" 車 of the "Wangfeng" , in *Shi jing* 詩 : , "If you do not believe by words, / my heart is just like the bright sun [i.e., I swear by the bright sun]" (see Chen Huan 陳 , *Shi Maoshi zhuanshu*, 詩 [Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1901], A.56).

still be afraid that I cannot satisfy my lifelong wish. How dare I have any other thought?[48] I wholeheartedly beg you not to doubt me. Just stay here sedately and wait until the eighth month, I will return to Huazhou [49] and look for someone to welcome you. The date of reunion is not far." After another several days, the scholar said good-bye to Xiaoyu and left for the east.

About ten days after he arrived at his post, Li asked to leave to visit his parents at the East Capital. Before his arrival at home, his mother had discussed his marriage with his cousin, Ms. Lu , and the agreement had already been settled. His mother was always strict and firm. The scholar, though hesitating, dared not refuse. Thus he followed the confirmation rites, and then there was an imminent date [for the wedding].[50] The Lu clan was also a

[48] *Zhe you er san* 三 refers to one changing his mind. The poem "Meng" in the "Weifeng" of the *Shijing* reads: , 三 "The serviceman was reckless, he was variable in his conduct." See *Shi Maoshi zhuanshu*, A.32.

[49] Huazhou is modern Hua County in Shanxi Province. Zheng County belonged to Huazhou in the Tang dynasty.

[50] Since the Spring and Autumn period, the *Liu li* 六 or Six Rites, became the fixed rites for marriage which lasted in China for two thousand years. They are: (1) *nacai* , sending first gift, normally a chicken or a goose, to the girl's home to request discussing and processing the marriage; (2) *wenming* , asking the girl's family background and birth date; (3) *naji* , divining in the boy's ancestral temple to consult his ancestors if the marriage would be auspicious; (4) *nazheng* , sending betrothal gifts to the girl's family and this shows the marriage is formally effective if the girl's family accepted the gifts; (5) *Qingqi* , setting the wedding date through consultation with the girl's parents; and (6) *Qinying* 迎, the bridegroom, acting on the order of his father, goes to the bride's home to welcome her. See Sun Xidan 孫 , "Hunyi" 婚 in *Li ji jijie* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1989), pp. 1416-23. Here Li Yi's mother had completed all the first three rites, Li Yi himself just went to send the betrothal gifts to confirm the marriage. After that a date for wedding was set.

magnificent one.[51] When sending a girl to marry another clan, they must get a promise of a million cash for betrothal money. [If the sum] did not reach this amount, the marriage would, in principle, not be allowed to process. The scholar's family had always been poor, for the marriage they needed to seek a loan.[52] So that he took false reasons as pretext to look up his relatives and friends who were far away, crossing the Yangzi River and the Huai River from the autumn till the next summer. Considering that he had betrayed his pledge and greatly exceeded the promised time, the scholar kept silent in order not to let people know, intending to make Xiaoyu give up her hope. And from afar he also trusted his relatives and friends not to make a slip of the tongue.

Since the scholar exceeded the appointed time [for their reunion], Xiaoyu had inquired about his whereabouts many times. The false news and unreliable messages she received differed one from the other day by day. Embracing sorrow and regret, she widely sought fortune tellers and consulted with diviners, and this went on for more than a year. Then, lying in the empty chamber with her body emaciated, she fell into a severe and lingering illness. Even though the scholar's letters never came again, Xiaoyu's longing for him never changed. She sent money to her relatives and friends to make them bring her news of him. Her inquires were so urgent and sincere that her resources were exhausted time and again. She frequently sent her maid out secretly to sell dresses and playthings from her suitcase, and most

[51] *Jia zu* , the most magnificent clan. It can also be called *jiaxing* or *jiamen* . See Liu Fang "Xingxi lun" , *Quan Tang wen* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), pp. 372 and 1672. "Li Wa zhuan," *Dixiong hungou jie jiamen* 婚 "The brothers are all marry to the magnificent families," *TPGJ*. 484.

[52] *Yanyi bian* (29. 4), *Tangdai congshu* (107.14), and *Wuchao xiaoshuo daguan* (2.1476) read *qiu gai* 丐 (beg for) for *qiu dai* 貸 (seek for loan). *Qiu dai* is obviously better.

of them were trusted to Hou Jingxian's commission shop in the West Market to sell. [53]

Once she sent the maid, Huansha, with a purple jade hairpin to sell at the residence of Jingxian. On the way she encountered an old jade craftsman who served in the court. Seeing what Huansha was holding, he came up to identify it and said, "This hairpin was made by me. Many years ago, when the youngest daughter of Prince Huo was going to have her hair pinned up,[54] [the prince] ordered me to make this pin, and he gave me ten thousand cash as reward. I have never forgotten it. Where did you get it?"[55]

Huansha replied, "My mistress is exactly the daughter of Prince Huo. Her family was impoverished, and she lost her chastity to a man. Her husband went to East Capital last year. Further, there was no message [from him]. Being depressed and sorrowful, she fell ill. And it has been nearly two years. She asked me to sell this in order to bribe someone and ask him to seek for news [of her husband]."

The jade craftsman shed tears in sadness, saying, "How could the sons and daughters of a nobleman be out of luck and in dire straits like this! My remaining days are nearly at an end, [but] I cannot bear my sorrow seeing this fluctuation of fortune." He then led Huansha to the mansion of the Princess of Yanxian ,[56] and

[53] Xishi , is located in the fourth street west of Zhuque 朱 Street in Chang'an. The home of Hou Jingxian was there. See *Tang liangjing chengfang kao,* 4.21.

[54] *Shang huan* 鬟, "to pin up the hair." See the "Nei ze" chapter of the *Li ji,* 而 "A girl has her hair pinned up with an hairpin at the age of fifteen" (*Shisanjing zhushu*, 5.539).

[55] *Yanyi bian* (29. 5), *Tangdai congshu* (107.14), and *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2.1476) read *ru shi he ren, cong he er de* 汝 何 何而 "Who are you, and where did you get it?" for *ru shi cong he er de* 汝 何而 "Where did you get it?"

[56] The Princess *Yanxian* 延先 should be *Yanguang* 延 . She was the seventh daughter of Suzong . *Xin Tang shu*, 83.3662: "鄠 主 延

told her the story in detail. The Princess also sighed in sadness for a long while, and she gave [the maid] one hundred and twenty thousand cash [for the hairpin].

At this time the girl of Lu family, to whom the scholar was engaged, was in Chang'an. Having finished raising the necessary sum for the betrothal gifts, the scholar went back to Zheng County, and in the last month of the year, he again asked for leave to enter the capital for his wedding. He chose a secluded lodging in secret, and let no one know.[57] There was a *Ming jing* graduate named Cui Yunming ,[58] who was the scholar's cousin. He was extremely honest and kind in nature. In the years past he had often enjoyed the time together with the scholar in Miss Zheng's house.[59] They laughed and chatted over food and drink, and there had been no distance between them [i.e., they had become very close]. Every time he got news of the scholar, he was sure to tell Xiaoyu honestly. Xiaoyu frequently helped Cui with firewood, provisions, and clothes. For that Cui was extremely

昇 " "昇 " "The Princess of the State of Kao was originally conferred with the title of *Yanguang*, and she married Bei Hui, again married Xiao Sheng" "After Xiao Sheng died, she had sexual relations with Li Wan, the Marshal of Pengzhou."

[57] *Yanyi bian* (29. 5), *Tangdai congshu*(107. 14), and *Wuchao xiaoshuo daguan* (2.1476) read *bu ling ren tong* , "let nobody visit" for *bu ling ren zhi* "let nobody know."

[58] Ming jing was one type of imperial examinations in the Tang Dynasty. The content of the exam was not writing poems and rhapsodies, which were needed in the *Jinshi* exam, but explaining the meaning of the classics. It was easier to pass the *Ming jing* exam compared with taking the *Jinshi* exam, but those who passed the *Ming jing* exam were still commoners and couldn't get an official position.

[59] *Yanyi bian* (29. 5), *Tangdai congshu* (107. 14), and *Wuchao xiaoshuo daguan* (2.1476) read *tong yin* 饮 for *tong huan* 歡 For the next sentence is "They laughed and chatted over food and drink," Wang Meng'ou prefers the reading *tong yin* to *tong huan* (2.211).

grateful to her. After the scholar arrived [at Chang'an], Cui faithfully told Xiaoyu all what he knew.

Xiaoyu sighed in indignation, saying,[60] "How could this kind of things happen in the world!" She then asked every relatives and friends to have [Li Yi] come to her by all means. The scholar thought himself that he had exceeded the appointed time and broken his pledge, and he also knew that Xiaoyu's illness was serious and lingering. Being ashamed of himself, he parted reluctantly with what he treasured and in the end was unwilling to go [see her]. He went out in the early morning and came back in the late evening, intending to avoid meeting anyone. Xiaoyu wept day and night, and completely forgot to sleep and eat. She desired to meet Li Yi just once, but, unexpectedly, there seemed to be no way. With deepened resentment and indignation, she lay exhausted in her bed. From then on this gradually became known to people in Chang'an. Men of sentiment were all moved by Xiaoyu's affection, while the gallant men were all enraged at the scholar's frivolous conduct.

It was the third month of the year, and many people were going on spring outings. In the company of five or six of his friends, the scholar went to Chongjing 崇 Temple to enjoy the peonies in bloom.[61] They strolled along the west corridor, taking

[60] For *hen tan* 恨 , *Yanyi bian* (29. 5) reads 且 , *Wuchao xiaoshuo daguan* (2.1476) reads *qie tan* 且 . In these two versions, the *hen* was obviously missed. *Tangdai congshu* (107. 14), however, reads *hen qie tan* 恨且 . In terms of rhetoric, this is the best of all the versions the translator has seen.

[61] Chongjing Temple was located in the southwestern part of Jing'an 安 Ward in Chang'an. It was famous for peonies in the Tang Dynasty. Bai Juyi 居易 (772-846) in his poem "Dai shu yinbai yun ji weizhi" 韵 sings of 牡 "an appointed time at Chongjing Temple when the peonies are in bloom." He annotates the line, "When the peonies of Chongjing Temple were in bloom, I always had an appointment with Weizhi [Yuan Zhen (779-831)] to view the flowers." See *Bai Juyi ji* 居易 (Taibei: Liren shuju, 1980), 2:245.

turns composing verses [for the occasion]. A man of Jingzhao named Wei Xiaqing 夏 ,[62] who was a close friend of the scholar, was then also walking along with the party. He said to the scholar, "The scenery is so beautiful, and the grasses and trees are so luxuriant and glorious. What a pity it is that Miss Zheng should nurse a bitter sense of wrong in her empty chamber! You could really abandon her at last. You are indeed a hard-hearted man! But a real man's heart shouldn't be like this. It is proper for you to think it over again."

As Wei was sighing and reproaching Li, a young gallant suddenly appeared, wearing a yellow silk shirt and carrying a bow. He was handsome, full of vigor, splendidly dressed, and followed only[63] by a boy of the northern tribes with short-cut hair.[64] Following them secretly, he overheard what they were talking about.

[62] Wei Xiaqing (742-806), styled Yunke , father-in-law of Yuan Zhen. In the Dali reign, he passed the *Jinshi* examination together with his younger brother, and he was offered the position of Assistant Magistrate of Gaoling 陵, modern Gaoling County in Shanxi Province. He had been Xingbu yuanwailang (Vice Director of Board of Punishments), Prefect of Changzhou and Suzhou , Li bu shilang (Vice Ministor of Board of Personnel), Metropolitan Governor, Taizi shaobao (Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent), and Zuo pushe (Left Vice Director). He was noted for his grace and skill in conversation and drinking; those who associated with were all famous people at the time. See *Jiu Tang shu* 165.4297-98.

[63] *Yanyi bian* (29. 6), *Tangdai congshu* (107. 14), *Wuchao xiaoshuo daguan* (2.1477), and *Jiu xiaoshuo* (2.120) read *wei jian* (only saw) for *wei you* (there was only). Based on what follows in the passage "The gallant immediately ordered a few servants to take hold of him and force him to go," the gallant obviously followed by several servants. Therefore the *wei jian* is better than *wei you*.

[64] *Hu chu* , a boy from a northern tribe of China. In the Tang Dynasty many noble and rich families raised the boys from northern tribes to manage their horses.

After a moment, he went forward and greeted the scholar with hands clasped, saying, "Aren't you Li the Tenth? My family comes originally from Shandong ,[65] and we are related to the relatives of emperor through marriage. Though I am lacking in literary talent, I like to make friends with talented men. Having been admiring your splendid reputation, I have always longed to meet you.[66] Today I am so lucky to meet you and have an opportunity to look at your exquisite appearance.[67] My humble residence is not far from here, and there are also songs and music that will suffice for entertainment. [Besides,] there are eight or nine bewitching beauties and more than ten fine horses — all of them which you can do with as you desire.[68] I merely hope that you will come and for a visit."

The scholar's friends all carefully listened to these words,[69] and each in turn sighed with admiration so that they rode along

[65] From the time of Emperor Xiaowen (r. 477-499) of the Northern Wei 北 , the old and great families of Shandong became among the most powerful clans. Even in the Tang Dynasty people were still proud of their origin from these great families of Shandong.

[66] *Gou zhi* , means "to meet [you]." The poem "Caochong" of the "Zhaonan" in the *Shijing* reads: 亦 亦 "I saw him, I met him." The "Zhuan" comments: *gou* means "to meet." *Shi Maoshi zhuanshu*, 2:29.

[67] *Qingyang* , "exquisite appearance." Another reference to the *Shijing*, this to "Ye you mancao" of "Zhengfeng" 鄭 : " 兮 "There is a beauty, how bright and clear her eyes, and how exquisite her appearance." The "Zhuan" says, 目 然 "It refers to graceful beauty between the eyes and the eyebrows." The "Shu" offers: Zang Lin "Jingyi zaji" 目 "We consider the clear and bright eyes beautiful, and consider the eyebrows which are held high beautiful." See *Shi Maoshi zhuanshu*, A.85. The young gallant ironically claims he is lacking in literary talent, then cites the *Shijing* twice.

[68] *Yanyi bian* (29.6) and *Wuchao xiaoshuo daguan* (2.1476) read *suo yao* 所 (what you want) for *suo yu* 所 (what you desire).

[69] *Wuchao xiaoshuo daguan* (2.1476) reads *si shu* (this narration) for *si yu* (these words).

with the young gallant. After winding through a few wards, they then arrived at Shengye [Ward]. Because it was close to Xiaoyu's residence, the scholar did not want to go. Thus he made an excuse and wanted to turn the head of his horse back, when the young gallant said, "My humble residence is well within reach, how can you bear to discard me?"

Then he took hold of scholar's horse and pulled it along. Delaying in this way, they had reached the entrance of the lane where Miss Zheng lived. The scholar was distracted. Whipping his horse, he intended to turn back. The gallant hurriedly ordered a few servants to take hold of him and force him to go on. Walking quickly, they pushed Li into the carriage gate; [the young gallant] at once had it locked, and announced, "Li the Tenth has arrived!"[70] The whole household called out in happy astonishment, which could be heard outside.

The night before, Xiaoyu had dreamed that a man wearing a yellow shirt brought the scholar to her, and when he reached the mat, he asked her to take off her shoes. When she woke up with start, she told the dream to her mother and explained it herself, "The word *xie* (shoe), being homophonous with the word *xie* (in harmony), refers to reunion of a husband and his wife; the word *tuo* 脱 (take off) means 'divide.' Being divided immediately after reunion also means being separated forever. Judging from this, I am sure that Li Yi and I will meet immediately, and after we see each other, I shall die."

In the early morning she asked her mother to comb her hair and put on her make-up for her. Considering that she might be somewhat distraught because of her lingering illness, her mother didn't really believe her. Reluctantly she tried to prepare her make-up. No sooner had she finished the make-up than the

[70] *Yanyi bian* (29. 6) reads *Li shi lang lai ye* "Li the Tenth has come" for *Li shi lang zhi ye* "Li the Tenth has arrived."

scholar indeed arrived. Xiaoyu had been ill so long that she needed assistance by others even when she turned over in bed. [But when she] suddenly heard that the scholar had arrived, she got up swiftly, changed her clothes and came out, as if some divine force were assisting her. Then she met the scholar and stared at him in indignation, saying nothing. Her body was so slim and frail that it seemed as if she could hardly bear it. From time to time, she covered her face with her sleeve and looked back at scholar Li. Moved by the heart-rending past events and taking pity on the lady, all those present were sobbing. In a little while, several dozen dishes of food and wine were brought in from outside. All present were surprised to see the feast. They asked immediately where the food had come from and found that all of it had been ordered by the young gallant. Thus they laid out the food and wine and sat down side by side. Xiaoyu then turned her body away [from Li], but turned her head back to watch the scholar over her shoulder for a long while.

Then she raised her cup of wine and poured it on the ground, saying, "As a woman I am so unfortunate. You, as a man, are so heartless. Pretty and young as I am, I will die with a grievance in my heart. My kind mother is still alive at home, but I cannot look after her; [as for] silk dresses, pipes and strings, from now on I have to leave them forever. In suffering, I shall go to the Yellow Springs,[71] and all this was caused by you. Mr. Li, Mr. Li! Now we

[71] For *zheng tong huang quan* 痛黃泉, *huang quan* refers to the nether world. See Yin Gong , 1 in the *Zuo zhuan* : 黃泉 相 "I will not see you before we arrive at the Yellow Springs" (*Shisanjing zhushu*, 6.37). As for *zheng*, Wang Meng'ou considers it to have no meaning here. He suspects that it is a mistake for *che* (connect) due to their similar shape (2:212). But *Yanyi bian* (29, 7) reads *xian tong* 痛 (bear the suffering) for *zheng tong* 痛, the shapes of *xian* and *zheng* are also similar, and the meaning of *xian* (bear) is more appropriate than *che* (connect). Thus the *Yanyi bian* variant deserves consideration.

shall say farewell forever! After my death, however, I shall certainly become a avenging ghost and cause your wife and concubines not be able to live peacefully [with you] at any time!" Then she grasped Li's arm with her left hand, and threw her cup to the ground. With several long and bitter cries, she passed away. Her mother immediately lifted her body and placed it in the scholar's arms, asking him to call to her. But she could not be revived. Putting on white mourning for her, the scholar wept sorrowfully day and night.

The night before the burial, the scholar suddenly saw Xiaoyu within the funeral curtains, her appearance as beautiful as in life. She was wearing a pomegranate-red skirt,[72] a purple tunic, and a red and green cape. Leaning against the curtain and holding an embroidered sash in her hand, she looked back at the scholar and said, "I feel ashamed for your sending me [to the other world], and it seems that you still have some feelings for me. In the netherworld, how can I restrain my sighs!"[73]

As soon as she finished speaking, she disappeared. The next day she was buried at Yusu Plain of Chang'an.[74] The scholar went to the place of burial, expressed his mourning through his tears, and then returned.

[72] *Yanyi bian* (29.7), *Tangdai congshu* (107.15), *Wuchao xiaoshuo daguan* (2.1478), *Jiu xiaoshuo* (2.120) all have the character *jiu* (old) before the "pomegranate-red skirt," adding emotional flavor in the lines by mentioning the old things the heroine used in the happier days.

[73] After this sentence, there are eight characters 輝 "I hope that you try hard to keep your brilliance," in the *Leishuo* version (*Biji xiaoshuo daguan*, 31. 1838).

[74] Yusu 宿 (The Emperor Stayed Overnight) Plain was located in the southeastern suburbs of Chang'an. It is said that the Emperor Wu of Han once constructed a palace there and he had stayed there overnight.

More than a month later, the scholar carried out the wedding ceremonies with Miss Lu. Grieved and moved by past events, he fell into melancholy.

In the fifth month of the year during the summer, Li went back to Zheng County together with Miss Lu. About ten days after they arrived, the scholar was sleeping with Miss Lu, when he heard a whispering sound outside the bed curtain. The scholar was startled, looked after it, and then found that there was a man around twenty years old, with a handsome appearance and a gentle manner, hiding himself within the curtains and repeatedly beckoning to Miss Lu. With fear and panic, he rose and pursued him around the curtains a few times, but the man suddenly disappeared. From then on the scholar harbored suspicions and evil thoughts in his mind, doubt and distrust consuming him. Between the husband and the wife, there was no more peaceful life. One of his relatives or friends persuaded and soothed him mildly and tactfully and the scholar's suspicions were a little bit relieved.

Ten days later, the scholar came back home just as Miss Lu was playing the zither on the couch; suddenly they saw an engraved rhinoceros-horn box was thrown in from the gate. It was more than one inch in size, in the middle a ribbon of light silk was in a knot of one heart, and it was thrown directly into Miss Lu's lap. The scholar opened it and looked inside, he found two love seeds, a kowtow beetle, a passion pill,[75] and a modicum of aphrodisiac made from the mouth of a newborn donkey. At this

[75] The kowtow (*ketou*) beetle was an insect which would bow down (or kowtow) whenever touched, indicating that the person who sent it bows down to seek the lover of the addressee.

The exact meaning of *fa sha zui* is unknown. Zhou Lianggong *Shu ying* (Shanghai: Gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1957, 5. 138) note that it seems to be a passion pill, but acknowledges he has not located a record of this aphrodisiac.

point the young man roared in rage, his voice like a jackal or a tiger. He grasped the zither and struck his wife with it, closely questioning and commending her to tell the truth. But Miss Lu also could not clear herself after all. After that, he often beat her fiercely, and treated her with all cruelty. Finally, he accused her in the court and sent her back [to her home].[76] After Miss Lu was divorced, the scholar always became jealous and distrustful of the women, such as the maids or concubines, with whom he just shared pillow and mat. There even had been someone who had been killed by him because of his jealousy.

Once the scholar visited Guangling ,[77] and obtained a famous courtesan called Ying 營 the Eleventh. Her face was smooth and her body lovely. The scholar doted on her. Every time they sat face to face, he would tell her, "I once obtained such and such a concubine from such and such a place, she committed such and such a crime, and I killed her in such and such a way." He repeated it every day, intending to let her become afraid of him and through this to keep her boudoir clean.

When he went out, he covered Miss Ying on the bed with a washing tub, sealing it and making marks around it. After he came back, he checked it carefully and then opened it.

[76] *Qian zhi* , "to discard her." *Chu zhi* or *qu zhi* are similar. In ancient China a husband could abandon his wife for various excuses, as the "Ben ming" chapter of the *Dadaili* reveals: 順 竊

"There are seven kinds of situation in which a woman should be discarded. If she does not obey her parents-in-law, she should be discarded; if she cannot give birth to a son, she should be discarded; if she is promiscuous, she should be discarded; if she is jealous of other women or her husband, she should be discarded; if she has a serious disease, she should be discarded; if she is gossipy, she should be discarded; if she steals things, she should be discarded." See Gao Ming , *Dadaili jinzhu jinyi* [A Modern Annotation and Translation of *Dadaili*] (Taibei: Taiwan Shangwu yinshuguan, 1975), p. 469.

[77] Guangling, modern Yangzhou in Jiangsu Province.

Furthermore, he kept a dagger that was very sharp. He looked around at his serving maids and said, "This is [made of] Gexi steel from Xinzhou , [78] it will only be used to cut off the head of a woman who commits a crime!" All the women whom the scholar met always caused him to be jealous. He married three times, but each marriage end up just as the first had.

[78] Xinzhou, northwest of modern Shangrao 饶 in Jiangxi Province. The steel produced there is the best for making swords.

Translator's Note

"Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" is one of the most famous Tang tales. Hu Yinglin (1551-1602) says, "Of the Tang tales, this is the most brilliant and touching one. For this reason, it has been widely read and that praise for it has never weakened" 尤采, 弗衰.[79]

The earliest version we can see today, found in *Taiping guangji*, is signed by Jiang Fang ; later versions, based on the *TPGJ*, such as *Yanyi bian* (29), *Shuofu* (112), *Yuchu zhi* (6), *Tangdai congshu* (107), *Longwei mishu* 威 (4), *Wuchao xiaoshuo* (2), are noted as having the same author. Some scholars say that this story is originally from the *Yiwen ji* , which was edited by Chen Han in the Tang dynasty. Unfortunately, the *Yiwen ji* is lost.

Jiang Fang, styled Zizheng 徵, or "Ziwei" ,[80] was a native of Yixing (modern Yixing in Jiangsu Province). At the age of eighteen, when his father asked him to write a "Qiuhe fu" 賦 (Rhapsody on the Autumn River), he picked up a pen and finished the work immediately. Yu Jian then let his daughter marry him. Li Shen [81] ordered him to improvise a poem that became "Gou zhong ying" 鷹 (The Eagle in the Leather

[79] Wang Bijiang, *Tangren xiaoshuo,* p. 82.

[80] *Quan Tang wen* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1990), 719. 3275.

[81] Li Shen (772-846) styled Gongchui . In the Muzong reign (820-823), he became a Hanlin xueshi 林 (Hanlin Academician); in the first year of Changqing, he was Zhizhigao 制 (Participant in the Drafting of Proclamations); the next year he became Zhongshu sheren (Secretariat Drafter). See *Jiu Tang shu,* 173.4497-4500; *Xin Tang shu*, 181.5347-5350; and *Wenyuan yinghua,* 759.4203.

Sleeve). The poem reads, "He desires to fly up to the sky, but who will untie the green silk cord for him?" Li Shen realized that Jiang Fang was a man of talent, and recommended him to become an official.[82] He later was both a Hanlin Academician and Secretariat Drafter. In the fourth year of Changqing (824), he was demoted from Vice Director of the Bureau of Honors,[83] Participant in the Drafting of Proclamations to Prefect of Tingzhou ,[84] and then further to Prefect of Lianzhou .[85]

As Bian Xiaoxuan says, "From the Song Dynasty on, no scholars has doubted the authorship of 'Huo Xiaoyu zhuan.'"[86] However, Li Yi was one of Jiang Fang's contemporaries and a famous historical figure, so it seems odd that Jiang would criticize him in the way he does. Moreover, in the tale of Xiaoyu, most of the dates concerning Li Yi's life do not accord with the historical facts. Therefore, an interesting debate concerning the authorship of "Huo Xiaoyu" has developed.

In her *Tangdai xiaoshuo yanjiu* , Liu Kairong says: "Jiang Fang and Li Yi were contemporaries, and he not only wrote down the real name of the protagonist, but also his own name. That was really incredible. Maybe the story was written after the Kaicheng era (836-840). Possibly someone, under Jiang Fang's name, wrote a story about Li Yi to expose the frivolity of the *jinshi* candidates. Otherwise, Jiang Fangwas born in

[82] Ling Dizhi , *Wanxing tongpu,* 統 , 86. See Wang Meng'ou, *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi,* 1:215.

[83] *Shangshu sifeng yuanwailang* , Vice Director of the Bureau of honors, one of the four major units in the Ministry of Personnel (*Li bu*), responsible for processing conferrals of noble titles. See Hucker, #5620, p. 446.

[84] "Jingzong benji" , in *Jiu Tang shu* , 17.507.

[85] *Tangshi jishi,* 41.659.

[86] Bian Xiaoxuan 萱, "Tangdai xiaoshuo yu zhengzhi" 与 , *Tangdai wenshi luncong* (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1986), p. 66.

the era of Zhenyuan 貞 (785-804), which was not far from the period of Dali (766-779), how could he mistake Huo Xiaoyu as the little daughter of Prince Huo? It is certain that the tale was produced relatively late, when events in the former times had already become obscure and could not be clarified." Liu Kairong also confirms her view through analysis of the form of the tale. She compares "Yingying zhuan" (Yingying's Story) with "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan." She thinks that the former is still a work from the early period of Tang tales, as it preserves a long poem titled "Hui zhen ji" and some commentary at the end. But the latter story is completely without this kind of inclusion, the long poem, and is much more complicated. Therefore, she considers "Yingying zhuan" a scholar's tale, while "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" is a storyteller's story.[87]

This argument is reasonable and Liu Kairong has good grounds for her view. In the 1970s, however, textual critics began to examine the tale and took issue with Liu's conclusion. Wang Meng'ou may be considered the main proponent.

Wang Meng'ou also thinks that "judged by consistent reasoning, it is impossible that Jiang Fang dared to slander a famous figure by exposing his private life so brazenly." However, Wang finds that most of the facts in the tale of Xiaoyu are in accordance with what is known of the historical figure Li Yi. Only the names and titles of the examinations he attended and his experiences as an official are obscured. Wang Meng'ou thinks that presumably this was because the author just wanted to expose Li Yi's bad behavior, and so intentionally hid Li's official life. Finally Wang concludes, "It seems credible that the tale was produced just because of a grudge and to expose someone's past misdeeds,

[87] Liu Kairong, *Tangdai xiaoshuo yanjiu* (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1947), pp. 64-82.

not intentionally for curiosity."[88] It seems that Wang was inclined to believe that "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" is not a fictional work. We shall return to this claim below.

Wang Meng'ou's argument that "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" was produced just because of a grudge and to expose someone's past misdeeds was greatly strengthened by Bian Xiaoxuan's research. Bian's main arguments are as follows: (1) Li Yi and Linghu Chu 令 [89] were on intimate terms; (2) Jiang Fang was intimately related to Yuan Zhen[90] and Li Shen; (3) Yuan Zhen and Li Shen had very bad relations with Linghu Chu. Therefore "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" is a fabricated story, which was made to defame a political opponent; for this reason the author does not mention the origin of the story or the process of writing. Why does the author depict Li Yi's life in such disorder? The author may have intentionally scrambled the facts about Li Yi's life so that Li would not take the story seriously and make formal inquiries or counter-accusations. Besides, Jiang Fang takes Wei Xiaqing, Yuan Zhen's father-in-law and Li Shen's close friend, as the incarnation of public opinion. His purpose was to flatter Yüan Chen and Li Shen.[91]

[88] Wang Meng'ou , "'Huo Xiaoyu zhuan' zhi zuozhe ji gushi Beijing" 背景, *Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu erji* (Taibei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1973), pp. 57-70.

[89] Linghu Chu (765-836), a native of Huayun (modern Yao County in Shansi Province). In the Jingzong reign (824-825), he was Shangshu pushe (Vice Director of the Department of State Affairs, Hucker, #5052, p.412) and Prefect of Bianzhou and Congzhou . See *Jiu Tang-shu,* 172. 4459-4465.

[90] Yuan Zhen (779-831), styled Weizhi . During the Changqing reign (821-824), he became Participant in the Drafting of Proclamations and *Tong Zhongshu Menxiashi* (Jointly Manager of Affairs with the Secretariat-Chancellery). See *Jiu Tang shu,* 166.4327-4339; *Xin Tang shu,* 174.5223-5229.

[91] Bian Xiaoxuan, "Tangdai xiaoshuo yu zhengzhi," *Tangdai wenshi luncong,* pp. 48-67.

Needless to say, Wang and Bian have greatly added to research on the authorship of "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan," and their arguments seem reasonable, too. However, it might still be rash to proclaim that the problem of authorship and purpose of this tale have already been solved. First, writing a story under other's name, as is widely known, was not rare in ancient China; second, people's curiosity about famous people, especially their private lives, has been strong from ancient to modern times. If the story were really written by someone else, we would have to interpret it in a different way; third, based on the style of writing, this story seems to have been produced in the golden age of the Tang tales. Liu Kairong's analysis concerning the development of the art forms of Tang tales and this story make sense. However, up to now, all the conclusions of recent research concerning the date of the composition of this story seem only to be conjunctures based on the premise that Jiang Fang wrote the tale and that it was effective in harming Li Yi.[92]

Even if one admits that the story was written by Jiang Fang to slander Li Yi, the story is still a work of fiction, not a historical biography; the protagonist, Li Sheng , is still a fictional person

[92] Wang Meng'ou says, "Li Jifu (758-814, he was Chief Minister in the second and sixth year of Yuanhe 806-820) went out as military governor of Huainan in the eighth month of the third year of Yuanhe , if Li Yi was really punished because of the investigation 案, it would have happened between the fourth and the eighth month, and "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" might have been finished in this year" ("'Huo Xiaoyu zhuan' ji zuozhe ji gushi Beijing," p. 69). Bian Xiaoxuan considers it should be placed in the beginning of Changqing reign, for in Changqing period Li Yi was relegated from *You sanqi changshi* (Right Policy Adviser) to *Taizi bingke* (Adviser to the Heir Apparent). This might be related to the defamation of this story (*Tangdai wenshi luncong,* p. 65). Li Jianguo considers this story written in the first year of Dahe (827) when Li Yi was about to pass away (Li Jianguo, *Tang wudai zhiguai chuanqi xulu* 叙录 (Tianjin: Nankai daxue chubanshe, 1993), pp. 446-55.

and cannot irrevocably be assumed to be the historical figure Li Yi. To ignore this, is to invite problems in interpretation. Wang Meng'ou's conclusions therefore suffer from this kind of problem.

It is interesting that even though Wang and Bian seem to share an argument concerning the authorship and purpose of this story, they part ways on how to treat the plot in the story. Bian considers that what the story says is all fabricated and of course untrue; Wang thinks that even though some dates are incorrect, most of the events are real. As a result, as noted above, he does not treat "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" as a fictional work. Yet many of the events do not coincide with history. At the start of the tale we read: "in the next year there would be *Bacui* (The Preeminent Examination)," but the time does not accord with historical fact. Wang Meng'ou is forced to add a note arguing that, "*Bacui* may be a mistake for *zhiju* ."[93] His note on Eastern Capital is another example of this tendency (see footnote 42 of the translation above).

Based on modern literary theory, after a work is written, it becomes independent from its author. While knowing the author and his purpose of writing can be helpful to our reading, paying too much attention to it can also hinder our reading.

It is not difficult for us to find that Li Yi in the story is not described as a rascal or a shameless man. Before he went to see Xiaoyu, "he washed his clothes, bathed and shaved. He couldn't fall asleep all night for joy and excitement." Afterwards, he compared his love to the mountains and the rivers, and his fidelity to the sun and the moon. After Xiaoyu's death, he "went to the place of burial, expressed all his mourning for the dead through tears." It cannot be argued that all of these acts were artificial. Of course, his love for Xiaoyu was not strong enough to defeat convention. In the Tang dynasty, marrying a woman from a great

[93] See Wang Meng'ou, *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi,* 2:201.

family, especially the five great families: Cui , Lu, Li, Zheng, and Wang , and passing the *Jinshi* Examination were equally important. Marrying a woman from a great family was not only a matter of glory, but also a benefit to a person's political career. After Li got an official post and returned home, his situation had changed: When his mother arranged his marriage with Miss Lu without his consent, "The scholar, though hesitating, dared not refuse." The reason for his hesitation is, of course, that he still loved Xiaoyu, and did not intend to marry a stranger. However, considering the fortune of his family and his own future career, he finally gave in and decided to marry Miss Lu. Here, in Stephen Owen's words, "we see the gap between cultural roles and genuine feeling."[94] The author doesn't simply attribute this misdeed to Scholar Li's lack of personal virtue, but pays more attention to the social factors that determine personal behavior and character. This deeply reflects social reality, and exposes the social roots that produce the tragedy of love. This is precisely the most important value of this tale.

Xiaoyu is a clever and beautiful girl. She "does not seek money and property, but only admires gifted and unconventional young men." As a courtesan, however, she is too innocent. She does not know that she is merely a plaything of men, and that she has no right to love. Even though she just has a "small wish," to live together and love the young man for eight more years, she still cannot fulfill it. Her miserable death exposes cruelty of the society.

The structure of this story is very similar to that of "Yingying zhuan," another famous Tang tale. It begins with a young scholar who admires and seeks a beauty, and then meets one. Afterwards, however, he finds it is difficult to continue his love because it

[94] Stephen Owen, "Conflicting Interpretations: 'Yingying's story'", in *The End of the Chinese 'Middle Ages'* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 166.

conflicts with social norms, so a dilemma results. Forced by convention and driven by selfish motives of his political career, he abandons her. The story ends tragically. The difference between the two is that Yingying accepts the cruel reality while Xiaoyu cannot. Xiaoyu's death is the proper climax of the story. For this reason, her tale has more artistic appeal.

The narrative elements of this story are somewhat modern. In charactering Xiaoyu, the author uses foreshadowing. Before she appears in the story, the author introduces her through the matchmaker's speech; then he depicts Scholar Li's joy and excitement at meeting her; finally he describes her mother in detail: "She was graceful, charming and seductive as she talked and smiled." If the mother is still so charming, how beautiful should her daughter be! Here the reader can freely use his or her imagination. After describing how Li Yi was brought back by the young gallant to Xiaoyu's residence, there is also a flashback to narrate what happened to Xiaoyu the night before.

The language of this tale is elegant and vivid, simple lucid, prose that includes many four-character clauses; the best example is the heroine's speech before her death. There are a number of parallel lines, lending not an elegance, but also a great power of expression, to the style. Some of the idioms, such as *wushan*, *luopu*, *qingyang* are taken from the *Wen xuan* or the *Shijing*; but most of them can be found in historical works.[95] Some usages are obviously imitating the *Shiji* 記. For example:

Yijun jiejing 皆驚 "The soldiers in the army were all surprised" (*Shi ji*, 92.2611); *Yijia jing xi* 家驚 "The whole household called out in happy astonishment" (Wang Meng'ou,

[95] For example, *huangquan* is found in *Zuo zhuan*, *chiming*, *qizhou* are found in "Wei Qing zhuan" and "Gaozubenji" in the *Shiji* (2.344 and 111.2935, respectively); and *zhejuan* 券 is found in "Gaodi ji" of the *Han shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1962, 1. 2).

1:198); *Yizuo jing shi* 座驚視 "All present were surprised to see [the feast]" (Wang Meng'ou, 1:199).

Just as William Nienhauser has pointed out, the word-hoard of the Tang tale authors is closely related to the biographies in dynastic histories, especially to those of the first three histories, which were popular with scholars of the Tang dynasty.[96] The dialogue of the characters in the tale might be closer to spoken language, however, and often vividly reveal the personalities of the characters, as we see in Bao the Eleventh spirited response to Scholar Li's first appearance: "What kind of young fellow has broken into the house unannounced?" Her bantering shows equally her quick tongue and her joy at her success in matchmaking.

The later reception of this tale was enormous. It was the source of countless poems and inspired Tang Xianzu's (1550-1617) famous play, *Zichai ji* 記 (The Purple Hairpin).

[96] William. H. Nienhauser. Jr., "Nanke taishou zhuan de yuyan, yongdian he yanwai yiyi" , in *Zhuanji yu xiaoshuo: Tangdai wenxue bijiao lunji* : 比較 (Taibei: Southern Materials, 1995), pp. 93-120.

Glossary

caidi 才 **n.** "Endowment and family" (Wang Meng'ou, 196.2); another example in "Yang xiuzhi zhuan" in *Bei Qi shu* : 俱
"Xiuzhi knows many things in the past, and familiars with the clans. All those who are selected by him have both outstanding endowments and a grand family" (*Bainaben ershisishi* [Taibei: Shangwu yinshuguan, nd.], 42.10634).

caidiao fengliu 才 **np.** "unrestrained spirit and matchless gifts" (194.12).

caisi 才思 **n.** "genius in writing" (193.2). Also in "Mi Heng" *Hou Hanshu* 後漢 : ( ) 章
"[Liu Biao] once drafted a memorial to the emperor together with the scholars, and they all exhausted their imaginative power and creativeness," *Bainaben ershisi shi*, 80.3783.

canjun **n.** "Adjutant" (194.4); Hucker No. 6876.

cheichu **n.** "a beating" (200.2).

chuoyüe **adj.** "graceful" (194.11).

congshi 從 **n.** "Retainer," Hucker No. 7176.

fengliu **(1) adj.** "gifted and unconventional"; Example: "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan": 流 "does not seek money and property, but only admires gifted and unconventional

young men" (193.8); **(2) adj.** "a man of sentiment" (197.15): Example: "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan": 流 感 "Men of sentiment were all moved by Xiaoyu's affection."

feng qizhou **v.** "serve with dustpan and broom [as a wife or concubine]." (194.14); also in "Kao-tsu pen-chi" 高 , in *Shiji* (*Records of the Grand Scribe*; [Beijing: Zhonghua, 1959], 8.344): , 息 "Mr. Lü says, "I have a daughter, and I intend to send her to serve you as a concubine with the broom and dustpan."

fengdiao **n.** "unrestrained spirit and gifts" (193.3); Example: "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan": 每 "Being proud of his unrestrained spirit and gifts."

fuma **n.** "Commandant-escort" (193.4); Hucker No. 2083.

gaoqing yitai 逸态 **n.** "refined tastes and elegant grace" (194.1).

gaosu **v.** "[put on] white mourning" (199.7).

gouzhi **v.** "to meet [you]" (196.6); See also "Caochong" of "Zhaonan" 召 , in *Shijing*, 既 既 . "I saw him, I met him" (*Shi Maoshi zhuanshu*, A.29).

haoshi 士 **n.** "a young gallant" (198.4).

Huangquan **n.** "the Yellow Springs, i.e., the nether world" (199.5). *Zuo zhuan* , Yin 1: 泉 "I will not to see you before we arrive at the Yellow Springs" (*Shisanjing zhushu* [Taibei: Yiwen yinshuguan, 1955], vol. 5, 6.37.

jianshu **n. "**humble birth" (193.11). See also the "Nei tse" chapter, *Li ji,* : "*Shuzi* are sons of concubines" (*Shisanjing zhushu,* vol. 5).

jiaori zhi shi 之 **n.** "sworn by the sun" (196.7); See also "Daju" of the "Wangfeng" section in the *Shijing* 詩 : , , "If you do not believe my words, I swear by the bright sun" (see Chen Huan , *Shi Maoshi zhuanshu* 詩 [Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1901], A.56).

jiazu **n.** "the most magnificent clan" (196.10). It can also be called *chiaxing* 姓 or *jiamen* . Example: "Huo Xiaoyu zhuan": "The Lu family was also a magnificent one."

Jixiandian xueshi 學士 **n.** "Academician of the Academy of Scholarly Worthies," Hucker, No. 553.

menzu qinghua 清華 **n.** "an honest and magnificent family" (193.2); see also "Dao Hui zhuan" , *Nanshi* : "These two positions are what the people from the honest and magnificent families do not accept" (*Bainaben ershisi shi*, 25.12308).

Mishu shaojian **n.** "Vice Director of the Palace Library"; Hucker No. 4596.

nüluo wutuo **np.** "a parasitic vine that has nothing to cling to" (195.8), a metaphor for a woman who has lost favor of a man she relied on. *Nü-luo* can also be written *tusi* (see Gao You 高 , annot., "Shuoshan xun" 訓, *Huainanzi zhu* [Taibei: Shijie shuju, 1962], 16. 276-277; also "Gushi"

詩: "I am newly married to you, just like the vine clings to the vine" (see Shen Deqian 潛, ed., *Gushiyuan* 詩 [Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1966], p. 54.

pizi 緇 **v.** "put on black clothes [i.e, become a nun]" (196.6).

qingyang 清扬 **n.** "exquisite appearance" (198.6). "Ye you mancao" of the "Zheng feng" , *Shijing*:

"There is a beauty, how bright and clear her eyes, and how exquisite her appearance."

qiushan jianjuan 捐 **np.** "the autumn fan is thrown away" (195.8), originally from Ban Jieyu 班婕 , *Yuan gexing* 歌 .

rongyi 容 **n.** "appearance and bearing" (194.12).

shanghuan **v.** "pin up the hair" (197.4); see also the "Neize" chapter of the *Li chi,* 而笄 "A girl has her hair pinned up at the age of fifteen" (*Shisanjing zhushu,* 5. 539).

suzhi **n.** "a lifelong wish" (196.7).

tianguan **n.** "Board of Personnel" (193.1).

tong zhenxi 席 **v.** "share pillow and mat with" (200.3).

tongxin jie 心 **n.** "a knot of shared hearts [love knot]" (199.15).

xie Qin Jin 諧 **vo.** "harmonize Qin and Jin [i.e., to get married]" (196.5); this idiom originated from the intermarriage for generations between the two states in the Spring and Autumn period.

yao ji **n.** "bewitching beauties" (198.7). *Wu yue chuqiu* 吴 (Taibei: Shijie shuju, 1962), 3.48: [ ] 拥 "[The King Zhuang of Chu] embraces a girl from Qin by his left arm and a girl from Yue with his right arm."

zhe you ersan 輒 三 **v.** "to be variable in conduct" (196.7); see also "Meng" of "Weifeng" , in *Shijing*: , "The serviceman was reckless, he was variable in his conduct" (*Shi Maoshi zhuanshu*, A.32).

Zhubu **n.** "Assistant Magistrate" (195.15); Normally, the third ranking post, behind one or more Vice Magistrates (*cheng*) as well as the District Magistrate (*ling, zhixn*). Hucker, No. 1413, p. 182.

zhuangshi 室 **n.** "the prime of a man's life (from thirty to forty)" (196.5); see also "Qu Li" , *Li ji* (Records of Ritual), 壮 , "At the age of thirty, one can be called entering into the robust years of his life, and he should have a wife" (see *Shisanjing zhushu*, 5.16).

zhuifeng xiece 追 挟 **vo.** "have a hand in romantic affairs and arranging matches" (193.5).

zhongfu **n.** "wife of the eldest son [who was born by wife, not concubine, of a family]" (196.2).

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Index

Acosta, Pedro, xxi
Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 龍 (1892-1927), 66
allegory, 106 ff.
An Lushan rebellion, 179, 219, 224
Anthology of Chinese Literature, Beginnings to 1911, see Stephen Owen

Bai Juyi 居易 (772-846), 33
Bai Kong liu tie 孔六 , 33
Bai Xingjian 行 (772-827), 160, 161
Bauer, Wolfgang (1930-1997), xviii
Beili zhi 北 , 225
Benares, 63
Bian Xiaoxuan 萱, 211-213, 261, 263
Birch, Cyril, xxii
Bo Juyi 居易 (772-846; see also Bai Juyi), 60
Bol, Peter K., 224

Cao Weiguo 國, 277
Chai, Ch'u (1906-1986), xviii
Chai, Winberg, xviii
Chanzhi Si (Wisdom of Zen Temple), 139
Chang, H. C., xx; his *Chinese Literature 3: Tales of the Supernatural*, xix
Chao Gongwu 晁 (1105-1180), 166
Chen Han 陳 , 167, 260
Chen Shou 陳壽 (233-297), 173
Cheng Yizhong 中, 211
Chinese Literature 3: Tales of the Supernatural, see H. C. Chang
Chinese Prose Literature of the Tang Period, A.D. 618-906, see E. D. Edwards
Chongjing Temple, 251
chuanqi , defined, xiii
Chuanqi , see Pei Xing
Chunyu Kun , 170-171
Classical Chinese Tales of the Supernatural and Fantastic, see Karl S. Y. Kao
Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature, see Victor H. Mair
Cui Yingying , 28
Cutter, Robert Joe, xxii

dagger, of Gexi steel , 259
Daizong , emperor (r. 763-779), 99, 100, 172-173
Daozang , 213-214
Davidson, Martha, xiv, n. 7
Dezong , emperor (r. 779-805), 95, 98, 100
Dragon King's Daughter, xvi

Dong Zhongshu 仲 (179-104 B.C.), 171, 218, 219, 220
dream interpretation, 254
dream stories, 106-122, 131 ff.
Du Guangting (850-933), 189; biography, 208-211
Du You 佑 (735-812), 98
"Du Zichun" , translation of, 49-59; analysis, 60-67
Duan Chengshi 式 (803?-863), 64
Dudbridge, Glen, xiii, xix, 167, 175; his *Tale of Li Wa*, xix-xx, xxii

Edwards, Evangeline Dora (1888-1957), xv, xvi, xxii, 26; her *Chinese Prose Literature of the Tang Period*, A.D. 618-906, xv-xvi
Eide, Elling O., xix, n. 27
Emperor Yang 煬 of the Sui (r. 606-616), 189

Fan Xingrong (1786-1848), 179
Fang Xuanling 房 (578-648), 173
Feng Menglong 龍 (1574-1646), 66
Franke, Herbert, xviii, xix, n. 26
fuma "royal son-in-laws," 172, 235, n. 9

Gan zhu ji , 33, 211
Ganze yao 甘 (Ballads of Timely Rainfall), 24 ff., 32 ff.
Gao Lishi 高 (684-762), 92
Gjertson, Donald, xx
Goldene Truhe, xviii
"Gujing ji" 記 (The Story of the Magic Mirror), xxii
Guwen 文 Movement, xiv, n. 6, xxi-xxii
Guanyin jing (*Avalokiteśvara Sutra*), 140
Guang yi ji 記, xiv, n. 8
Guo Ziyi (697-781), 107, 109, 110, 112, 114

Han Yu (768-824), p. xiv, n. 6, xix, 28, 106, 219-223
Hanan, Patrick, xiv, n. 5
Hightower, James R., xviii, xix, xx, xxii
Honglou meng , xvi
Hong Mai (1123-1202), his *Rongzhai suibi* , 209
"Hongxian" 線 (Red Threads), translation, 1-23; analysis of, 24-39
Hsu Sung-nien [Xu Songnian] (1904-1981), xv; his *Contes choisis des T'ang*, xv
Hu Yinglin (1551-1602), 260
Huai River, 248
Huang Chao (d. 884), rebellion of, 217
Huangfu Mu's 枚 *Sanshui xiao du* 三 , 178
Huntington, Rania, 277-278
"Huo Xiaoyu zhuan" (The Tale of Huo Xiaoyu), 233; translation of, 233-259; analysis of, 260-268

Ji shen yi yuan 稽 , 166
Jia Zhi 賈 (718-772), 98
Jiang Fang , 233, 260-268
Jiao Du (423-483), 166
Jiao Lu (d. 868), 166
Jindai mishu 秘
Junzhai dushu zhi , 166

Kao, Karl S. Y., xxi; his *Classical Chinese Tales of the Supernatural and Fantastic*, xxi
Kelly, Jeanne, xx

Kermode, Frank, xx
King Wei of Qi 齊 (r. 378-343 B.C.), 170-171
King Hui 惠 of Liang (r. 370-335 B.C.), 170
Knickerbocker, Bruce, 277
Koffler, Pauline Bentley, xxii
Kong Chuan 孔 , 33

Ladies of the Tang, see Elizabeth Te-chen Wang
Lau, Joseph S. M., xx, xxii
Lei shuo 類 , xix and *passim*
Levenson, Christopher, xviii
Lévy, André, xxi; his *Histoires d'amour et de mort de la Chine ancienne, Chefs-d'oeuvre de la nouvelle (Dynastie des Tang. 618-907)* and *Histoires extraordinaires et récits fantastiques de la Chine ancienne*, xxi
Li Deyu (787-850), 60, 161
Li Fuyan 復 , 61
Li Gongzuo (c. 778-848), 131, 157; biography of, 159-162; other tales: "Ku *Yuedu jing*" 瀆 (The Ancient *Classic of Peaks and Rivers*), 159; "Lujiang Feng'ao" 盧江 (Mother Feng from the Lu River), 159; "Xie Xiao'e" , 159
Li Jifu 吉 (758-814), 160-161
Li Jianguo 國, xiii, xxv and *passim*
Li Jing (570-649), 191-207
Li Mei's (fl. 830-860) *Zuan yi ji* 記, 178
Li Qi (741-807), 160
Li Shen (772-846), 161, 260, 261, 263
Li Shimin 民 (599-649; Taizong 太 , emperor, r. 626-649), 202, 208, 224
"Li Wa zhuan" (The Story of Miss Li), xv, xix-xx, 37, 161; see also Glen Dudbridge
Li Yuan (566-635), 222-223
Li Yuangui 軌 (before 620-689), see Prince Huo
Li Zhao (*ca.* 780-*ca.* 850), 105, 158, 167, 169, 173, 179
Li Zongwei , 211
Liaozhai zhiyi (Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio), xiv; see also Pu Songling
Lie Zi , 118, 162
Linghu Chu (765-836), 263
Liu Bang (256 B.C.-195 B.C.), 218-219, 222
Liu Binke jiahua lu 話 , see Wei Xun
Liu Kairong 開 , 213, 261-262
Liu Yan (*ca.* 715-80), 99-101, 110
Liu Yuxi (772-842), 219, 221-223
Liu Zhiji (661-721), 106
Liu Zongyuan (773-819), xiv, n. 5, 219-223; relationship of his "Yongzhou baji" 州 記 (Eight Records of Yong Prefecture) to "Nanke Taishou zhuan," 176-178
Longwei mishu 龍威秘 , 168, 260
Lu Chun (i.e., Lu Zhi [754-805]), 102
Lu Qi 盧 (*fl.* 780-83), 101
Lu Xun (1881-1936), xiii, xiv, xv, xvi and *passim*
Lu Zhi (754-805), 98, 102
Lüchuang xinhua 話, 33

Ma Junliang 俊良, 168
Ma, Y. W., xx
Mair, Victor H., xxii; his *The Columbia Anthology of Traditional Chinese Literature*, xxii
Mangbuzhi 布 (Cogro Manpoci), 82
Maspero, Henri (1882-1945), xv, n. 12
Mao Jin (1599-1659), 35
"Mao Ying chuan" (Biography of Fur Point), xix, 106
Minford, John, xxii
More Translations from the Chinese, see Arthur Waley
Motsch,Monika, xxii

"Nanke Taishou zhuan" 太 (An Account of the Governor of the Southern Branch), translation of, 131-158; analysis of, 159-179
Narad, 65-66
Nienhauser, William H., Jr., xix, xxii, 268, 277
Niu-Li factional strife, 60
Niu Que 牛缺, 118
Niu Sengru 牛 (779-847), 49, 60

Owen, Stephen, xxii; his *Anthology of Chinese Literature, Beginnings to 1911*, xxii

Pei Du (765-839), 30
Pei Guangting (676-733), 86
Pei Ji (*fl.* 777-81), 101
Pei Xing (fl. 860), 211; his *Chuanqi* , 211
Peng Shi 式, 173
Pimpaneau, Jacques, xxiii; his *Anthologie de la littérature chinoise classique*, xxiii
Prince Huo , Li Yuangui 軌 (before 620-689), 237, n. 18
Princess of Changshan , 235, n. 9
Princess of Liangzhou 凉州, 235, n. 9
Princess Taiping 太平, 212
princesses, Tang, 157, n. 83, 172-173, 179
Pu Songling (1640-1715), xiv, 66, 178

Qian Xiyan 錢 (fl. 1613), 63
Qiong shen mi yuan 秘 (Probing for the Supernatural in the Garden of Mysteries), 165
"Qiuran Ke Zhuan" (The Tale of the Curly-Bearded Guest) by Du Guangting (850-933), translation of, 189-207; analysis of, 208-226
Qixie ji 齊諧記 (Records of Universal Harmony), 162
Qu Yu 佑 (1341-1433), xviii, n. 22
Qu Yuan's (340 B.C.-278 B.C.) "Li Sao" , 225
qun dai "petticoat influence," 171

Reed, Carrie, 63, n. 46, 65 ff., 174
"Renshi zhuan" (Miss Ren's Story), xix, 96, 101, 102
Rongzhai suibi , see Hong Mai
Ruizong ; emperor (r. 684-690 and 710-712), 235, n.9
Rushton, Peter, xx

Sanguo zhi 三國 , 173
Scheffler, Laurie, xxi
Shao Xizeng , 168
Shen Chaozong , 96
Shen Chuanshi (769-827), 96-97, 104
Shen Jiji , 73; biography, 94-103, 110
Shen Junliang , 95
Shen Qijia 齊家, 96
Shen Yazhi (781-832), 95
Shen Yüeh (441-513), 95
Shenxian ganyu zhuan 仙感 , 213, 214
Shi Yan 延, 139
Shiji 記 (The Grand Scribe's Records), 170-171, 266
Shuo fu , 35-36, 211, 260
Shuo ku (Treasury of Stories), 168
Sima Qian 司 (145-*ca.* 86 B.C.), 106, 171, 218
Sima Xiangru 司 相 (179 B.C.-117 B.C.), 225
Soushen ji 搜 記 (Records of Searching for the Strange), xiv, 162
Spring, Madeline, xxi-xxii; her *Animal Allegories in T'ang China*, xxii
Su E's 鶚 (fl. 885-888) *Sushi yanyi* , 216-217
Sun Cheng 孫 (*fl.* 779-81), 101
Sun Qi 孫 , 225
Sushi yanyi , see Su E
Suzong , emperor (r. 756-763), 99

Taiping guangji 太平 記, xvii, xix and *passim*
Tale of Li Wa, see Glen Dudbridge
Tan Kai (1503-1569), edition of the *Taiping guangji* by, 169
Tangdai congshu , xvi, 168, 260
Tang guoshi bu 國 補 (Supplements to the History of the Tang), 106, 167
Tangren xiaoshuo , xiv, xv
Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu, erji ' , see Wang Meng'ou
Tang Song chuanqi ji , xiii; see also Lu Xun
Tang tales, history of, xiii-xxiii
Tang Xianzu (1550-1616), 38; his "Nanke ji" 記 (A Record of the Southern Bough), 171-172, 178, 268
Tao Zongyi (fl. 1396), 35
Tayler, Gladys B. (Dai Naidie 跌, 1919-1999, Yang Xianyi's wife), xvi-xvii
The Tempest, xx
Tian Chengsi (704-778), 5, n. 18, 13, 17, 24, 29, 31
Tian Hongzheng 弘 , 29, 30
Tianzhu Yuan (Hindu Courtyard), 139
Traditional Chinese Stories, Themes and Variations, xx
Traditional Chinese Tales, xvi

Varsano, Paula, xxi
Vishnu, 65

Waley, Arthur (1889-1966), xv; his *More Translations from the Chinese*, xv
Wang Chi-Chen 1899-2001, xvi, xviii, xxii
Wang E 鍔 (740-815), 160

Wang, Elizabeth Te-chen, xvii; her *Ladies of the Tang*, xvii
Wang Jian 建 (ca. 767-830), 28
Wang Jian 建 (847-918), 209
Wang Jing , 278
Wang Junchuo , (d. 727), 83
Wang Meng'ou (1907-2002), xx and *passim*; his *Tangren xiaoshuo yanjiu, erji* ' , xx, xxiii, xxv
Wang Pijiang 疆 (1887-1966), xiv, xv and *passim*
Wang Shaoying , 169
Wang Shizhen (1526-1590), 38
Wang Wengao 文 (b. 1764), 168
Wang Wenru 文濡 (1867-1935), 168
Wang Xianzhi 仙芝, rebellion of, 217
wedding gifts, 138
Wei Xiaqing 韋 (father-in-law of Yuan Zhen), 252, 263
Wei Xun's 韋 (fl. mid 9th century) *Liu Binke jiahua lu* 話 , 223-224
wenjuan (warming scrolls), 60
Wen Tingyun (ca. 812-870), 25
Wieger, Georges Friedrich Leon (1856-1933), xiv
Wilkerson, Douglas, xxi
Wuchao xiaoshuo 五 , 37, 260
Wu Jing (670-749), 98-99
Wu Zetian , empress (r. 690-705), 95

Xianzong , emperor (r. 806-820), 172-173
Xiao Song (*ca.* 669-749), 76, n. 10, 85, 108-109, 111
Ximeluo (Stagra [Konlog]), 81-82
Xingshi hengyan (1574-1646), 66
Xizong , emperor (r. 873-888), 210
Xu xuan guai lu 續 怪 , 61
Xu Zichang (fl. 1596), 169
Xuanguai lu 怪 , 49, 60 ff.
Xuanxue (School of Mysteries), 219
Xuanzang's (602-664) *Datang xiyu ji* 記, 63
Xuanzong , emperor (r. 712-756), 109, 110, 212
Xuanzong , emperor (r. 847-59), 225
Xue Boyang 薛 阳, 235, n. 9
Xue Song 薛 (?-773), 1, 11, 17, 24, 32, 33
Xue Tan 薛 , 235, n. 9

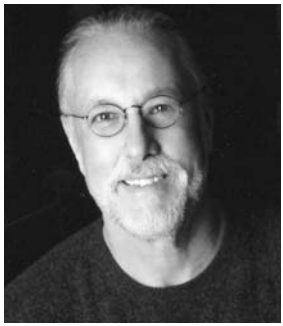
Yan yi bian , 37
Yang Juyuan 楊 (b. 755), 1, 26-38
Yang Lao 楊 , 31-32
Yang Maoqing 楊 , 28, 29, 31
Yang Su 楊 (d. 606), 189-193
Yang Xianyi 楊 益 (1915-2009), xvi-xvii
Yang Yan 楊 (727-81), 94-95, 99-103, 107, 109, 110-112, 114, 118
Yangzi River, 248
Yanyi bian , 260
Yao yi ji 妖 記, 165
Yee, Cordell, xxi
Yen, W. W. [Yan Huiqing] 惠慶, xvii
Yijing 易 , 175
Yiwen ji (A Collection of Strange Tales Heard), 73, n. 1, 167, 260
Yiwen leiju 文類 , 162
Yim, Sarah, xiii

"Yingying zhuan" (The Story of [Cui] Yingying), xv, 28, 262, 266; see also Yuan Zhen
"Yongzhou baji" 州 記 (Eight Records of Yong Prefecture), see Liu Zongyuan
you wu 物 (beautiful creatures), xix
Youyang zazu 陽 , 63
Yu chu zhi 虞 , 37, 168, 260
Yu Jian , 260
Yusu 宿 Plain, 256
Yuan Jiao , 1, 24, 25
Yuan Jie 結 (719-772), 24
Yuan Zai (d. 777), 99-101, 107, 110-111, 114, 118
Yuan Zhen (779-831), xviii, 27, 28, 60, 263
Yuan Zi (ca. 748-818), 24, 25

Zeng Zao 慥 (1091-1155), 168
Zhang Maosong , 172
Zhang Mingke 鳴珂 (1829-1908), 179
Zhang Xiaozhong 忠 (730-791), 172
Zhang Youhe , xvii, n. 21
Zhang Yue (667-730), 76, n. 10, 108, 111, 211-212
Zhang Zhenjun 振 , 278
Zhao Yanwei (fl. 1295), 60, 161
"Zhenzhong ji" 枕中記 (Record within a Pillow), 66; translation of, 73-93; analysis of, 94-122, 167, 170, 174
Zheng Hao 鄭 , 225
Zheng Hu 鄭 (708-777), xix
zhiguai 怪, xx, xxi, 63
Zhongguo xiaoshuo shilue 中國 , xvi
Zhu Shengfei 朱 非 (1082-1144), 29
Zhuang Zi , 114; allegories in, 106
Zichai ji 釵記 (The Purple Hairpin), 268

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Lu Xun



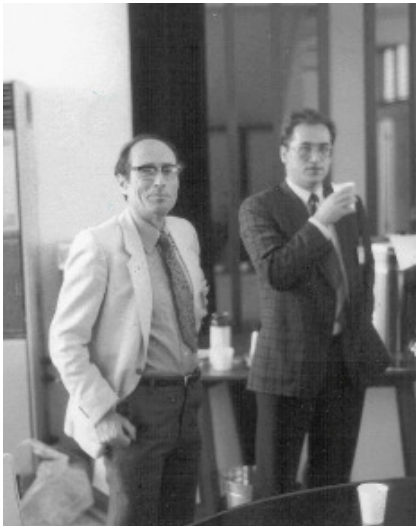
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Noted Tang-tale Scholars (left to right): Wang Guoliang, Bian Xiaoxuan, Zhou Xunchu, Fu Xuancong, Sun Changwu, Li Jianguo, and William Nienhauser



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